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VARIETIES OF CLASS-COLLABORATIONIST IDEOLOGY IN THE FRENCH LABOR MOVEMENT BEFORE WORLD WAR I

by

MARK S. WEITZ

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in History in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1977

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INTRODUCTION

When the law which legalized labor unions was passed in 1884, René Waldeck-Rousseau, the Minister of the Interior, sent a circular to the prefects in which he urged them to assist in the formation of unions. The law, he said, was based on the philosophy that unions were "less an arm of combat than an instrument of material, moral and intellectual progress."[1] This was not just wishful thinking. The idea that the labor union was an instrument of social peace was fairly common in late nineteenth-century France and it was shared by important segments of the working classes as well.

This concept of worker organization may seem unnatural at first glance. Yet recent work on the French labor movement has shown that the concept of revolutionary syndicalism, with its violent strikes and rhetoric of class war, is not sufficient to describe French labor. Historians have begun to emphasize the essential moderation of the French worker.[2]

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[1] "Circulaire Ministérielle relative aux syndicats professionels, 25 août 1884," in Annuaire des syndicats professionels, 1896, pp. xiii-xiv.

[2] Peter Stearns, Revolutionary Syndicalism and French Labor: A Cause Without Rebels (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1971); Theodore Zeldin, France, 1848-1945, vol. 1: Ambition, Love and Politics (London: Oxford University Press, 1973); Edward Shorter and Charles Tilly, Strikes in France, 1830-1968 (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1974); Harvey Mitchell and Peter Stearns, The European Labor Movement,

Revolutionary syndicalism left its mark upon French labor and has received its due. But the class collaborationists also contributed, albeit in a different way. This dissertation examines the ideology and influence of the various class-collaborationist organizations. Chapter I traces their roots in the Second Empire and the early Third Republic. Chapter II deals with the Barberettist Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France (U.C.S.), the first specifically class-collaborationist labor federation, which kept the ideology alive in the 1880s. Chapters III and IV examine reformism in the C.G.T. Chapter V focuses on the preeminent reformist union, the Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, led by the preeminent Proletarian Positivist, Auguste Keufer. The doctrine of the Proletarian Positivists is covered in Chapter VI. Chapter VII looks at the Conseil Supérieur du Travail. As a national body of workers, employers, and government representatives, it was the essence of class collaborationism. Positivists were well represented on it, as were other moderate workers. Chapters VIII and IX cover the other major labor organizations of social peace, the Yellows and the Catholics. The last chapter examines the linkages that existed among the different groups. There were enough linkages to permit one to speak of a class-collaborationist movement.

---

the Working Classes and the Origins of Social Democracy, 1890-1914 (Itasca, Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1971); Michael Sabatino DeLucia, "The Remaking of French Syndicalism, 1911-1918: The Growth of the Reformist Philosophy" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Brown University, 1971). Two articles were devoted specifically to the antirevolutionary approach of the miners: Jacques Julliard, "Diversité des réformismes," Le Mouvement social, no. 87 (April-June 1974), pp. 3-7; Joel Michel, "Syndicalisme minier et politique dans le Nord-Pas-de-Calais: le cas Basly (1880-1914)," ibid., pp. 9-33.

There was an alternative to revolutionary syndicalism. There were workers who believed that the capitalist and the worker were not born enemies. Since they believed that the two classes could and should work together, they may be called class collaborationists. Whereas the revolutionary syndicalists regarded capitalism as the enemy, the class war as necessary, and a collectivist revolution as desirable, class collaborationists saw the capitalist and the worker as partners in the productive process, sharing enough common interests to make peaceful social relations possible. They rejected the concept of a socialist revolution. They were hostile to collectivism and upheld the institution of private property. They respected the entrepreneur for the necessary social role he played. They saw nothing wrong with an economic system in which risk, entrepreneurship, and capital were rewarded with profit, although they did want a more equitable distribution of social wealth. Revolutionaries regarded strikes as an integral part of the struggle and the ultimate revolutionary action; class collaborationists rejected the strike as a weapon--or accepted it only as a last resort--and placed severe restrictions on its use. Revolutionaries tended to be antimilitaristic and antipatriotic; the class collaborationists were proudly nationalistic and fiercely patriotic. They displayed a conservative social morality. Not surprisingly, they tended to be antifeminists. They played the role of strong upholders of traditional family

virtues. By the early twentieth century, the class-collaborationist doctrine had captured a significant number of the unionized French workers--probably more than the number of revolutionaries in the Confédération Générale du Travail (C.G.T.).

Class-collaborationist unionism existed in different forms. In the 1880s the moderate unionists were called Barberettists, after the journalist Joseph Barberet, who helped them and promoted the antirevolutionary ideology. Another prominent group, which spanned the period up to 1914, was the Proletarian Positivists. They were working-class followers of Auguste Comte, who accepted the religion he had created and participated in its rites. The Proletarian Positivists never numbered more than a handful, but they were found in influential positions in the labor movement. Closely allied to the Positivists, and frequently led by them, were the reformist syndicalists of the C.G.T. Yet another class-collaborationist group consisted of Catholic unionists. Finally, there were the Yellows--les jaunes--a curious group which began as unions of strikebreakers. These groups were not united and often were hostile to each other, yet they shared a common doctrine of social peace.

The importance of these groups has long been ignored. They contributed to the French labor movement in three significant ways. First, they were largely responsible for whatever social legislation was passed by the Third Republic before World War I. Second, they originated and propagated many of the practices and institutions of modern worker-employer relations. Third, they stimulated the development of the labor movement as a whole. It would not be overestimating their contribution to say that

the antirevolutionaries were in large measure responsible for the creation of the basic organizations of French labor.

The Third Republic, at least until the Popular Front of the 1930s, did not distinguish itself with the quantity and quality of its social legislation. As insignificant as they might have been, however, the laws that were passed owed their existence to the class collaborationists, who worked for piecemeal legislative reforms disdained by their revolutionary comrades. The 1884 law, for example, was disliked and rejected by the revolutionaries. The Barbarettists, on the other hand, devoted a great deal of effort to achieving its passage--including lobbying and petition campaigns. Similarly, other class-collaborationist groups worked for the laws on arbitration, the Sunday day of rest, the state retirement system, a minimum wage, and health and safety regulations. They also participated in the creation of the Office du Travail, the French equivalent of the Department of Labor. In the Conseil Supérieur du Travail (C.S.T.) the delegates of class-collaborationist unions elaborated proposals for these laws and urged parliamentary passage.

There was another way in which the class collaborationists contributed to social legislation. Members of the Radical Party (and later of the Socialist Party) felt that progressive laws encouraged and strengthened moderate unionism and helped weaken revolutionary syndicalism. Waldeck-Rousseau encouraged the Barberettists in the 1880s. Twenty years later, when he was Prime Minister, his Minister of the Interior, Alexandre Millerand, adopted the same attitude toward the C.G.T. reformists and the Catholic syndicalists. Even conservatives and clericals

supported the more extreme forms of class-collaborationist syndicalism--as exemplified by the Yellows--as a way of increasing their popular electoral support.

The different class-collaborationist unions also initiated many ideas and techniques which are today considered essential ingredients in good labor-capital relations. Arbitration, for example, was scorned by the revolutionaries but promoted by the antirevolutionaries. Many class-collaborationist unions set up joint arbitration committees with employers with whom they had signed contracts. The collective contract itself, in France, was a class collaborationist idea. The revolutionaries rejected contracts as limitations on their freedom to strike. The moderates willingly negotiated them. In addition, they attempted to effectuate negotiation and collective bargaining. The idea of actually sitting down and talking to the employer--the exploiter--was anathema to the revolutionaries, who also rejected the idea that agreements must be reached through a process of mutual compromise. The class collaborationists brought these ideas to French labor relations.

The concepts of profit sharing, stock sharing, and worker participation on corporate boards of directors originated in the class-collaborationist camp. Today, progressive companies proudly announce the introduction of profit sharing plans. West Germany's system of codetermination--considered by many to be the very model of good industrial-labor relations--would be familiar to the class collaborationists. Along with the notion of worker cooperatives (also supported by the antirevolutionaries), profit sharing and arbitration have been called the major innovations

in labor relations in the late nineteenth century.[3] They are part of the patrimony of the moderates.

In contrast to the revolutionaries, the class collaborationists believed in tightly organized unions, with permanent, paid officials and high dues. The revolutionary syndicalists, many of whom were libertarians, rejected this. Furthermore, the moderates believed the unions should supply benefits to its members, such as unemployment insurance, sick pay, health insurance, etc.

The class collaborationists also introduced to France the techniques of the union label and the boycott. On the organization of work, they had advanced ideas. Today, as a means of combatting the boredom and dehumanization of the assembly line some companies are experimenting with a team approach whereby a group of workers, under their own self-discipline, build a complete product, rather than merely repeating the same unskilled process on the conveyor belt. This idea, known in France as the commandite, originated with the moderates. In their case, it was an answer to piece work, but they saw it too as a moral reform, in which the worker would be able to exercise his creative skill, work with others, and create his own work rules and organization.

The third major contribution was in the area of labor organization. The key idea of a national labor federation, composed only of unions and independent of political parties was,

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[3] R.A. Church, "Profit-Sharing and Labour Relations in England in the Nineteenth Century," International Review of Social History 16 (1971): 2.

in its origins, a class-collaborationist idea. It was later appropriated (and distorted) by revolutionary syndicalists, but in the 1870s and 1880s, when the idea was first put forward, the revolutionaries of the time favored linking labor unions to one or the other of the socialist groups. The first workers' congress that was limited to unions only, and excluded socialist parties, study groups, cooperatives, and the like, was called by the Barberettists. At this congress, the idea of a bourse du travail was raised. The class collaborationists not only originated the idea for this important institution, but they helped create the Paris Bourse as well as many provincial bourses (although it must be said that the revolutionaries dominated many individual bourses and the Fédération des Bourses du Travail).

The reformist syndicalists were in the forefront in the creation of the C.G.T. They not only supplied its first officers, but they also kept it alive through its difficult early years. Finally, the antirevolutionary unions were the first to create international trade federations.

What made some workers accept a class-collaborationist ideology? An overriding motif which separated revolutionaries from antirevolutionaries was republicanism. Faith in the nation was a bedrock idea for class collaborationists. They believed that the reforms which were necessary to give the worker a more equitable position in society could be obtained through parliamentary means, since the Republic was what they, their fathers, and their grandfathers had fought for. They supported the Radical Party in the 1880s and 1890s, and the reform Socialists thereafter. They were not Boulangists, but Dreyfusards. Catholic syndicalists tended to be ralliés, and although opposed to republican anticlericalism,

they held themselves apart from the antirepublican movements and leagues of the era. Only the Yellows allied with monarchist and reactionary political groups and pursued an antidreyfusard position. But they too remained republicans.

The nationalism of the class collaborationists made them unwilling to subject French society to a brutal and divisive class war. The antipatriotism of the revolutionaries led the moderates to view them as traitors at worst and fools at best. The antirevolutionary ideology was similar to solidarism, which one scholar has called the official philosophy of the Third Republic. Solidarism recognized class differences, but maintained that all groups had obligations to society as a whole, and that the working class deserved better treatment from the nation. Significantly, Comte and Proudhon were both considered to be forerunners of solidarism, while bourgeois solidarists emphasized the importance of trade unions, worker cooperatives, mutual aid societies, collective bargaining, arbitration, and contracts.[4]

Religion was a determining factor also. The Yellows, while not confessional, emphasized their Catholic roots. Positivism, like Catholicism, recognized a hierarchical society and demanded only that the upper classes act with justice toward the lower classes. Workers who maintained their religious convictions

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[4]On solidarism, see J.E.S. Hayward, "The Official Social Philosophy of the French Third Republic: Léon Bourgeois and Solidarism," International Review of Social History 6 (1961): 19-48; idem, "Solidarity: The Social History of an Idea in Nineteenth Century France," ibid. 4 (1959): 261-84; Zeldin, France, pp. 660-69.

were more likely to end up in the class-collaborationist camp. Women, who generally were more religious than men, were particularly well represented in class-collaborationist syndicalism.

Occupation too was a determinant. Although all kinds of workers formed antirevolutionary unions, they were especially strong among traditional artisanal crafts, such as carpentry, printing, shoemaking, tailoring, and specialized building trades such as plumbers, roofers, joiners. Jewelers, piano makers and other skilled trades were represented. White collar workers, and home workers (who were predominantly women) were also susceptible to moderate unionism. Although there were important antirevolutionary unions of miners, textile workers and metal workers, class collaborationism was not important among industrial workers in large factories.[5] Class-collaborationist syndicalism was an expression of workers who did not see capitalism as a class enemy because they were not proletarianized. Many had hopes of becoming their own master, or a small entrepreneur, and often had long traditions of self-help and mutual aid.[6]

Although it became apparent that the old possibilities

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[5]Bernard Haym Moss, "Producers' Associations and the Origins of French Socialism: Ideology from Below," Journal of Modern History 48 (March 1976):70-72, claimed that these workers did not constitute a labor aristocracy, but were true "proletarians" who, although skilled, still depended on capitalist enterprise and lacked their own means of production. However, we will refrain from using the word proletariat to describe them.

[6]Eric Hobsbawm, for England, has shown the frequency with which workers could become their own masters, and the variety of ways it could be done, in a capitalist economy that had not yet become dominated exclusively by large-scale enterprise. See Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Anchor Books, 1967), pp. 321-54, especia ly 349-54.

for social mobility were being closed off in the late nineteenth centuries, the hope probably outlived reality. Also, it was deflected into schemes for cooperatives, profit sharing, and codetermination. The effect of the last two was to make the worker a coproprietor--which was the term the Yellows used. The cooperative was seen as a way for several workers to pool resources and so have their own (joint) business.

The skilled worker was not interested in collectivism. Nor was he interested in revolutionary adventures once the republic had been established. He wanted to become a small capitalist, or a partner in the productive process, and to be treated by his employer with dignity and respect. Republicanism, patriotism, religion, and occupation were thus the decisive factors behind class-collaborationist unionism.

Most western nations had similar labor organizations.[7] The Knights of Labor in the United States emphasized cooperatives; many English unions in the 1860s and 1870s had class-collaborationist ideas and accepted profit sharing and arbitration. In France, however, they had a vitality and duration that was unique. It would not be too farfetched to suggest that this was due to the nature of the French economy, which preserved the small enterprise and the atelier (or workshop), as opposed to the factory,

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[7]For a sampling, Church, "Profit Sharing;" V.L. Allen, "The Origins of Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration," International Review of Social History 9 (1964):237-54; R.W. Fleming, The Labor Arbitration Process (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1965); Geoffrey Alderman, "The National Free Labour Association: A Case Study of Organized Strike-Breaking in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," International Review of Social History 21 (1976):309-36.

well into the twentieth century.

It may be ironic that the reforms introduced by the class collaborationists, reflecting their preindustrial or early industrial values, can now be seen as modern. Historians, however, like playwrights and novelists, are used to irony.

One last word must be said about limits. This study is concerned only with labor unions. Therefore, I have left out like-minded groups which were not exclusively working class in character, including the fascinating syndicats mixtes--unions which had both employers and employees as members, but which could not be considered true labor unions.

All translations, unless otherwise noted, have been done by the author.

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGINS OF A CLASS-COLLABORATIONIST IDEOLOGY

Class-collaborationist syndicalism reached the height of its influence during the first decade of the twentieth century. However, its ideology had been created earlier, during the Second Empire and in the early years of the Third Republic. Several separate currents contributed to its formulation. Sometimes these currents were continuous; sometimes they converged; at other times they merely intersected. Some were long-lasting, some ephemeral. Taken together, they provided a tradition--a congeries of ideas which contained all the basic concepts for a working-class ideology of social peace. The roots of class-collaborationist syndicalism can be found in: the writings of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon; the original labor unions formed during the Second Empire; the doctrine of the First International; the unions created in the 1870s; the ideology of Joseph Barberet; the first four Worker Congresses (1876-1880); the corporatist Social Catholicism of Albert de Mun and René de la Tour du Pin, as well as the ideas of Frédéric Le Play.

Proudhon

Proudhon's broad and varied influence is well known. He has been considered a revolutionary, a socialist and an anarchist as well as a grandfather to French revolutionary syndicalism.[1] On the other hand, Proudhon became an inspiration for the French right (particularly elements of the Action française) and one scholar went so far as to call him a harbinger of fascism.[2] There are also elements in his work

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[1]The best, and most thorough statement is by Annie Kriegel, "Le Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et Proudhon," in idem, Le Pain et les roses (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), pp. 33-50. Two works which study Proudhon in the context of the anarchist movement reach much the same conclusion: James Joll, The Anarchists (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, Universal Library, 1966), pp. 197-203 and George Woodcock, Anarchism (Cleveland and New York: World Publishing Company, 1962), pp. 107, 318-19. While recognizing divergences on several important points, Gaetan Pirou, Proudhonisme et le syndicalisme révolutionnaire (Paris: Arthur Rousseau, 1910), felt that there was a basic similarity on several important points. Seepp. 121, 194, 391-93, 398-99. Also, Stewart Edwards, ed., Selected Writings of Pierre Joseph Proudhon (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Anchor Books, 1969), p. 32; Jean Bancal, "Préface," in Proudhon, Oeuvres Choisies (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), pp. 36-37; J. Hampden Jackson, Marx, Proudhon and European Socialism (New York: Collier Books, 1966), pp. 134-35; Edouard Droz, P.-J. Proudhon (Paris: Librairie des Pages libres, 1909), p. 34.

[2]The phrase was used by J. Salwyn Schapiro, "Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Harbinger of Fascism," American Historical Review 50 (July 1945):714-37. The existence of a Cercle Proudhon composed of members of the Action française and syndicalists is fairly well known. See Eugen Weber, "Nationalism, Socialism and National Socialism in France," French Historical Studies 2 (Spring 1962):279. Edouard Berth, a Sorelian who took part in the Cercle, later referred to it as "fascisme avant la lettre" in Guerre des états ou guerre des classes (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1925), p. 19. See also Ernst Nolte, Three Faces of Fascism (New York: New American Library, A Mentor Book, 1969), p. 104; Jules Levey, "The Sorelian Syndicalists: Edouard Berth, Georges Valois and Hubert Lagardelle" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1967), pp. 117, 142-57; Mark Weitz, "Edouard Barth and Fascism: A Leftist Sorelian Critique" (Master's Essay, College of the City of New York, 1970), pp. 32-43; Samuel Osgood, French Royalism under the Third and Fourth Republics (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), pp. 92-93; Archives Nationales, Direction de la Sûreté Générale, F7 13195, "Les Royalistes et les syndicalistes."

which anticipated a nonrevolutionary syndicalist ideology. That is not to say that Proudhon developed a consistent body of ideas which could be transferred whole to a conservative worker movement. Yet, many of the class-collaborationist beliefs were found in, and first enunciated by, Proudhon.

To begin with, Proudhon was not a partisan of violent revolution. He rejected the idea of an irrevocable and antagonistic class war or a "Saint Bartholomew's massacre" of property owners.[3] It was consistent with this outlook for Proudhon to have condemned the use of the strike.[4]

Similarly, in spite of his famous cry, "Property is theft," he was a strong upholder of the right to private property. He had said, "It is when all people are owners of property that fortunes are most equal and there is work for everyone," and went so far as to call property "the greatest existing revolutionary force, with an unequaled capacity for setting itself against authority."[5]

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[3]J.H. Jackson, Marx, Proudhon, p. 53; Proudhon, Oeuvres choisies, pp. 89-90; Pirou, Proudhonisme, pp. 331-32, 337, 347-49; Theodore Zeldin, France 1848-1945, vol. 1: Ambition, Love and Politics (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 463; Georges Lefranc, Histoire des doctrines sociales dans l'Europe contemporain, rev. ed. (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1966), pp. 58-59; Edouard Dolléans and Gérard Déhove, Histoire du travail en France: Mouvement ouvrier et legislation sociale, vol. 1: Des origines à 1919 (Paris: Editions Domat Montchrestian, 1953), pp. 339-40.

[4]Proudhon, De la Capacité politique des classes ouvrières, quoted in Edwards, Selected Writings, pp. 181-82. Also Pirou, Proudhonisme, pp. 352-54; Georges Lefranc, Grèves d'hier et d'aujourd'hui (Pairs: Aubier-Montaigne, 1970), pp. 209-10; Jacques Rennes, Syndicalisme français (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1948), pp. 158-59. Although Kriegel recognized Proudhon's opposition to strikes, she maintained that it was not significant ideologically, since he was merely reflecting the established opinion of his time. "Le Syndicalisme revolutionnaire et Proudhon," p. 49. Be that as it may, it is no less true that he disliked them.

[5]Edwards, Selected Writings, pp. 71-72, 135. Also pp. 127, 133, 136, 140. Proudhon, Oeuvres choisies, pp. 112-15; Lefranc, Histoire des doctrines, p. 62.

In an attempt to reconcile widespread individual ownership with growing industrialization, Proudhon, as did those who followed in this tradition, turned to ideas of cooperation, profit sharing and worker participation in the direction of industrial enterprises. He wanted business corporations to be open to the workers, who would be able to acquire stock and share in the profits. "Either the worker . . . will be simply the wage earner of the capitalist-proprietor-entrepreneur, or he will participate in the risks of loss and profit of the business, he will have a voice in the board of directors, in a word, he will become a partner . . . ."[6] Proudhon did expect the eventual disappearance of the capitalist, his place taken by workers organized in their own cooperatives. But he desired the peaceful evolution of this development, and occasionally made it sound as if worker cooperatives could coexist with small, individual enterprises.[7]

In addition, Proudhon emphasized the idea of mutualism. The revolutionaries in the C.G.T. regarded mutualism as a false idol and used the word "mutualist" as a term of derision which they applied to unions which used their funds and energies to provide social services to their members rather than organizing forthe revolution. The class-collaborationist unions,

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[6]Proudhon, Oeuvres choisies, p. 110, and pp. 113, 126-28, 130.

[7]Bancal, "Préface," pp. 32-33; Lefranc, Histoire des doctrines, p. 62; Edwards, Selected Writings, pp. 63, 280.

on the other hand, devoted a great deal of effort to the creation of institutions of mutual aid.

The contract occupied an important place in Proudhon's thought. As he saw it, the contract represented a voluntary agreement between free individuals of all classes. "What is mutuality? A formula . . . by which the members of society . . . corporations or individuals . . . industrialists, farmers, reciprocally promise and guarantee each other service for service, credit for credit, value for value . . . ."[8] Historically, it was the revolutionary syndicalists who rejected the idea of contracts between workers and employers, while the antirevolutionaries made their attainment a key goal.

Proudhon exhibited other attitudes which, while not direct forerunners of later class-collaborationist doctrine, are nevertheless suggestive of it or related to it. These include corporatism, patriotism, and his attitudes to women, equality, and education.

Proudhon was not a corporatist. However, there is some substance in his thought that comes close to corporatism. This is of interest to us because some (but not all) of the class-collaborationist groups displayed corporatist tendencies and the class-collaborationist movement as a whole was supported by

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[8]Proudhon, Oeuvres choisies, p. 106. On Proudhon's mutualism, see ibid., pp. 109, 142; Edwards, Selected Writings, pp. 59-60; Aaron Noland, "Proudhon and Rousseau," Journal of the History of Ideas 50 (January-March 1967):50-51. On the class-collaborationist aspects of mutualism, see Zeldin, France, pp. 660-69. On the contract, see Noland, "Proudhon and Rousseau," p. 49; Woodcock, Anarchism, pp. 134-35.

corporatists, who viewed social pacification as a first step to corporatism.[9]

Proudhon also had a certain degree of pro-French patriotism, and he believed in protectionism for the benefit of French industry.[10] In contrast to the antimilitarists of the C.G.T., the class collaborationists were also patriotic and protectionist.

Proudhon was unenlightened in his attitude toward women. He did not believe in a perfectly egalitarian society. He mistrusted state education, preferring parental education or at least parental control over the schooling of the young.[11] Positivists, Catholics and Yellows believed likewise.

Finally, Proudhon was what the French called a moralist. He believed that many of civilization's problems were cause by decadence, corruption, egotism, and the general lack of a sufficiently developed moral sense.[12] Here too he was in harmony with the spirit of the Catholics and the Positivists, both of whom based their approach to labor problems on this assumption.

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[9]René Gonnard, Histoire des doctrines économiques (Paris: R. Pichon and P. Durand-Auzias, 1943), p. 649; Matthew Elbow, French Corporative Theory, 1789-1948: A Chapter in the History of Ideas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), pp. 27-28; Proudhon, Oeuvres choisies, p. 190; Joll, The Anarchists, pp. 76-77; Woodcock, Anarchism, p. 107; Bancal, "Préface," p. 38.

[10]Proudhon, Oeuvres choisies, p. 328; Edwards, Selected Writings, pp. 26, 187; Woodcock, Anarchism, p. 109.

[11]Joll, The Anarchists, pp. 69-72; Edwards, Selected Writings, pp. 67-68, 83-87.

[12]Noland, "Proudhon and Rousseau," pp. 46, 52-53; Pirou, Proudhonisme, pp. 122, 398; Kreigel, "Le Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et Proudhon," pp. 34-35.

There is no question but that many key elements in the antirevolutionary doctrine can be traced back to Proudhon. Most of these ideas reappeared in the nascent French labor movement that began in the Second Empire. It does not surprise us that scholarly opinion is virtually unanimous in seeing Proudhon's influence operative there.[13]

The Second Empire

The French union movement began during the Second Empire. Although worker organizations had existed prior to this time, they cannot truly be considered labor unions. They were, rather, mutual aid societies, sociétés de résistance, or relics of the medieval guilds such as the compagnonnages.[14]

The impulse toward unionization was assisted by Louis Napoleon himself, as he sought to develop support among the working classes. The Emperor gave encouragement to the mutual aid societies and, in the 1860s, to worker cooperatives. He also permitted French workers to attend the London Exposition of 1862.[15]

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[13]For just a sampling, see J.H. Jackson, Marx, Proudhon, pp. 118-22, 125-26; Woodcock, Anarchism, pp. 141-44; Edwards, Selected Writings, p. 31; Joll, The Anarchists, pp. 79-83; Val Lorwin, The French Labor Movement (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1954), p. 12. Zeldin, France, p. 732, disagreed.

[14]Paul Louis, Histoire du mouvement syndical en France, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Valois, 1947), pp. 19-20; Colette Chambelland, Le Syndicalisme ouvrier français (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1956), pp. 10-11; Jean Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier en France des origines à nos jours (Paris: Aubier, 1946), p. 116.

[15]Georges Weill, Histoire du mouvement social en France, 1852-1910, 2nd ed. (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1911), pp. 6, 81-89; Louis Levine, The Labor Movement in France: A Study in Revolutionary Syndicalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1912), pp. 34-36; Zeldin, France, p. 201.

The French delegates were impressed with the degree of labor organization they saw in England. When they returned to France, it was with a desire to form what they referred to then as chambres syndicales ouvrières.[16] They translated this desire into action, and the first unions date from this era.[17] In 1864, several French workers returned to London to participate in the founding of the Association Internationale des Travailleurs (A.I.T.)--the First International. In that same year, the French government granted workers the droit de coalition. This meant that strikes were no longer illegal, although attempting to prevent others from working and/or resorting to violence remained so. Also the unions themselves remained illegal. They were granted toleration (but not legalization) in 1868.[18]

The labor movement was not strong, and most of the unions were ludicrously small throughout the 1860s.[19] However, a

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[16]See the glossary at the end of the dissertation for an explanation of the different terms used to indicate "union."

[17]Georges Lefranc, Le Syndicalisme en France (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), pp. 8-9; idem, Le Mouvement syndical sous la Troisième République (Paris: Payot, 1967), p. 14; Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 107; Jean Bruhat, "Le Socialisme français de 1848 à 1871," in Histoire générale du socialisme, vol. 1, ed., Jacques Droz (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972), p. 520; Dolléans and Déhove, Histoire du travail, pp. 300-6.

[18]Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 109; Edouard Dolléans, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, vol. 1: 1830-1871 (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1936), pp. 279-87; Georges Lefranc, Histoire du mouvement syndical français (Paris: Librairie Syndicale, 1937), pp. 121-22; Chambelland, Le Syndicalisme, p. 16; Levine, The Labor Movement, p. 34; Zeldin, France, p. 205; Leon de Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, fédérations, bourses du travail (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1902), pp. 26-28; Edward Shorter and Charles Tilly, Strikes in France, 1830-1969 (New York: Cambridge Press, 1974), pp. 22-23.

[19]Bruhat, "Le Socialisme français," pp. 522-26; Annie Kriegel, "L'Association Internationale des Travailleurs," in Histoire

beginning had been made. It is necessary, therefore, to examine the nature and characteristics of these first unions. Their traits, their outlook and their philosophy reappeared throughout the history of French labor.

More than one historian has noted that the first professions to organize were those which conserved an artisanal structure: cabinet makers, shoemakers, tailors, mechanics, jewelers, bakers, carpenters, building painters, hat makers, printers, and clerks.[20] As B.H. Moss has noted, these were workers who, although dependent on a capitalist economy--on an employer who supplied raw materials, sold the finished products, and paid wages--controlled the whole productive process. They were skilled and had pride in their craft. In some cases, mutual aid societies (and thus the experience of organization) existed in their crafts and reached back to the 1830s. Their republican roots could be traced back to the sans culottes of revolutionary Paris.[21] Usually they worked in small workshops

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générale du socialisme, vol. 1, ed., J. Droz, p. 613; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, pp. 126-28, 135-36; Georges Duveau, La Vie ouvrière en France sous le Second Empire, 2nd ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), pp. 9, 543-50; Joseph Barberet, Monographies professionnelles: Le Travail en France, 7 vols. (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1886-90), 5 (1889):31-34 pointed out in one of many similar examples that the ropemakers union had forty members. The labor movement did face opposition. The leadership of the A.I.T. was arrested three times and the organization dissolved. A wave of strikes swept France in the closing years of the Second Empire and some, such as the ones at Ricamarie and Anzin, were bloodily suppressed. The working classes as a whole did not develop great fondness for Napoleon III. See David Kulstein, "The Attitude of French Workers Towards the Second Empire," French Historical Studies 2 (Spring 1962):356-75.

[20]Lefranc, Le Syndicalisme, p. 9; Bruhat, "Le Socialisme français," p. 510; Lorwin, French Labor Movement, p. 11; Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 116.

[21]Bernard Haym Moss, "Producers' Associations and the Origins of French Socialism: Ideology from Below," Journal of Modern History 48 (March 1976):70-72.

where contact among workers and between workers and the employer was personal and intimate. Often, the employer had been a worker himself, or was just a generation removed from the position of wage earner. It has been estimated that, in 1876, only 3.6% of French workers were employed in large-scale industry. As late as 1896, 41,000 Parisian businesses employed only 1-4 workers. Another 8,000, roughly, employed between five and ten workers. An additional 5,000 enterprises employed up to fifty workers and only 311 employed more than one hundred workers. Of 575,000 industrial enterprises in the nation as a whole, the average number of employees per establishment was 5.5.[22]

Figures on the use of steam power give further testimony to the small scale of French business. In 1872, only 23,500 establishments used steam power, with an average horsepower per establishment of 14.4. By 1902, the figures had risen to 58,700 and 34.0 respectively. As John Clapham said, "Down to 1890, the average amount of power available per establishment is almost incredibly small, especially when it is remembered that the figures contain the really great mining and metallurgical concerns. Obviously the rest were using little 5 and 10 horsepower engines . . . ."[23]

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[22]Louis Chevalier, La Formation de la population parisienne au XIX siècle (Paris: 1950), pp. 73-80; J.H. Clapham, The Economic Development of France and Germany: 1815-1914 (London: Cambridge University Press, 1963), p. 258; Jean Joughin, "The Labor Movement in France, 1876-1884" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, Austin, 1947), p. 15.

[23]Clapham, Economic Development, p. 259.

Typical of the state of mind which smallness engendered was the reaction to the development of machinery driven by electricity. Many moderate unionists felt that electricity would revitalize home work: a family could install a small electric machine in their home and establish their own little enterprise. They were oblivious to the horrors which industrialization would visit upon home work.[24]

Proudhonist notions of mutual aid and self help were strong among such workers. They looked for practical, daily improvements in their working lives and the creation of cooperatives. As Jean Montreuil said, "The emerging syndicalism was not a syndicalism of violent war, but a syndicalism of negotiation."[25] The feeling was widespread that unionization was a way to prevent strikes, which were regarded as a cause of "misery for the workingman and ruin for the employer."[26]

The union itself was often seen not as the agency of worker demands, but as an arbitrator. The Parisian engravers, in the 1860s, formed a joint arbitration commission with the employers' organization.[27] Even the militant bronze workers, who carried out notable strikes in 1865 and 1867, desired worker-employer committees to set working conditions.[28]

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[24]Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et des Colonies, Conseil Supérieur du Travail, troisième et quatrième sessions (1893-1894), pp. 175-77; Henriette Brunhes, "Les Conditions du travail de la femme dans l'industrie," La Ruche syndicale, nos. 11 (April-June 1905), p. 165 and 17 (October-December 1906), p. 258; Pierre Froment, "La Réconstitution des ateliers familiaux," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 32 (January 10, 1903), pp. 11-12.

[25]Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, pp. 107-8.

[26]Levine, The Labor Movement, pp. 32-33.

[27]E. Martin Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations de métiers (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1922), pp. 654-55.

[28]Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 108.

The hat makers union, created in 1869, summed up its orientation as follows:

> Each epoch has its task. Ours is the difficult one of realizing social justice. . . . In order to follow the march of social progress, what must we do? Unite.
> Many workers believe that they can improve their social position by recourse to the transitory means of the strike. It is necessary to respond to this. The strike is often powerless, always disastrous; it is part of a vicious cycle; it is an appeal to force, unworthy of a century devoted to progress. We reject it. 29

Many unions did not even perceive themselves as unions in the modern sense of the term, but as associations to promote the formation of cooperatives:

> Wage earners were so exploited in all professions that they resorted to strikes. Soon they recognized that the results were not what they hoped for . . . the ruinous expenses led them to understand that strikes are completely useless. . . . They understood that resources could better be used in a fund to accumulate capital and create an association /cooperative/ which would prevent strikes. 30

These same concepts and trends can be seen in the French section of the International.

The First International

The Association Internationale des Travailleurs was founded in London in 1864 by French and British workers. The joint meeting grew out of, and may be seen as a continuation of, the contacts made at the International Exposition of 1862. A series of international congresses was held, and by the end

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[29]Committee of Initiative, "Manifesto," quoted in Barberet, Monographies professionnelles 2(1886):130-31. The committee listed the goals of the union as defense of general interests, amicable intervention in disputes, execution of apprenticeship contracts and the creation of a professional library.

[30]Delegate of brush makers to Paris Exposition of 1867, quoted in ibid., p. 259. See Levine, The Labor Movement, p. 34.

of the 1860s the A.I.T. had acquired a significant following.

In the beginning, the French section was dominated by men who belonged to the Proudhonist tradition, and the French delegates to the international congresses were the most active advocates of moderation, cooperatism, and anticollectivism. Henri Tolain especially was concerned with the creation of cooperatives of production and the transformation of the working class into a property-owning class.[31]

Reflecting the antistatist traditions of Proudhon, the mutualists (as they were called)[32] opposed taxes, a standing army, and state education. They disliked strikes, and were convinced that the place for women was in the home, educating the young. They called for religious liberty as a matter of individual conscience, and asserted that the discussion of antireligious proposals had no place in the International. In other words, they rejected the politics of anticlericalism. This was another touchstone for class-collaborationist syndicalism.

While not all the French delegates agreed with the entire program, it was generally well received when it was presented to the First Congress of the A.I.T. in Geneva (1866).[33] Almost

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[31]Dolléans, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, pp. 286-89; Jules Puech, Le Proudhonisme dans l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1907), pp. 5, 41-42, 65-84 passim; Zeldin, France, p. 730; James Guillaume, L'Internationale: documents et souvenirs, 1864-1878, vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Georges Bellais, 1905): 1-3; Annie Kriegel, "Vie et mort de la 1re Internationale," in idem, Le Pain et les roses, pp. 65-68.

[32]See the Glossary following Chapter X.

[33]Guillaume, L'Internationale, pp. 4-7; Bruhat, "Le Socialisme français," pp. 522-23; Kriegel, "L'Association Internationale," p. 616; Puech, Le Proudhonisme, pp. 108-11; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, pp. 104-7; Robert Brécy, La Grève générale en France (Paris: Études et Documentation Internationales, 1969), p. 13.

immediately, however, the mutualists began to lose influence--both in the congresses and in the French section itself. By the Third and Fourth Congresses (Brussels, 1868 and Basel, 1869), the mood had shifted and the delegates voted resolutions in favor of strikes and collectivization.

Henri Tolain spoke for the minority. He upheld the institution of small property and claimed that the best organization of society consisted of the multiplication of cooperatives of production. This differed from collectivization in that each cooperative was conceived as owning its own instruments of production--the factory was the private property, so to speak, of the workers who belonged to the cooperative. Tolain and the mutualists opposed the Marxist vision of a society in which the society as a whole, through the agency of the state, owned all the land and factories. To them, collectivization meant the enslavement of the individual to an all-powerful state.[34] This idea, as a working-class perception, appeared not only in Proudhon and Tolain, but also in the worker congresses of the 1870s as well, and was transmitted to the Proletarian Positivists, the Catholic syndicalists, and the Yellows.

On the other hand, the collectivists in the A.I.T. were suspicious of the cooperative strategy. At the Congress of Basel, a committee set up to study the question warned of

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[34]Kriegel, "L'Association Internationale," p. 616; Dolléans, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, pp. 3-3-4; 334-35; Guillaume, L'Internationale, pp. 28-32, 66-70, 190-97; Puech, Le Proudhonisme, pp. 216-25; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, pp. 110-11, 115-16, 130-33. See the Glossary for an expanation of the usage of the terms "cooperative" and "cooperative of production."

grave dangers:

> /In/ these societies . . . even as they protest against the strangulation of capital, workers strive to create it for themselves and to obtain its profits. To create capital, to obtain dividends, these conservative sentiments and appetites for possession . . . are the thoughts and desires developed by /cooperatives. It/ legitimizes all the accusations that the workers hurl daily against the capitalists. From such practices arises a fourth class, bourgeois and property-owning. 35

Henceforth, the revolutionary elements in the labor and socialist movements would either reject cooperatism or view it with suspicion. The promotion of worker cooperatives remained part of the nonrevolutionary labor movement, however, through the 1880s. After 1890, the cooperative movement and the union movement developed separately.[36]

Although anticooperative collectivism had triumphed in the A.I.T. by the end of the 1860s, the Franco-Prussian War and the post-Commune repression eliminated the A.I.T. from Paris and most of France. When the labor movement revived in the 1870s, it did not use the First International as its model. Instead, it returned to the Proudhonian, mutualist, class-collaborationist roots.

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[35]Quoted in Guillaume, L'Internationale, p. 69.

[36]Bernard Haym Moss, "Origins of the French Labor Movement: The Socialism of Skilled Workers" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1972) presented the provocative idea that cooperation was a revolutionary strategy of the early labor movement and that collectivism was not "imported" into France by Marxists, but flowed logically from the cooperative idea. In his view, cooperation was an anticapitalist, emancipatory idea. Although many advocates of cooperatives were indeed radical anticapitalists, a clear distinction had been established by 1870 between revolutionary collectivists and cooperatists. Cooperation was not apocalyptic; it did not require the destruction of the existing capitalist class, merely its replacement. In fact, the coexistence of cooperatives alongside capitalist enterprises was ideologically possible and alluded to frequently. Proudhon, in Edwards, Selected Writings, p. 70, described how cooperatives would operate according to the laws and principles of a capitalist economy. Also, there was a place for the individual

The 1870s

It had long been thought that the defeat of the Commune destroyed the workers' movement and delayed its development for several years. Yet it is noteworthy, as Aimée Moutet has pointed out, how quickly the labor unions reconstituted themselves. Between January and October, 1872, nearly half of all the unions which were in existence in 1876 (the date of the First Workers' Congress) were formed. In 1871 the typographers, jewelers and engravers had reorganized, followed in short order by the bronze workers, carriage makers, clerical workers and carpenters. By 1876 there were around one hundred organizations representing anywhere from 15,000-20,000 members.[37]

They were not mass organizations. Inevitably, they were small and weak, which led one historian to claim that "To the extent there even was a labor movement, it was nothing to get excited about."[38] Such as it was, the movement had to face official hostility. A Cercle de l'Union Syndicale Ouvrière had been formed by twenty-five unions in 1872, but it was

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artisan in a cooperative society, but not in a collectivist one. I find Moss' thesis to be of limited validity. For his defense, see pp. iv-v, 14, 107, 123-27, 261-69.

[37]Aimée Moutet, "Le Mouvement ouvrier à Paris du lendemain de la commune au premier congrès syndical en 1876," Le Mouvement social, no. 58 (January-March 1967), pp. 3-12; Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndical, pp. 22-24; Chambelland, Le Syndicalisme, p. 18; Joughin, "The Labor Movement," pp. 61-62, 65-67.

[38]Joughin, "The Labor Movement," p. 2. The worker cooperatives were also pitifully small and weak. See P. Hubert-Valléroux, Les Associations ouvrières et les associations patronales (Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1899), pp. 22-23.

dissolved by the police shortly after its founding. It had proposed nothing more dramatic than the study of professional questions, the exclusion of all political or religious discussions, and the peaceful attainment of moral and material improvements.[39]

The moderation of these unions is easily seen in their statutes. Invariably, they defined their goals as professional education, the study of economic questions, and the organization of cooperatives of production and consumption. Often, the union announced that it rejected the strike, or accepted it only as a last resort, after all attempts at conciliation had failed. The unions also generally desired the creation of a permanent arbitration commission composed of worker and employer delegates.[40] Georges Lefranc called it a "syndicalism of social pacification."[41]

The secretary of the pit sawyers union, in an 1875 progress report, wrote: "Our goal is to establish permanent

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[39]On the Cercle, see Archives de la Préfecture de Police (APP), series BA 1442, 1443; Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Télégraphes, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières /hereafter referred to as APO/, 4 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1899-1904), 1 (1899): 236; Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, pp. 61-62; Joughin, "The Labor Movement," pp. 61-62; Pierre Sorlin, Waldeck-Rousseau (Paris: Armand Colin, 1966), p. 239; Moutet, "Le Mouvement ouvrier," p. 14.

[40]Barberet, Monographies professionnelles, 2: 42-44, 157-61, 186, 393-96, 404; 3 (1887): 166, 363, 415-16, 440, 450; 4 (1887): 41, 136, 165, 289-91, 315-18, 389; 5: 104-5, 253, 277, 305, 479; 6 (1889): 12, 56-57, 60; 7 (1890): 60, 404. Also Louis, Histoire du mouvement syndical, pp. 121-23; Madeleine Rébérioux, "Le Socialisme français de 1871 à 1914," vol. 2 in Droz, Histoire générale, p. 138; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, pp. 190-91; Moutet, "Le Mouvement ouvrier," p. 23; Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, pp. 52-53, 69.

[41]Lefranc, Histoire du mouvement syndical, p. 165.

ties between the entrepreneur and ourselves, and as soon as our resources permit it--which cannot be long--to buy the tools and equipment necessary for us to work by ourselves and for ourselves. This will permit us to become businessmen."[42]

The copper smelters announced that they did not wish to create feelings of hostility toward the employers, but merely to make them "respect our rights by supporting their interests, which are the same as ours. . . . These interests must march in peace, since the commerce and industry of our nation have need of concord."[43]

The council of the horn button workers union emphasized the cooperative aspect:

> To found cooperative associations of production . . . that is our view, and if it has been difficult, even impossible, it is because strikes have absorbed our savings. But today, now that the union has rendered strikes nearly impossible, there is nothing that can stop our march toward emancipation . . . and the complete enjoyment of the fruits of our labor. [44]

In general, then, the ideology of these early unions was marked by a desire for peaceful relations with their employers, based on their common interest in the prosperity of the industry, and self help, expressed in the desire for cooperative workshops or becoming an individual entrepreneur. These concepts were widely propagated by a baker turned journalist and union organizer--Joseph Barberet.

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[42]Quoted in Barberet, Monographies professionnelles, 3: 375.

[43]Ibid., p. 229. Also 3: 153; 6: 12, 56.

[44]Ibid., 2: 50.

Joseph Barberet

An interesting role in the early labor movement was played by a group of journalists who associated themselves with Gambetta's brand of republicanism. The most prominent of these, Joseph Barberet, was so active in union organization that he might almost be considered the father of the French labor movement.[45] So pervasive was his influence that the moderate unions were often referred to as Barberettists by the revolutionaries.

During the 1870s, Barberet wrote and edited the "Bulletin du travail" which appeared in the Gambettist paper La Constitution. When the conservative government of Thiers suppressed it, Barberet continued his work at Le Corsaire and then at Le Rappel. In his column, he provided a range of services to the unions. Most often, it consisted in publicizing their announcements. When the horn button workers, for example, wanted to form a union, they asked Barberet to announce their meeting.[46]

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[45]Jean Joseph Barberet was born in 1837 and died in 1920. He came to Paris in the last years of the Second Empire to practice his trade of baker, but was soon involved in the republican movement full time. He joined the election committee of Henri Rochefort in 1869 and became director of Rochefort's journal, La Marseillaise. He was in touch with the leading militants of the A.I.T., such as Eugene Varlin and Benoît Malon. He became well known and popular, and was elected Commandant of two National Guard Batallions. He served the Commune, but after he tried to prevent the executions of Generals Lecomte and Clement Thomas he was disavowed by his men and resigned. He continued to work on other journals and joined La Constitution after the Commune. For biographical details, see Jean Maitron, ed., Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français, troisième partie: 1871-1914, De la Commune à la grande guerre, vol. X (Paris: Les Editions ouvrières, 1973): 198-99; Sorlin, Waldeck-Rousseau, pp. 237n-238n; Joseph Barberet, La Bataille des intérêts (Paris: A. Cinqualbre, n.d. /ca. 1880/), pp. 327-29.

[46]Barberet, Monographies professionnelles, 2: 37.

Sometimes, Barberet himself would take the initiative in prodding a group of workers to organize.[47] When disagreements surfaced in the unions, he published letters from advocates of both sides so that the members could be informed.[48] He also supplied advice and guidance, attended union meetings, and on one occasion was even elected a director of a workers' cooperative.[49] The secretary of the pit sawyers echoed the feelings of many labor leaders in the early 1870s when he wrote: "It remains for us to thank you for the generous help and wise counsels you gave us. . . . Continue your work, which is so useful, and which other workers . . . can benefit from."[50]

It was Barberet, together with the engraver Chabert and the tailor Dupire, who formed the Cercle de l'Union Syndicale Ouvrière. In 1874, he was one of the organizers of a cooperative bakery, of which he became president. He had a plan for a network of cooperative bakeries and consumer buying cooperatives to cover all of Paris. To this end, he united twenty new or already existing cooperative associations, but the idea did not take hold. There was little doubt, however, that "Barberet was the principal representative of the workers' movement, above all when . . . he wrote the Bulletin du travail . . . which exercised a considerable influence on the Parisian

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[47] Ibid., 5: 268.

[48] Ibid., pp. 301-3.

[49] Ibid., 2: 7-9, 36-38, 46, 278; 3: 314-15, 374; 4: 145, 244, 389; 5: 273-83, 457; 6: 57.

[50] Ibid., 3: 375.

workers."[51] Barberet himself said that of the 125 unions in existence in 1880, there were not ten which had not come to him for advice and counsel.[52]

However, despite his efforts on behalf of the working class, the more militant unionists grew to mistrust his moderate approach. As the power of the revolutionary movement grew stronger, Barberet found himself neglected and even slandered. In response, he turned away from the labor movement and devoted himself exclusively to the promotion of mutual aid societies.

His ideology with regard to unions was exceedingly moderate and antirevolutionary. In the opinion of several historians, Barberet's loyalty was not primarily to the working class but to the Republic. What he sought to do was to develop working-class support for the parliamentary regime at a time when it was under attack from the monarchists and its future was none too bright.[53] There is no question but that for Barberet moderate unionism and republicanism went hand in hand. It did

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[51]Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, p. 189. Also Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 128; Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, p. 53; Moutet, "Le Mouvement ouvrier," pp. 14-15; Maitron, Dictionnaire, p. 198; Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndical, pp. 22-24; Joughin, "The Labor Movement," p. 60.

[52]Barberet, La Bataille des intérêts, p. 330. The APP, series BA 1439, reports of September 26, 1878, April 10 and 16, 1878, August 28, 1878, and January 15, 1879, list approximately twenty-five union leaders who were considered faithful followers.

[53]Moutet, "Le Mouvement ouvrier," p. 14; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, pp. 186-87; 193-99; Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 128; Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndical, p. 22; Robert Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale française: militants et théoriciens (Paris: Armand Colin, 1948), p. 24; Lefranc, Histoire du mouvement syndical, pp. 165-66.

so for many workers also. To the extent that the bourgeoisie was perceived as republican, it made sense to the moderate unionists that they not be considered enemies; royalists or Bonapartists were the enemies.

It was expected that the Republic would promote improvements in their condition. When the Republic was firmly established after 1877, a large segment of the organized working class quickly became disappointed, and turned to collectivization, socialism, and revolution. On the other hand, a goodly number never lost hope that the Republic would serve the interests of the working classes and that sympathetic politicians and enlightened businessmen would cooperate with them. It is worth noting that the Radical Republicans of the period did have a progressive social program and a prolabor attitude. The expectation that a change in government would be all that was necessary to fulfill the desires of the working class remained a strongly-held idea.[54]

Republicanism determined the moderate attitude to strikes. To Barberet, "The union means the end of the strike."[55] Whereas we may view strikes as a fairly normal element in labor-capital relations, to Barberet (as well as to Proudhon and Tolain) a strike was a symptom of social disorganization,

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[54]Leo Loubere, "The French Left-Wing Radicals: Their Views on Trade Unionism, 1870-1898," International Review of Social History 7 (1962): 203-30.

[55]Le Rappel, April 18, 1872, quoted in Lefranc, Histoire du mouvement syndical, p. 166.

of anarchy and of undirected, or misdirected anger. The organization of a union, on the other hand, meant the rationalization of an industry or a trade. Workers who were organized (and educated by their organization) were expected to adopt more realistic, less utopian attitudes to labor relations. The union was thus perceived as a block in the social edifice. Needless to say, this attitude depended on a willingness to view the capitalist as an essentially rational being also, who could be persuaded to make concessions to legitimate demands.

This was not in any way a minimization of the importance of unions. Quite the contrary, they were critically important. A major plank in Barberet's program called for the legalization of the unions, since they had many important tasks to fulfill. They had to elaborate and regulate apprenticeship contracts; create placement services; establish permanent arbitration committees; set up libraries and professional courses; organize elections to the Conseils de Prud'hommes;[56] create mutual aid and credit societies; work out wage scales and working conditions with the employers; and finally and most importantly, found cooperative workshops in which groups of workers would have access to commerce and wealth.[57]

Barberet was a strong partisan of cooperatives, and he always advised unions to use their efforts and funds to create

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[56]The Conseils de Prud'hommes, originally instituted by Napoleon I in 1806, were a kind of small claims court for worker-employer disputes. The cases usually involved wage claims, or arguments over the quality of work done and the amount to be paid. They were composed half of workers, half of employers.

[57]Barberet, Monographies professionnelles, 3: 146; 5: 458; Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndical, pp. 22-23.

them. Almost singlehandedly, he set in motion a project for the government to aid cooperative societies by giving them contracts for public works.[58]

> By encouraging the cooperative principle, and aiding its development, one attracts towards this intermediary form situated between employers and employees, those employees who feel most strongly the need for liberty, who have the most energy, the most ambition, and who are nearly always, if not the promoters of strikes, at least their organizers. These leaders, having been changed from wage owners to associates, will turn away from the strike, and will no longer occupy themselves with politics that are systematically hostile to the government. They will become conscious of their own interests, because they will have to consider their commercial responsibilities. [59]

What the Congress of Basel warned against,[60] Barberet put forward in all candor. To him, it was desirable to make a worker feel more like a bourgeois. He recounted the story of a carpenters' strike in which the members of a cooperative were asked to join. Their leader said to the strikers: "We have a small capital. Did you give it to us? If we lose it, will you replace it? We would like to help you, but we have contracted to do this work, and if we do not do it we will be subjected to a suit for damages. If we are put in prison, will you serve our time for us?"[61]

Strikes were dangerous. They used up precious funds and weakened the union.[62] As dangerous was any union involvement

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[58]See below, pp. 42-43.

[59]Barberet, Monographies professionnelles, 1 (1886): 51.

[60]See above, pp. 26-27.

[61]Barberet, Monographies professionnelles, 3: 364.

[62]Ibid., p. 146; 5: 458; Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndical, pp. 22-23.

with socialist parties or political causes. "Far from exalting one socialist school over another socialist school, we commit ourselves, on the contrary, not to march to the tune of any doctrine."[63] Barberet did not see it as contradictory that he assumed all unions would be republican. He had no doubt that the Republic was the best government for all classes and for France. In 1873, he proudly announced that not one union formed since he began his campaign had gone on strike.[64] To strike against the Republic, especially when it was in danger from monarchists and antirepublicans, was a crime. Barberet envisioned a society in which worker and capitalist united in support for the Republic. Each class would help the other; mutual concessions would be made. Making compromises was a patriotic act.[65]

The idea of profit sharing also appealed to Barberet. It was a convenient way to improve a worker's standard of living. Then too, if an entrepreneur risked his money for a return on his investment, did not the worker risk his health, and sometimes his life? Profit sharing would increase good will, provide greater solidarity between classes, and reduce the chances for strikes.[66]

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[63] Le Rappel, January 7, 1873, quoted in Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, pp. 189-90.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Barberet, Monographies professionnelles, 1: 55; 5: viii.

[66] Ibid., 1: 55; 2: 211-13; 5: vii-viii.

Barberet perceived a dual thrust: toward the embourgeoisement of workers via the cooperative; toward the pacification of employer-employee relations by such means as profit sharing. Also important in this scheme was the joint arbitration commission, both as a way of settling disputes peacefully and as a means of establishing closer, more permanent ties between the two classes. He urged all unions to create them.[67]

It is easy to see why the cooperative idea was so seductive. It made emancipation easier to achieve, theoretically, since no coup d'état or revolution was needed. By the same token, it is obvious why there was such a strong emphasis on self help and professional education in the moderate ideology. The creation of cooperatives, and their success, were viewed as wholly dependent upon the worker's effort, determination, energy, and sacrifice. There was no need to capture the government; universal suffrage guaranteed that worker interests would be represented. But there was a great need to develop a working class that had enough discipline and sense of purpose that it could create cooperatives and make them work. The Republic did not stand in the way; the only critical variable was the condition of the working class.

Barberet never faced up to the difficulties in his program. From where would the funds come to organize cooperatives? He had little doubt that if the working class adopted more moral

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[67]Ibid., 2: 38.

habits and saved its money instead of squandering it on alcohol the problem could be solved.[68]

> It is necessary for /the worker/ to work very hard, be persevering without relaxation . . . and be economical in a manner that comes close to avarice. These three things are hard to practice, but one will not die from them. And if, instead of confining oneself strictly to this program, one wishes to live a life of ease, to take off not only Sunday, but also Monday, to spend all one's time at the wine merchant and the café, to go to the theater all the time, then it is for certain that such a person will vegetate in the salariat. 69

Such a worker was only deluding himself if he thought that a socialist revolution would allow him to live better while working less. It was by work alone that the wage earner could improve his condition.[70]

Barberet did recognize that industrialization had made it much more difficult for the worker to escape from the working class. In fact, he was an early user of the term "industrial revolution" to describe the economic changes that were taking place.[71] But he felt that it could be accomplished with the proper strategy, dedication, and strong unions. In this regard, he criticized the French notion of distrusting concentrations of power in mediating institutions. He wanted the unions to have paid, full-time officials, eligible for re-election. The revolutionaries, suspicious of all authority, opposed these features. Barberet thought they were foolish, but thought that a generation would have to pass before the French worker

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[68] Ibid., 3: 482-83; 7: viii-ix.

[69] Ibid., 5: 90-91.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., 3: 482-83; 7: ix. See Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, p. 25.

would appreciate the importance of strong organization. His prediction, although correct, was short-sighted. The conflict over the nature of union organization would be replayed by revolutionaries and reformists in the C.G.T., but with inconclusive results in the prewar era.

The worst thing that could happen to a union, in Barberet's opinion, was its capture by revolutionary collectivists. By preaching violence and introducing political questions, they deflected the union from its proper pursuits. Also, they rejected useful reforms. Barberet recounted with dismay how the gas workers had rejected a proposal for a joint arbitration commission that had been suggested by the gas companies. It was doubly upsetting because such concessions were rare. Barberet quoted with approval the report of the syndicat patronal:

> These days, certain angry and utopian spirits seek to create division between employers and workers, in order to pursue the formation of a labor party. . . . The interests of workers and employers are so intertwined, so strong, that one cannot touch one without the other feeling it immediately. If these dangerous theories propagate and have some chance of success, they will produce an incalculable evil and we will be led to a catastrophe from which only the foreigner will joyfully profit. The interests of the employers are the same as those of the workers, and their divisions would be dangerous, not only to industry, but to the entire nation. . . . The workers should understand the advantages to be had from a permanent joint commission, to examine and conciliate all conflicts which occur, whether of salaries, length of day, or all other differences. . . . Who can contest the fact that a meeting of wise, reflective, fair men with an incontestable competence, chosen by their peers, will not have great authority, each time they have the opportunity to settle a difference between a businessman and his worker? 72

72Barberet, Monographies professionnelles, 2: 193-95. Barberet also disliked collectivism because he felt it destroyed individual initiative and personal genius. The very style of the revolutionaries alienated him. He thought that no capitalist would grant concessions under duress or threats of violence. See ibid., 2: 258; 6: 77-78.

Like the gas companies, Barberet saw social problems in a national context. It was precisely this emphasis on the health of the nation, this nationalist theme, that separated class collaborationists from revolutionaries. How could the nation survive, Barberet wondered, if its constituent parts were in perpetual antagonism?[73]

This entailed, logically, a solicitation for the capitalist class. As the strength of the revolutionary doctrine grew among workers during the 1880s, Barberet became seriously concerned. When the Paris Bourse du Travail was established and taken over by revolutionaries, he issued a call to the businessmen:

> Why, since the Bourse du Travail seems to be the center of the anticapitalist movement, should not the employers who are most interested in having accord reign between them and the workers create an Office du Travail Libre, where placement services can operate under the direction of a joint commission? . . . If, beside an institution which is guided by revolutionary instincts, another, analogous institution, but functionning in an impartial and practical manner was founded by the businessmen's organizations . . . we would be putting together the best workers and the best employers. Those who have the dedication to remain the longest time possible at the same job and for whom the strike is repugnant will soon come to the Office out of preference to the Bourse and the latter will soon have for clients only the habitués of the /political/ clubs . . . and the workers who never work. [74]

Joseph Barberet did not know it, but in his call for an employer-supported counterweight to the Bourse, he provided the basic prescription for Yellow unionism.[75]

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[73] Ibid., 5: viii.

[74] Ibid., pp. 436-37.

[75] There was a lingering suspicion that Barberet was a police spy. It resulted from some obscure incidents in his career, but was intensified when he was appointed to a position in the Ministry of the Interior. When he was accused in Le Prolétaire, he brought suit for slander and won. However, there

By 1880, Barberet had moved out of the arena of union organization and into the arena of government service. He was appointed Chef du Bureau des Sociétés Professionnelles in the Ministry of the Interior. It was the first office in France devoted to labor problems--professional societies were taken to mean labor unions. By 1887, however, Barberet moved into the position of Chef du Bureau des Sociétés de Secours Mutuels, essentially ending his association with the labor movement. While he was Bureau Chief for Professional Societies, he took his work seriously. He did what any legitimate Department of Labor does: he tried to collect statistics on working conditions and worker organizations. But when he sent out a questionnaire to acquire this information, he was attacked as a police spy.

He also used his position to promote the cooperative movement. A memorandum he addressed to Waldeck-Rousseau, then Minister of the Interior, led to the formation of a committee

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is no question that he sought to use the influence of the government to promote moderate trade unionism. See "Procès de J. Barberet, Chef du Bureau des Sociétés Professionnelles au Ministère de l'Intérieure contre Le Prolétaire," Le Prolétaire, no. 90, supplement (June 19, 1880); Sorlin, Waldeck-Rousseau, p. 237. On p. 287n Sorlin said that everything concerning Barberet was mysterious. See also Barberet, Bataille des intérêts, pp. 331-64; Moutet, "Le Mouvement ouvrier," pp. 16-17. Moutet uncovered some evidence that Barberet used the police to deal with one of his rivals. Moss, "The Socialism of Skilled Workers," pp. 146-47, using the same police reports, recounts the incident somewhat differently, but agreed that Barberet denounced a comrade to the police. Moss was not willing, however, to go so far as to call him a police agent. A convocation of union delegates held in 1879 did vote their belief in Barberet's innocence, but there were too many unexplained incidents in his past to completely dispel the suspicions. For example, he seemed to have no trouble during the Commune getting newsprint for his journal. He was alleged to have told a worker that he had influence with the police, and a police official claimed that he had seen Barberet's name on a list of persons who had rendered services to the Prefect. The trial did not shed as much light on these questions as it might have,

to investigate the conditions of workers' cooperatives. Barberet played a key role as secretary to this committee, which resulted in a policy whereby worker cooperatives were given a certain number of public works contracts. Barberet also lobbied extensively for a law legalizing unions and was widely considered to have been one of the forces behind the law of 1884. He played a role in other social legislation as well, particularly the law of 1898 on mutual aid societies and the law of 1901 on the right of association.[76]

Although Barberet's direct influence on the labor movement waned in the 1880s, and his emphasis changed from cooperation to profit sharing and mutual aid, his doctrine was kept alive by the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France, which he helped found. It was in the 1870s, however, that Barberettism dominated the labor movement. This can be clearly seen at the First Workers' Congress of 1876, to which Barberet himself was a delegate.

The First Workers' Congresses (1876-1880)

The First Workers' Congress, held in Paris in 1876, was

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since the strategy of Barberet's lawyer was not to refute the charges made, but to discredit the writer who made them by attempting to prove that he was a Bonapartist. The trial mainly produced expressions of mutual paranoia.

[76]Ministère de l'Intérieure, Enquête de la Commission Extraparlementaire des Associations Ouvrières, 2 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1883); J. Barberet, Les Sociétés de secours mutuels: Commentaire de la loi de 1er avril 1898 (Paris and Nancy: Berger-Levrault, 1899); Maitron, Dictionnaire, pp. 198-99.

one of the key events in the history of the French working class. It marked the beginning of a series of congresses which led, with interruptions, schisms, and setbacks, to the eventual creation of the C.G.T. However, the first four congresses are also important as a sampling of labor opinion at that time. The moderate, antistrike, class-collaborationist ideology of Proudhon, Tolain, and Barberet reigned supreme at the Congress of 1876 and its successor, although it lost influence after that.[77]

The Congress was organized by a planning committee drawn from members of the existing unions. It decided that no delegate could speak unless he or she were a worker. While the action of the planning committee may seem like a radical step, it was just the reverse. It stemmed from an identification of politicians with utopian extremism. "We must, at all costs, forbid the politicians, the men of theories, from coming to mislead us and from making use of the Congress as a tribune for their electoral and political operations."[78]

The First Workers' Congress, called by Louis Levine the "supreme effort" of the early unions, opened on October 2. The room, fittingly, was decorated with a bust of the Republic. Chabert was elected to preside over the first session, and in

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[77]This would tend to disprove the statement of Goetz-Girey that the syndicalism of the 1870s was a "syndicalism without a doctrine," La Pensée syndicale, p. 24. Chambelland, on the other hand, pointed out that there was a moderate tradition which persisted throughout the history of the labor movement, in Le Syndicalisme, p. 18.

[78]Séances du Congrès Ouvrier de France, Session de 1876 tenu à Paris du 2 au 10 octobre, Salle des Ecoles, 3 rue d'Arras (Paris: Librairie Sandoz et Fischbacher, 1877), pp. 3-4.

his remarks he set the tone for the whole Congress: "It is not necessary here to engage in a vain display of words; but it is necessary that we direct our discussions to practical solutions to the social question and for the improvement of the condition of the working class." Guillon, who had been elected secretary of the session, added that all systems, all utopias, were products of the bourgeoisie, not the workers.[79]

These were, on the whole, practical men and women wrestling with everyday problems: the question of women workers, the role of the union, the proposed law on legalization, prud'hommerie.[80] But if they were not utopians, they were still visionaries. Many had an image of a society in which labor would be emancipated and would receive the full fruits of its effort through the creation of cooperatives, especially cooperatives of production. Proudhon was obviously a spiritual force behind the Congress. Once, when making a point, Dupire referred to Proudhon as an "authority who will not be contested here."[81]

Cooperatism dominated the Congress. Pagèze spoke for the great majority of the delegates when he said: "Association

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[79] Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . de 1876, pp. 41-42, 65.

[80] It is impossible to get an accurate count of delegates. Some names were left out of the list, especially late arrivals and delegates with identical or similar names. Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, p. 25, counted three hundred delegates total. Lefranc, Histoire du mouvement syndical, p. 168, claimed there were 360--255 from Paris. Yet in his Le Mouvement syndical, p. 26, he gave the numbers as 350 total and 279 Parisian. Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, p. 205, agreed with the 360--255 figures. Moss, using police records, came up with 290 Parisian delegates and 105 provincials. "The Socialism of Skilled Workers," p. 154.

[81] Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . de 1876, p. 160.

in all its forms: mutual aid societies, banks of credit, consumer cooperatives, production cooperatives, popular libraries, day care centers, professional schools. Association, I say, is the base on which to construct the new society."[82] He suggested concentrating on buying cooperatives (consumer cooperatives) since they were easier to set up and less capital was needed. The job of the union in this regard was to educate their members in the virtues of cooperation and in the practical skills needed to make them operative. In essence, the role of the union was to create cooperatives.[83]

There was an ambivalence towards capitalism. On the one hand, the cooperative society was meant to replace capitalism, and this involved implicit (and sometimes explicit) feelings of hostility towards capitalists. Yet, in an extremely well-received speech on the importance of the prud'hommal councils, the delegate Chartrier said: "The principle of prud'hommie . . . is the principle of the legal, peaceful entente between capital and labor; it is the termination, if not amiably, at least obligatorily, of all the differences which arise between these two essential agents of production."[84]

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[82] Ibid., p. 384.

[83] Ibid., pp. 385-87. See Moss, "The Socialism of Skilled Workers," pp. 155-75.

[84] The delegates wanted several reforms in the structure of the prud'hommal councils, however. Generally, these involved a more equitable sharing of power and an extension of their number to trades and industries that did not have them. Since foremen and lower-level supervisors were often classified as workers, the businessmen found it easier to obtain a majority. Also, if the employer delegates boycotted the councils, they were incapable of rendering decisions. The delegates wanted these provisions changed. In addition, they wanted a law specifying that if the president was a businessman, the vice-president had to be a worker.

The reference to capital and labor as two essential elements would seem to indicate a belief in the permanence of capital, or at the very least its acceptance. Yet if the Congress would live with capitalism, it was fiercely proud of its working-class nature. When Barberet and Camille Desmoulins, who were both delegates, asked to speak, a violent commotion ensued. Many felt that since neither one was a manual worker, neither should be permitted to speak.[85]

The only opposition to the cooperative idea came from the Proletarian Positivists, in the person of their main spokesman, Isidore Finance.[86] He accused the partisans of cooperation of being utopians--a true insult at the Paris Congress, by relating the story of a meeting he had attended to discuss the creation of a cooperative library. The organizers began to spin ever more grandious schemes, which involved using the profits from the library to open a cooperative stationery store, which would then fund a cooperative bookstore, which in turn

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See Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . de 1876, pp. 514-15. Additional demands were for pay for councillors and selection of the president and vice-president by the council itself, rather than by the government.

[85]Barberet represented a cooperative library; Desmoulins was the delegate of the Society for the Extension of Free Education. Barberet withdrew his request, and Desmoulins was allowed to give his speech, but the incident showed how jealous the workers were of class distinction. And this was in spite of the fact that Barberet knew many of the delegates personally and had worked with them for several years. Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . de 1876, pp. 203-9. The delegates also refused to let a Belgian-born worker speak, in spite of the fact that he lived in France and had served in the French army. They were both class conscious and nationalistic. See p. 310.

[86]For biographical details on Finance, see Chapter VI. There were two other Positivists at the Congress, Fabien Magnin and E. Laporte. Revue Occidentale, no. 1 (May 1, 1878), p. 17.

would permit the establishment of a cooperative printing shop, which would finance and publish a cooperative newspaper. And they think they are not utopians, he asked?[87]

Finance was troubled because it seemed to him that the cooperative movement sidetracked the more energetic and intelligent workers from their true task: the emancipation of the working class as a whole. Cooperatives only benefited those workers who were fortunate enough to be members. Yet Finance was not a collectivist. What then would Positivists put in place of the cooperative? Finance admitted that he did not know. Comte had taught that social and industrial phenomena submitted to natural laws just like other sciences. These natural laws could be discovered, through research, education and experimentation. But mankind was only on the threshold of that endeavor; it had yet to discover all the rules of the social sciences. Therefore, the exact form of the future society could not be delineated. What was important at this stage of human development was that worker organizations not commit themselves to a specific strategy. Instead, they should concentrate on organizing the working class more completely and on obtaining piece-meal improvements.

Finance did enunciate some parts of a doctrine, however. As Positivists saw it, the solution to the social problem did not consist in changing the possessing class, but in a better utilization of the wealth of society. This depended

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[87] Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . de 1876, pp. 315-27, 334.

on individuals being able to recognize that the wealth and property they possessed had to be used not merely for their selfish benefit, but for the general good. The ultimate solution had to be moral, not legal; any legal solution would only be illusory. Only when men changed their habits and customs could a truly new society be established.

From this came the critical place that education occupied in Positivist thought. Education would make men conscious of their social duties, and train them to fulfill them willingly. Of course, if the employer refused to act in a moral way, the worker had to have some means of last-resort compulsion. This was the strike. It is ironic that the Positivists, who stood for the least radical approach to restructuring society, were the ones who were most favorable to the strike.

The cooperatist, in Finance's view, was doomed to _embourgeoisement_. He would become selfish, egotistical and greedy. The member of the cooperative ended up working ever longer hours, because his only interest was material gain. The wage earner, on the other hand, as he improved his working conditions and achieved reductions in his hours of work, could devote himself to study and education. Thus, cooperation stood in the way of intellectual and moral progress, while the _salariat_, once it was made more humane, permitted it.[88]

Finance was not particularly well received--and his long-winded speech did not help. His discourse was punctuated with cries of "The conclusion, the conclusion!" from the impatient

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[88]Ibid., pp. 340-44.

delegates. But he had established the Positivist presence in the labor movement. It was to remain there as a force at least until 1914.

The final reports of the committees summed up the work of the Congress. The first committee, on women, recognized their right to work but expressed the hope that they would not. If women were employed, the committee desired unionization, an eight hour day, equal pay for equal work, and restrictions on work contracted to convents and prisons. The second committee called for the complete liberty of reunion and association--that is, the right to form unions and hold meetings freely. The third demanded reform of the prud'hommes.

Finance was the reporter for the fourth committee. His ideas on education were at such variance with the rest of his colleagues that he had to be removed from the committee before it could write a report. The Positivists had some unique ideas about education (primarily they opposed public education), but the report rejected them and called instead for free, lay, compulsory education.

The committee on cooperatives recognized that there were three points of view on the subject: the Positivist, which rejected them; the view that cooperatives were the means of worker emancipation; and a mediating view which held that cooperatives, while not the final solution, were useful and should be encouraged. After noting the three positions, the committee supported the second one. It did take note of some of Finance's criticisms and recommended that the profits made

by a cooperative not be distributed to the members, but be used instead to fund new cooperatives.

The last committee dealt with the question of a social security system. Displaying a distrust of the state, it condemned government-administered plans and forced contributions from the workers. Following the traditions of self help and mutual aid, it preferred the organization of retirement systems by the unions.

The Congress' work completed, the delegates adjourned by rising to their feet and crying "vive la République!"[89]

The Congress of 1876 had been unabashedly reformist. It produced a long list of demands, but ones which were eminently realizable in any democratic regime with a social conscience. As Léon Blum pointed out, the delegates believed that if they could come up with practical solutions to the eight agenda items, the social question would be solved.[90]

There was an acceptance of the system of private property; no collectivist ideas were announced. Unionization and cooperation were seen by many as a means of participating in the capitalist system. On the other hand, there was no great love expressed for the bourgeoisie. The cooperative freed the worker from the employer by eliminating his dependence on him. Yet, almost schizophrenically, the unity of capital and labor in traditional

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[89]For the complete texts of the committee reports, all of which were adopted by the Congress, see ibid., pp. 510-26.

[90]Léon Blum, Les Congrès ouvriers et socialistes français (Paris: Société Nouvelle de Librairie et d'Édition, 1901), p. 11.

enterprise was asserted and the union was viewed almost as much as an instrument of education than as a defender of worker rights.[91]

It had been decided at Paris that a second congress would be held in Lyons the following year, but the seize mai crisis intervened in 1877. It was not until 1878 that the Second Congress was held.[92]

In his opening address, Chepier, the presiding officer and delegate of the Lyons weavers, announced that the meeting would follow the path laid out in Paris. He spoke of the mission of the Congress, "to study, without passion but without weakness, the great social problem."[93] He also pointed out that "we are not senseless utopians, professing hate against

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[91]The anticapitalist aspect led Blum to say that the Paris Congress had sown the seeds of socialism. Ibid., pp. 15-17. At the time, revolutionary groups such as the Blanquists, from their exile in London, attacked the Congress for being too moderate and for not raising the question of amnesty for the exiled communards; Thiers and the bourgeois press praised it for the same reasons. See "Les Syndicaux et leur congres," in Leon de Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers en France de 1876 à 1897 (Paris: Armand Colin, 1899), p. 18; Lefranc, Histoire du mouvement syndical, p. 169; Joughin, "The Labor Movement," pp. 89-91; Chambelland, Le Syndicalisme, pp. 19-20. Both Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, p. 27n and Louis, Histoire du mouvement syndical, p. 118, believed that the delegates were more radical than they appeared; they took a moderate stance out of fear of governmental repression. Moss, "The Socialism of Skilled Workers," divided the cooperatists into collectivist-cooperatists and noncollectivist-cooperatists. He emphasized the radical, anticapitalist program of the former, perhaps not doing enough justice to the latter group. Pp. 163-64, 167-68, 171. Goetz-Girey emphasized the curious amalgam of reformism and syndical autonomy at the Congress. The concept of independent unions was usually associated with revolutionary syndicalism; in the beginning of the labor movement, it was, however, a reformist idea. See pp. 28-30. This may explain why Fernand Pelloutier, one of the original leaders of revolutionary syndicalism, had kind words for these moderate reformers. Perhaps he saw in their efforts the roots of his own belief in an autonomous labor movement. F. Pelloutier, Histoire des bourses du travail (Paris: Schleicher Frères, 1902),

all that exists." Louis Besson, the secretary of the planning committee, added that what they desired was material improvements, a just salary, the ability to earn a living through one's labor.[94] Fair treatment, not revolution, was the theme. It was proposed that each session be opened with a cry of "vive la République," since it was the Republic alone which could ensure liberty to the working class.[95]

The Second Congress was very similar to the First. The question of women was still on the agenda. While women delegates called for complete equality of the sexes, some male delegates (particularly the printer Nicolas) demanded the complete suppression of employment for women in manufacturing jobs.[96] There were the usual calls for cooperation and for an end to legal restrictions on worker organizations. The union was praised for having taken the workers out of their isolation, strengthening them and preparing them for cooperation. The idea that cooperation would lead to the disappearance of strikes, since workers would not strike against their own interests, was also repeated. One new suggestion was for

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pp. 35-43, 54-56. Rébérioux pointed out that the Congress not only anticipated aspects of the later syndicalist movement but that it also was "situated in the theory and practice of the 1860s." "Le Socialisme français," p. 139.

[92]The Congress had originally been set for the Autumn of 1877, but the Prefect of the Rhone had dissolved all the Lyons unions during the crisis. Reset for December, it had to be postponed again and finally opened on January 28, with 138 delegates attending. The report of the planning committee is in Séances du Congrès Ouvrier de France, deuxième session, tenu à Lyon du 28 janvier au 8 février 1878 Salle du Théâtre des Variétés (Lyon: Imprimerie Jules Trichot, 1878), pp. 3-10. The list of delegates is on pp. 26-30.

[93]Ibid., p. 16.

[94]Ibid., p. 17.

[95]Ibid., pp. 274-75.

[96]Ibid., pp. 34-65.

the creation of federations of unions in the same industry and for regional federations to represent all the unions of a city or department.[97]

There was one very significant development at Lyons. Two delegates, Ballivet of the Lyons mechanics, and Dupire of the Paris tailors, announced their support for the collectivist idea. Collectivism had begun to take hold again in France, due in large measure to the return of the Marxist Jules Guesde. In his journal, L'Egalité, Guesde spread the message of abolishing bourgeois society by the collective expropriation of all the means of production. Society, Dupire said, was divided into two great, antagonistic, hostile, irreconcilable classes. As long as the bourgeoisie held power, there was no hope for real reform. The bourgeoisie had had its '89; the worker had to have its great revolution also. The collectivists mocked the idea of emancipation through cooperation. In their eyes, cooperation was merely a device whereby some favored workers were allowed to enter the middle class.[98]

Finance was again a delegate. Although he too had misgivings about cooperatives, he led the anticollectivist forces:

> You are mistaken if you think that by preaching the

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[97]Ibid., pp. 81, 88-89, 97-98, 126-27, 132-34, 137, 141, 177, 310.

[98]Ibid., pp. 335-40, 431-44. Dupire, it turned out, was a police agent. Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, p. 228; Moss, "The Socialism of Skilled Workers," pp. 178-86. Joughin, "The Labor Movement," p. 112, noted that the collectivist issue did not create a furor, and the press hardly reported it.

> collective expropriation of the soil that you will lead the peasant to socialism. Having had private property since his liberation from feudalism, he will not accept the yoke of collectivism. Impersonal, anonymous property is the worst of properties. Individual property is at least susceptible to pity, to justice, to feelings of shame. Corporate property [i.e., property owned by all the workers in an industry jointly] is without feeling, without remorse. It is . . . inflexible, void of all passion and all love 99

Collective ownership belonged to the past. In modern times, it existed only in backward societies such as India or Russia. The idea of private property had been associated with man's progress. Why return to the past? The collectivists made the same mistake with regard to the family. They wanted to liberate relationships by eliminating marriage and destroying the nuclear family. This was not progress, but regression.[100]

Finance's speech was greeted with great applause, but the next day, delegate Pessey of Besancon rose to combat "formalistic discourses from so-called collectivists or Positivists." He recalled the delegates to their mission of seeking to better the lives of workers through immediate, honest, practical ways, and asked both Positivists and collectivists to find another tribune.[101] The Positivist-Barberettist alliance had obviously not yet jelled. Some delegates regarded the Comteans as doctrinaires little better than the Marxists.

In the final reports, the Congress generally repeated

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[99] Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . de 1878, p. 452.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid., pp. 474-75.

the positions of the First Congress. When the question of collectivism was put to a vote, it was overwhelmingly rejected.[102] There was, however, one significant difference between Lyons and Paris. The Second Congress weakened its position on cooperatives by accepting a report which stated that the salariat was a transitory stage between servitude and a type of society unnamed at the present time. In this situation, cooperative societies should be established, but they were not to be considered the definitive expression of social reorganization.[103] This was a significant victory for the Positivist point of view.

From a class-collaborationist perspective, the most important issue at Lyons was the reintroduction of collectivism. The Positivists were clearly opposed to it. The position of the cooperatists was more complicated. In many ways, they were more radical than the Comteans. The cooperatists, for example, envisioned an end to the class of wage earners. Cooperation was not ideologically contradictory to collectivism; the cooperative represented a type of collective ownership. It was conceivable that a collectivist-cooperatist alliance could have been formed, and in fact many cooperatists did become

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[102] Ibid., p. 595, for the text of the amendment. The compte rendu of the Congress gave no vote totals. Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, p. 26, said eight votes were cast for the collectivist resolution. This number is repeated by Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 145. Blum, Les Congrès ouvriers, p. 29, claimed that only a show of hands was asked for, and that L'Egalité reported that about twenty delegates voted for it. On the other reports, Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . de 1878, pp. 590-613.

[103] Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . de 1878, p. 593.

collectivists. But those who remained committed to the cooperative ideal allied with the Positivists. The Positivists had several strange ideas compared to the rest of the labor movement. They were opposed to public education, government assistance, and worker candidates for Parliament. They too opposed cooperatives. However, they were not violent or revolutionary, and in the end it was temperament, rather than ideology, that sealed the alliance. The Positivists were republicans. They had been active in the labor movement for many years, but especially during the 1870s. They stood for peaceful reforms; they practiced mutual aid. In these regards, they were compatible with the cooperatists. Even so, it would take two more congresses to seal the alliance, and then it would begin to disintegrate almost immediately.

To Jules Guesde, the Congress of Marseilles (1879) was the "immortal Congress."[104] Just a year and a half after the collectivists had been routed at Lyons, they had become strong enough to capture the French labor movement. However, the anticollectivist ideology did not die out, and the arguments used at Marseilles to combat the revolutionaries were still used thirty years later by C.G.T. reformists, Proletarian Positivists, Catholic syndicalists, and Yellows.

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[104]Quoted in Rébérioux, "Le Socialisme français," p. 149. Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 29-30, called it the most important congress in the history of the French working class, while Joughin, "The Labor Movement," p. 143, said that "In eleven days, ... the character of the French labor movement was changed . . . ."

The debate was begun by Julie Martin of the Marseilles women's union. Speaking on the question of what made for a well-organized union, she repeated the basic Barberettist conception that it should have a retirement fund for its members, a fund for mutual assistance in case of illness or accident, a placement bureau to obtain jobs for its members, and that it should belong to a federation.[105]

Ernest Roche presented the alternative. "I am a revolutionary," he declared. For him, only two groups existed: those who favored the established order, and the oppressed. The unions, taken so seriously by the Barberettists and the Positivists, were mocked by Roche. They existed in name only, he asserted; a mere whisper of authority could blow them away. Those unionists who wanted to observe scrupulous legality by acting respectfully and docilely were doing just what the bourgeoisie wanted. Roche pointed to unions which, after eight years of existence, did not have even two hundred francs in their treasuries. He was astonished that their leaders continued to talk about creating retirement funds. To a revolutionary, the union had only one role to play: to be the center and source (foyer) of the revolutionary idea.[106]

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[105] Séances du Congrès Ouvrier Socialiste de France, troisième session, tenu à Marseille du 20 au 31 octobre 1879 à la Salle des Folies Bergères (Marseille: Imprimerie Générale J. Doucet, 1879), p. 229.

[106] Ibid., pp. 244-49.

It was Finance who gave the most notable reply. He admitted that the unions had remained pitifully weak, but he urged them not to take sides in doctrinal disputes. The union had to remain politically neutral so that it could devote itself to striving for improvements. No system of ideas, he warned, should have the pretension to lead the unions in the pursuit of narrow, doctrinal objectives. Finance attacked the collectivists for believing

> that the solution to the social question revolves around some decrees on property that one will insert into the /Journal/ Officiel on the day that one attains power. . . . Positivists do not agree that the collective possession of capital is necessary to give property a social responsibility. What is necessary is a strongly organized proletariat, formed into an immense league of control and surveillance, a defensive league of morality and justice, which can make known to the entrepreneurs their responsibilities, and if necessary, to impose their obligations upon them. In each of these cases, one too often forgets that a long period of socialist education is necessary, during which, slowly but surely, the definitive doctrine will grow.
>
> While awaiting this, it is necessary to work for salary increases and the reduction of hours. That is the pacific work of the union. What is the purpose of declaring war if one is not ready, and especially if one does not know what to do the day after the victory? [107]

In a second speech in defense of private property, Finance quoted Proudhon to the effect that property was necessary for the independence and dignity of the citizens. Also, the sentiments attached to homeowning, to exclusive, personal possession, were basically the same as love of family. Familial love developed from the feeling of continuity, from the transmission from father to son. Collectivism destroyed

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[107] Ibid., pp. 255-63. Finance was one of several Positivist delegates, but the only one to take a leading role. See I. Finance, "Le Congrès ouvrier socialiste de Marseille," Revue Occidentale, no. 1 (January 1, 1880), pp. 166-74.

these moral sentiments.

Finance asked the delegates to put their faith in education and organization. The bourgeoisie ruled not by force, but as a result of its intellectual superiority. The working class had to aim for the same accomplishment. Science did not develop through the use of violence; "if the revolution only serves to bring to power a faction of the bourgeoisie which is imbued with socialist ideas--which will be the inevitable result if it occurs before the working class is ready--then the revolution will be for the workers only a cruel hoax."[108]

His opposition to collectivism did not, however, cause him to moderate his opposition to cooperatives; the cooperatists were under attack from both collectivists and Positivists. Their advocates were forced into a defensive role. One delegate admitted that the cooperative was not a total solution, but he insisted that it could improve conditions for the workers. If it was not the last word in progress, it was a way of uniting workers to promote their general interests. A delegate from a building trades cooperative was more positive, but hardly in a manner designed to win over collectivists. He favored cooperatives because, in his society, a man could retire at age fifty with one thousand francs. Others defended the cooperative of consumption as a means of reducing the cost of living.[109]

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[108] Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . 1879, pp. 614-21, 760-61.

[109] Ibid., p. 370; Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, p. 36; Blum, Les Congrès ouvriers, p. 45.

The final resolutions reflected the new spirit. Co-operatives were declared to be capable of improving the lives of only a small number of workers. In regard to women, absolute equality of the sexes was called for. Other resolutions stated that the workers, organized collectively, should receive the tools of production, and that the soil, subsoil, and raw materials should be collectivized. Finally, a workers' party was created, the Fédération du Parti des Travailleurs Socialistes de France, and worker candidates who won election to Parliament were required to vote for amnesty for the Communards.[110]

The moderates, although defeated, were not routed. After accusing the revolutionaries of having played the game of the enemies of the working class by throwing discredit on the Congress, and disclaiming responsibility for it, they began to gird themselves for the next congress: Le Havre.[111]

The Congress of Le Havre, held in November, 1880, saw the formal split between the collectivists and the class collaborationists. The immediate origin of the schism lay in the precongress maneuvering for advantage. The Congress of Marseilles had specified that each workers' circle or study group that had formal statutes and was concerned with defending

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[110] Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . 1879, pp. 804-21. On the party, see Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 48-49. On the amnest issue at the workers' congresses, see Jean Joughin, The Paris Commune in French Politics, 1871-1880, 2 vols., The Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, series 73, nos. 1 and 2 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1955), pp. 157-60, 287-96.

[111] Séances du Congrès Ouvrier . . . 1879, pp. 813-14.

the interests of the working class could send delegates. However, the moderates accused the Guesdists of forming paper organizations, using the same individuals, to create several groups and thus increase their number of delegates. Therefore, the moderates who controlled the planning committee specified that only groups which had at least twenty-five members could send representatives. When the Congress opened, several revolutionaries were denied admittance. The rest of the revolutionaries thereupon walked out and held their own congress at the Union Lyrique. The moderates--Barberettist cooperatists and Positivists--continued to sit at the Cercle Franklin.[112]

The Congress of Le Havre was thus both an end and a beginning. It ended the first phase of the labor movement in the Third Republic, by definitively separating revolutionary collectivist and moderate, class-collaborationist currents. It also marked a beginning. The class-collaborationist movement was now free to develop on its own power with its own identity.

The moderate congress affirmed the prorepublican sentiments of earlier meetings. The planning committee's report

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[112] Joughin, "The Labor Movement," pp. 197-98; Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 61-64; Blum, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 59-64; Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 148; Le Congrès du Havre, compte rendu officiel des séances du Congrès Ouvrier Socialiste, 4me session, no. 1 (November 15, 1880) and no. 2 (November 16, 1880). The compte rendu was published in newspaper form and may be found at the Musée Social, Paris. Moss, unaccountably said that no compte rendu existed; "The Socialism of Skilled Workers," p. 311n. The APO, 1: 249 claimed that sixty out of sixty-seven delegates at the Cercle Franklin represented unions, while only thirty out of fifty-nine were unionists at the Union Lyrique. It should be mentioned that Finance wrote that section of the APO. The Positivists at Le Havre engaged in the same technique as the Guesdists. There were, for the first time, delegates from such organizations as the Bibliothèque Positiviste, the Cercle des Etudes Positivistes Professionnelles Cuisiniers de Paris, and the Cercle Positiviste des Etudes Sociales.

stated that "the Republic is the sole government capable of realizing the program traced by our fathers in the Revolution."[113] Bernardeau of the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France received enthusiastic applause when he claimed that the revolutionaries were intent not just on destroying property, but on destroying the Republic as well.[114]

The Positivists were well represented at Le Havre, with five delegates. Auguste Keufer of the printers' union made his first appearance at a labor congress, as the delegate of the Positivist Library. In his first speech, he exposed the basis of Positivist anticollectivism. Keufer claimed that it was impossible to do away with the wage-earning class; the salariat would always exist. Revolution was a chimera. The union's role was not to plan revolution, but to be the organ of defense and education for the proletariat. To accomplish its goals, the union had to be strongly organized. Like the army, like industrial enterprises, the union needed a commander. Furthermore, Keufer rejected the common attitude which opposed the concentration of capital. He asserted that large-scale industrialization was advantageous: it made employment more regular, and it was easier to obtain concessions such as wage increases. When the working class had grown strong, which is to say when it had acquired intelligence, morality, and unity through federation, it would be able to enforce justice upon

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[113] Le Congrès du Havre, compte rendu, no. 2 (November 16, 1880).

[114] Ibid., no. 7 (November 21, 1880).

capital. This would then fulfill Comte's principle that wealth, being social in its origins, had to be social in its usage.[115]

Keufer's emphasis on the union as the center of working-class organization was in contrast to the Guesdist-led revolutionaries, who placed their emphasis on the political party.[116] The Barberettists agreed with the Positivists approach and stressed the need for legalization. They shared Keufer's concept of a strongly organized union with high dues and regular officers. However, they did not share his acceptance of the course of industrial development. The cooperative approach required a belief in the continued viability of small workshops.[117]

As might be expected, the Positivists chided the cooperatists, but they severely toned down their criticisms, and emphasized what the two moderate groups shared. This included a rejection of the all-or-nothing approach; a willingness to work for practical, daily improvements; a belief in the importance of the union; a desire for improved employer-employee relations; a rejection of violence; an appreciation of private property; a fidelity to the Republic; a feeling that women belonged in the home.[118]

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[115] Ibid., no. 4 (November 18, 1880).

[116] Lefranc, Le Syndicalisme, p. 16.

[117] Le Congrès du Havre, compte rendu, nos. 3 (November 17, 1880) and 4 (November 18, 1880).

[118] Ibid., nos. 3 (November 17, 1880) and 5 (November 19, 1880). Also, I. Finance, "Le Congrès ouvrier du Havre," Revue Occidentale, no. 6 (January 1, 1881).

Specific differences did arise. The Positivists attacked compulsory, public education. To the followers of Comte, the state's intervention in moral affairs was repugnant. As Emile Antoine put it, the state had no right to replace the head of the family in the fulfillment of his duties. Education of the young was a parental responsibility. Finance argued against leaving all professional education in the hands of the union, since this too relieved the father from the obligation of looking after his son. The Barberettist replied that free thought was as necessary as free labor. There was no place for religion in education, including the "scientific" religion of Positivism. The Positivists were urged to refrain from imposing their religious principles on others; free, lay, public education was upheld.[119]

Keufer opposed worker representation in parliament, which was another idea to which all the non-Positivists at the congress were devoted. He claimed that political campaigns took the best and most ardent workers out of the daily struggle. His argument, which parroted Positivist objections to the cooperative, illustrated the narrowness of the Comtean outlook. Each social component had a role to play; it had one role and none other. The union had a job to do and it was to concern iself with that exclusively. There was no room for politics in the economic domain.[120]

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[119] Ibid., no. 8 (November 22, 1880).

[120] Ibid.

Not surprisingly, the Positivists opposed state funding of a workers' retirement system. Finance gave the Comtean view. Since problems were viewed morally, not legalistically, Positivist solutions depended on the efforts of individuals, not of the state. "What is necessary is to moralize, not to legislate." To the Positivists, there was a simple answer to the question of social security. If a worker acted in a moral way and was devoted to his family, he could rest easy; his children would return the debt they owed him: children would be the true retirement system. It was only when they were faced with problems which were insoluble for individuals that they accepted government intervention. Thus Keufer admitted that the state could institute a retirement plan for orphans and unmarried women who were without a family.[121]

Veyssier, head of the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France and the leading Barberettist of the 1880s, enunciated their main objectives: legalization of unions, the right of worker cooperatives to bid for public works contracts, the establishment of popular credit, and a state retirement system funded by an income tax.[122] There were also calls for protectionism and for the transformation of the prud'hommes into full-fledged industrial councils with full powers to regulate working conditions.

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[121] Ibid., no. 7 (November 21, 1880); Le Petit Havre, November 18, 1880.

[122] Le Congrès du Havre, compte rendu, no. 4 (November 18, 1880).

The delegates also accepted the strike as a weapon to be used if absolutely necessary.[123]

The essence of the Barberettist ideology was presented by two non-Parisians. Trotte, of the Le Havre building joiner, declared that far from suppressing property, it was necessary to facilitate its acquisition by the workers. Or, as Salvat of the Perpignan carpenters put it, "The more small owners there are, the better things will be." When these gentlemen spoke of upholding the principles of the French Revolution, it was with a recognition that the Revolution had established the Republic, consecrated property, and opened up the possibility of possession. The Barberettists did not see the bourgeoisie as an object of hatred, separated from the workers by irreconcilable differences, as the collectivists believed. Their outlook was entirely different; they looked forward to becoming part of the property-owning class.[124] Although the Positivists did not share this particular outlook, they did share the Barberettist's spirit of social pacifism.

One last element in the class-collaborationist movement remains to be examined briefly. This current existed independently of the Proudhonist-A.I.T.-Barberettist-Positivist tradition. It pursued a separate existence until 1900. But

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[123] Ibid., no. 5 (November 19, 1880); Le Petit Havre, November 17, 1880 and November 18, 1880.

[124] Le Congrès du Havre, compte rendu, no. 7 (November 21, 1880).

in the years before World War I, during the heyday of revolutionary syndicalism, it became a major component of the class-collaborationist movement. It was Social Catholicism, forerunner of Catholic unionism.

Social Catholicism

Independently of Positivists, cooperatists, revolutionaries, a Catholic worker movement also began in the early years of the Third Republic. It is actually too much to say that a worker movement began--no Catholic unions were formed until the late 1880s. But worker study groups and circles, admittedly under upper-class patronage and supervision, were founded. The ideology developed was very similar to that of the non-Catholic moderates, and although the two traditions remained separate for three decades, they finally converged in the twentieth century.

There were two Catholic currents which can be identified: the school of Frédéric Le Play, represented in the Société d'Economie Sociale, the Unions de la Paix Sociale (not labor unions) and the journal La Réforme sociale; and the school of Albert de Mun and René de la Tour du Pin, institutionalized first in the Oeuvres des Cercles Catholiques des Ouvriers and later in the review Association Catholique and the Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Française. Only the Oeuvre had a working-class membership. Since none of these organizations were labor unions, they are technically outside the realm of this study. However, since they contributed so clearly to the subsequent Catholic syndicalist movement, a very brief summary

would be in order.[125]

Frédéric Le Play was a prominent Catholic economist and sociologist. An antimodernist who rejected the individualistic society which he attributed to the French Revolution, Le Play wanted a return to what he saw as the virtues of the prerevolutionary period. Specifically, he wanted each worker to have a home of his own, a piece of land, steady work, and a stable family life. Most importantly, he felt that employers had a social responsibility; property ownership was not a right to be abused, but a trust to be administered in a manner accountable to God.

Le Play did not look with favor on unionization; his approach was paternalistic. Some of Le Play's followers, however, became interested in worker organization, and moderate Proudhonists such as Fribourg and Limousin of the A.I.T. were invited to meetings of the Société d'Economie Sociale. Later, the Société and the Unions de la Paix Sociale offered support and aid to both Yellow and Catholic unions.

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[125] On Le Play, de Mun and La Tour du Pin, as well as Social Catholicism generally, see Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, Les Débuts du catholicisme social en France, 1822-1870 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1951); Parker Thomas Moon, The Labor Problem and the Social Catholic Movement in France (New York: MacMillan, 1921); Robert Talmy, Le Syndicalisme chrétien en France, 1871-1930 (Paris: Editions Blond & Gay, 1965); Georges Hoog, Histoire du catholicisme social en France: De l'encyclique "Rerum Novarum" à l'encyclique "Quadragesimo Anno" (Paris: Domat-Montchrestien, 1942); John McManners, Church and State in France, 1870-1914 (New York: Harper and Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1973); Henri Rollet, L'Action sociale des catholiques en France, 1870-1914, 2 vols. (Paris: Boivin, 1947-58). For Social Catholic thought in relation to other intellectual movements in France, see Gonnard, Histoire des doctrines économiques, pp. 640-45; Gaetan Pirou, Les Doctrines économiques en France depuis 1870 (Paris: Armand Colin, 1925), pp. 133-34, 171; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, pp. 123-25, 180-84, 208, 393; Gerard Thormann, "Christian Trade Unionism in France: A History of the French Confederation of Christian Workers" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1951),

Le Play's significance was in using a Catholic perspective to assert that workers had legitimate grievances which had to be corrected. This was combined with a vision of a property-owning working class. Others took these concepts, and merely added the union to the mixture, and produced Catholic syndicalism. The intermediate step was taken by de Mun and La Tour du Pin, who began to organize workers, although not yet in labor unions.

Under the influence of La Tour du Pin, a corporatist ideology was developed for the Oeuvre. The circles were to be the first step in the formation of syndicats mixtes, which were further steppingstones to corporatism. The "corporation," as conceived of by the Social Catholics, was an organ of social peace. In their view, the guilds of the Middle Ages (which they called corporations) provided an inspirational example of social organization. In the guilds religion was respected, worker and employer worked side by side in harmony, the principles of a just price and a just wage prevailed, and mutual aid was practiced. In this analysis, the great crime of the French Revolution was the law of 1791 which destroyed the guilds, leaving the individual alone and isolated.

The Social Catholics condemned the absolute liberty of capitalism. To them, work was not a piece of merchandise to be submitted to the laws of supply and demand, but a human

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pp. 22-25; Dolléans and Déhove, Histoire du travail, pp. 347-54; Elbow, French Corporative Theory, pp. 7-15, 55-58, 67-69, 81-90; Dragoslav Todorovitch, Le Droit syndical et les doctrines syndicalistes (Paris: Librairie Technique et Economique, 1934), pp. 222-36; Pirou, Le Corporatisme, pp. 8, 19-34.

(and thus Godly) act. Therefore, all workers had to be treated with respect and dignity. In economic terms, that meant a living (or minimum) wage, improved hygienic conditions, and so on. In short, they believed, as did the Positivists, in the social responsibility of capital.

De Mun, La Tour du Pin and Le Play were totally opposed to any idea of class war. In a well-organized society, based on Christian principles, man's natural social instincts would result in the solidarity of classes. "Love thy neighbor" applied to capitalists as well as to working-class comrades.

By 1880, then, several elements had contributed to the development of a labor ideology of social peace. The ideology was not monolithic, the movement itself even less so. But there could be no denying its existence.[126] Although its influence weakened in the 1880s, it revived in the 1890s and flowered in the first decade of the twentieth century. The group most responsible for keeping the doctrine alive in the 1880s was the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France.

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[126]Only Joughin, "The Labor Movement," p. 152, noted the basic similarity of cooperatists, Positivists, and Social Catholics.

CHAPTER II

THE CLASS-COLLABORATIONIST LABOR MOVEMENT IN THE 1880S

By the 1880s, the French Republic was established, although republicans continued to fear royalist or Bonapartist attempts to undermine the parliamentary regime. Toward the end of the decade, General Boulanger appeared. Each time the Republic seemed threatened, the moderate unionists reaffirmed their support. They rejected the blandishments of Prince Jerome Bonaparte and Boulanger, and expected that their loyalty would be rewarded. The republicans in power during the 1880s made some attempts to improve conditions for the working class, but they were not willing to go far enough to satisfy most unionized workers. As a result, although a small band of Barberettists remained loyal to class-collaborationist unionism, by the end of the decade they ceased to be an important part of the labor movement.

The 1880s was a period of growth for the French socialist movement, but during that decade the labor movement was in disarray. The different socialist factions--Guesdists, Broussists, Allemanists--each attempted to establish control over the labor unions and impose its ideology on them. Only the moderates, organized in a nonpolitical federation, the Union des Chambres

Syndicales Ouvrières de France (U.C.S.), remained free of party affiliation. In this way, the antirevolutionaries kept alive the concept of an independent labor movement. It was this tradition which the C.G.T. drew upon when it was created in 1895. Ironically, the C.G.T. was not republican, but revolutionary. In the 1880s, union independence and republicanism went hand in hand.

At Le Havre, as we have seen, the collectivists and the moderates split. But the collectivists themselves were rent by division and, in 1882, split into Possibilist and Guesdist factions. The Possibilists were seriously divided by the middle of the decade and suffered a further split in 1890 into Broussists and Allemanists. The competition among socialist sects for labor support was intense; the labor movement became subordinated to the political movement. As Colette Chambelland put it, "a political phase began." Or, as Goetz-Girey said, there no longer was a labor movement; there were merely rival political movements.[1]

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[1]Colette Chambelland, Le Syndicalisme ouvrier français (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrieres, 1956), p. 20; Robert Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale française: militants et théoriciens (Paris: Armand Colin, 1948), pp. 30-31. Also Léon de Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers en France de 1876 à 1897 (Paris: Armand Colin, 1899), pp. 80-112; Jean Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier en France: Des Origines à nos jours (Paris: Aubier, 1946), p. 148; Jean Joughin, "The Labor Movement in France, 1876-1884" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, Austin, 1947), pp. 228-30; E. Martin Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations de métiers (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1922), p. 709; James Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier and the Emergence of the French Syndicalist Movement, 1880-1906" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1960), pp. 1, 27, 32-203; Aaron Noland, The Founding of the French Socialist Party, 1893-1905 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 1956), pp. 9-27. We should note that the labor movement was still very weak. Although 150 unions existed in Paris in 1881, they had only 60,000 members--roughly 400 workers per union. In other words, even where a union existed, only a miniscule percentage

It was a confusing period, as individuals or unions moved from one faction to another, rival congresses where held, doctrinal disputes raged, and personality conflicts flared up. It does not surprise us that in the hurly-burly of factional fighting between the future elements of the unified Socialist Party, the real moderate movement faded from sight. There was an understandable tendency to see the Possibilist opposition to Guesde as the moderate element in French labor.[2] Brousse, the Possibilist leader, was a reformist socialist, and even the Positivists were compatible with his brand of socialism, which essentially rejected revolutionary goals in favor of a program of limited reforms. However, it was not the followers of Brousse who carried the moderate, class-collaborationist mantle forward from Le Havre, but the Barberettists.

Some historians recognized that the Barberettists survived, but unjustly shortened their life span. There were two congresses held by the moderates after Le Havre, in 1881 and 1882. Montreuil stated that the movement ceased to exist after the last one, as did Joughin.[3] Guy Thorel stated that the U.C.S. went out of existence in 1882.[4] Georges Weill, just as inaccurately,

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of the workers joined, and membership figures were notorious for including workers who did not pay their dues. See P. Hubert-Valléroux, Les Corporations d'arts et métiers et les syndicats professionnels en France et à l'étranger (Paris: Librairie Guillaumin & Cie., 1885), p. 338; Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations, p. 658; Joughin, "The Labor Movement," p. 13.

[2]Madeleine Rébérioux, "Le Socialisme français de 1871 à 1914," in Jacques Droz, ed., Histoire générale du socialisme (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974) 2: 155.

[3]Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 148; Joughin, "The Labor Movement," p. 248.

[4]Guy Thorel, Chronologie du mouvement syndical ouvrier en France, 1791-1946 (Paris: Editions du Temps Présent, 1947), p. 50.

said that the U.C.S. came into existence after the last Congress.[5] In fact, the Barberettist brand of trade unionism survived throughout the 1880s. It has been so overlooked that Robert Goetz-Girey, certainly a knowledgeable student of syndicalism, claimed that it was founded by Finance and Keufer.[6] Not only was this untrue, but the Positivists remained aloof from the U.C.S. for the most part.

The Barberettists had always considered federation to be important. One of their first acts in the labor movement was the creation, in 1872, of the short-lived Cercle de l'Union Syndicale Ouvrière. The moderates at the Lyons and Le Havre Congresses had voted in favor of the creation of both regional and trade federations. The moderates had traditionally worked for increasing coordination among the labor unions of Paris, whether it was a matter of prud'hommal elections of sending worker delegates to an International Exposition. The U.C.S. resulted from a continuation of these efforts.

As far back as 1875, M. de Marcère, the Minister of the Interior had asked the unions to elaborate a proposal for a law to legalize unions. An eleven-member committee, composed of representatives from different unions, was formed. According

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[5]Georges Weill, Histoire du mouvement social en France, 1852-1910, 2nd ed. (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1911), p. 252.

[6]Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndical, p. 28. The role of the U.C.S. was not unrecognized by its contemporaries. See Fernand Pelloutier, Histoire des bourses du travail (Paris: Schleicher Frères, 1902), pp. 54-59; Hubert-Valléroux, Les Corporations, p. 363; Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 196-97.

to the publicists of the U.C.S., this was the embryo of the class-collaborationist federation. At the time, Barberet thought of it as an attempt to reconstitute the Cercle de l'Union Syndicale Ouvrière of 1872.[7] When friction occurred between moderates and collectivists, and with the Congress of Le Havre approaching, the moderates felt the need to organize themselves as a counterweight to the revolutionary Federation du Parti des Travailleurs Socialistes de France. Thus, on July 29, 1880, the U.C.S. was formed by twenty-nine unions. The impetus for the group came from Joseph Barberet. Barberet also helped organize the Le Havre Congress, and the Union des Chambres Syndicales was the recipient of a three thousand franc subsidy from the Paris Municipal Council which enabled it to send fifteen delegates to the Congress.[8]

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[7]The committee drew up a draft of a bill, which it then submitted to a convocation of delegates from sixty-two Paris unions. This was followed by a meeting with prolabor republican legislators such as Louis Blanc and Lockroy, which resulted in revisions and a resubmission to the unions. In all, several meetings were held, lasting into 1879. The last several ones were not harmonious; violent arguments broke out between moderates who favored the draft laws and revolutionaries who opposed it. See Le Moniteur des syndicats, October 5-12, 1882; Joseph Barberet, Monographies professionnelles; Le Travail en France 7 vols. (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1886-90), vol. 1 (1886), pp. 32, 95; Joughin, "The Labor Movement," pp. 134-37; Archives de la Préfecture de Police (APP), series BA 1443, "Cercle de l'Union Syndicale: Projet de reconstitution."

[8]APP, series BA 38, reports of August 8 and August 11, 1880; BA 1442, report of March 20, 1881; Bernard Haym Moss, "Origins of the French Labor Movement: The Socialism of Skilled Workers" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1972), pp. 306-7; Ministère de Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Telegraphes, Office du Travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, 4 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1899-1904), vol. 1 (1894), p. 248. The moderates had this to say about the regional congress of the Federation du Parti des Travailleurs Socialistes: "We have a profound love for the Republic. We are serving notice on you that we are ready to fight all those who intend to overthrow it, whether they be monarchists or anarchists. . . . Some of you reject universal suffrage. For us, it is a sign of health. When

The moderates, who had controlled the Congresses of Paris and Lyons, felt that they had lost their majority at Marseilles only because of "trickery"--the admission of delegates from study groups which were not unions, but essentially political groups. The Barberettists were determined to regain control at Le Havre. The U.C.S. was not entirely unhappy about the schism,[9] and used its position at Le Havre to put itself at the head of the moderate labor movement. Although both Positivists and provincial unions were jealous of the U.C.S., it was inevitable that it would dominate the antirevolutionary side of the labor movement. It was organized, for one thing. Also, it was unavoidable that any viable worker's group at that time had to be centered in Paris, which is where the U.C.S. was strong. The moderate federation was thus successful in having itself designated the organizer of the next congress, which took place in Paris in 1881.[10]

The U.C.S. increased its leadership position in 1882, when it began publication of a weekly paper, the Moniteur des syndicats. Significantly subtitled "Journal Républicain Socialiste," it appeared uninterruptedly until 1911. Moss, commenting on the expensive newsprint and the professional layout, decided

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education is more widespread, we will be able to obtain the reforms we need through the vote. We will obtain them without the shedding of blood; when we have a republic, we can be evolutionaries instead of revolutionaries." Quoted in Barberet, Monographies professionnelles 2 (1886): 186.

[9]Le Moniteur des syndicats, October 5-12, 1882.

[10]The account of the maneuvering between the U.C.S., the Positivists and the provincials is in Le Petit Havre, November 23, 1880, which provided a daily account of the events of the Congress.

that it was "obviously subsidized by the government." It is clear that Barberet provided the funds.[11]

One stumbling block in the way of the U.C.S.' growth was the suspicion with which it was regarded by many workers. Like Barberet himself, the organization was regarded as either a government agent or a tool of the police.[12] There is little doubt that the federation was favored, not so much by the government as a whole, but at least by the prolaborites in the Ministry of the Interior, namely Waldeck-Rousseau and Barberet.

On July 14, 1880, even before it was officially established, the leaders of the U.C.S. led a holiday demonstration of workers through the streets of Paris. Without informing the marchers of their intentions, they led them to the Ministry of the Interior, where they halted the procession to pay their respects. This infuriated many marchers, who saw it as a sign of submission to bourgeois politicians. Had it not been for this incident, more labor unions would have undoubtedly joined the federation when it was formed a week later. As it was, the U.C.S. justified the fears of those who thought it might have official ties.[13]

Although the U.C.S. did receive money from governmental sources, it was never enough to make the federation wealthy,

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[11]Moss, "The Socialism of Skilled Workers," p. 318; APP, BA 1478, report of November 11, 1881.

[12]Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, p. 183; idem, Syndicats ouvriers, fédérations, bourses du travail (Paris: Armand Colin, 1902) p. 261; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, p. 254.

[13]APO 1: 248; APP, series BA 1442, reports of May-July, 1880.

and its period of official favoritism was not of long duration. While they lasted, however, its ties to the government were barely hidden. Both Waldeck-Rousseau and Barberet appeared at a banquet organized by the U.C.S. to celebrate the passage of the 1884 law legalizing unions. Both were fulsome in their praise of Veyssier, head of the U.C.S., and the organization itself. Soon after, Veyssier was awarded the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur on the recommendation of the Minister of the Interior, a rare event indeed for a labor leader in the Third Republic.[14] The federation itself received a gold medal at the Paris Exposition of 1889. Pierre Sorlin claimed that Waldeck-Rousseau got his ideas on labor and unions from the Moniteur des syndicats. When the law of 1884 placed unions under the aegis of the Minister of Commerce, Waldeck-Rousseau was instrumental in having Barberet's office transferred from the Ministry of the Interior to Commerce.[15]

Close ties existed between the Union des Chambres Syndicales and Barberet. The Moniteur gave his activities much publicity and approbation. It publicized his books and offered them for sale. Barberet was a frequent guest at banquets of the U.C.S., at banquets of individual unions which belonged to the federation, and at other meetings of organizations sponsored by or supported

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[14]Le Moniteur des syndicats, July 17-24, 1884; January 8-16, 1885; October 13-27, 1889.

[15]Pierre Sorlin, Waldeck-Rousseau (Paris: Armand Colin, 1966), pp. 273, 287, 294n.

by the U.C.S., such as the Société de Participation aux Bénéfices d'Entreprise. Barberet even attended a testimonial dinner for Veyssier in 1898, when Veyssier was ill, soon to pass away, and obviously of no influence whatsoever in the labor movement. On the other hand, when Madame Barberet died, the Moniteur published an obituary. It was the only death notice the journal published for someone other than a federation militant or an associated politician. In the course of the text, Barberet was mentioned as having regularly provided advice and services to the newspaper. When Veyssier died, his obituary referred to him as a direct collaborator of Waldeck-Rousseau.[16]

The U.C.S. was straighforward in its dedication to the Republic. It mourned the death of Léon Gambetta in a lead story in the Moniteur, recalling the valiant days of 1870 when he alone had saved the honor of the patrie. It remembered with pride his struggle against the monarchists. Five years after his death, the U.C.S. sent a delegation to the dedication ceremonies for his monument.[17]

When Prince Jerome Bonaparte had his agents placard the walls of the capital with appeals to the workers in 1883, the Moniteur leapt to the defense of the Republic. It reminded workers that two Bonapartist empires had brought nothing good

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[16]Le Moniteur des syndicats, March 29-April 5, 1883; May 15-22, 1884; December 3-10, 1885; December 31, 1885-January 7, 1886; August 26-September 3, 1886; June 23-July 7, 1889; August 7-27, 1898; February 1-21, 1903; April 9-29, 1905.

[17]Ibid., January 1-11, 1883; July 22-August 5, 1888.

for the worker and many bad things: the livret (an identity card all workers had to have and turn over to their employer, who could write in comments about the worker which would then be passed on to his next employer), a provision in the Civil Code whereby the employer's word was taken at face value against the word of the worker, the bloodily repressed strikes of Anzin and Ricamarie. The normally pacific Moniteur threatened violence if any revolutionary, white or red, endangered the Republic for which "we have struggled and suffered."[18]

While the Union des Chambres Syndicales supported the Republic, the Republic took several steps to win the support of labor. The Bureau of Professional Societies had been created, and Barberet appointed to head it, as we have seen. Also at this time, the law on the prud'hommes was revised to permit the council itself to elect its own president and vice-president. The law further stipulated that if the president was an employer, the vice-president had to be a worker, and vice versa. Finally, there was the law of 1884. In 1880 it was already making its way through the legislative jungle.[19] It would not have been out of character for the government to encourage those labor unions which were not revolutionary. Nor would those same unions think it unusual to support the regime which was improving the condition of the workers. Their republican ideology was based on this conception: they would serve the Republic and the Republic would help them.

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[18]Ibid., January 25-February 1, February 1-18, 1883.

[19]Ibid., October 5-12, October 13-19, 1882; January 4-11, February 1-8, 1883; January 3-10, 1884.

The Union des Chambres Syndicales devoted most of its efforts to obtaining reforms from the government. In addition, it used the strategy of pressuring the government as a technique to gain support and propagate its moderate ideas. The U.C.S. would have liked nothing better than to rally all labor unions to its banner; it tried to do that by engaging them in campaigns for reform.

The basic method was the petition campaign. When the federation organized a campaign, it tried to get as many unions as possible to support it, whether they formally belonged to the U.C.S. or not. In 1881, for example, it began a campaign to convince the Senate to support legalization of unions. (The Chamber of Deputies had already proven itself in favor of such a law). According to the Moniteur, two hundred unions from all over France supported the appeal. In 1882, it was renewed. In 1883, the Moniteur announced the start of a petition for a law limiting the length of the working day to ten hours. Ultimately, 235 unions signed.[20]

Letters were sent to legislators and to the President of the Republic for a variety of causes, including those mentioned above. In 1883, a letter was sent complaining about the high rates of unemployment. It suggested that the cause was the inability of French industry to market its goods abroad and urged that the Republic pursue a more vigorous policy of imperialism to capture markets for French business. The writers

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[20]Ibid., October 5-12, October 13-19, 1882; January 4-11, February 1-8, 1883; January 3-10, 1884.

again took the occasion to remind the President that they were good workers who had always been respectful of republican legality.[21]

In November, 1883, Veyssier was chosen by the Conseil of the U.C.S. to serve as a lobbyist in the Senate with regard to the law on legalization. In this capacity, Veyssier wrote reports which he distributed to the Senators. They had a distinctly Barberettist ring to them. In one, he referred to 1789 as a great dividing line in French history. The Revolution had accomplished a much-needed reform when it had outlawed the guilds, which had monopolized economic power. It had made it possible for a worker, on his own, to rise to the status of patron. However, in the course of the nineteenth century an industrial revolution had taken place, and manual labor had become completely subordinated to capital. To protect himself, the worker now needed to right to organize.

Veyssier asked the Senators to eliminate a section of the proposed law which required unions to register their statutes and officers with the prefect. He assured the Senators that legalized unions would not be organs of revolution. Admittedly, "agents of disorder, the worst enemies of the Republic," had penetrated some unions, but "only a few." Legalization would weaken these elements, he claimed, since a union that was legally constituted would naturally concern itself only with

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[21]Ibid., November 10-17, 1882; January 4-11, February 22-March 1, October 18-25, 1883.

professional questions and exclude politics.[22] He reminded the Senators that in 1873 he had been among those who had participated in the forming of the Cercle de l'Union Syndicale Ouvrière. Had that not been dissolved, he claimed, the unions would be more strongly organized and totally unrevolutionary.[23]

Disregarding the obvious wishful thinking in his report, Veyssier gave a good statement of the outlook of the U.C.S. When the Senate refused to exclude the registration requirement, he urged passage of the law anyway. By contrast, the revolutionaries refused to accept a law which established police supervision over their organizations.[24]

Other approaches were made to the Chamber regarding the law on mutual aid societies and to the Paris Municipal Council on the question of subsidies for worker organizations. Regarding these subsidies, the federation recommended that they be given only after the Council was sure of the "moral value" of the union and the legitimacy of the demands it was making. It felt that activities such as professional courses, apprenticeship training, or the operation of a library were worthy of government financial support. It urged the Council to use its good offices to obtain contracts for worker cooperatives

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[22]The phrase "professional questions" meant, essentially, economic issues, or questions relating to the conditions of work. "Politics" was a code word for revolutionary activity, and originated from the fact that revolutionary unionists were concerned with the conquest of political power so as to change the society radically, while the moderate unionists had no interest in changing the system.

[23]Le Moniteur des syndicats, October 25-November 1, November 22-29, 1883.

[24]Ibid., March 13-20, 1884. The law was passed with the restrictions and registration clauses intact.

on public works projects, and forwarded a list of seventy existing associations that could qualify. Finally, it warned the Council to have nothing to do with socialist study circles, since they were occupied exclusively with "politics" and were enemies of the Republic.[25]

The U.C.S. ran campaigns against the commercial placement bureaus and for a law holding the employer responsible in industrial accidents.[26] The placement bureaus were widely regarded in working-class circles as exploitative; they played on the misery of the unemployed and charged a fee to place a worker in a job. The federation favored placement bureaus run by joint employer-employee committees in each industry or trade. They were not immediately successful with either of these issues, but they did contribute to creating an atmosphere favorable to reform. The law on industrial accidents was finally passed in 1898; the placement bureaus remained an unresolved problem.

Veyssier's group, true to its Barberettist philosophy, actively promoted the formation of worker cooperatives. In addition to its actions with regard to the Paris Municipal Council, it created the Chambre Consultative des Associations de Production in 1884. This group was composed of the directors of worker cooperatives, and was designed to provide legal and business advice, and help obtain credit. This was one of the

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[25]Ibid., November 6-12, 1884; June 23-July 7, 1889.

[26]Ibid., November 22-29, 1883; January 3-10, October 9-15, 1884.

most lasting aspects of the U.C.S.' work. The Chambre Consultative had twenty-nine members in 1884 and 183 in 1902; it was still in existence in the 1950s. In the late 1880s, it set up the Banque Cooperative des Associations Ouvriers de Production, a bank formed to extend cheap credit to cooperatives.[27]

Like most pre-1914 French labor federations, including the C.G.T., the U.C.S. was loosely organized. At its height, sixty-four labor unions belonged.[28] The number varied throughout the 1880s, but usually it was in the thirties.[29] Joining was a simple matter, since there were no dues or other obligations required. Unions joined and quit, and sometimes rejoined. If the leadership of a union was moderate, it might bring it into the federation. If collectivists captured the union, they would just as quickly and easily take it out.[30]

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[27]Ibid., December 4-11, 1884; APO 1: 275; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, pp. 381-82, 387-88; Moss, "The Socialism of Skilled Workers," pp. 321-22; Hubert-Valléroux, Les Associations professionnelles, p. 24.

[28]Le Moniteur des syndicats, August 2-9, 1883.

[29]Membership figures are impossible to come by. The number of affiliated unions is taken from the minutes of the meetings of the General Assemblies and executive commissions. See Le Moniteur des syndicats, November 26-December 2, 1882; May 31-June 6, August 2-9, 1883; December 27, 1883-January 3, 1884. By 1893, the U.C.S. counted only twenty-one member unions: February 12-20, 1893.

[30]Le Moniteur des syndicats, November 4-11, 1886, described how the Paris typographers joined and left the federation after successive leadership changes. Finally, when they split into two separate unions, the moderate Alliance Typographique applied for and was accepted into the U.C.S. The Fédération du Livre as a whole discussed joining the U.C.S., but it decided to join no organization except those of printers exclusively. See APO 1: 832; Marcel Bar, L'Organisation et l'action syndicale dans la typographie française: Patrons, ouvriers (Paris: Imprimerie et Librairie Duruy et Cie., 1907), p. 193. Barberet, Monographies professionnelles 6 (1889): 73, described how the cooks, under the Positivist Albert Gaze, joined and then quit the federation when the leadership changed. Also Le Moniteur des syndicats, May 14-21, 1885.

Even if a union belonged to the U.C.S., the closeness of the ties between it and the federation rested entirely on the former. If it chose to, it could send up to three delegates to the General Assemblies of the Conseil. Provincial unions, however, could have only one delegate (and he was chosen by the federation with the approval of the union).[31] An executive commission provided continuity of leadership between General Assemblies and administered the organization. In practice, the same men who constituted the executive commission made up the editorial board of the Moniteur and were the stockholders in the cooperative society which published the paper.

Their leader was the painter Veyssier, who was simultaneously Administrator-Delegate of the U.C.S. (i.e., its executive officer), administrator of the Moniteur and director of the cooperative. His major collaborators throughout most of the 1880s were trade unionists who have remained generally unknown:[32] Anatole Emille, a dress cutter; Marty, a jeweler; Souchet, a mechanic; Martel, a machine sawyer; Jouvidoux, an ornamental metal worker; Aufant, a typographer; Souchet, a mechanic; Fréval, a candy maker; Bausan, a musician; Bienfait, a cook; Rocherau, another typographer; and Paul Simon, Félix Simon, and Masson, whose occupations I was unable to determine. In the late 1880s a new group of militants appeared, who were more heavily concentrated in the white-collar occupations: Provost and Laurens,

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[31] The statutes of the U.C.S. are in Le Moniteur des syndicats, November 30-December 7, 1882.

[32] Theodore Zeldin, France, 1848-1945, vol. 1: Ambition, Love and Politics (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 257-60 also noted the important and unsung role played by relatively unknown figures, especially in the provinces.

accountants; Artaud, a clerk; Larran, a salesman; and Theobalt, occupation unknown. One can readily see that the U.C.S. did not represent the industrial worker, the miner, the blue-collar factory laborer. The U.C.S. organized the artisanal and skilled trades of Paris, groups for whom the cooperative workshop retained an aura of practicality. Veyssier's assistant and treasurer of the federation, Gruhier, was the administrator of the Caisse Centrale Populaire, a bank which supported cooperatives. In addition to the occupations already mentioned, one found the following unions in the U.C.S.: gardeners, chauffeurs, glassworkers, bakers, and printing foremen. The bakers' union was mixed, in that it included some small proprietors in its ranks who worked alone or with an assistant or two.[33]

The Union des Chambres Syndicales was not a mass organization. The average labor union in the 1880s had less than two hundred members, the police estimated. At most, then, the U.C.S. represented a few thousand workers, out of a working population of 7.5 million.[34] The only time that it reported circulation, the Moniteur claimed 950 subscriptions.[35]

However, the U.C.S. had an influence that transcended its small membership. It did publish a newspaper. It did rally working-class opinion at certain key moments; the petition for the 1884 law ultimately was supported by over two hundred

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[33]APO 2 (1901): 322.

[34]APP, series BA 1442; Joughin, "The Labor Movement," pp. 13-24.

[35]Le Moniteur des syndicats, December 20-27, 1883.

labor unions.[36] It did have a limited success in attracting support from the provinces. Four members of the Conseil came from outside Paris, and the Moniteur regularly printed notices from unions in the departments. Ties were maintained especially with Bordeaux and Lyons, but a correspondence was also kept up with unions in Besançon, Saint Quentin, Sedan, Reims, Nice, Niort, and Rouen. Veyssier was invited to the banquet of the Rouen unions in 1883, and delegates from Lyons, Besançon, Nice, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Reims, Bolbec, Rouen, Bordeaux, Sedan, Niort, and Limoges attended the 1884 banquet held by the federation in Paris.[37] At the banquet, Veyssier claimed that the U.C.S. had relations with 145 unions, but that figure seems exaggerated.

Perhaps its most important role was that it kept the class-collaborationist, antirevolutionary ideology alive. In addition, it maintained the idea of a federation of unions independent of any single political movement. In this respect, its children were not only the class collaborationists of the 1890s and 1900s, but the C.G.T. itself. Finally, it could take some credit for the law of 1884.

The passage of the 1884 law was the high point of the federation's existence. It had lobbied for it, petitioned for it, testified for it, and had made legalization an important point at every worker congress. Their influence was attested

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[36] Ibid., January 3-10, 1884.

[37] Bausan came from Flers, Gruhier from Mauberge, Marty from Lisieux and Paul Simon from Fournières. Ibid., February 1-8, August 2-9, 1893; July 17-24, 1884.

to by the presence of Waldeck-Rousseau at the elaborate banquet the federation gave in honor of the law's passage.[38]

There is no question that the law was seen by the government as a way of encouraging moderate unionism. In his instructions to the prefects, Waldeck-Rousseau urged them to promote the formation of legal unions. He thought such unions would concentrate on creating "useful institutions . . . retirement funds, mutual aid funds, mutual credit, courses, libraries, cooperative societies, information and placement bureaus . . . etc." He was obviously using the Barberettist organization as his model. He had no doubt that a growth in unionization would mean a decrease in strikes--again, a conclusion that could be justified only by using the U.C.S. as a point of reference.[39]

At the banquet (which was attended, in addition to Waldeck-Rousseau and Barberet, by one Senator, five Deputies, two Municipal Councillors, and two representatives from employer organizations), Waldeck-Rousseau paid tribute to Veyssier. His efforts, the Minister said, strongly aided in the passage of the law. He went on to say that a well-organized society required the establishment of durable, cordial relations between all elements of production. There were two schools among the working class. One said that if the worker did not have his rightful place in society, the whole society should

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[38]For two contemporary judgements on the influence of the U.C.S. on the 1884 law, see Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 63-64; Joughin, "The Labor Movement," p. 285.

[39]Waldeck-Rousseau's instructions may be found in Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Télégraphes, Direction du Travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnelles, 1896, p. xiii; Val Lorwin, The French Labor Movement (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1954), pp. 15, 19.

be destroyed. The other school, to which the U.C.S. belonged, said that if the worker did not have the position he deserved, it was necessary to attain it legally, peacefully, and honestly. Such was the job of the labor union. One reform in particular which would provide the worker with a more equitable stake in society was profit sharing. The minister hoped that the newly-organized unions would devote all their energy to the achievement of such plans. Finally, to prolonged applause, he drank to "republican government, to prosperity, and to the grandeur of our France through the grandeur and prosperity of labor."[40]

Veyssier gave an extended discourse, setting out the goals of the moderate labor movement. He wanted the following reforms: an extension of profit sharing; more public contracts for cooperatives; an extension of prud'hommal coverage; legal protection for women and children; a reduction in the working day; insurance against industrial accidents; union control of placement; retirement systems; and laws on plant safety and hygiene.

> This outline of a program that we are presenting is two years old, and was presented at the first banquet of the U.C.S. We have not varied from it. We have always followed faithfully the same line of economic conduct. As in the past, the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France will be constantly involved in pushing for more progress, and will be happy to meet with other groups of employers or workers to work together in this regenerative task. We say to the employer groups: Come to us. Have confidence in our good faith. We will come half way to meet you. [41]

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[40] Le Moniteur des syndicats, July 17-24, 1884.

[41] Ibid.

There was also a delegate from the cooperative associations who reminded the assembly, to much applause, that the union was only the first step to the cooperative. The unionists of today, he assured his listeners, were the cooperatists of tomorrow. Cooperative members truly belonged to the working class, contributing to the wealth of the nation. By contrast, the revolutionaries--characterized by him as politicians, journalists, and professors--were not true workers. He affirmed that the republican form of government, which the workers had established, would be defended by them.[42]

With republicanism went nationalism and patriotism. The moderates were completely out of touch with the radical ideas of antipatriotism, antimilitarism, anti-imperialism. On the contrary, they favored colonial ventures as an example of France's superiority and civilization: "The success of our armies in Tonkin has touched a chord in the hearts of our people. We can say, from this moment on, that republican France . . . is ready to fulfill the role assigned it by civilization."[43] They even went so far as to support universal, three-year conscription.[44] As the Moniteur put it, the security of the nation rested on its unity, not on its division into warring classes.[45]

Because they believed in the Republic, they also believed

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[42]Ibid.

[43]Ibid., June 19-26, 1884. Also January 11-18, 1883.

[44]Ibid., April 3-10, 1884.

[45]Ibid., October 5-12, October 20-27, November 26-December 2, 1882.

that peaceful reform was feasible through universal suffrage.[46] They had a different goal than the collectivists. Besides improving, as much as possible, living conditions for the workers, the moderates desired a diffusion of property ownership. "The more small capitalists there are, the fewer revolutions will be possible."[47] They urged workers to become possessors through the cooperative.[48] As an intermediate step, the moderates believed in profit sharing. This seemed a perfect way to give the workers an interest (both pecuniary and moral) in an enterprise, and raise their standard of living. Their lack of militancy, and respect for private ownership was shown by the fact that although they believed strongly in profit sharing, they opposed any law which would make it obligatory. That, they felt, would be too great a violation of the freedom of enterprise. The only method of implementation they favored was direct negotiation between union and employer.[49]

Although they favored state intervention in some cases (such as legalization and aid to cooperatives), the Barberettists maintained a healthy suspicion of it, which was common to the republicanism of the era. However, they were realistic enough to know that in some areas, little could be accomplished without

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[46]Ibid., October 5-12, October 13-19, 1882.

[47]Ibid., January 18-25, 1883.

[48]Ibid., February 1-8, 1883.

[49]Ibid., December 28, 1882-January 4, 1883; April 19-26, 1883; January 14-21, 1886.

the assistance of the government. Thus, they unenthusiastically favored a state-supported social security system.[50]

The Veyssier group admitted the possibility of strikes as a last resort, but was decidedly unfavorable to them. It urged upon the unions instead a program of regular dues, a full treasury, and the utilization of the treasury for the purposes of mutual aid. As much as they might claim that they recognized the possible necessity of strikes, there is no indication that any of the federation's unions ever engaged in a work stoppage with the backing and support of the federation. There was never a collection taken, or an attempt made to rally support for, a striking member union.[51]

The attitude of the U.C.S. was exposed during the strike of the Anzin miners in 1884. It had been asked by a group of socialists to contribute to a fund for the strikers. Veyssier, speaking at a meeting of the Conseil, reported that the organization disapproved of strikes, that it had no funds with which to support them, and that opening a subscription in the Moniteur would set a dangerous precedent. Several members of the Conseil voiced opposition to Veyssier, and called for some act of solidarity with the miners. Finally, a resolution was adopted which condemned the mineowners and criticized the government for sending troops. However, no official action of support was taken. A private collection was taken up at the meeting; only six and a half francs were collected. When the

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[50]Ibid., November 18-25, 1882.

[51]Ibid., October 5-12, November 10-17, 1882; January 11-18, April 19-26, 1883.

strike was crushed, Veyssier noted that it demonstrated the futility of strikes and proved that his method was the correct one.[52]

One reason why the U.C.S. remained weak was its unwillingness to take militant stands. This inertness often met with opposition from members, and probably explains why membership figures went down from 1884 on. When the Senate had the law on legalization before it, in the beginning of 1884, but was refusing to abrogate Article 416 of the Civil Code (which made strikes illegal) a meeting of the Conseil was held. Several members favored some kind of action; proposals were made ranging from a public meeting to an outright protest demonstration. One member regretted that the federation did not do more of this kind of thing. But all such ideas were rejected. Instead, the Conseil authorized the executive commission to write to the Senate and disassociate the federation from the violent attacks directed at the Senate from revolutionary quarters which, it wrote, represented only a small minority of French workers.[53]

On the other hand, the U.C.S. was very active in seeking to create bonds with the employer class. Amicable, permanent relations were highly desired. In 1882, the U.C.S. began to meet with the Union Nationale du Commerce et de l'Industrie, an organization of ninety syndicats patronaux. The two federations

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[52]Ibid., April 17-24, April 24-May 1, 1884; October 5-12, November 10-17, 1882; April 19-26, 1883.

[53]Ibid., January 31-February 7, 1884.

agreed to hold joint conferences for the purpose of studying ways to prevent strikes and improve working conditions. The U.C.S. saw it as an excellent way of demonstrating that rational discussions could be held with capitalists. Unfortunately, it was forced to admit that the plan did not work too well; many employers just refused to talk with labor representatives.[54]

The U.C.S. did not give up, however. It continued to arrange meetings, and got the Union Nationale to agree to the principle of permanent joint committees in each industry. M. Muzet, the president of the employer group, was invited to the 1884 banquet. There he promised that workers would be invited to the festivities of his organization, and promised to work for the desirable accord of the two "inseparable factors of production." He was true to his word to the extent that Veyssier was a frequent guest at the functions of the Union Nationale. The Moniteur sang the praises of businessmen who organized their own syndicats patronaux.[55] Class-collaborationists looked with favor upon employer organization--they saw it as a step toward closer interclass relations. It was easier to negotiate with an organized employer class than with numerous independent entrepreneurs. This was an ironic twist on the argument that labor unions were desirable because they stabilized the anarchic tendencies of the workers.

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[54]Ibid., October 5-12, October 13-19, 1882.

[55]Ibid., February 22-March 1, October 18-25, 1883; July 17-24, November 6-12, 1884; August 17-31, 1890; May 7-21, 1891; April 10-24, 1892.

The U.C.S. also organized and participated in worker congresses. As we have already noted, two congresses were held after Le Havre by the moderates. Although Léon de Seilhac voiced a generally held opinion when he said they were of no importance,[56] they are instructive for an examination of the federation's ideology and to show the weakness of the moderate ideology as compared to the revolutionary idea in this period.

The 1881 Congress, held in Paris, called itself the Fifth National Socialist Workers' Congress, to establish a continuity with the series of four which began at Paris in 1876. The meeting was ineffectively organized. There had not been much publicity about it during the year. A poor response to the original announcement led to a widely-held assumption that plans for the Congress had been dropped. However, in the space of only eight days, the organizers announced in the press that it would take place, and opened the Congress. The Municipal Council had promised a hall, but the prefect vetoed the idea, probably on the grounds that if he gave the moderate unionists a hall he would be constrained to do the same for the revolutionaries. As a result, the location of the meeting was in doubt right up to the time of its opening. Finally, a hall was obtained in a distant corner of Paris. Not surprisingly, attendance was low. Only thirty-six delegates appeared, of whom thirty were from Paris.[57]

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[56]Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, p. 70; Robert Brécy, Le Mouvement syndical en France, 1871-1921: Essai bibliographique (Paris: Mouton & cie., 1963), p. 11.

[57]"Le Ve Congrès National Ouvrier Socialiste, tenu à Paris, du 27 novembre au 5 décembre, 1881, Salon des Familles," Handwritten MS, 3pp., Musée Social; "Cinquième Congrès," Revue Occidentale, no. 2 (March 1, 1882), pp. 218-20.

Neither Finance nor Keufer attended, although the Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes did send a delegate. Camille Desmoulins, representing a teachers' union, was denied admittance because he was not a manual worker. All discussions were closed to the public, and all the delegates were cooperatists except for the lone Positivist.

The agenda contained just five items, with many subtopics. The main questions included the goals and organization of labor unions, placement bureaus, the mutual obligations of employers and employees, joint committees, model apprenticeship contracts, profit sharing, cooperation, and social security. It is interesting to note that the moderates raised the idea of a bourse du travail--a labor center of information, coordination, and job placement--at the 1881 Congress. Yet, when the bourses became a significant factor in the labor movement in the 1890s, the revolutionaries dominated them, and they have been remembered, wrongly, as of revolutionary inspiration.[58]

No record of the debates remains--only the resolutions which were passed. They called on all worker to form unions, and to create regional and craft federations. They demanded the abrogation of all restrictive laws, the elimination of placement bureaus, and the assumption of placement by the unions. A resolution asked all unions to create joint committees with employers and to use them to fix the price of labor and eventually to prevent strikes. Other resolutions asked for the suppression of religious education in the schools; the spread of lay,

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[58]"Le Ve Congrès National Ouvrier Socialiste."

compulsory, free primary education, with accessible and free secondary education; and the creation of professional schools in each commune. The government was called on to establish a committee charged with regulating the safety and health conditions in the factories, in cooperation with the unions. Finally, the Congress adopted a plan for retirement funds to be administered by the unions but subsidized by the state. The Congress refused, however, to vote a resolution calling for the abrogation of the law prohibiting international labor organizations. The resolution was probably offered by the Positivist delegate, since the Comteans were very interested in creating international craft federations and felt that the law, originally designed to suppress the A.I.T., would be invoked against such organizations.[59]

If anything, the Sixth Congress, held in Bordeaux in 1882, was even less impressive. Only twenty-seven delegates attended, and twenty-three of those were from the host city. Of the four others, one was from Algeria, two (Marty and Aufant) were from Paris and represented the U.C.S., and one (Paul Simon) was from Niort but he was also secretary of the U.C.S.[60] The report of the planning committee stressed the smallness

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[59]Ibid.

[60]"VIe Congrès Socialiste National Ouvrier de Bordeaux, septembre, 1882," Handwritten MS, 4pp., Musée Social. Moss, "The Socialism of Skilled Workers," p. 317, failed to notice the presence of the Parisian delegates and was unaware that Simon was a U.C.S. member.

of the group and the number of defections the moderate movement had suffered.

The Congress lasted only two days, but the delegates nonetheless took their task seriously. Marty presided over the opening session and issued the traditional announcement: "We wish to employ only peaceful and legal means" to improve the conditions of the working class.[61] While the dominant motif was cooperation, the differing reactions to capitalism were again evident. However, no attempt was made to synthesize, or settle the differences; they existed side by side in relative comfort. Aufant, for example, was a cooperatist with an anticapitalist perspective. He recognized that the working class was exploited, but he felt the strike was not a practical solution. The way to eliminate the exploiters was for the workers themselves to become their own employers--through cooperation. Aufant, who was a typographer, told the Congress how Parisian cooperatives could bid for contracts put out by the city; a printers' cooperative printed the Journal Officiel. He envisioned a day when the state, similarly, would turn the mines over to the workers.[62]

The jeweler Marty put more emphasis on the existing situation. He particularly attacked the evils of strikes. They ruined French industry, and caused great joy among France's foreign competitors. The virtue of the union was to unite workers

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[61] "Le VIe Congrès Socialiste National Ouvrier."

[62] Ibid.

to reduce the number of strikes. The workers' unity was better utilized in forming cooperatives. Like other cooperatists, Marty favored reforms such as the extension of the prud'hommes, but he emphasized that they would be needed only until the workers organized cooperatives; after that, they would be superfluous as there would be no capitalist class left.[63]

The other trend was represented by some of the Bordeaux delegates such as Rousset, who criticized those who made capital out to be an antagonist of labor. In reality, both were necessary social elements which had to coexist. The pro-capitalist attitude was most frankly put by Drean, a basket maker. Why should the worker fight capital, he asked: "I am thirsty to become a capitalist and a bourgeois."[64]

What bound these two distinct attitudes together was their shared dislike of violence, revolution and collectivism. Marty summed up the dominant attitude: "If there are citizens who believe they can accomplish things more quickly with other methods, we ask them to reflect; we believe that we will accomplish more with peaceful and legal ways than with violence; we call on the citizens who hear us to follow the legal ways open to them by universal suffrage."[65]

The resolutions were familiar, with but a few new, minor wrinkles.[66] It was decided to hold a seventh congress, and

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[63] Ibid.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

[66] The resolutions were for the abrogation of all legal restrictions on unions; recognition of the union as a civil person; elimination of commercial placement bureaus, prison work and work in convents; regulation of the workshop by unions and the prud'hommes; the prohibition of the creation of mutual aid societies

the task of organizing it was again entrusted to the U.C.S. One might wonder how the federation's activists felt about holding yet another congress when the last two had been so poorly attended. Initially, they were enthusiastic. They had not given up the idea that the U.C.S. could attract many more unions; they expected the violent, revolutionary style to rapidly demonstrate its bankruptcy. They watched with glee as the Guesdists and Possibilists split at the Congress of Saint-Etienne (1882).[67]

As the U.C.S. organized the Seventh Congress, it feared that the socialist groups would try to take it over. Therefore, it decided that the Congress would only be for labor unions.[68] This decision was an unrecognized but extremely important event in the history of French labor. It was the first time that a workers' group decided to hold a congress of unions exclusively. Up to that time, study groups of socialist bent, societies for popular education (and other causes) and cooperatives had been included in the world of labor. It was the moderates who gave the French union movement its exclusively ouvrièrist character. On the other hand, all unions, whether revolutionary or not, were invited to attend.

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by employers; elimination of night work where possible; elimination of all taxes except for one on capital; free and lay education; civil and social rights for both sexes; equal salaries for men and women; an eight-hour day for women; suppression of religious services in government-supported hospitals; representation of all industries in the prud'hommes; creation of joint arbitration committees; creation of lay and professional orphanages for children of both sexes.

[67] Le Moniteur des syndicats, October 5-12, 1882.

[68] Ibid., May 31-June 6, 1882.

Veyssier's group decided to bring the proposal for the congress to the Parisian unions which were at that time meeting in preparation for sending worker delegates to the International Exposition of Amsterdam. Here the U.C.S. ran into trouble. Many of the Parisian unions were Possibilist; some were Guesdists. They were not able to work well together on the question of choosing delegates to Amsterdam and were not interested in attending a U.C.S. congress. Besides, the Possibilists and the Guesdists had both scheduled congresses of their own for 1883 and early 1884. That was the last that was heard of the Seventh Congress. It was never held. The U.C.S. did not have enough influence or importance to bring it off. That did not mean that it abandoned the idea of a congress of unions. When the labor unions of Lyons, acting in reaction to both Guesdist and Possibilist attempts to dominate the unions, called for an independent labor union congress in 1886, the U.C.S. became one of its major supporters.[69]

The Lyons Congress represented, at first, a new departure for the French working class. It was an effort to break out of the organizational patterns dictated by the socialist sects and to re-establish a politically independent workers' movement.[70] This was in keeping with the U.C.S.' desires, and some historians

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[69]Ibid., June 14-21, September 27-October 4, October 25-November 1, 1883.

[70]Joughin, "The Labor Movement," p. 250; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 63-64; Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, pp. 34-34; Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 183-92; Pelloutier, Histoire des bourses, p. 59.

have been under the incorrect impression that the federation organized the Congress. It played no role in setting up the meeting, which was organized solely by the labor unions of Lyons.[71] In fact, the U.C.S. learned about it only in June of 1886. It did think it was a good idea, but only if it were limited strictly to legal unions and that both study circles and unions that had not complied with the provisions of the 1884 law were excluded. It withheld its support for the Congress--although the Moniteur continued to run the announcement of the meeting--pending acceptance of these two requirements. In August, the Lyons workers sent a representative to meet with the Conseil. Opinion was split, with many members voicing misgivings.

The Lyons unions made no secret of the fact that they wished to see the creation of a new federation come about as a result of the Congress. To this, members of the U.C.S. quite naturally replied that such an organization already existed. Others were not happy about the fact that the illegal unions had not been excluded, although the Lyons delegate sought to mollify them by saying that the organizers did not expect many of them to attend because they would not be able to get subsidies, and the study circles were excluded. The Parisians were also afraid of being outnumbered by the Lyonnais, since the rules of the Congress stated that a delegate could represent more

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[71] Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, p. 264, claimed it was organized by the U.C.S.; Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, p. 35, claimed that Veyssier was an organizer; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," p. 64 and APO 1: 254, also credited the U.C.S. Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, p. vii, said that the Barberettists were responsible. Barberet did help with the arrangements for the Congress by providing a list of all the legal unions he had knowledge of.

than one union but he could only have one vote. Finally, the U.C.S. decided to support the Congress. Six delegates were chosen.[72]

The Congress, as perceived by its organizers, was not meant to be revolutionary. In the preliminary notices, the planning committee reiterated the old idea that through unionization the strike would disappear. Even after the Congress had ended, and a revolutionary orientation had been determined, the Executive Commission of the new federation said only that it would seek to get the legislature to translate the resolutions of the Congress into law; this would be the best way to avoid strikes.[73]

However, the moderate delegates at Lyons were surprised at how numerous the revolutionaries were. Apparently, a number of study circles had transformed themselves in short order into labor unions.[74] Whereas the planning committee had shied away from collectivism, calling only for a just retribution for labor, the Congress of 1886 ended as a victory for the revolutionaries, who went so far as to rip down the tricolors in the hall and replace them with red flags.[75] Even the government had expected a more moderate Congress, and had provided a 5,000 franc subsidy to enable poorer unions to attend.[76] One

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[72] Le Moniteur des syndicats, June 3-10, July 22-29, September 9-16, October 7-14, October 26-November 4, 1886. The delegates were Veyssier, Gruhier, Masson, Souchet, Théobalt, Frogat.

[73] Congrès National des Syndicats Ouvriers tenu à Lyon en octobre 1886, compte rendu officiel (Lyon: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1887), pp. 7, 14.

[74] Le Moniteur des syndicats, October 21-28, 1886.

[75] Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, p. 194; Le Moniteur des syndicats, December 16-23, 1886.

may discern here the hand of Barberet.

The main reason for the Congress was to create a new federation. This the U.C.S. opposed. Some of the delegates, such as Victor Delahaye, a moderate who was not affiliated with the U.C.S., proposed a delay, thus hoping to maintain a facade of unity. But the revolutionaries successfully pressed for its immediate creation. Interestingly, some Possibilists too were lukewarm to the idea, since they controlled an existing organization, the Federation des Travailleurs Socialistes de France, but in the end they supported the idea.[77]

The U.C.S. remained adamantly opposed. Veyssier conceded that the idea of federation made sense, and cited his role with the Union des Chambres Syndicales as proof that he was a believer in it. But a common program on which unity could be forged was a preliminary necessity. Meanwhile, he urged the assembled unions to join one of the existing organizations. The final vote on the question was ninety for the new federation, fifteen opposed, and four abstentions.[78]

On the question of the eight-hour day, the U.C.S. was similarly isolated. Both Gruhier and Veyssier spoke in opposition

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[76]Congrès National . . . 1886, p. 15; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, p. 264.

[77]Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 195-97; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," p. 65. On Delahaye, see APO 3 (1903): 274-76.

[78]Congrès National . . . 1886, p. 48; Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 195-97; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," p. 65; Le Moniteur des syndicats, November 4-11, 1886.

to it. Gruhier claimed that he would support even a six-hour day, but only if national production did not suffer and if other nations instituted similar regulations. He drew the attention of the delegates to certain trades in which work was seasonal; on season, a 14-18 hour day was a necessity, as for example in the fur-skinning business. Veyssier added that an eight-hour day would result in hardship for piece workers, who would find their wages reduced.[79] These arguments became commonplace among other class-collaborationist groups, who based their opposition to the eight-hour day on either the harm it would do to the workers or the harm it would do to the nation.

The vote was only slightly more favorable to the U.C.S. on the matter of the 1884 law. Veyssier defended the law, although he admitted modifications were needed. He felt that it was a great step forward, and to call for its abrogation was foolish. Delahaye supported this position, but they were once again outnumbered by those who agreed with Blondeau--that the law put workers in the same category as prostitutes by requiring them to register. By a vote of 74-29-7, the Congress declared that it did not accept the law, and suggested that it should be abolished and a new one formulated after consultation with the unions.[80]

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[79] Congrès National . . . 1886, p. 185; Le Moniteur des syndicats, November 18-25, 1886.

[80] Congrès National . . . 1886, pp. 350-54; Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 197-203; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," p. 67.

Also at issue in the Congress was the idea of a Conseil Supérieur du Travail, which was under consideration by the government. The Conseil was to be an appointive body functioning in the Ministry of Commerce. It was to be composed of representatives of workers and employers, as well as government officials. Its purpose was to serve as an advisory body on social legislation.

Naturally, Veyssier favored the idea:

> This institution, if it existed, would be very useful in some circumstances, because the amiable determination of a maximum work day requires specific studies, which must be undertaken by all the interested parties. The Conseil Supérieur du Travail would naturally serve as the representative of the workers and would defend their interests. 81

Another delegate said that it would be the most powerful instrument ever seen for the attainment of social peace. Possibly because the majority of delegates did not believe that social peace was a high-priority goal, the Conseil Supérieur du Travail went down to defeat 74-21-15, as did a proposal for the use of compulsory arbitration to solve labor disputes.[82]

The Congress' main achievement was to launch the Fédération Nationale des Syndicats et Groupes Corporatifs Ouvriers de France. The U.C.S. refused to join it. In spite of the overwhelming vote at Lyons, however, the Fédération

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[81] Congrès National . . . 1886, p. 188.

[82] Ibid., pp. 146, 369. Also APO 2: 322-23.

Nationale des Syndicats did not do well. It was almost immediately taken over by the Guesdists, who made it an arm of their Parti Ouvrier. Its subsequent congresses, lacking in direction, poorly attended, and controlled by the political leadership of the Guesdists, testified once again to the counterproductivity of factional disputes and political involvements.[83] The Moniteur stressed time and again that the labor movement had to maintain an autonomous character and remain free of all political tutelage.[84]

There was no love lost between the Fédération Nationale des Syndicats and the U.C.S. The revolutionaries regarded the moderates with undisguised contempt and were sure that they were merely government agents. Veyssier was subjected to a personal attack at the Congress as a result of his decoration.[85] The U.C.S., in response, planned to call a congress of its own to rally all the unions which accepted the law of 1884. But although they talked about it for awhile, the moderates could not effectuate their plans. They did not have enough influence on their own and could not attract more support; the congress was never held.[86]

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[83] APO 1: 255; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 68-71, 93-99, 116-17, 182-203; Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, p. 35; Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 204-13.

[84] For a sampling, see Le Moniteur des syndicats, October 5-12, October 13-19, 1882; March 26-April 9, 1893.

[85] Congrès National . . . 1886, pp. 382-85; Le Moniteur des syndicats, November 4-11, 1886.

[86] Le Moniteur des syndicats, June 26-July 10, September 18-October 2, 1887.

The U.C.S. did engage in some further activities. It participated, for a time, in the creation of the Paris Bourse du Travail, until the revolutionaries established control over it. Then it disassociated itself from the Bourse.[87]

The U.C.S. was clearly out of touch with the great majority of organized French labor. It grew weaker and weaker, and by the last years of the decade was nonfunctioning. There was still a coterie grouped around the Moniteur which continued to publish the paper, but a lack of funds caused it to become a biweekly. More importantly, it changed its orientation. Rather than being a union newspaper, it became a journal of profit sharing and mutual aid. In the 1890s, its columns were filled with news of various mutual aid societies[88] and organizations for the promotion of profit sharing. These were not exclusively worker organizations, but Veyssier and Gruhier threw themselves into their activities. In particular, they worked with the Banque Cooperative des Associations Ouvriers de Production,and the Société pour l'Etude Pratique de la Participation aux Bénéfices.[89]

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[87]Ibid., January 8-22, January 22-February 5, March 18-April 1, 1888.

[88]In the 1890s, the mutual aid movement experienced a small boom. Tens of thousands of French men and women joined mutual aid societies. They were not necessarily workers, and the societies they joined had nothing to do with the labor unions. They were, in effect, the equivalent of insurance companies, providing protection for unexpected tragedies such as illness or death. See Zeldin, France, pp. 661-63.

[89]Veyssier helped organize the Congrès de la Participation dans les Bénéfices in 1889 along with Barberet and Laroche-Joubert, an industrialist who was later involved in the Yellow movement. Veyssier and Gruhier also attended the Congrès International de l'Intervention des Pouvoirs Publics dans le Contrat du Travail. For these and similar activities. see Le Moniteur des syndicats,

The U.C.S. also became more and more enamored of the capitalist class. It went so far as to authorize the inclusion of employers in labor unions under the title of honorary members. It looked with great favor on the Catholic mixed unions of Roubaix. The Moniteur praised them as a kind of family, with the employer as a father. This kindly father raised the wages of the workers without being asked, as long as profits permitted. He even gave them an occasional banquet, and actually met with his "children." For the U.C.S. in the 1890s, this was the model for the industrial relations they desired.[90]

In 1892, Veyssier tried to reconstitute the U.C.S. A new union, the Union Syndicale des Comptables was created, and Veyssier became its president. The bookkeepers' union became the mainstay of the new Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France. A series of organizational meetings was held, and twenty-one unions adopted new statutes and joined the federation. The statutes committed the members to work for entente between capital and labor and for profit sharing. The new attempt never got off the ground, although the comptables continued to grow modestly.[91]

September 2-16, 1888; January 20-February 3, July 7-21, 1889; August 28-September 10, 1892; July 30-August 19, 1899. A lead article by C. Deville, who had been at the Paris Congress of 1879 and who had maintained good relations with the U.C.S. over the years (he had praised them as having carried on the spirit of the First Congress in a letter to Le Moniteur, October 27-November 2, 1882), contrasted the vitality of the three million mutualists (i.e., members of mutual aid societies) with the 800,000 union members. He urged the unions to give up politics and concentrate on mutual aid. March 19-April 8, 1905.

[90] Ibid., August 13-27, 1893; August 30-September 19, 1903.

[91] Ibid., August 28-September 10, 1892; February 12-20, March 16-26, March 26-April 9, October 22-November 5, 1893; July 1-15, October 21-November 4, 1894; June 9-20, 1895; February 20-March 12, November 20-December 10, 1898.

By the time Veyssier died in 1905, the labor movement had passed the Barberettists by. The U.C.S. had long since ceased to be a force in the labor movement. On the other hand, the trend of thought represented by the moderates lived on in the organizations of Yellows, Catholics, and C.G.T. reformists. The Moniteur did not hesitate to give these groups its moral support; it recognized its patrimony.[92]

As an organization, the U.C.S. had only a limited influence, especially after the passage of the 1884 law. Even the government, which had supported the federation, must have realized its inconsequence. In 1891, when the Conseil Supérieur du Travail was created, worker representatives were named by the Minister of Commerce. None of those chosen were from the U.C.S. The worker representatives, although not revolutionaries, were men such as Keufer, Finance, and Delahaye: they represented what would become the reformist wing of the C.G.T. Nothing could have demonstrated so clearly how the government had abandoned the U.C.S. Almost alone among the organized working class, the U.C.S. had supported the creation of the Conseil Supérieur de Travail. The government, however, chose to look for support from other groups. It found them in the C.G.T. reformists, among whom the Positivists were prominent. The reformists may not have had a linear kinship with the Barberettists, but ideologically the relationship was direct and clear. This

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[92]See Chapter X.

will become apparent in the next chapter.

The U.C.S., then, had an importance that was greater than historians have been willing to credit it with. It was the connecting link between the labor ideology developed during the Second Empire and at the early Congresses and the class-collaborationist groups of the early twentieth century. The Barberettist federation kept alive the ideas of the non-political federation, the joint committee, amicable relations with the capitalist class, labor republicanism, cooperation, and the diffusion of property. It upheld the concept that a labor union did not have to be revolutionary or socialist, but that the worker, in pursuing his own interests, could also support the national interest.

The U.C.S. made concrete contributions also. More than any other labor group, it could take credit for the legalization of unions. Although the revolutionary unions objected to the restrictive aspects of the law, it was a great achievement for the French working class. Although Veyssier's group never attracted overwhelming support, it did offer some Parisian unions the opportunity to work together for common goals. The U.C.S. participated in the founding of the Bourse du Travail, and in fact originated the idea. Finally, it supported and assisted worker cooperatives and encouraged the institution of profit sharing plans.

Its contribution was not negligible. On the other hand, it clearly did not meet the felt needs of the growing French working class. Its program was not effective in improving the

conditions of the skilled workers and artisans. In fact, the dream of entering the class of small proprietors was rapidly disappearing. Profit sharing plans were virtually nonexistent; cooperative workshops rarely succeeded. The skilled worker faced competition and unemployment from the increased use of machinery. The small workshop was giving way to the factory. In addition, the U.C.S. offered nothing to the emerging industrial proletariat.

The U.C.S. was too meek, too solicitous of the capitalists. For a moderate ideology to attract significant numbers of French workers, it had to be put at the service of a vigorous struggle for improvements and reforms. This was the tactic adopted by the C.G.T. reformists, and it explains their greater success.

CHAPTER III

REFORMIST SYNDICALISM AND THE GROWTH OF THE C.G.T. (1895-1906)

The 1890s and early 1900s were a period of growth for the labor movement. Labor union membership went from 139,692 in 1890 to 781,344 in 1905.[1] The Confédération Générale du Travail was founded in 1895. At the time, it competed with both the Fédération Nationale des Syndicats and the Fédération des Bourses du Travail. The Guesdist-controlled Fédération Nationale expired shortly thereafter, however, and the Fédération des Bourses merged with the C.G.T. in 1902, making the Confédération the major union organization. But it would be a mistake to assume that the C.G.T. dominated the labor movement in France. Only one-tenth of the French working class belonged to a union, and the C.G.T. represented only one-half of the unionized workers.[2] Many of the non-C.G.T. unions rejected the official revolutionary ideology of the Confédération and identified instead with Catholic syndicalism or Yellow unionism. Even within the C.G.T., not all the unions adopted

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[1]Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Télégraphes, Direction du Travail, Annuaire des syndicats professionnelles, 1896, p. xxiv; ibid., 1905, p. xxxi.

[2]Ibid., 1905, p. xxxiii. In 1905, the C.G.T. had 347,062 members.

the revolutionary posture.

However, unlike the reformists in the French Socialist Party, those in the C.G.T. have never really received their due.[3] The creation of the C.G.T. at Limoges in 1895 was the result of an alliance between two groups: reformist syndicalists led by Auguste Keufer and socialists of different factions who all were angry at the political domination of the labor movement. In toto, they represented what we have come to call syndicalists. Only later were they joined by the anarchists (technically, anarchosyndicalists), who entered the movement after 1895 and usually via the Fédération des Bourses.

In its early years, the C.G.T. was kept alive by the reformist Fédération du Livre and the railroad workers' union, the Syndicat National des Chemins de Fer, which almost alone provided both the funds and the original leadership.[4] In this

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[3]Jacques Julliard, "Diversité des réformismes," Le Mouvement social, no. 87 (April-June, 1974), p. 3. The whole issue was devoted to reformism, socialist as well as syndicalist. Also, Michael Sabatino DeLucia, "The Remaking of French Syndicalism, 1911-1918: The Growth of the Reformist Philosophy" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, 1971), pp. 3, 33-34; Theodore Zeldin, France, 1848-1945, vol. 1: Ambition, Love and Politics (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 231-37. Contemporaries were more aware of the influence of the reformists. Two studies were devoted to them which still appear in the bibliographies of most present-day students: Pierre Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste (Paris: Librairie C. Reinwald, A. Schleicher, successeur, 1912) and Felicien Challaye, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et syndicalisme réformiste (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1909). Val Lorwin, The French Labor Movement (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1954) showed a sensitivity to the presence of reformists, pp. 29-30, 43-46. Strangely, he felt that the reformists failed to become the mainstream postwar current, a conclusion most would disagree with, including this writer. Georges Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndical sous la Troisième République (Paris: Payot, 1967), p. 109, is typical when he said that for the twenty years preceding World War I, revolutionary syndicalism dominated the labor movement. Robert Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale française: Militants et théoriciens (Paris: Armand Colin, 1948), p. 24, pointed out that the reformists have been largely forgotten.

period, the reformists pioneered many of the techniques of peaceful labor relations, such as collective bargaining, contracts, and arbitration. On the other hand, the fact that they were not revolutionary did not make them totally passive. They developed nonrevolutionary weapons of struggle such as the boycott and the label, and engaged in limited strikes. Their goals were similar to those of the American labor leader who, when asked what he wanted, answered with one word: more. They wanted better wages, shorter hours, better conditions, more labor legislation, more government protection; they did not want a socialist revolution.

Although most of the reformists agreed with the traditional moderate idea that the Confédération should be independent of political control, they did not hesitate to work with parlementarians, particularly those in the Socialist Party, for social legislation. The parliamentary system was important to them, and not only had they supported the republican forces in the Dreyfus Affair, but they lent their support to Alexandre Millerand when he accepted the post of Minister of Commerce in the bourgeois government of Waldeck-Rousseau. For this, they were excoriated by the revolutionary syndicalists, who rejected both the parliamentary system of government and socialist participation in it.[5]

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[4]Only Henri Dubief recognized the dominant role played in the early C.G.T. by the moderates. See Le Syndicalisme révolutionnaire (Paris: Armand Colin, Collection U: Serie Idées Politiques, 1969), pp. 26-27.

[5]Victor Griffuelhes, "Les Deux Conceptions du syndicalisme: le syndicalisme révolutionnaire," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 146 (January 1, 1905), pp. 4-5; Griffuelhes speech at XVe Congrès National Corporatif (9e de la Confédération) et Conférence des

This caused a struggle between revolutionaries and reformists for control of the C.G.T. Although the reformists never really took over, they were successful in changing its orientation. By the end of World War I, the Confédération adopted the program and techniques of the reformists and operated along strictly reformist lines.

Reformist syndicalism was not monolithic, even though many scholars classify all reformists together.[6] Recently, however, historians have come to realize that there were serious differences among those who are generally thought of as reformists. Jacques Julliard, for example, has shown the divergences between Keufer of the printers' union and Emile Basly of the miners.[7] James Butler, in one of the best and most nuanced treatments, was able to distinguish three marked currents in the C.G.T., as opposed to the traditional view of a bipartite division of revolutionaries and reformists. Butler described them as moderates, socialist syndicalists and anarchist

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Bourses du Travail tenu à Amiens du 8 au 16 octobre 1906, compte rendu des travaux, p. 167; James Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier and the Emergence of the French Syndicalist Movement, 1880-1906" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1960), pp. 327, 347-49, 353-56.

[6]See, for example, Zeldin, France, pp. 238-39; Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, pp. 11-13; Challaye, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et syndicalisme réformiste, p. 106n; Lorwin, The French Labor Movement, pp. 43-44; Gaetan Pirou, Les Doctrines économiques en France depuis 1870 (Paris: Armand Colin, 1925), p. 43.

[7]Julliard, "Diversité des réformismes," pp. 3-5.

syndicalists. In his schema, the first two united to create the C.G.T. in order to take the labor movement out of political entanglements. Then, a loose coalition of the latter two groups, encompassing anarchists, Allemanists, Blanquists, and even Guesdists took control of the Confédération on the basis of a shared opposition to Socialist ministerialism. When their differences became too great, the moderates threw their weight back to the side of the socialist syndicalists. When Butler ended his study in 1906, the anarchist syndicalists were still in control.[8]

Michael Sabatino DeLucia, in a more recent study, dealt with the 1911-1918 period. He too discovered different branches of reformism, although he identified the divisions differently than did Butler. DeLucia claimed that one type of reformism was represented by Keufer, the other by Alphonse Merrheim, leader of the Federation of Metal Workers. Merrheim was the real subject of his dissertation, and DeLucia felt that the Keuferite tradition was anachronistic and irrelevant to twentieth-century labor problems, whereas Merrheim's reformist policy dominated the C.G.T. after the First World War.[9]

Pierre Carcanagues, in a classic study written contemporary to the formative years of the C.G.T., distinguished between revolutionary reformists such as Louis Niel, briefly head of the C.G.T. in 1909, and moderates like Keufer. The C.G.T. itself,

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[8]Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 96-98, 347-48, 360-86. Butler also used the term "corporatists" to refer to the moderates because they believed that the union should concern itself only with "corporate," or professional problems of an industry.

[9]DeLucia, "The Remaking of French Syndicalism," pp. 4-9, 33-56.

at its Amiens Congress (1906), recognized a tripartite division in the organization by allocating speaking time among three different sides: revolutionaries, reformists, and politiques--partisans of political action in collaboration with the Socialist Party.[10]

Further complications are introduced by some recent works which attempt to show that neither the leadership nor the membership of the C.G.T. were truly revolutionary. Therefore, in this view, the ideological differences were unimportant or irrelevant.[11] Except for the emphasis on the attitudes of the mass membership, this approach is not new. Several historians have pointed out that the revolutionaries, in practice, acted just like reformists.[12] On the other hand, there are those who felt that the reformists were really revolutionaries, since they desired an eventual abolition of

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[10]Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste, pp. 24-25; Emile Pouget, "Le Congrès syndicaliste d'Amiens," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 182 (January 1907), pp. 37-47.

[11]This thesis is most strongly expressed in two works by Peter Stearns, Revolutionary Syndicalism and French Labor: A Cause Without Rebels (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1971), pp. 1-4, 13, 29-30, 56, 64-67, 93-94; and P. Stearns and Harvey Mitchell, The European Labor Movement: The Working Classes and the Origins of Social Democracy, 1890-1914 (Itasca, Illinois: F.E. Peacock, 1971), pp. 2, 171, 179, 188, 195.

[12]Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, p. 111; Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste, pp. 61-62; Georges Moreau, Le Syndicalisme: Les Mouvements politiques et l'evolution économique (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1925), pp. 30-32. It was a point Keufer liked to make himself. See "Les Deux conceptions du syndicalisme: le syndicalisme réformiste," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 146 (January 1, 1905), pp. 32, 37, 39.

capitalism, just like their more militant comrades.[13]

Without a clear perception of the different groups, understanding is impossible. It makes no sense to say that reformists wanted a revolutionary transformation of society and thus there was no essential difference between reformists and revolutionaries. Some reformists did fit this category for a time, and their ideology was clearly identifiable. Others rejected it outright. There were different types of reformists; some of them, at least, were distinct from the revolutionaries. Their ideological differences were important.

There were three types of reformism in the C.G.T., and each can be personified. First, there was the pattern represented by Eugène Guérard of the railroad workers, and by Louis Niel of the Bourse du Travail of Montpelier. These men were what Butler called socialist syndicalists or what Carcanagues referred to as revolutionary reformists. They were, in part, quite militant. They believed, for example, in the general strike; they were enemies of capitalism and proponents of transformation to a socialist society. They considered that the reforms for which they struggled had a revolutionary effect. As Niel said: "Every reform which snatches a piece of capital or a piece of authority from the employer, to give it to the worker, is a revolutionary reform. . . . We are revolutionaries

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[13]Moreau, Le Syndicalisme, pp. 95-96; David Saposs, The Labor Movement in Post-War France (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), pp. 22-23.

because we have proven historically the Revolution is destined to take place."[14]

However, these revolutionary reformists believed in a more moderate methodological approach than the anarchist revolutionaries. That, plus their temperamental affinity for the moderates, made them frequent and close allies of the non-revolutionaries. In practice, their commitment to an eventual socialist revolution was barely apparent. Like the German Social Democrats, they spoke of revolution long after they had abandoned the idea. Niel, who condemned Millerand in 1901, was by 1909 the reformist candidate for secretary; he was subsequently thrown out when he refused to lead the Confédération on a general strike.

The second current was personified by Victor Renard, head of the Fédération Nationale du Textile. Renard was also a leader of the Guesdist wing of the Socialist Party, and he wanted the C.G.T. to align itself with the Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière. On this point, he was isolated from the rest of the C.G.T.: anarchist revolutionaries, revolutionary reformists, and moderates. On the other hand, on many issues, such as the method of voting in the C.G.T., or the need for labor legislation, his views coincided with the other two reformist currents. As a Guesdist, he believed

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[14]L. Niel, "Les Réformes révolutionnaires," Bulletin de la Bourse du Travail de Reims, June 15, 1909, quoted in Zeldin, France, p. 238.

in the efficacy of reforms obtained from parliamentary political activity. This view was shared by all reformists; it was violently challenged by the anarchist elements in the Confederation, for whom direct action in the economic sphere was the only acceptable form of struggle.

The third current was exemplified by Auguste Keufer. So consistent was his devotion to the labor movement, so dedicated were his efforts, so articulate was his philosophical expression, that Keufer has often been viewed as the leader of reformism generally and its guiding spirit.[15] That judgement will receive no quarrel here. At the C.G.T. Congresses and in the journals, he spearheaded the reformist battles. Much of the time, Guérard, Niel, and Renard were at his side. However, the Keufer brand of reformism was unique in the Confédération. It was, contrary to the other two, specifically anticollectivist, antirevolutionary, and anti-general strike. Of the major syndicalist leaders, Pierre Coupat of the Fédération des Mécaniciens was the most prominent to have shared his outlook.[16]

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[15]Saposs, The Labor Movement, p. 23; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," p. 97; Challaye, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et syndicalisme réformiste, p. 106n; DeLucia, "The Remaking of French Syndicalism," p. 44; Jean Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier en France des origines à nos jours (Paris: Aubier, 1946), pp. 199, 210; F.F. Ridley, Revolutionary Syndicalism in France: The Direct Action of its Time (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 179; Georges Lefranc, Le Syndicalisme en France (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), p. 31; E. Martin Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations de métiers (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1922), pp. 718-19; Archives Nationales, F7 13753, Fédération du Livre, 1905-10, report of April 19, 1906.

[16]M.J. Bourdeau, at an early C.G.T. Congress, noted that the nonrevolutionaries constituted a group apart, in "Le Mouvement syndicale en France: Le Xe Congrès National Corporatif (IVe de la C.G.T)," Musée Social, no. 2 (February 1899), p. 67. Dubief, Le Syndicalisme révolutionnaire was aware of Keufer's special brand of reformism. Curiously, he felt it was more revolutionary than that of Pierre Coupat and close in some respects to the anarchist revolutionaries. See pp. 34, 43.

Keufer referred to the disappearance of property and the wage-earning class as a beautiful dream, but he did not think that it would ever be realized. Furthermore, he rejected entirely the idea of a violent revolution. The transformation of society would come about only through a doctrine that would unite all individuals and put them into agreement on a reorganization of society in a moral as well as in a material way. Keufer put his hopes for the future in Positivism and an essentially religious conversion.[17] The Positivist head of the printers carried on both the Comtean and the Barberettist traditions.[18]

Because Keufer was active in the C.G.T., rather than outside it, and because Guérard, Renard, and Niel worked with him, it is often hard to see the differences. In this chapter we shall try to illuminate the role played by the moderate, antirevolutionary reformers in the formation and early development of the C.G.T.

The labor movement had reached its take-off point in the 1890s. The Fédération Nationale des Syndicats, established at Lyons in 1886, had fallen under Guesdist control, but the

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[17] Septième Congrès National Corporatif, tenu à Limoges du 23 au 28 septembre, 1895 (n.p.), p. 23; Keufer, "Réformes et révolution: au camarade Pouget," La Voix du peuple, April 12-19, 1903.

[18] Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndical, p. 22, called Keufer the inheritor of Barberet.

pure syndicalist elements which remained in it were able sometimes to overcome their political tutelage. In 1888 and 1892, the Fédération Nationale voted resolutions favoring the general strike, which was bitterly opposed by the Guesdist leadership.[19]

Meanwhile, a Fédération des Bourses du Travail had been created in 1892 as a counterweight to the Fédération Nationale by what were essentially Allemanist and Blanquist elements led by Fernand Pelloutier. They desired an independent, revolutionary syndicalist movement. Pressure for unity grew, and in 1894 a joint congress was held. The Guesdists, realizing they were outnumbered by those who favored an apolitical organization, walked out. Although they tried to maintain the Fédération Nationale, it soon expired. The syndicalist elements of the Guesdist group had not joined the walk-out; instead, they joined with the members of the Fédération des Bourses to create a Conseil National Ouvrier. A year later, the Conseil summoned the labor movement to Limoges, and there the C.G.T. was founded.

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[19] Resolutions votées en séance publique du 3me Congrès National /Fédération Nationale des Syndicats et Groupes Corporatifs Ouvriers de France, 3me Congrès National, Bourdeaux, octobre 1888/ (Bordeaux: Imprimerie en Caractères et Papeterie de Bacalan, 1888), p. 2. Also Léon de Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers en France de 1876 à 1897 (Paris: Armand Colin, 1899), pp. 213-15; Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations, p. 709; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 69-96; Colette Chambelland, Le Syndicalisme ouvrier français (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1956), pp. 23-24.

The moderates who joined the C.G.T. were generally not the same as those who had been active in the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France. During the 1880s, on the contrary, the C.G.T. moderates-to-be were generally in the Possibilist camp or independent. The Possibilists permitted both syndicalists and moderates to feel comfortable, since they stressed a trade union orientation and played down their collectivist ideology in favor of reformist politics. Keufer and Finance both joined the Possibilists, and attended their congresses in the 1880s, as well as the International Congress which the Possibilists organized in Paris in 1886.[20]

However, the moderate adherence to Possibilism was not completely wholehearted. Although the Fédération du Livre sent delegates to the 1887 Possibilist Congress, it agreed to vote only on questions having to do with labor problems; it abstained from any vote on so-called "political" questions. The printers were the only union at the Congress not to support the resolution declaring unremitting warfare against the bourgeoisie.[21]

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[20]Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 31-32, 44, 46-49; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, p. 253; Seilhac, Les Congrès ouvriers, pp. 122, 137-39; Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, p. 32; Jean Joughin, "The Labor Movement in France, 1876-1884" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, Austin, 1947), pp. 229-32, 259-85; Jean Bron, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier français, vol. 2: La Contestation du capitalisme par les travailleurs organisés (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1970), p. 64; Georges Haupt and Jeannine Verdes, "De la Première à la Deuxième Internationale: les actes des congrès internationaux, 1877-1888," Le Mouvement social, no. 51 (April-June 1965), pp. 124-26.

[21]Fédération des Travailleurs Socialistes de France (Parti Ouvrier Socialiste Révolutionnaire), compte rendu du IXe Congrès National tenu à Charleville du 2 au 8 octobre 1887 (Paris: Imprimerie Typographique F. Harry, 1888), pp. 7, 30-31, 36-37, 47.

It might seem strange, given Keufer's antirevolutionary orientation, that he favored the Bourses du Travail, since they were strongholds of the revolutionaries. Yet, as a purely syndical organization, stressing the delivery of services, education, and the principle of self help, the Bourses corresponded neatly to the moderate approach. Keufer was very active in the creation of the Paris Bourse. He served on the organizing committee, and was one of the speakers at the dedication ceremony. Characteristically, he caused a commotion when he departed from the revolutionary tenor of the preceding speeches and called for a militarily strong France, ready and capable of defending herself.[22]

When the Bourse proved too revolutionary for the printers, the Fédération du Livre moved its offices out of the building. However, printers in the provinces continued to play an active role in their local Bourses. François Fagnot, a member of the printers' union, as well as a Proletarian Positivist, was the founder and president of the Bourse at Clermont-Ferrand.[23]

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[22]Léon de Seilhac, Les Bourses du Travail (Paris and Reims: L'Action Populaire, n.d.), pp. 13-14; Marcel Bar, L'Organisation et l'action syndicale dans la typographie française: Patrons, ouvriers (Paris: Imprimerie et Librairie Duruy et Cie., 1907), p. 203

[23]In Jean Maitron, ed., Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français, troisième partie: 1871-1914: De la Commune à la Grande Guerre, vols. 10-13 (Paris: Les Éditions Ouvrières, 1973-75), there are fifty-two cases of printers playing a role in the organization or administration of either Bourses du Travail or Unions Départmentales (regional federations): 10 (1973): 150, 169, 189-90, 193, 231, 244, 330, 347; 11 (1973): 17, 25, 33, 45, 60, 123, 127, 134, 176, 178, 202, 204, 219, 238-39, 242, 281, 304, 324, 328, 333; 12 (1974): 34, 118-19, 145-46, 157, 161, 163, 167, 179, 181, 207, 278, 294, 310, 323; 13 (1975): 65, 66-67, 76, 116, 147, 208, 254, 303, 348. The printers' role in the Paris Bourse was noted by the police in Archives Nationales, F7 13615, "Bourse du Travail provisoire, état des cotisations payées et dues par les syndicats."

The U.C.S.' counterpart at Bourdeaux took a leading role in the founding of the Bourse there.

In addition, the Fédération du Livre continued to send delegates to the Bourses Congresses. It also sent delegates to the Fédération des Syndicats Congresses. Keufer saw these as opportunities to publicize and propagandize the moderate doctrine. All his life Keufer maintained a firm belief in the necessity of organization on all levels: unions in the workshops, federations by region and by trade, international trade federations, and national confederations. The idea of holding the Federation du Livre aloof from the rest of the labor movement did not make sense to him. Of course, this meant that often his point of view would be in the minority. As a Positivist, however, he recognized the imperative need for education to change people's outlook and values; what better place to engage in this essentially missionary endeavor than in the labor movement.[24]

The Fédération du Livre attended the 1892 Congress of the Fédération des Syndicats in Marseilles. It was here that Aristide Briand stunned the Guesdists by his powerful, emotional speech in favor of the general strike, which the Congress adopted. The printers did not participate in the debate on this topic, and it was left to other delegates to uphold the moderate

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[24]See Keufer's response to a question about schism in the C.G.T. in Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste, and below, Chapter IV.

viewpoint. Although the revolutionary concepts prevailed at Marseilles, a small minority attempted to deflect the Congress from the revolutionary course. It did this by proposing an alternative to the general strike: the grève généralisée des métiers. The general strike of all the workers in a specific industry represented more than just a semantic difference from the general strike. The latter was revolutionary and probably insurrectionary. At its very least, it was political. To have every working man and woman in the country cease his or her labor implies demands that are national in scope and whose adoption would change either the political system or the established way of doing things. The general strike in a single trade could only be useful in obtaining trade union demands within an industry. It offered no challenge to the existing society. The moderates gave the Congress the opportunity to accept a type of general strike without having to commit itself to a revolution, but the antirevolutionary alternative was spurned.[25]

The printers withdrew from the Congress after the vote on the general strike, but the Congress of Marseilles was the last in which the Livre limited its participation. The next year, in Paris, they made their presence strongly felt and led the fight against the revolutionary general strike. The occasion

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[25] Ve Congrès National des Syndicats et Groupes Corporatifs de France, tenu à Marseilles du 19 au 22 octobre /sic/ 1892, compte rendu (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1909), pp. 57-58, 67. The syndical congress was actually held in September; the Guesdist political congress (Parti Ouvrier) was held in October.

was the Congress of the Federation des Bourses. Alfred Hamelin, a member of the Central Committee and a close associate of Keufer, was the delegate of the printers. Hamelin was also active in the Broussist wing of the Socialist Party, and well respected in the syndical community. He was not as moderate as Keufer, but he was less radical than the revolutionaries. He had the task of preparing the report of the committee on the general strike. His report, which has long been neglected, was the most significant attempt by the moderates to change the general strike from an instrument of revolution into something less threatening.

The strength of the revolutionaries, however, obliged Hamelin to write a balanced report, one that could be accepted by both sides. He admitted the basic revolutionary assumptions: that the position of the working class was deteriorating seriously, and that partial strikes (that is, a strike against one establishment) had proven to be, on the whole, ineffective. However, the serious and complicated ramifications of the general strike required answers to many questions before it could be unleashed. Did it require a period of organization, or could it be undertaken immediately? If preparation was required, how long a period was necessary? Should it be international or national? What demands should be made, what goals should be sought?

Hamelin noted that the working class was divided on the first question. The moderates believed that since the organization of the working class was not complete, the general strike could not be declared. Instead, they favored continued

unionization, plus a referendum of all French workers, unionized or not, on whether they would support a general strike. Furthermore, they felt that the strike should be declared only if two-thirds of the workers favored it, and that its date should be set only in consultation with all Bourses and with all Federations. A cynic would be forgiven for thinking that no general strike would ever take place under such conditions. The moderate reply was that if the general strike could not command the overwhelming support of the French working class, it should not occur.

The revolutionaries, as might be expected, favored an immediate strike movement. To what purpose, Hamelin asked? There was a feeling in certain quarters that nothing was easier than a general strike. Hamelin attempted to add a more rational voice to the debate. The revolutionaries had the idea that if the entire working class refused to work for a week the exploiters would die of hunger and the workers would be able to assume control of society. But how would the workers eat?

If the working class lacked the ability to assure life's necessities to those on strike, then the general strike was doomed to failure. He cautioned the delegates that they had to have a clear idea of what they wanted to achieve, and how they expected to do it. He warned them that once they began, they had to be prepared to see the thing through to the end.

Hamelin's tone was entirely different from Briand's emotional appeals. He spoke with moderation and measure, and

caught the spirit of the delegates. Although twenty-four unions, which had come to the meeting with prior specific instructions to vote for an immediate general strike were allowed to register their feeling in a separate vote, Hamelin's report was overwhelmingly adopted. Hamelin also succeeded in being named to a committee to study the question.[26]

Although the moderates had won the victory, the war was far from ended. The revolutionaries applied constant pressure to have a general strike. Hamelin found himself in the minority on the commission. When the commission conducted a referendum of worker organizations, it found forty in favor of an immediate general strike and only two opposed. Consequently, the question of an immediate work stoppage was placed on the agenda of the joint congress of the Fédération des Bourses and the Fédération National des Syndicats held at Nantes in 1894.

This time it was Chabot of the Paris typographers, the strongest union in the Fédération du Livre, who led the attack against the extremists. He followed Hamelin's approach and called on the delegates to have the courage to recognize reality and not to raise false hopes. The state of union organization was so poor, the need for unity so great, that it would be impossible under current conditions to have a successful

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[26]Fédération des Bourses du Travail de France, Compte rendu du Congrès National des Chambres Syndicales et Groupes Corporatifs Ouvriers tenu à Paris en juillet 1893, précédé de l'historique des Bourses du Travail françaises (Paris: Imprimerie J. Allemane, n.d.), pp. 48-49, 63-66.

general strike.

Chabot went further than Hamelin, however, and exposed the essentially conservative and social preservationist ideology of the moderates. He accused of self-delusion those who saw in the general strike a way to precipitate social revolution: "Believe it, comrades, to transform the basis of society is as impossible as changing the laws of gravity and of the planets. Thus, we must work not for this transformation--which is a dead-end--but for the modification of the laws which rule the conditions and relations of labor and capital." He urged the delegates instead to find practical ways to improve their working lives.[27]

When it came time to vote, Chabot cast his vote against the general strike. The Fédération du Livre, however, did not. There was another dynamic at work at this Congress. The Guesdists were also bitter opponents of the general strike, although in this case for different reasons. The Guesdists believed that only a conquest of political power was effective. They distrusted syndical independence and thought that the general strike was an ineffective revolutionary tool.

Keufer, who had more in common with revolutionary syndicalists than with political socialists such as Guesde, did not wish to split the syndical bloc at the Congress. Instead, the printers

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[27] VIme Congrès National des Syndicats de France, compte rendu des travaux du Congrès tenu a Nantes du 17 au 22 septembre 1894 (Nantes: Imprimerie Georges Schwab et Fils, 1894), p. 31.

supported the general strike--on the condition that it be declared only after a referendum of the French working class had been taken. Obviously, it had no real intention of getting involved in a general strike. The vote was close (63-37-9), but many of the negative votes were Guesdist.[28]

Keufer's action guaranteed that a pure syndicalist movement could come into being. By choosing to stand with the revolutionaries to present a united front against the political socialists, he forged the alliance that would, only a year later, found the Confédération Générale du Travail. At first, he played a commanding role in it.

The time was ripe for the creation of a new confederation. As a result of the joint congress of 1894, a permanent organization had been created, the Conseil National Ouvrier. The Conseil National desired to go out of existence and be replaced by a more effective body. In the year between Nantes and Limoges, the Conseil National had not had much success. In addition to a lack of broad support, it was deeply in debt. There was a pervasive feeling that a new, more permanent organization had to be created.[29] The Conseil National called

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[28]Ibid., pp. 45, 50-51. Also Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 182-99; Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndical, p. 69. Bar, L'Organisation et l'action syndicale, p. 212, said that the Livre voted for a general strike because the revolutionaries in the union gained a temporary majority on the Central Committee and gave specific instructions to the delegate. This does not account for the reservations attached to the Livre's vote. This story is also found in Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Telegraphes, Office du Travail, Les Associations professionnelles, 4 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1899-1904), vol. 1 (1899), p. 864.

[29]Septième Congrès . . . 1895, pp. 38-39. The Conseil had a treasury of ninety-five centimes and debts of over 250 francs.

the Congress at Limoges in 1895 and made the first item on the agenda the organization of the French working class.[30]

Keufer threw himself into this task. He served on the committee to draw up a plan for working-class unity, and became involved in developing the statutes. He took a leading role in all the major debates at the Congress, and established himself as a leading figure in the labor movement. He was chosen to serve on the provisional commission of the new organization, and became its first treasurer. His influence, while not preponderant, was significant.

Keufer put his ideological stamp on the statutes of the C.G.T. in two ways: first, on the issue of political independence, and second, on the question of tactics. Along with many other delegates, he supported the principle of syndical autonomy, but he did so rigidly:

> The workers are divided by rival schools which wish to dominate the movement. These rivalries cause disunity among proletarian organizations. One must guard against these groups in the new organization. They have a foot in two camps at the same time. We do not want to kick the politicians out the door and have them return through the window.

Therefore, he concluded, all groups which were not exclusively working class and which belonged to a political party should be excluded. His suggestion, reminiscent of the Barberettist position of the previous decade, was adopted overwhelmingly.

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[30]Ibid., p. 38; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 71, 82-83, 201.

In addition, Article Two of the statutes specified that the C.G.T.'s only object was to unite the workers on the economic terrain, and that the elements which constituted the Confédération were to remain outside all political schools.[31]

On the question of tactics, Keufer added arbitration to the statutory list of activities to be undertaken by the organization. In his day, arbitration meant more than third-party settlement of disputes. It could also mean negotiation. The worker-employer arbitration committees Keufer envisaged were really negotiating committees. Arbitration was something in which Keufer believed strongly, and was indicative of his attitude of avoiding class war. When his motion was adopted, the C.G.T. was committed to make an effort to avoid strikes and class warfare.[32]

Keufer also tried, in vain, to give the new organization a different name. Rather than Confédération Générale du Travail, he proposed calling it the Confédération Nationale, or the Confédération Française du Travail. He insisted that he was not motivated by feelings of patriotism, but merely the desire that the name accurately reflect its nature. We may be permitted to doubt Keufer's sincerity in this; his patriotic feelings were very strong.[33]

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[31] Septième Congrès . . . 1895, pp. 53-54.

[32] Ibid., p. 67. For other Keufer suggestions, see p. 57.

[33] Ibid., p. 52.

The leader of the printers wanted to make the C.G.T. as tightly organized as possible, but here he was less successful, as he encountered the strong democratic sentiments of the French workingman. For example, he wanted to limit the number of delegates from each federation to the Confederal Committee (the governing body of the C.G.T.) to one each. He felt the proposed number of three would be too unwieldy and would prevent effective meetings. His view was not shared. Similarly, when a resolution was offered stating that prud' hommal councillors could not run for re-election. Keufer opposed it. A strong organization needed the continuity of effective leadership. He also believed in a paid, professional staff. His notions of trade-union organization were remarkably modern. The French worker, on the other hand, distrusted any concentration of power, and often felt that a union official, if he were paid, was no better than an office seeker. This concept dominated in the early C.G.T., which did not have a full-time, paid staff. However, the resolution on the prud' hommes was narrowly defeated.[34]

Keufer also emphasized to the delegates at Limoges that the success of the C.G.T. depended on their willingness to put forth the required effort. It was easy to create new organizations, he reminded them, but much more difficult to put life into them. His remarks carried the weight of one who

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[34]Ibid., pp. 42-64.

led the best-organized and most powerful union in France.[35] The responsibility for success or failure rested on the unions which had voted to create the Confédération. If they fulfilled their obligations, the C.G.T. would work.[36]

In the beginning, the C.G.T. succeeded only in surviving. The provisional commission, which had been formed to carry out the details of setting up the C.G.T., was active. But it was too small, too poor, too weak, and too ineffective. It did not have the strong support of the French labor movement. Often, its meetings were attended by less than ten members. The commission could not even afford to send a delegate to the International Congress at London in 1896. Of the thirty-one groups which joined the C.G.T., only four paid their dues regularly. It was commonly believed that the C.G.T. was doomed to extinction.[37]

During this dark, early period, the C.G.T. was kept alive by the printers and the railroad workers. They were the highest dues payers, and they paid regularly. The printers' journal printed the notices of the C.G.T. While Keufer served as treasurer, Lagailse of the railroad workers served as secretary--a position equivalent to president. Hamelin was one of the planners for

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[35]See Chapter V.

[36]Septième Congrès . . . 1895, pp. 17-18.

[37]VIIIe Congrès National Corporatif tenu à Tours les 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 et 19 septembre 1896, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Tours: Imprimerie G. Debenay-Lafond, 1896), pp. 37-39, 44. Also Dubief, Le Syndicalisme révolutionnaire, pp. 72-73; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," p. 287.

a C.G.T. newspaper. Above all, Keufer never stopped propagandizing the idea of the C.G.T. and pushing recalcitrant unions to join, to pay their dues, to send delegates to the meetings, to make the C.G.T. work. The printers cosponsored all the proclamations issued by the Confédération.[38]

Initially, the moderates were able to keep the C.G.T. on a nonrevolutionary path. At the 1896 Congress, two important issues demonstrated this. As usual, the question of the general strike was on the agenda. Guérard was the reporter, and although he himself favored the general strike, his report pleased the moderates. He disputed the idea that only the politiques were against the general strike. With an obvious eye on the Livre, he noted that many true worker organizations were opposed to it, or had not yet taken a position on it. Therefore, he urged the Congress to adopt a resolution in favor of propagandizing the general strike, rather than one which called for organizing it. His suggestion was adopted.[39]

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[38] VIIIe Congrès . . . 1896, pp. 28-31, 40, 49-54; IXe Congrès National Corporatif (IIIe de la C.G.T.) tenu à Toulouse les 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 et 25 septembre 1897, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Toulouse: Imprimerie G. Berthoumieu, 1897), pp. 33-34, 56-57, 190; Xe Congrès National Corporatif (IVe de la C.G.T.) tenu à Rennes les 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 septembre et 1er octobre 1898, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Rennes: Imprimerie des Arts et Manufactures, 1898), p. 249; XIIe Congrès National Corporatif (VIe de la C.G.T.) tenu à la Bourse du Travail de Lyon les 23, 24, 25, 26 et 27 septembre 1901, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Lyon: Imprimerie L. Decleris et Fils, 1901), p. 42. With the Eighth Congress, a double numbering system was begun. The 8-9-10, etc system includes the predecessor Fédération des Bourses Congresses in the series.

[39] VIIIe Congrès . . . 1896, pp. 76-87.

The Congress was also asked to consider a resolution for the establishment in each industry of permanent conciliation committees, composed of equal numbers of workers and employers. This was a little too moderate for the Congress, but it did resolve to leave this question up to each federation to do as it saw fit, and it was passed at the Ninth Congress.[40]

For too long historians have focused on the revolutionary resolutions and leadership of the post-1900 C.G.T. They have ignored the fact that the C.G.T. in its orig was more moderate than revolutionary; that it did not elevate the general strike to a position of revealed truth; and that reformist tactics such as arbitration and conciliation were part of its program. It was also a period in which revolutionaries and reformists were able to work together on the basis of their common opposition to political control.

Fernand Pelloutier of the Fédération des Bourses, and Keufer--the spirit of revolutionary syndicalism and the spirit of reformism--were able to get along quite well together. Both men were delegates to the London Congress of the Second International in 1896. Together, they jointly led the French delegates who considered themselves as syndicalists rather than socialists (that is, members of one of the Socialist Parties). When an attempt was made to require all the delegates to pledge their

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[40] VIIIe Congrès . . . 1896, pp. 150-56; IXe Congrès . . . 1897, p. 140.

faith in the political process, the syndicalists refused and were expelled from the International. Although the International was trying to remove those whom it considered anarchists, such as Pelloutier, it seems reasonable to expect that a place could have been found for Keufer, who was a member of the Broussists, and after unification, a member of the S.F.I.O. However, Keufer jealously guarded syndical independence and led the opposition to the demands of the socialists.[41] It was their common belief in keeping politics out of the C.G.T. that was the basis for the Pelloutier-Keufer alliance.

While neither man compromised his ideological integrity, each discovered that he could accommodate himself to the other. At the Tenth Congress (1898), for example, the question of alcoholism was on the agenda. Many revolutionaries wanted it to be removed. They felt that it was a waste of time to discuss such "petty" issues. The Fédération du Livre delegate insisted that it was a question of interest to many workers. The moderate attitude toward alcoholism was part of their overall outlook. Since they believed that the worker must himself undergo a change before any social transformation was possible--he had to become more educated, more altruistic, more dedicated--any moral reform was important. Since the reformist

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[41] Eugène Guérard, Le Congrès de Londres (Paris: Imprimerie Jean Allemane, 1896); François Fagnot, Le Congrès Socialiste Internationale de Londres (Paris: Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes de Paris, 1896); Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," p. 253; Keufer, "Les Deux Conceptions du syndicalisme," p. 41.

ideology was postulated on self emancipation, alcoholism was of great concern. An inebriated proletariat was incapable of carrying through any kind of sustained effort; a worker who spent large sums of money on alcohol would be unable to pay union dues.

Pelloutier sided with the moderates. He agreed that the question was important and should be treated. However, he added that the Congress should recognize that the problem was caused by capitalist society and should be dealt with in that context.[42]

In spite of the efforts of Keufer and Pelloutier to seek areas of agreement, the tensions between moderates and revolutionaries could not be significantly lessened. As the C.G.T. grew, the conflicts worsened. Success attracted more extreme elements to the Confédération, including a group of anarchists. Already, by the Ninth Congress (1897), the Fédération du Livre was attacked for not supporting the general strike. The printers, although generous in their financial support for the C.G.T., had not contributed a centime to the Committee on the General Strike which had been set up. In prior congresses, the Livre had voted for the general strike resolutions (although it did include resolutions); in 1897, it cast its vote against it.[43]

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[42] Xe Congrès . . . 1898, pp. 147-49.

[43] IXe Congrès . . . 1897, pp. 45-46; Xe Congrès . . . 1898, p. 350.

As anarchists such as Emile Pouget and Paul Delesalle entered the C.G.T., the orientation not only became more revolutionary, but the willingness to seek areas of agreement and to accept different viewpoints evaporated. The anarchists pushed a hard line.[44] At the Ninth and Tenth Congresses, approval was voted for the tactic of sabotage, which was repugnant to the moderates. The C.G.T. also declared itself in opposition to the Conseil Supérieur du Travail and instructed C.G.T. members who were delegates to that body to resign. Guérard did so; Keufer did not, demonstrating the difference between Keufer's reformism and Guérard's.[45]

Surprisingly, this was not completely understood at the time. Many syndicalists believed that the printers were more militant than they actually were. There was a tendency to draw a distinction between unions which were in the C.G.T. (and thus, *prima facie*, radical) and those which remained outside. It took some time to realize that the moderates in the C.G.T. were continuing the Barberettist tradition.[46]

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[44]Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 327, 348-49, 353-54.

[45]*IXe Congrès . . . 1897*, pp. 141-48; *Xe Congrès . . . 1898*, pp. 295-303; *XIIe Congrès . . . 1901*, pp. 110-23, 199; Goetz-Girey, *La Pensée syndicale*, p. 111.

[46]See Edmond Briat, "La Bourse du Travail de Paris," *Le Mouvement socialiste*, no. 1 (January 15, 1899), p. 53; *Confédération Générale du Travail, Commission des Grèves et de la Grève Générale, Grève générale réformiste et grève générale révolutionnaire* 2nd ed. (Paris: Imprimerie Economique, 1903), pp. 17-20.

As the tide turned against the moderates, the Fédération du Livre withdrew from the active role it had played from 1895-1898. By 1898, Keufer was no longer treasurer. The printers' delegates played a much less active role in the C.G.T. congresses, and no representatives from the Livre were on the Confederal Committee in 1901. Guérard had become the new secretary, but even he was moved aside for a new generation of radical leaders: Victor Griffuelhes, Emile Pouget, Paul Delesalle, and Georges Yvetot. Their roots were either in the anarchist, Blanquist, or Allemanist groups (the Allemanists were the most revolutionary of the socialist factions). As they solidified their control, an abyss opened between them and the less revolutionary groups. Passions ran high and tensions increased. By the Congress of Bourges in 1904, an all-out fight was held to determine who would control the Confédération.

At Bourges the moderate reformist and revolutionary philosophies found themselves locked in combat at every turn. In each case, the moderates were resoundingly defeated. What was worse, the bitter feelings engendered threatened to destroy the C.G.T. The moderates were exasperated by the knowledge that although they controlled a majority of the membership, they could not win control of the organization. In the congresses, the method of voting was one vote per union, regardless of size. The smaller the union, the more likely it was to be revolutionary, or the more likely it was to give a proxy to the Confederal Committee. Time after time, the moderates found themselves outvoted, even though their federations encompassed

more workers.[47]

Since the 1890s, only the Fédération du Livre had provided serious opposition to the general strike. But as the reformists situated to the left of Keufer (the Guérard group, called either socialist syndicalists or revolutionary reformists) became more and more disaffected with the anarchists who had taken control, the Livre became the standard bearer of the opposition. In return, it was singled out for anarchist attacks.[48]

C.G.T. organizers attacked the printers in provincial cities, in the course of their organizing campaigns. Confederation leaders likewise publicly attacked Keufer. In return, the Livre refused to print reports of C.G.T. meetings in its paper, La Typographie française. The Confederation and the federation quarreled over the use of the union label, with the printers refusing to incorporate the label of the C.G.T. into its own professional label, as all members of the C.G.T. were supposed to do.[49] The C.G.T. went so far as to admit a union of proofreaders as a separate organization. The correcteurs were a revolutionary group who did not wish to be submerged in Keufer's organization, but the statutes of the C.G.T.

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[47]Ridley, Revolutionary Syndicalism, pp. 177-78; Zeldin, France, pp. 233-34.

[48]Guérard, like Keufer, supported the Conseil Supérieur du Travail, but felt obligated to carry out the will of the C.G.T. After he missed one session, he returned to it. He also agreed with the moderates on the issue of voting, favoring proportional representation, as it was called, with the biggest federations having more votes.

[49]On the issue of the label, see Daniel Sieurin, "Le Label ou marque syndicale," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 155 (May 15, 1905), pp. 87-108; Emile Pouget, "Le Congrès syndical de Bourges:

said that an individual union could be admitted to the Confédération only if no federation existed in that industry (membership in the C.G.T. was composed of federations). The printers angrily felt that the proofreaders were being admitted only with a view to weakening the Livre and in preparation for the creation of a rival federation.

Keufer accused the C.G.T. of waging a campaign against his organization. "Everyone in the labor movement knows what language, what injurious words, what accusations of softness and servility have been directed at us. . . . I am quite disposed to believe that soon we will be called 'Yellows.'"[50] The leader of the printers had been accused, in addition, of selling out his own unions by imposing on them wage settlements and of siding with employers in their attempts to organize syndicats patronaux. He asserted that it was not a matter of general criticism and disagreement, to which anyone had a right, but of a conscious, organized attack. Since the Livre was a member of the C.G.T, paid its dues, and took part in C.G.T. campaigns such as that against the commercial placement bureaus, it deserved the right to be treated the same as other federations. Keufer had gone to the unusual step of submitting

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les débats et les résolutions du congrès," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 142 (November 1, 1904), pp. 69-70; XIVe Congrès National Corporatif (VIIIe de la C.G.T.) et Conférence des Bourses du Travail tenu à Bourges du 12 au 20 septembre 1904, compte rendu des travaux (Bourges: Imprimerie Ouvrière du Centre, 1904), p. 15.

[50]Keufer, "Réformes et révolution: au camarade Pouget," La Voix du peuple, August 9-16, 1903; Pouget, "Réformes et révolution: au camarade Keufer," ibid., August 16-23, 1903.

a formal protest, and called for a special meeting of the Confederal Committee to deal with his complaints.[51] Keufer warned that he would also take his case to the French working class as a whole, thus setting the stage for the Congress of Bourges.[52]

The main objective of Keufer and the moderates was to overturn the antipolitical ideology of the revolutionaries. For Keufer, as well as for Guérard and his followers, and for Renard and his group, the C.G.T. had never been intended to ignore politics. Although (with the exception of Renard) they wanted the C.G.T. to remain independent of any political sect, they still believed in looking to Parliament to obtain legislation favorable to the working class. The anarchists, however, had transformed the idea of political independence into the rejection of all political action. According to them, legislation was useless and the only way to struggle was for a revolutionary transformation through direct action, namely the general strike.

To Keufer, the anarchists were merely another type of sectarian who, under the guise of excluding politics, actually refused to admit to any approach other than their own. All their hopes and all their activity were directed toward the

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[51] La Voix du peuple, December 13-20, 1903.

[52] "Protestation de la Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre," La Voix du peuple, December 13-20, 1903.

general strike.

> Today, as always, I am strongly convinced of the necessity for worker organizations to exclude politics and to handle their own affairs by themselves. Everywhere I go I propagate this idea. But I have never said that political action, exercised individually and outside the unions was worthless. In spite of my skepticism concerning legislative action, I feel, and I have always felt that the working class must interest itself in the form of the government and in the intervention of the public powers in certain specified areas. This legislative action, when it is stimulated and supported by public opinion and by the workers' organizations can sometimes have a real efficacity.

Keufer compared his struggle against intolerance at London to his struggle against the anarchists. "I am now prepared to resist the new apostles of a new intolerance--who are forcing a new credo, the revolutionary general strike, on the working class."[53] He accused the anarchists of having entered the labor movement only because they saw in it a fertile ground for the spread of their extremist ideas. "Can anyone doubt that if they fail they will again become the adversaries of syndicalism?"[54]

Keufer had no faith in the general strike. He doubted that violent action could effect a transformation of society and feared that violence might only beget violence, to the detriment of the workers. Besides, the constant affirmation of the general strike was harmful because many French workers

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[53]Keufer, "Réformes et révolution," La Voix du peuple, April 12-19, 1903.

[54]Keufer, ibid., August 9-16, 1903. Keufer was proven correct. After the revolutionary method lost its influence, the anarchists withdrew from the C.G.T. See Ridley, Revolutionary Syndicalism, p. 261.

did not believe in it and thus did not join unions. It was too simplistic to view the general strike as a kind of magical instrument. The belief in a day of complete redemption was similar to Catholicism. In each case, the believers were deluding themselves; progress resulted only from incremental steps associated with an increase in the general level of education and morality.

The truth of this approach was demonstrated, according to Keufer, by the revolutionaries themselves, who actually pursued reformist methods out of necessity. Even the most radical unions engaged in negotiation and compromise, demanded laws to regulate working conditions and wages, and looked to the state for help.

In sum, there were two methods:

> The first consists in discussing and supporting, with competence and firmness, worker demands, and using the strike if necessary, to pursue without relaxation, but gradually, all improvements through our worker organizations, which are free of all ties to politicians or any doctrinaires. This method . . . respects the individual opinions of all in their personal lives. . . . /The second/ proclaims war from the beginning, inspired by hatred. It counsels intransigeance and, under the pretext of being activist, applauds acts of violence. 55

The revolutionaries accepted Keufer's charge that they used reformist tactics, in the sense that they did not ignore daily reforms while pursuing total emancipation. The more improvements, they felt, the greater the desire for complete liberation. But they rejected what they saw as gifts falling

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55Keufer, "Réformes et révolution," La Voix du peuple, August 9-16, 1903.

from a parliamentary heaven. The reforms they favored were reforms won by the power of the workers' unions and not those won by legislative good will. Furthermore, they were unalterably opposed to reforms which tended to reduce the spirit of worker militancy. In particular, they had nothing but contempt for institutions such as the Conseil Supérieur du Travail or the Conseils du Travail proposed by the Socialist Minister of Commerce Alexandre Millerand. Millerand had also proposed a compulsory arbitration law. His plans were seen as an attempt to weaken the syndical movement by trapping the unions in laws, regulations, and official procedures. The very fact that a Socialist had entered a bourgeois government was proof of his perfidy and the corruption of politics. As Louis Niel, who associated with the revolutionaries in the early 1900s put it, "I declare to you in all sincerity that we have never had a minister as terrible, as dangerous as the one we have now. Under the guise of concessions, he wants to destroy our organizations."[56] The revolutionaries felt that such reforms had no usefulness, since the basic antagonism of interests between workers and employers rendered the two classes incompatible and incapable of working together. The role of the Conseils du Travail, for example, were to maintain social peace and reconcile capital and labor. This was completely

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[56] XIIe Congrès . . . 1901, p. 217; Pouget, "Réformes et révolution," La Voix du peuple, May 10-17, 1903.

at variance with the aims of the revolutionaries: their only goal was revolution, their method uncompromising struggle, their tool the general strike.[57]

The Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre prepared diligently for the Bourges Congress, as did the rest of the C.G.T. It was widely expected to be a showdown between the moderates and the revolutionaries. 125 unions of the Fédération du Livre were represented at Bourges, out of a total of 1,178 unions. Only thirty printers' unions had been represented at the Congress of Montpelier (1902) and only ten at the Congress of Lyons (1901). Five members of the Central Committee attended, plus Keufer, who made his first personal appearance at a labor congress in nine years.

Every issue was made into a revolutionary-reformist quarrel. The type of union label to be used (which, as we have seen, was part of the struggle between the Livre and the C.G.T.) was raised at Bourges. A dispute on whether to organize the C.G.T. around industrial federations exclusively and disband the craft federations represented a more fundamental issue. The Fédération des Mécaniciens was strongly reformist and craft based. The Fédération de la Métallurgie was not only large, but decidely revolutionary. Not surprisingly, the revolutionaries favored the absorption of the *mécaniciens* by the *métallurgistes*; the moderates opposed it.[58]

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[57] *XIIe Congrès . . . 1901*, p. 218; Hubert Lagardelle, "Chronique sociale," *Le Mouvement socialiste*, no. 45 (November 1, 1900), pp. 563-66.

[58] *XIVe Congrès . . . 1904*, pp. 18, 76-77, 80-81; Pouget, "Le Congrès syndical de Bourges," pp. 69-70. The vexatious issue

The real struggle, however, centered on the call by Keufer to the Congress to reject the report of the Confederal Committee--in effect, to give it a vote of no confidence. He enumerated his complaints, and charged that the Confederal Committee had violated the statutes of the organization. It violated them when it admitted the Syndicat National des Correcteurs. The Voix du peuple, the C.G.T. newspaper, violated them also because, rather than being the organ of all members of the C.G.T., it served as the propaganda instrument of one tendency and thereby exacerbated the divisions in the Confederation. In addition, the C.G.T. violated its rules when it accepted some revolutionary unions of miners, while a miners' federation was in existence. Here Keufer was stretching the point. The Fédération des Mineurs would not join the C.G.T. because it did not share its revolutionary doctrine. It was not unreasonable for the C.G.T. to admit individual miners' unions in that case.

Finally, Keufer claimed that the statutes of the C.G.T. guaranteed each federation complete autonomy in its affairs. Yet the Livre was being attacked precisely for its method of action. He denied that the C.G.T. had any right to attack the printers on that basis. Not only was it a denial of the principle of federalism, but who, he asked, could affirm the absolute superiority of a particular method? Experience had not yet

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of industrial vs. craft unionism was first raised in 1900. See XIe Congrès National Corporatif (Ve de la C.G.T.) tenu à la Bourse du Travail de Paris les 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 septembre 1900, compte rendu des travaux du congres (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1900), pp. 149, 166-68. Also see Keufer, L'Usage du label dans l'industrie du livre en France (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1912), pp. 1-6, 12.

proven the superiority of any one approach.

> To conclude, I affirm with the greatest of energy that all the attacks against us are unmerited, because our organization has fought for more than fifty years to improve its situation; it has collaborated in an active fashion in syndical propaganda, applying direct action in its demands. We have always proclaimed the necessity of syndical action without rejecting legislative action. Yes, we prefer the reformist method, because we believe that violent direct action, as recognized by the anarchists, may cost the lives of thousands of workers without a guarantee of durable results. 59

In their turn, the revolutionaries attacked the conduct of the Fédération du Livre. Even Guérard, who voted with Keufer on many items, told the Congress that he disapproved of the Livre's philosophy and that he considered it too moderate. However, despite asking the delegates not to censure the Confederal Committee, he did support the need for legislative action and for neutrality on the part of the Voix du peuple.[60]

When the vote was finally taken, 825 voted for the Confederal Committee and 369 against it. Considering that the Livre had 125 votes on its own, the vote shows the existence of a fairly substantial minority support for the reformist position. The mechanics, railroad workers, and clerks were strongest in support of the printers.[61]

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[59] XIVe Congrès . . . 1904, pp. 92-96.

[60] Ibid., pp. 97-106, 110-12. See Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations, p. 722; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 389-91; Pouget, "Le Congrès syndical de Bourges," p. 67.

[61] XIVe Congrès . . . 1904, p. 143. Also Chambelland, Le Syndicalisme, pp. 33-34; Paul Delesalle, "Le Congrès syndicale de Bourges: l'opinion révolutionnaire," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 142 (November 1, 1904), p. 73; Charles Guieyesse, "Les Syndicalistes révolutionnaires," Pages libres, December, 1904, said that the fight was not between reformists and revolutionaries but merely between the printers and the revolutionaries.

Beyond this issue, the Congress had several substantive items to decide. Proportional representation was a major source of controversy. The adoption of such a system would give the large, moderate federations control of the congresses. Naturally, it was defeated. The Congress also decided to launch a movement for the eight-hour day. Here too, Keufer was in opposition. Although he claimed that he favored it, he argued that it would be impossible to achieve in one fell swoop. If one looked at the example of the United States, one saw a gradual reduction, first to nine, then to eight hours. Furthermore, in some states it had been accomplished by legislation. To Keufer, good sense indicated that in industries with a ten-hour day, their goal should be a nine-hour day. He informed the Congress that that would be the approach of the printers. Once again, the Fédération du Livre would be marching to a different drummer.[62]

Although the reformists suffered a convincing defeat, they had also indicated that they were a force to be reckoned with. According to many historians, one result of the Congress was that the anarchists modified their behavior slightly and tried to reduce the stress that had been built up. Griffuelhes was careful not to drive the reformists out of the Confédération

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[62] *XIVe Congrès . . . 1904*, p. 208. For more on the dispute see "C.G.T. Comité Confédéral (Réunion des deux sections), séance du 28 decembre," *La Voix du peuple*, June 5-12, 1904; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, *Les Deux Méthodes syndicalistes: polémiques publiées à l'occasion des attaques dirigées contre la Fédération du Livre. Réformisme et action directe* (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1905).

and as a result the next two years were fairly calm.[63] However, the issues had not been settled. Arguments continued throughout 1905 and spread into new areas.

The reformers organized a journal, La Revue syndicaliste, to propagate their views. The list of supporters included Keufer, Guérard, Renard, and Coupat. As La Voix du peuple was an organ of combat, the Revue syndicaliste was intended to deal with the concerns of the moderates. It was to be a journal of information and "science," dealing with legislation, education, and practical reforms.[64] The articles stressed the importance of legislative reforms, the value of mediation in settling or preventing strikes, and the need for international reforms.

The reformist strategy was direct: continue to oppose the revolutionaries, expose the reformist philosophy, try to attract more support. As usual, Keufer was in the forefront of the effort. With clarity and patience he explained the moderate position in the syndical journals and before labor meetings and conferences.

The starting point for Keufer's analysis was the hypothesis that France, as well as the world at large, was in a transition period of indeterminate length and character, brought on by

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[63]Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, pp. 366-82; Zeldin, France, p. 235; Louis Levine, The Labor Movement in France: A Study in Revolutionary Syndicalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1912), pp. 165-70; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 393-94.

[64]Challaye, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et syndicalisme réformiste, pp. 151-52; "Nôtre but," Revue syndicaliste, no. 1 (May 15, 1905), p. 3. Moreau, Le Syndicalisme, p. 32, unaccountably said that the Revue syndicaliste displayed the "revolutionary" aspects of reformism.

the joining together of science and capital--a union which had resulted in industrialization. In this difficult period, many solutions had been proposed: cooperation, collectivism, Positivism, anarchism. Who could possibly know the true solution? It would be foolish to try and choose definitively at this point in time. Besides, there was still an overriding need: to organize all workers, whatever their political or religious opinions. Their status as wage earners was sufficient grounds on which to unionize them. This naturally required that the labor union be politically neutral. Not only would a precise political orientation alienate certain workers, but it could also be dangerous. In the case of the revolutionaries, for example, an attempt by them to effectuate their doctrine might result in the death of thousands of human beings--a matter not to be taken lightly.

No matter what ideas workers subscribed to, Keufer believed that no worker wished to neglect partial, successive improvements in their working conditions--improvements which the union could obtain. Keufer maintained what he called an organic conception of syndicalism; he believed that the union had to grow, build its strength, and perpetuate itself, whereas he felt his opponents viewed it only as an instrument of social demolition which would disappear on the day after the revolution.

It was this organic conception that made the first goal for any labor union the attainment of a collective contract. Not only was the contract a means whereby salaries could be raised, hours reduced, work rules made more humane, and so on,

but more importantly, the collective contract raised the union to a position of value. It became the organized expression of the workers, substituting itself for the collection of individuals. It thereby became the expression of the general good, as opposed to an individualistic structure in which egotism and selfishness prevailed. The union, to Keufer, was more than just a means for improving the condition of the working class; it was also a way of moralizing it.[65]

A union had several important functions to fulfill. Another important one was to provide unemployment and accident insurance as well as survivor benefits. Keufer denied that he favored the practice of mutual aid as an end in itself. The purpose of mutual aid was to create bonds between unionists, so that when the time came for struggle, the members would stand behind the union.[66] The French worker was notorious for joining a union when it promised immediate benefits, and then neglecting to pay dues when conditions worsened or a strike was lost. Keufer tried to deal with this problem by

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[65]Keufer, "Les Deux Conceptions du syndicalisme," pp. 18-23. The revolutionaries were violently opposed to collective contracts. They felt that they limited their freedom of action, particularly their right to strike at any time. Also, in French law, a strike was seen as the breaking of an agreement between employer and employee and could carry judicial penalties. The revolutionaries feared greater legal difficulties if they broke actual written contracts. Furthermore, they felt that a contract would make workers docile and would prevent them from being in a state of constant struggle. See Rapport fait au nom de la Commission du Travail chargée d'examiner le projet de loi rélatif aux conventions collectives de travail. Annexe au procès-verbal de la 2e séance du 5 décembre 1912, Chambre des Députés, session extraordinaire de 1912 (Paris: Imprimerie de la Chambre des Deputes, 1912), especially pp. 404-12. It is not surprising to learn that the earliest contract was a wage scale negotiated by the Paris printers in 1843. Also Keufer, "Introduction," to François Fagnot, Le Syndicalisme anglais (Paris: Bibliothèque Socialiste, Société Nouvelle de Librairie et d'Edition [Librairie Georges Bellais], 1903), p. 5; Challaye, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et syndicalisme réformiste, pp. 108-9, 118-19.

forging bonds among the members and between the members and the union. He repeatedly emphasized that a union had to be strongly organized to be effective, which meant it had to have a high proportion of workers in an industry unionized, and they had to be regular dues payers. This was especially necessary when it came time to strike.

The revolutionaries, by contrast, had developed the theory of the conscious and audacious minority which, by the boldness of its acts, would stimulate the rest of the working class to join it. Keufer put no faith in this concept, which he regarded as foolish. There was no substitute in his mind for organization. We can appreciate the consistency and logic of Keufer's theory and practice. Organization required political neutrality, because that was the only way a union could avoid offending any worker's political beliefs. Organization required the practice of mutual aid, because that was the way to bind members to the union. Organization was the determining factor in the success or failure of a strike.

Keufer did not reject the strike. In this sense, he was more militant than other class collaborationists. He did view it as a last resort, and he did oppose the general strike, but to him the strike was a tool. It was a weapon to be used when the employer violated the rights of the workers--preferably as spelled out in a contract. Whereas other class collaborationists

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[66]Keufer, "Les Deux Conceptions du syndicalisme," pp. 24-28.

paid lip service to the possible ultimate necessity of the work stoppage, most were not sincere. The U.C.S., as we have seen, never undertook or supported a strike. The Yellows and the Catholics, as we shall see, also usually failed to make good on their words. Keufer was different. The Fédération du Livre engaged in many strikes, some of them truly notable; it supported strikes in other industries and other nations.[67]

However, although a labor union had to be constantly ready to demand improvements, that did not always mean an ultimatum and a strike. First, there had to be negotiations, conciliation efforts, attempts to settle the matter peacefully. Keufer noted that his method was criticized for emasculating the energy of the proletariat and weakening his pride. Also, revolutionaries accused him of legitimizing the status of the employer. Keufer denied these charges. He felt it was possible to negotiate and still be firm in pressing one's demands. If this failed, there was still the strike. But it had to be well-organized and peaceful. The Fédération du Livre paid its strikers 3.50 francs a day for three months. Not only was the amount unheard of for a French union, but the very payment of any strike benefits whatsoever was unusual.

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[67] Ibid., pp. 25-26, 34-36. See below, Chapter V, and Keufer letter to Camarade Carteau of Ivry, 28 June 1902, Institut Français d'Histoire Social; Federation du Livre, Les Deux Méthodes, p. 69.

The strike was not the only tool available to the union. Keufer also favored the use of the label, the index, the boycott, and social legislation. He agreed that it was dangerous to put all one's hope in government action, but sometimes it could be useful. He noted that some laws had been passed which had helped the working class: laws regulating the labor of women and children, reorganizing the prud'hommes, suppressing the livret. He found it interesting that the anarchists, who supposedly opposed the intervention of the state, called on it to abolish the commercial placement bureaus.[68]

Finally, Keufer dealt with the question of the goal of the revolutionaries. To him, they were only using the unions in an attempt to accomplish what they really wanted: the destruction of all existing social institutions. As anarchists, their objective was to wipe out all institutions, since they restricted individual liberty. They were not sincere syndicalists; they were not struggling for syndical goals. Keufer had no faith whatsoever in their vision of a libertarian communist utopia in which all men were free and society nonexistent.[69]

Of all the elements of Keufer's ideology which set him apart, not only from the revolutionaries, but from other reformists

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[68] Ibid., pp. 30-32, 38-39.

[69] Ibid., p. 40. Keufer, "Le Congrès syndical de Bourges. Le Congrès et l'opinion ouvrière. Enquête: l'opinion réformiste," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 142 (November 1, 1904), pp. 92-96.

as well, one of the most significant was his attitude toward France, la patrie. He was the only labor leader in the C.G.T. to adopt a frankly patriotic position.[70] To the leader of the printers, class divisions only meant that nations consisted of different categories of citizens--it did not mean that the worker had no country. Keufer had an organicist conception of the nation as well as of the union, and it was impossible for him to conceive of man without the nation. The nation was a historical reality, the result of human evolution. All men were born and raised in a milieu which permitted the transmittal of their social heritage. This milieu included one's family, one's village and region, and one's country.[71] However, this did not mean that a Frenchman had to hate other nations. It merely meant loving one's own homeland. Of course, this included an obligation to defend its borders.[72]

Keufer did subscribe to a limited version of internationalism. He believed in the formation of international craft federations so that, for example, the printers of Germany and England could assist the printers of France in their struggles and vice versa. In fact, the Fédération du Livre had been the first French

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[70] "Enquête du l'idée de patrie et la classe ouvrière," Le Mouvement socialiste, nos. 162-163 (September 1 and 15, 1905), pp. 47-51.

[71] Ibid., pp. 48-49.

[72] Ibid., pp. 49-50.

union to form an international organization. Keufer felt that such ties would tend to promote pacifism and reduce the possibilities of war.[73] But if war came, the nation had to be defended. To Keufer, the general strike, as useless as it was for social transformation, was even worse when used for antimilitaristic purposes. If the French working class undertook the general strike at the outset of an armed conflict, France would be rendered helpless, and put at the mercy of her enemies.[74]

It was clear that the reformist philosophy was in direct contradiction to the revolutionary approach and that the divisions seen at Bourges had not abated. There was every reason to expect that the 1906 Congress, scheduled for Amiens, would be another battleground. This expectation was heightened by the fact that the C.G.T. had engaged in a general strike on May 1, 1906 for the eight-hour day. The Livre refused to participate, although it did strike for a nine-hour day.

But, a few months before the Congress, Victor Renard announced that he would raise at Amiens the question of syndical ties to the newly-unified Socialist Party. This complicated the Congress and made it seem as if syndical unity had at

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[73] Ibid., pp. 50-51; XIVe Congrès . . . 1904, pp. 128-31; Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations, p. 720.

[74] "Enquête du l'idée de patrie," pp. 50-51; Keufer, "L'Antimilitarisme et les syndicats," Revue syndicaliste, no. 18 (October 1906), pp. 160-68; Archives Nationales, F7 13753, "Fédération du Livre, 1910-1914," report of August 2, 1912.

last been achieved. In reality, the Congress of Amiens was widely misunderstood, since the real issues were submerged underneath the reaction to Renard's proposal.

Still, the violent animosities of Bourges were nonetheless not repeated at Amiens. Some progress had been made. The Syndicat National des Correcteurs, although no less revolutionary, had been reabsorbed into the Fédération du Livre; the printers agreed to use the symbol of the C.G.T. (two clasped hands embracing across a globe) with the confederal motto as part of its own logo. However, it did not include the words "Confédération Générale du Travail." Keufer later admitted that the moderates had been treated better at Amiens.[75]

As at Bourges, Keufer attacked the report of the Confederal Committee. He objected to the way in which the Livre had been regarded with reference to the May 1 movement. He informed the Congress that in 150 cities the printers had obtained a nine-hour day, while the revolutionaries had failed miserably in their attempt for the eight-hour day.[76] Not only did the results demonstrate the greater practicality of the Livre's approach, but they also showed that the Livre was a fighting organization, capable of more than mere mutual aid.

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[75] XVe Congrès National Corporatif (IXe de la C.G.T.) et Conférence des Bourses du Travail tenu à Amiens du 8 au 16 octobre 1906, compte rendu des travaux (Amiens: Imprimerie du Progrès de la Somme, 1906), pp. 23, 30. Keufer's comments on his treatment were made at his own union's congress: Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Dixième Congrès National tenu à Bordeaux, Casino des Lilas, du 18 au 23 juillet 1910 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1910), p. 59.

[76] It was estimated that of 202,507 strikers, only 10,177 obtained any reduction of the work day in Nicholas Papayanis: "Alphonse Merrheim and the Strike of Hennebont: The Struggle for the Eight-Hour day in France," International Review of Social History 16 (1971): 160. Almost all of that number consisted of printers.

Keufer also criticized the leaders of the C.G.T. for having taken the organization out of the international syndical movement--because the leadership of the syndicalist international would not permit the discussion of antimilitarism and the general strike at its congresses. He maintained that the French should not have broken their ties to the International Secretariat on this matter; "Better to remain and fight for your ideas than to walk out." He might have been describing his own attitude to the Confédération.

While Coupat supported Keufer, Pouget and other revolutionaries stressed the idea that no internationalism was possible without antimilitarism. In an important development, though, Niel joined Keufer and Coupat on a resolution stating the necessity of participation in the syndicalist international. Niel had been in the revolutionary camp, but had been slowly moving toward a more moderate stance. The fact that he could join with the reformists on some issues domonstrated that the revolutionary bloc was not unshakeable and that on some issues, at least, the reformists could hope to attain a majority.[77]

The major issue of the Congress was Renard's proposal. His resolution noted the value of social legislation, and that Socialist deputies had always proposed and voted for laws

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[77] XVe Congrès . . . 1906, pp. 93-98; Pouget, "Le Congrès syndicaliste d'Amiens," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 181 (December 1906), pp. 380-82; Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations, p. 725; Levine, The Labor Movement, p. 169, pointed out the failure of the campaign for the eight-hour day. There were only two successes out of 103 attempts. Lorwin, French Labor Movement, p. 45.

to help the working class. Although the C.G.T. and the Socialist Party pursued different paths, it made sense for the two organizations to work together, or at least to coordinate some of their activities, especially since the unions could not achieve all they wanted on their own. Therefore, he called on the Confederal Committee to enter into relations, either intermittent or permanent as circumstances dictated, with the Conseil National of the Socialist Party, to facilitate the achievement of working class demands.[78]

Keufer reacted predictably; he opposed Renard's plan. However, he took the opportunity to lash out at the anarchists who, he complained, had done the very same thing. They had taken over the Confédération and had given it a political direction: antiparliamentary, antimilitarist, antipatriotic. Although Keufer had more in common with Renard--they both believed in piecemeal reform and the parliamentary process--he and his followers joined with the revolutionary leadership to defeat Renard's idea. Their belief in syndical autonomy was stronger than their desire to support Renard.

The resolution that was adopted came, in time, to be known as the Charter of Amiens. Since it was passed by a vote of 830-8-1, the impression made was that there was general agreement on syndical principles between moderates and their radical opponents. A closer examination of the resolution

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[78] XVe Congrès . . . 1906, pp. 134-36.

that was passed reveals that the motion did not correspond, in its entirety, to moderate ideas:

> The Confederal Congress of Amiens confirms Article Two of the statutes of the C.G.T.
>
> The C.G.T. organizes, outside of any political school, all workers who are conscious of the war for the elimination of the wage earner and capitalism.
>
> The Congress considers that this declaration is a recognition of the class war which, on the economic terrain, pits the workers against all forms of exploitation and oppression, material and moral, wielded by the capitalist class against the working class. . . . syndicalism prepares the emancipation /of the workers/ by the expropriation of capitalism; it recognizes as its means of action the general strike. . . .
>
> /I/n that which concerns individuals, the Congress affirms complete liberty for the unionist to participate, outside his union, in whatever forms of struggle correspond to his philosophical or political convictions, as long as he does not introduce into the union the opinions he professes on the outside; . . . the confederal organizations, as much as the unions, must remain outside of all parties and sects which can, in perfect freedom, pursue the transformation of society. 79

The moderates had introduced two resolutions of their own, and only supported the above resolution when it became obvious that their own ones would not pass. As at Nantes, twelve years earlier, they submerged their differences with the revolutionaries to support the cause of syndical autonomy. But they did not, thereby, signal their acceptance of the rest of the revolutionary program. In fact, they felt that the resolution could be used to condemn the anarchist control of the C.G.T. The anarchists, naturally, did not believe that

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79 Ibid., pp. 166-70. See Chambelland, Le Syndicalisme, pp. 37-39; Pouget, "Le Congrès syndicaliste d'Amiens," pp. 43-45, 48-49; Dubief, Le Syndicalisme révolutionnaire, p. 36; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 399-400; Ridley, Revolutionary Syndicalism, p. 180.

the Charter of Amiens applied to them at all. They did not think that their rejection of parliamentarism was a brand of politics.

Strangely enough, although some historians saw the Charter of Amiens as a victory for the revolutionaries,[80] others claimed that it was a victory for the reformists.[81] This writer does not see how it can be interpreted as a moderate victory. The true moderate resolutions had been withdrawn. The Livre, when it cast its vote, announced that it was voting for the resolution because it condemned political interference in the C.G.T., but specifically expressed reservations in its assent because of the resolution's approval of the general strike.[82] The revolutionaries certainly did not see it as a defeat. And on every other issue at the Congress, the reformists remained a distinct minority.

The syndicalist movement was stronger in 1906 than at any previous time, although this is not to say that it was all-powerful, or even strong enough to make a revolution a practical mode of action. It included in its ranks only half of all unionized labor in France, and unionized workers comprised only a feeble percentage of all French workers (roughly 11 per

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[80]Dubief, Le Syndicalisme révolutionnaire, p. 35; Saposs, The Labor Movement, p. 220.

[81]Ridley, Revolutionary Syndicalism, p. 180; Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier," pp. 400-1. Levine, The Labor Movement, p. 174, said that each group could interpret it in its own way.

[82]XVe Congrès . . . 1906, p. 171.

cent).[83] However, the C.G.T. had become solidly established. It had re-established a veneer of unity at Amiens; it had been able to organize a generalized action of the French working class around the demand for the eight-hour day; it had affirmed its political independence.

On the other hand, the Confédération was severely divided between revolutionaries and reformists. The reformists had played a key role in the establishment and growth of the C.G.T., but had seen their influence in the organization drop sharply. However, even revolutionary unions found parts of the reformist program attractive. The collective contract, emphasized by the moderates, remained rare. Only 202 were signed in 1912, compared to almost 4,000 in Germany (in 1911). From 1892-1912, approximately 2,000 contracts were concluded, while in Great Britain there were 1,692 contracts in force in 1910 alone.[84] There was a slightly more significant use of arbitration or conciliation; in 1906 it was used in 302 cases; in 1907, in 250 cases; in 1910, in 278 cases.[85] Compared to the number

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[83] In 1905, there were 4,626 labor unions with 781,344 members. By 1906, membership had risen to 836,134. This compared with 419,781 in 1895 and 138,692 in 1890. The total wage-earning population in 1905 was 9.7 million. See Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, 1896, p. xxiv; 1904-1905, pp. xxi-xxxiii; 1914, p. xxxii; Année sociale internationale, 1913-1914, p. 583.

[84] Année sociale internationale, 1913-1914, pp. 463-64; Rapport fait au nom de la Commission du Travail . . . relatif aux conventions collectives de travail, pp. 146-47.

[85] Rapport fait au nom de la Commission du Travail . . . relatif aux conventions collectives de travail, p. 35.

of strikes, arbitration and conciliation were used in about 10-20% of strikes, depending on the year. The miners in particular (along with the printers) made frequent use of the arbitration process.[86] Shorter and Tilly have determined that requests for conciliation or arbitration were made by workers in 48.3% of the cases (compared to 2.6% for employers; in 46.2% of the cases, it was initiated by the local justice of the peace). Shorter and Tilly also pointed out that the unions formally negotiated with the employer in only 6% of all strikes between 1898 and 1914.[87]

Although there were some permanent joint committees set up, they were not common. As might be expected, the most notable one was in the printing industry. Forty-seven were created in 1910, but only 19 in 1911.[88] The Conseil Supérieur du Travail, on the other hand, achieved greater acceptance. In addition to the printers, the railroad workers, transport workers, tobacco workers, clerks, mechanics, leather workers, and culinary workers participated in it through their federations. The more revolutionary federations remained aloof.

The use of the union label had also experienced a modest growth. The idea of a label had been brought to France by Keufer, who had learned of it on a trip to the United States. The Fédération du Livre was the first union to adopt one (in

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[86] On the printers, see Chapter V. On the miners, Edouard Loze, Conciliation at arbitrage dans le bassin houiller du Nord et du Pas-de-Calais, 1889-1898 (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1899).

[87] Edward Shorter and Charles Tilly, Strikes in France, 1830-1968 (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 29-30.

[88] Rapport fait au nom de la Commission du Travail . . . relatif aux conventions collectives de travail, p. 146.

1885), and it was also adopted by the hairdressers and bakers in addition to the C.G.T. itself.[89]

Finally, there was a modicum of social legislation passed with labor support. These laws will be covered in more detail in Chapter VII. Suffice it to say for now that they included a law on arbitration and conciliation, a law making employers liable for accidents, a law regulating working conditions for women and children, and a Ministerial decree establishing a minimum wage for government-contracted work.

The reformist program, in sum, if not widely accepted in its entirety, found growing acceptance. It was obviously more sensible and practical than that of the revolutionaries. As the revolutionary spirit declined--or was beaten down by repressive governmental actions--the C.G.T. evolved toward a greater acceptance of the moderate approach.

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[89]Keufer, L'Usage du label; idem, Rapport du délégué de l'imprimerie à l'Exposition de Boston (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1884).

CHAPTER IV

REFORMISTS AND THE C.G.T., 1906-1914

Only a superficial unity had been achieved at Amiens. The divisions between revolutionary and reformist had not disappeared; if anything, they grew more bitter at least until 1910. At the same time, reformism increased in influence, although the same could not be said of the reformists. Except for a brief period in 1909, the C.G.T. remained in the hands of revolutionaries who became more moderate; the reformists did not gain control of the Confédération. However, as the radical leadership mellowed, their relations with the reformers improved. In fact, Keufer expected that the congress scheduled for 1914 (but never held) would definitively place the C.G.T. on a nonrevolutionary course.[1]

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[1]Michael Sabatino DeLucia, "The Remaking of French Syndicalism, 1911-1918: The Growth of the Reformist Philosophy" (Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, 1971), pp. 1-2, 5, 10-11, 24, 35-37; Val Lorwin, The French Labor Movement (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1954), pp. 45-46; F.F. Ridley, Revolutionary Syndicalism in France: The Direct Action of its Time (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 261; David Saposs, The Labor Movement in Post-War France (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), pp. 25-28; Bernard Georges and Denise Tintant, Leon Jouhaux: cinquante ans de syndicalisme, vol. 1: Des Origines à 1921 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962), pp. 65-89; Theodore Zeldin, France, 1848-1945, vol. 1: Ambition, Love and Politics (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 274-75. René Montémilard, a reformist leader, predicted the evolution toward reformism in Pierre Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste (Paris: Librairie C. Reinwald, A. Schleicher,

The outbreak of the war and the working-class response to it dramatically demonstrated what the reformists had been saying for years: that the general strike was a chimera and that antimilitarism had no place in the syndicalist movement. The inability and unwillingness of the C.G.T. to unleash a general strike to prevent mobilization and stop the war were widely taken as evidence that the revolutionary era had come to a close. During the war, the C.G.T. pursued a policy of cooperation with the government and with employers, and after the war its policies reflected reformist desires. In this respect, the Confederation followed the same pattern as the Socialist Party. From the standpoint of the reformists, then, the period from 1906 to 1914 was a fruitful one.

It was not a good period for the revolutionary leadership. Membership, which had been growing up to 1906, stagnated at around 300,000 members. The governments of Georges Clemenceau (1906-1909) and Aristide Briand (1909-1910) adopted very repressive policies. Clemenceau used the army to crush a dockers strike at Nantes in 1907, and broke a strike of Paris electrical

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successeur, 1912), p. 149. Keufer acknowledged it in "Changement de tactique," La Typographie française, October 1, 1912. There were many signs that the so-called "heroic period" had ended. DeLucia pointed out that only 2,200 workers attended the May Day demonstration in Paris in 1914; Lorwin noted that many more unions were interested in including the question of a shorter work week on the agenda of the 1914 Congress than in discussing antimilitarism. The Bulletin de l'Office du Travail, January, 1913, reported the results of a questionnaire it had sent to labor unions. 590 unions said that their situation was satisfactory; only 262 responded in the negative (p. 2). By contrast, E. Martin Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations de métiers (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1922), p. 739, claimed that the immediate prewar period was one of increasing revolutionary activity. Yet he is forced to admit that it disappeared as soon as the war began.

workers in the same year. He also tried to prevent the teachers from unionizing by firing their leaders, a tactic he also used against the postal workers in 1909. In 1908, when strikes broke out among construction workers at Draveil-Vigneux and Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, strikers were killed by police. When the C.G.T. demonstrated in protest, the troops which Clemenceau had called out opened fire, wounding fifty and killing four. The ex-Radical also had the leaders of the C.G.T. arrested. Briand, the firebrand of the general strike, had to face a railroad strike in 1910. He too called out the army, and in an innovation Clemenceau would have been proud of, drafted the strikers. Faced with such pressure, it is not surprising that the moderate alternative looked more attractive.

The major themes sounded by the reformists in this period were a rejection of antipatriotism and antimilitarism, and a stronger emphasis on parliamentary activity. Parliamentary activity had always been important to the reformists, but there had also been a hesitancy about using laws for social reforms and about the involvement of the state generally. These fears began to fade.

The ideological distinctions which divided reformists before 1906 tended to become inoperative after Amiens. The revolutionary reformists such as Niel and Guérard became much less revolutionary. Although Niel sometimes tried to make it appear that he was to the left of other reformists, this was not really so, and was probably just a tactical ploy to obtain more support from the left groups in the Confédération.[2]

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[2]Contrast Niel's statements at the XVIIe Congrès National Corporatif (XIe de la Confédération) et IVe Conférence des Bourses

In addition, the revolutionary reformists and the Keuferites became much more committed to parliamentary politics. Although still not willing to go as far as Renard, their acceptance of the Socialist Party's efforts in the legislature drew them closer to the Renard wing.

Many of the reformists, especially Keufer, had originally opposed a government-operated retirement plan for workers. It was this fact to which Pouget pointed in 1904 to demonstrate that reformists, as much as revolutionaries, detested "phony" reforms. Those scholars who judged the reformists as essentially revolutionary have seized on the same point.[3] By 1909, however, with parliament seriously considering the passage of such a law, the reformists, en bloc, threw their support to it.

This new-found unity among the antirevolutionaries was demonstrated by the foundation of the Comité d'Union Syndicaliste. It was created in 1909 out of a desire to increase the organizational strength of the moderates. The list of members was a veritable who's who of reformism. In addition to such familiar names as Keufer, Coupat, Guérard, Hamelin and Renard, it included such major labor leaders as Cleuet of the Amiens Bourse, Victor Dalle, an old Possibilist and leader of the clerks,

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du Travail tenus à Toulouse, du 3 au 10 octobre 1910, compte rendu des travaux (Toulouse: Imprimerie Ouvrière, 1911), p. 207 and "Notre doctrine?" Action ouvrière, no. 9 (February 1, 1910), p. 1.

[3]Emile Pouget, "Réformes et révolution: au camarade Keufer," La Voix du peuple, April 5-12, 1903; Georges Moreau, Le Syndicalisme: Les Mouvements politiques et l'évolution économique (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1925), pp. 95-96.

Bajat of Marseilles, a figure at many confederal congresses, Clavérie of the gas company clerks, Montémilard of the dyers, Niel, and Thil of the lithographers. The committee's goals were to "react against anarchist syndicalism /and/ to realize the union of all workers outside all politics, on the professional and economic terrain exclusively."[4] Its membership was limited to unionists of five years' standing, and it planned to hold its general assembly in the same city as the C.G.T. Congress, presumably to coordinate strategy. The committee was not long-lived--its journal, Action ouvrière, was published from October 1909 to October 1910 only, and it attained a membership of merely ninety--but it was a sign of cooperation among the opponents of the revolutionaries.[5]

Its manifesto declared that it stood for a pure syndicalism, a syndicalism without politics. This meant that questions such as antipatriotism and antiparliamentarism, being of a political nature, did not belong within the purview of the union, which was essentially an economic (or professional) institution. That did not mean, however, that political action was adjudged useless. Quite the contrary, politics was a necessity, both for the union and for the unionist. For the

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[4]"A Tous les Travailleurs," Action ouvrière, no. 1 (October 1, 1909), p. 1.

[5]"Statutes," ibid., p. 4. In "Notre situation," ibid., no. 10 (February 15, 1910), p. 1, the executive committee claimed ninety members and a circulation of one thousand, too little to enable it to publish weekly, print brochures, or hold conferences.

union, politics consisted in bringing pressure on parliament to pass laws which would benefit the working class. For the unionist, it was incumbent upon him to play an active role in politics, but outside the union, on his own, in a manner consistent with his syndical beliefs.[6]

Many articles, other than those devoted to the perfidy and stupidity of the revolutionaries, dealt with the need for parliamentary action and the status of proposed laws. The reformists were always careful to admit that they never placed complete faith in parliament, and that the laws passed there were never totally adequate; usually they were seriously imperfect. However, even imperfect laws meant progress, and could be used to help the workers. Once a law was on the books, its flaws could be pointed out--a perfect role for the union--and pressure exerted for a better one.

Coupat, for example, described how the wood cutters and agricultural workers had been excluded from the law on industrial accidents. A proposition to include the woodworkers who labored in government-owned forests was having difficulty in parliament. Syndicalists should be supporting this revision, he declared. What a perfect campaign for the C.G.T. to undertake, had not the leaders such a fear of parliamentary action. Were they afraid of making the woodcutters too satisfied, and

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[6]"A Tous les Travailleurs," p. 1; C. Désirat, "Le Parlement," ibid., no. 2 (October 15, 1909), p. 2.

thus reducing their revolutionary fervor? It was the job of the union to improve conditions.[7]

Montémilard called for more government inspectors. The law on industrial hygiene had many flaws, which he duly pointed out. But to have any law at all was a beginning; it was up to the working class to do the rest.[8] Guérard attacked worker indifference to the projet de loi under consideration in the Senate regarding retirement. He admitted that the law would provide only a few sous a day to workers over sixty-five, an amount wholly inadequate and at an age too advanced. But that was the fault of the workers who, instead of acting, passively awaited whatever parliament chose to give: "The indifference of the working class is truly prodigious." The C.G.T. acted in a wholly negative manner. It rejected all proposed laws, but suggested nothing to put in its place. In its disdain for reforms, the Confédération had lost all sense of reality. Practical action yielded positive results, and contributed to the growth of unions. Coupat added the observation that old workers would prefer even the modest pension to the paradise promised (but unachieved) by the revolutionaries.[9] Keufer noted that the constant calls for a revolution which did not occur only served to discourage workers and weaken the unions.

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[7]Pierre Coupat, "Les Bucherons et la loi sur l'accidents du travail," ibid., no. 2 (October 15, 1909), p. 2.

[8]René Montémilard, "L'Hygiène du travail," ibid., no. 5 (December 1, 1909), p. 2 and Vidi, "L'Hygiène du travail: une réforme nécessaire," ibid., no. 1 (October 1, 1909), p. 3.

[9]Eugène Guérard, "Les Retraites ouvrières," ibid., no. 3 (November 1, 1909), p. 1; Coupat, "Les Retraites ouvrières," ibid., no. 7 (January 1, 1910), p. 1.

When the C.G.T. took a position of opposition to the draft law in the Senate, a manifesto was issued by Keufer, Coupat, Guérard, Clueut, Montémilard, and Thil. It reiterated the point that bourgeois laws would always be insufficient. The writers agreed that worker contributions deducted from wages, as the proposed law stipulated, were distasteful. But the answer was to force parliament to fund the system with government money, not to reject the whole plan. Unfortunately, the working class was too weak to accomplish that. Still, it was in the interest of the worker to have a retirement system; something was better than nothing.[10]

Renard expressed his regret that the C.G.T. did not act more forcefully in these matters, rather than wasting its time with nonsyndical questions such as antipatriotism, which had nothing tangible to do with the defense of working-class economic and professional interests. He also could not help noting that if his proposition at Amiens had been adopted, and contacts had been established between the C.G.T. and the Socialist Party, an immense campaign of agitation could have been organized to obtain the kind of law the working class desired.[11]

Alfred Hamelin took the argument even further. He felt that the worker had to employ all the means at his disposal to fight the exploiters. This included such things as forming

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[10] "Aux Travailleurs," ibid., no. 9 (February 1, 1910), p. 1.

[11] Victor Renard in L'Ouvrier textile, quoted in "Revue de la presse ouvrière," Action ouvrière, no. 10 (February 15, 1910), p. 4.

cooperatives, syndical action, and political action. Going even further than Keufer, he stated unequivocably that only the Socialist Party protected the rights of workers. No bourgeois, no matter how radical, did so. Therefore, it was absurd to act as if Socialist deputies were traitors to the working class, as the anarchists claimed. They were , on the contrary, friends, and should be welcomed as such.[12]

Montémilard wondered if, in their acceptance of parliamentary action and their desire for the retirement law, the reformists were not acting as Barberettists. Although Barberet was still a symbol for a government-dominated union movement, it was clear that Barberet's ideology had been accepted by the C.G.T. reformists. As Montémilard put it with mild sarcasm, "My simple intellect does not allow me to see any other way."[13] He also carried the idea of parliamentary action to its logical conclusion, and thereby returned to one of the basic ideas of the Paris Congress of 1876. He suggested that the syndicalist movement think in terms of worker representatives.

At this point, Keufer drew the line. He reiterated his long-standing and firm opposition to worker deputies. For a union to become involved in supporting candidates would only lead to rivalries, divisions, and schisms which would be fatal to the life of the union. The unions should intervene in the parliamentary process when a law of interest to workers

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[12]Alfred Hamelin, "Parlementarisme et abstentionnisme," ibid., new series, no. 1 (May 15, 1910), p. 1.

[13]Montémilard, "Au Congrès du Toulouse," ibid., new series, no. 4 (July 1, 1910), p. 11.

was at stake, but there was a big difference between that and official support for particular candidates.

Keufer never lost sight of what he regarded as the essential role of the union: to organize all workers. That was only possible if the opinions of all were tolerated and the opinions of none were elevated to the position of dogma. This included not only political, but also philosophical and religious matters. To other groups belonged the function of propagating such ideas and doctrines, and each unionist, as an individual, was free to join such groups. But in the union, only the defense of professional interests was at stake. This is what Keufer meant when he spoke about syndical neutrality.[14]

Keufer failed to see that he did commit himself and his union to a specific political doctrine: republican anti-communism. In Keufer, as in Barberet, republicanism was so deep-seated, so taken for granted, that he failed to see it as a particular ideological commitment. Republicanism was normality. When Keufer talked about political neutrality, it

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[14] Keufer, "La Politique du syndicalisme," ibid., new series, no. 8 (September 1, 1910), pp. 1-3; idem, "L'Education syndicale," ibid., no. 5 (July 15, 1910), pp. 15-16. Carcanagues asked several reformist leaders what they thought about a Labor Party, such as in England. Reactions ranged from those who felt it was unnecessary, since it duplicated the Socialist Party, to those who favored it, to those who opposed it since they felt it would only lead to new divisions. Hamelin, for example, felt that individuals, but not unions, should join the Socialist Party. Keufer, curiously, said it might be an interesting idea, but rejected it because, given the mode of voting in the C.G.T., it would be dominated by the demagogues of revolution. Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste révolutionnaire, pp. 115, 123, 133, 138, 142, 144. Keufer was a member of the Socialist Party, but it was remarkable how he was able to separate his purely political functions from his trade unionism. That is not to say that his Positivist or socialist beliefs did not influence the way he acted or thought. On the other hand, he never used his position as a union leader to promote a Socialist candidate or to gain converts for Positivism.

was a neutrality among competing political groups in a republican setting. He did not see (or did not want to see) that choosing the setting was also a political choice, and he was exceptionally partisan when it was a question of the defense of the Republic.

Keufer was disturbed by the growing antiparliamentary tendencies on the right, and the support which it was finding among revolutionary syndicalists.[15] He wondered how the two groups could work together, since the right was looking for a dictatorship or a restoration to impose social peace and restore what they saw as the grandeur of France. The left, theoretically, was opposed to this. Nonetheless, a rapprochement was taking shape, and Keufer sprang to defend the parliamentary system against attacks from both left and right.

He admitted that the regime was riddled with vices, and that it was easy to criticize parliament. Extravagant promises were made during election campaigns (made, by the way, because an uneducated, unsophisticated, immoral French electorate wanted to hear wild, exaggerated, unrealizable plans which seemed to hold the promise of immediate paradise). When it

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[15]This fascinating subject has yet to be definitively studied. There is a dossier on "Les Royalistes et les syndicats (1908-1914)" in the Archives Nationales, F7 13195. Also Eugen Weber, "Nationalism, Socialism and National-Socialism in France," French Historical Studies 2 (Spring 1962): 273-307; Zeev Sternhell, "National Socialism and Antisemitism: The Case of Maurice Barrès," Journal of Contemporary History 8 (October 1973): 47-66; Jules Levey, "The Sorelian Syndicalists: Edouard Berth, Georges Valois and Hubert Lagardelle" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1967); Mark Weitz, "Edouard Berth and Fascism: A Leftist Sorelian Critique" (Master's Essay, College of the City of New York, 1970).

became apparent that the promises could not be fulfilled, the deputies then rendered small, material services to their voters so as to ensure re-election. "There was thus no social sentiment, only individual anarchy." There was no moralistic desire to improve society, only an institutionalized method of petty bribery to effectuate the perpetuation in power of those who held it.

However, Keufer warned against confusing the form of government with the abuses of the system. The republic was still better than any alternative. It had done a marvelous job in overcoming the disaster of 1870. Some good laws had even been passed. All over the world, Keufer noted, in China, Japan, Russia, Turkey, Persia, and Belgium, men were struggling to achieve a parliamentary system. It was ridiculous to believe that labor's interests would be better protected in a monarchist regime. A "dictatorship of the proletariat" would be no better: "It is a veritable folly to conceive and try to realize such a project. It would fail miserably and result in the most horrible and bloody anarchy, which will destroy for years to come all possibility of social action for the workers to the benefit of a military or reactionary dictatorship."[16]

Although Keufer considered himself a socialist, it is clear that he was not one in the fundamental late nineteenth-century meaning of the word. His socialism, such as it was, was that of the pre-industrial age: of Saint-Simon and Comte.

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[16]Keufer, "Parlementarisme ou dictature," La Voix du peuple, July 4-11, 1909.

He stressed the "social" rather than the "political" question; his socialism consisted in a belief that the "poorest and most numerous classes" (to use the Saint-Simonian phrase) were exploited and mistreated. Their condition had to be improved, and wealth had to be divided more equitably and used more fairly. But private property was to be preserved; a better distribution of wealth was not dependent on collectivization. Keufer placed himself squarely in the tradition of Barberet and the U.C.S. He warned that when it came to threats to the Republic, the habitual defenders of republicanism would be ready.[17]

Keufer also offered an interesting sidelight into his political thought by sketching out his ideas on what reforms were needed to improve the parliamentary system. Most necessary, of course, was a higher level of morality, a greater concern for the social good, on the part of both voters and politicians. More specifically, he favored a reduction in the number of deputies, with strict financial controls placed on them. He wanted the legislators to have no say in the hiring of administrative personnel, and for ministers to be chosen from outside parliament. In a sense, he previewed a technocratic type of government, administered by a politically neutral, highly trained elite. This was consistent with his

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[17]Ibid.

Positivist beliefs.[18]

To the revolutionaries in the C.G.T., acceptance of the parliamentary regime was impossible. They were too conscious of the oppression suffered by the working class. Memories of events such as those at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges were too vivid. Such events also proved, to the anarchists, the complete inadequacy of the reformist approach.

The affair of Villeneuve-Saint-Georges represented one of the last efforts by the prewar C.G.T. to mount a generalized movement of mass protest. It was a failure, and not only exposed the weakness of the revolutionary labor movement, but also demonstrated that the heroic age was nearing its end. Through a combination of events, the Fédération du Livre came to be blamed for the failure, although it is clear that the Livre's opposition, while significant, was not enough to destroy the attempt.

The affair began with a confrontational strike by the excavation workers at Draveil, in which two workers were killed. The C.G.T. began an agitation, which led the government to dissolve it and arrest its leaders. This further raised the level of anger, and the Union Départementale de la Seine caused a further demonstration. Again, more people were killed, among them a member of the Fédération du Livre. Several Paris unions decided to call a general strike. An over-eager delegate of the Central Committee of the printers told the Paris section

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[18]Ibid. See Chapter VI for Keufer's Positivism.

that the Fédération would support such an action. When the Central Committee met, however, it rejected any general strike, and declined to pay strike benefits to the Paris section if it joined the strike. It did, by a vote of 10-7, agree to support a work stoppage on the day of the funerals. The Paris section was furious. Although the general strike aborted when other key unions, such as the transport workers and the electrical workers, failed to shut down their services, the Livre became the object of rage.[19]

Keufer was accused of being the savior of the capitalists and of having been afraid to permit the working class to display its power. The reformists saw the issue somewhat differently. It demonstrated to them the bankruptcy of the revolutionary strategy of the general strike, and showed conclusively that the C.G.T. was too weak to be effective.[20] At the 1908 Congress, Renard asked the Confederal Committee to act more prudently, and to avoid getting into actions that could lead to catastrophes. To the revolutionaries who protested against his "cowardly" approach, he informed them that the structure of the C.G.T. practically guaranteed failure in any confrontation. There were 250,000 unionists in Paris. If the C.G.T. was organized along English or German lines, collected

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[19]A. Boudet, "Le Comité Central du Livre et la 21e Section," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 203 (October 15, 1908), pp. 296-305; Keufer, "La Crise syndicaliste: enquête," ibid., no. 220 (April 1910), pp. 268-69; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Dixième Congrès National tenu a Bordeaux, Casino des Lilas, du 18 au 23 juillet 1910 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, n.d.), pp. 85-102.

[20]Keufer, "La Crise syndicaliste," pp. 268-69.

dues and paid strike benefits, it could have had 250,000 strikers; that would have made an impact. "It is not with resolutions . . . that one can fight capitalism, but with bulging treasuries."[21] Keufer's analysis was essentially the same. It was not enough to make a lot of noise and vote violent resolutions, he said. The Confédération had to be capable of leading the mass of workers in disciplined action.[22]

Villeneuve had some very important ramifications. The Paris section had not had good relations with the Federation for some time. After Villeneuve, the leaders decided that they had had enough of Keufer and planned to form a rival federation by attracting some of the more revolutionary sections in the provinces. The C.G.T. leadership, although pessimistic about the chances of success, was willing at first to go along with the idea. The effort never got off the ground, but in 1911 the Paris section asked to be admitted to the Confédération as a *syndicat isolé*. In other words, it planned to withdraw from the Fédération. Léon Jouhaux, by this time, had become secretary of the C.G.T. Although Griffuelhes might have agreed to this (as he had with the Syndicat National des Correcteurs), Jouhaux was less willing to anger the moderates. The idea was rejected. This one incident showed how far the C.G.T. had

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[21] *XVIe Congrès National Corporatif (Xe de la C.G.T.) et IIIe Conférence des Bourses du Travail tenus a Marseilles du 5 au 12 octobre 1908, compte rendu stenographique des travaux* (Marseille: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1909), pp. 41-42.

[22] Keufer, "La Crise syndicaliste," p. 269.

come in its relations with the reformists.[23] But before this point was reached, the reformists and the revolutionaries engaged in a heated battle for control of the Confédération--one that threatened to split the C.G.T. in two.

What did the reformists want from the C.G.T? According to Liochon, they desired an organization similar to the ones in England and Germany. They wanted a Confédération which was more tightly organized, and had the capability of extending practical assistance to member unions when they were engaged in labor struggles. To the dismay of the reformists, the C.G.T. had no real ability to help the adhering federations. It had no significant strike fund and no means of coordinating action other than requesting it. Its usual approach was to issue manifestoes and pass resolutions. When a union was on strike and needed help, it did not approach the C.G.T., but its sister federations. The Fédération du Livre was very proud of the role it played in cases such as this. It had helped the miners during their grève généralisée, and was prepared to do the same for the railroad workers.[24]

The reformists felt the C.G.T. had failed. Its membership was not growing. Important strikes had been crushed by the government. The great majority of French labor remained outside

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[23]Archives Nationales, F7 13752, reports of August 13 and August 14, 1908; F7 13753, report of December 13, 1911. The Paris section did not give up. In February, 1913, it began to print a journal, and planned on sending its leaders, Boudet and Sargent, to the provinces on organizing trips. The police agent, report of February 11, 1913, noted "with regret" that Boudet was a state employee at the Imprimerie Nationale.

[24]XVIIe Congrès . . . 1910, pp. 183-88.

the organization. To Keufer, there was no question but that the crisis was the result of the revolutionary leadership. The anarchists had only hostility and disdain for older forms and methods, such as mutual aid, discussion, peaceful strikes, and joint arbitration committees. They even opposed energetic strikes if they were fought without violence and sabotage.

What made all this worse was that the revolutionaries were a minority in the world of labor. This had been proven in the campaigns for the eight-hour day and the general strike of Villeneuve-Saint-Georges. Not only did they imprudently raise unrealizable hopes, but the weak organization and feeble resources of the C.G.T. made defeat inevitable. The Bourses du Travail were in no better shape than the C.G.T. Pelloutier had envisioned the Bourses as alternative institutions, organizing in embryo the future society inside the bourgeois state. They had accomplished nothing along those lines. They were not only powerless, but worse, they degraded themselves by taking official subsidies.

In short, the revolutionaries were full of sound and fury, but contributed nothing to the development of the working class. The only way to rebuild the C.G.T. was to abandon "official" doctrines which only divided the labor movement, and to centralize the C.G.T. so that it could assure a coordinated action when the situation warranted it.[25]

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[25]Keufer, "La Crise syndicaliste," pp. 262-75. For another attack on the subsidies, see Montémilard, "Légende à dissiper," Action ouvrière, no. 6 (December 15, 1909), p. 2; "Echos: la légende des révolutionnaires anti-subventionnistes," ibid., no. 11 (March 1, 1910), p. 2. Ironically, the Yellows, who were notorious for taking money from employers, also attacked the Bourses on the matter of subsidies.

The 1908 Congress was held in Marseilles. Keufer did not attend, although the printers were adequately represented by Burgard, Jusserand, and Claude Liochon, Keufer's protégé. The Congress took place under unusual circumstances, since Griffuelhes, Pouget, and Yvetot had all been arrested as a result of the Villeneuve affair and were not able to attend. Niel, Renard, Guérard, and Coupat led the reformist forces. Renard, as we have seen, delivered a blistering attack on the Villeneuve incident. Niel took the Confederal Committee to task for still not participating in the international syndicalist movement. It was the first concrete sign of his disenchantment with the anarchist leadership.[26]

Jusserand, supported by Renard, Burgard, Liochon, Cleuet, Coupat, Thil, Guerard, and Niel, among others, joined together for a new attack on the C.G.T. voting system by introducing a resolution for proportional representation. Keufer had asserted that the reformist desire for a new system of voting was not based on any plot against the current leadership, but was the only way to assure the most exact representation possible of the ideas of the French workers. No one was unaware that proportional representation would give the reformists, with their large federations, control of the C.G.T., and the measure was defeated. However, Keufer was not merely

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[26] XVIe Congrès . . . 1908, pp. 62-84, 154-56; Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations, pp. 729-30.

dissembling in his explanation. He did truly believe that it was a better method. The problem with the C.G.T. as it was then constituted was that the leadership was not representative of the majority sentiments of the working class. This alone practically guaranteed its ineffectiveness. At his own printers' congresses, the system of proportional representation was in effect.[27]

The moderates also made an attempt to remove the question of antimilitarism from the agenda. On this issue, Niel broke definitively with the revolutionaries. He felt that the Charter of Amiens (he actually used the word charter--I believe the first such usage) forbid the introduction of such a question in the unions. Would we go from that to a general strike against religion, he wondered?

The reformist resolution stated that the question of patriotism and antipatriotism was one for individual conscience and therefore was not a question for syndical action, which must be exercised only against the employer, not the state. Of course, each unionist had complete freedom to pursue his political beliefs outside the union. On the other hand, since international relations among the working classes of different nations was a guarantee of peace, the reformist resolution called on the C.G.T. to join the trade union international and undertake an "intense agitation to prevent a declaration of war." But this was not the same as a general strike, and the

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[27]Keufer, "La Représentation proportionelle," La Revue syndicaliste, nos. 46-47 (October 1-15, 1908), pp. 171-76.

resolution left no doubt on that score when it continued: "If the declaration /of war/ cannot be prevented, in spite of the efforts of the international proletariat, then the attitude to take /toward the war/ is no longer within the realm of competence of the union." Finally, the motion condemned the use of the army in strikes. This well-written motion, expressing several of the key concepts of reformist ideology, was defeated, but it received 421 votes as against 681 for the revolutionary motion declaring that the worker had no country and calling for a general strike in case of war. The vote showed how unpopular the antimilitarist policy of the C.G.T. was. The events of August, 1914 should be less of a surprise and more comprehensible looking at the implications of this vote.[28]

As close as it was, the vote itself does not begin to demonstrate the numerical strength of the reformists, since each union, regardless of its size, had one vote. If we cross-reference the federations whose sections voted consistently for the reformist resolutions to their membership figures and compare them to the total C.G.T. membership, we can see that 109,490 workers were represented by reformist unions, out of a total C.G.T. membership of 264,398. We must also note that the membership numbers for the extremist federations, which were usually more loosely organized than the reformist federations, tended to include members who did not pay dues regularly. Also,

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[28] XVIe Congrès . . . 1908, pp. 167-215; Robert Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale française: militants et théoriciens (Paris: Armand Colin, 1948), p. 112; Ridley, Revolutionary Syndicalism, p. 178, determined that the unions which voted for the antimilitarist resolution represented 114,000 members while those who voted against it comprised 127,000 members.

there were several federations that did not join the C.G.T. because of its revolutionary orientation, such as the 30,000 member Fédération des Mineurs and the 7,000 member Fédération des Employés de France. There were also Catholic and Yellow unions in existence totalling from 50,000-100,000 members. Thus the revolutionary unions accounted for less than half of unionized French labor.[29] Of course, not every person in a reformist union was a reformist, but by the same token, not every worker represented by a revolutionary union was a revolutionary.

The 1908 Congress propelled Niel to a position of leadership among the reformists. Yet Keufer, Coupat, and the others mistrusted him because of his prior revolutionary associations. They supported him because they knew that they themselves would never be accepted by the radicals; they hoped it would be possible to use Niel to broaden their base of support.[30]

The occasion came when a scandal broke around the head of Griffuelhes in 1908. The reformists saw their chance to take control of the C.G.T. and put Louis Niel forward as their

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[29]Many unions belonged to no confederation, federation, or other group. Officially, there were almost 850,000 unionized workers. Adding up the C.G.T., the Catholics and Yellows at their highest estimated membership, the miners and the clerks (264,000; 100,000; 37,000 respectively), one is left with 350,000 unionized workers unaccounted for. It is safe to assume that had they been revolutionary, they would have been in the C.G.T. Even more than the class-collaborationists, these unaffiliated unions represent the untold story of the French labor movement. The voting and membership figures for the C.G.T. are in XVIe Congrès . . . 1908, pp. 32-33, 254-91. The federations which consistently voted reformist at the 1908 Congress were the printers, railroad workers, clerks, lithographers, mechanics, civilian employees of the army, post office, telephone and telegraph workers, tobacco workers, textile workers, and transport workers. On statistics for the Yellows and Catholics, see Chapters VIII and IX.

candidate for secretary. They hoped he could be a unity candidate, and enjoy the broad support they could never hope to obtain. When that strategy failed, and Niel was forced out after less than five months, they once more girded for combat.

This is not the place to go into an examination of the charges brought against Victor Griffuelhes in relation to the funding and ownership of the Maison des Fédérations, the home of the C.G.T. Suffice it to say that there was irregularity in the accounts, and great resentment over the fact that the ownership of the Maison was in the hands of a private company formed by Griffuelhes and three others rather than by the labor movement as a whole. Although it was not the reformists but Albert Levy, longtime treasurer of the Confédération, who brought up the issue, the reformists did not hesitate to nurture it. The Action ouvrière ran a muckraking series by Thil. As pressure mounted, a special conference of the federations and Bourses was held by the C.G.T. in 1909, and it was a major topic at the 1910 Congress. By themselves, the reformists would not have been able to force Griffuelhes out. But his stubbornness in not divulging information, and his unwillingness to transfer ownership to the federations cost him the support of several federations which had hitherto supported him.

Niel's name had been put forward by the miners. The miners had remained out of the C.G.T. for many years, but finally decided to join it in 1908. They had none of the hostility directed

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[30]Albert Thomas, "L'Election de Niel," La Revue syndicaliste, nos. 54-55 (February 1909), p. 284.

against them similar to that which had been aimed at the Livre, for example.[31] It is clear that the miners and printers worked together on this. Ironically, Niel's trade was that of printer, but in his role as an official of the Montpellier Bourse, he had been completely inactive in federation matters. The Livre quickly elevated him to membership on its Central Committee, so that he could serve as its representative to the Confederal Committee of the C.G.T., and thus qualify for election. Keufer candidly admitted that had the Livre put Niel up for the secretaryship, he would have had no chance of being elected. In the whole affair, the printers played a very low-key role. Keufer and Liochon were always careful to claim that they had no personal ax to grind, although Keufer made it abundantly clear that he expected a good administrator to act in a manner that was above reproach.[32]

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[31] On the miners, see Rolande Trempé, "Le Réformisme des mineurs français à la fin du XIXe siècle," Le Mouvement social, no. 65 (October-December 1968), pp. 93-107; Jacques Julliard, "Diversité des réformismes," ibid., no. 87 (April-June 1974), pp. 3-7; Joel Michel, "Syndicalisme minier et politique dans le Nord-Pas-de-Calais: le cas Basly (1880-1914)," ibid., pp. 9-33; Zeldin, France, pp. 220-26.

[32] On Niel's election, see Thomas, "L'Election de Niel," pp. 281-85; Ridley, Revolutionary Syndicalism, p. 181; Georges and Tintant, Léon Jouhaux, pp. 20-25; Jean Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier en France des origines à nos jours (Paris: Aubier, 1946), p. 276; Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste, pp. 25-26; G. Thil, "La C.G.T. et la Maison des Fédérations," Action ouvrière nos. 2 (October 15, 1909), 3 (November 1, 1909), 4 (November 15, 1909) 5 (December 1, 1909), 6 (December 15, 1909), 7 (January 1, 1910), 9 (February 1, 1910); Confédération Générale du Travail, Compte rendu de la Conférence Extraordinaire des Fédérations Nationales et des Bourses du Travail ou Unions de Syndicats, tenue les 1er, 2 et 3 juin 1909, Paris (Paris: Maison des Fédérations, Service de l'Imprimerie, n.d.); XVIIe Congrès . . . 1910, pp. 5-6, 62-180. On the Livre's role see Keufer interview in La Petite République, September 20, 1910, clipping in Archives Nationales, F7 13753; Fédération du Livre, Dixième Congrès, p. 142; L'Humanité, April 13, 1909.

Unfortunately for the reformists, Niel had been elected by a majority of only one vote. Three votes, instead of going to his opponent, were cast for Griffuelhes, who was not a candidate at that point. In other words, the revolutionaries still had a majority on the Confederal Committee if they could coordinate their actions. Meetings became very hostile, and at one point Niel, exasperated, came to blows with Yvetot. But it was the postal workers' strike that sealed Niel's fate. When he refused to call a general strike in support of the postal workers, who were out on a second strike, facing an extremely hostile government, and the object of a great deal of sympathy from other workers, he was forced out and Léon Jouhaux was elected to replace him.[33] By that time, relations had seriously degenerated, the Comité d'Union Syndicaliste had been formed, and talk of schism was in the air.

For some time it had been feared that the reformists were on the verge of leaving. At the special conference of 1909, Guérard had called a special meeting of all those who supported the reformist resolution. This was seen by some as a first step to division. Actually, Keufer never considered splitting the Confédération. He was very concerned with organizing more strongly the moderate forces in the C.G.T., but it flew in the face of everything he believed in to disrupt the unity of the

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[33] Georges and Tintant, Léon Jouhaux, pp. 25-27; Ridley, Revolutionary Syndicalism, p. 181; Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations, pp. 734-45. Niel became a somewhat pathetic figure, taking every opportunity to explain at great length his motives and actions to bored or disinterested audiences; XVIIe Congrès ... 1910, pp. 205-10; Conférence Extraordinaire, p. 108.

working class. If the printers stayed in the C.G.T., so would the mechanics and several other federations; without them a new organization would not have been viable.[34]

It looked, in 1910, as if the reformists had had their chance, and that it had passed. The revolutionary current appeared to be in as complete control as it had ever been. That the delegates to the C.G.T. Congresses continued to vote for revolutionary resolutions out of memory and sentiment, rather than out of firm conviction, was not yet evident.

Ironically, relations with Jouhaux were better than they were with Griffuelhes. Jouhaux made it a point not to make the reformists feel unwelcome. He insisted there was room for all in the C.G.T.[35] Relations gradually improved, and the Comité d'Union Syndicaliste dissolved. The 1912 Congress was one of the mildest ever, with an agenda weighted toward basic trade union concerns. In 1913, Jouhaux showed how the C.G.T.'s orientation had changed when he opposed a motion of the Confederal Committee for a general strike to protest the Three-Year Army Law.

With hindsight, we can see that the practice of the C.G.T. had ceased to be revolutionary well before World War I--a development which was confirmed by the 1912 Congress. There was an unplanned irony, perhaps, in the fact that the Congress was held in Le Havre, at the Cercle Franklin, where the labor movement

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[34] Conférence Extraordinaire, pp. 28-29.

[35] Georges and Tintant, Léon Jouhaux, pp. 28-29.

had split into its moderate and revolutionary wings back in 1880, and in the hall where the moderates had held their meeting. Now, on its return, the C.G.T., while not exactly united, displayed more unity than had been seen in years. There were seven agenda items; on only two was there significant opposition. One of these was the question of the Maison des Fédérations, and here the abstentions almost equalled the nay votes.

Since the C.G.T. had no standing in law and thus legally could not possess any property,[36] the plan put before the Congress was for a society formed by the Union Départmentale des Syndicats de la Seine to own it. The vote on this proposal was 628-185-171. The Livre was split on this question, with roughly one-third of its unions voting for it, one-third against, and one-third abstaining. The nay votes did not necessarily come from the reformists. The leather workers federation, the one to which Griffuelhes belonged, voted against it. This was no doubt an expression of faith in their leader.

The only other split vote came on the question of a dues increase. Here the vote was 706-266-73. In this case, the reformist federations voted against it, with the exception of the miners and lithographers, who split on it. It was well known that the reformists favored an increased dues structure, and had been asking for it for years, but they were not willing

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[36]The law which legalized unions did not recognize confederations of unions. The unions themselves were forbidden from owning any property other than that which they needed for professional purposes.

to vote more money to a Confederal Committee of which they were still suspicious.

On all other questions, overwhelming votes occurred. The report of the Confederal Committee was endorsed 998-4-66; the resolution of Amiens was reaffirmed 1,028-34-12; a protest was lodged against the Millerand-Berry Law, which provided more severe penalties for antimilitarist activities, 1,035-0-14; the English week (Sundays off and half days on Saturdays) was demanded, 1,063-0-1; and opposition was voiced against the government's social security system, 909-76-113.[37]

Renard fought some rear-guard actions for proportional representation, for closer cooperation with the international syndicalist movement, and for closer relations with the Socialist Party. He restated the basic idea that organized labor needed political power and political action--a principle which was accepted by the labor movement in every other nation. To this end, Renard put forward an exceedingly mild resolution: "The Congress . . . affirms its sympathy for the Socialist Party which, like the Confédération, pursues, albeit on a different terrain, the improvement of the economic conditions of the working class, leading to the complete transformation of society." Although there was much in his presentation with which the other reformists could agree, they nonetheless repeated their actions at Amiens

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[37] XVIIIe Congrès National Corporatif (XIIe de la C.G.T.) et Ve Conférence des Bourses du Travail tenus au Havre du 16 au 23 septembre 1912, compte rendu des travaux (Le Havre: Imprimerie des Unions, n.d.), pp. xi-xlvi.

and voted to uphold the Amiens resolution.[38]

The rapprochement of reformers and revolutionaries, if it could be called that, was hardly complete, but a beginning had been made. The revolutionaries showed themselves more prone to engage in reformist-type activity, or to tolerate different methods. This was made clear in the vote on the English week. For one thing, Hamelin was chosen to report the resolution. Then, as opposed to the approach made toward the eight-hour day, no specific method (such as the general strike) was specified. Instead, each union was left free to pursue the method it thought best. Finally, there was no all-or-nothing approach. The C.G.T. did not demand all of Saturday off; in fact, the "half day" frequently meant an eight-or nine-hour day (i.e., anything less than ten hours).[39] In addition, no strong antimilitarist resolution was offered at Le Havre; there was nothing in the resolution which was adopted which committed the C.G.T. to antimilitaristic activity.

On the other hand, the reformists emphasized more strongly that their particular methods of action still placed them within the traditions of militant unionism. Keufer pointed out that the printers had always participated in C.G.T. demonstrations, and reminded the revolutionaries that he had been arrested in 1893 when he protested the closing of the Paris Bourse and had

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[38] Ibid., pp. 25, 44-51, 157-58.

[39] On the English week, see Ministère du Travail et de la Prévoyance Sociale, Office du Travail, Enquête sur la réduction de la durée du travail le samedi (semaine anglaise) (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1913).

been beaten by police on occasion.[40]

The moderates drove home the idea that they did not reject the strike as a weapon, but they did wish to avoid if the workers were not properly prepared. Being a delicate weapon, a strike should not be called in a moment of passion, but only after calm reflection and a hard look at the condition of the strike fund.

The reformers protested the "sabotage" of language, whereby the very word "strike" had been made into a revolutionary term. A strike was neither revolutionary nor reformist, they asserted, it was syndicalist. The printers, railroad workers, and miners had had as many strikes as any revolutionary federation. Not even the violent strike was a monopoly of the extremists. As Hamelin put it, even the most moderate unions could be driven to violence by an intransigent employer, while a strike that began violently could very well be settled by peaceful means. The best indication of the changed attitude of the reformists was Keufer's admission that, in a hard-fought strike against a cruel employer, he would not oppose the "chastisement" of strikebreakers. Niel summed up this newly-emphasized militance: "The revolutionaries may monopolize certain virtues, the roaring and demagogic verb, the romantic gesture. But I forbid them from monopolizing the strike sentiment. The reformists have never repudiated this revolutionary act of war against capitalism."[41]

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[40]Keufer, "Réponse nécessaire," L'Humanité, January 4, 1909.

[41]Niel, "A Propos de la grève des cheminots," Action ouvrière, new series, no. 7 (August 15, 1910), p. 2; Hamelin, "Le Congrès du Livre," ibid., p. 8; Montémilard, "Violence et révolutionnairisme," ibid., no. 4 (November 15, 1909), p. 3; Charpentier, "Les Conflits

All this is not to say that the reformists had abandoned their basic methods. Arbitration (even compulsory arbitration) and the collective contract were still emphasized.[42] The moderates hammered away at the idea that the joint committee, or the attainment of demands peacefully, was still a victory for the workers, and an example of direct action. No one, not even the revolutionaries, should be unhappy if an employer accepted their demands before a strike took place. Like Keufer, other reformists were fond of pointing out revolutionary unions which settled their disputes peacefully. Coupat wrote an article on the Fédération du Bâtiment, a revolutionary organization which had even gone so far as to ask the Minister of Labor, René Viviani (an ex-socialist), to use his influence to convince the employers to negotiate with the union. The result was a collective contract for a fixed period, and the formation of a joint arbitration committee. The sight of a revolutionary union accepting these reformist measures gave the moderates great joy.[43]

économiques," ibid., no. 2 (October 15, 1909), p. 3; Keufer, "Revue de la presse ouvrière," ibid., no. 12 (March 15, 1910), p. 4; Renard, "Necessité des hautes cotisations," ibid., no. 7 (January 1, 1910), pp. 1-2.

[42] M. Claverie, "L'Arbitrage obligatoire," ibid., new series, nos. 2 (June 1, 1910), p. 1 and 3 (June 15, 1910), p. 6; C. Mutschler, "Arbitrage impossible," ibid., no. 3 (June 15, 1910), p. 9.

[43] P. Coupat, "Leçon des choses," ibid., no. 1 (October 1, 1909), p. 2; Keufer, "Le Contrat collectif dans le bâtiment," ibid., no. 8 (January 15, 1910), p. 1. The virtue of Peter Stearns' work is to show just how common it was for French workers to seek peaceful settlements of strikes and government mediation: Revolutionary Syndicalism and French Labor: A Cause Without Rebels (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1971), pp. 1-4, 29-43. Also Edward Shorter and Charles Tilly, Strikes in France 1830-1968 (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 28-33.

Keufer had pioneered the idea of the joint commission and he always considered it to be an efficient and effective way of dealing with labor problems. But he took pains to warn the revolutionaries to approach it in the proper spirit. Once a contract had been signed, the workers were constrained from spontaneous revolts. Complaints had to be brought to the commission. By its nature, it could not consider the broader questions such as "exploitation" or "surplus value." It could only deal with the smaller issues, susceptible of compromise between worker and employer. It had to deal with practical problems; in this way, it could be an instrument of social peace.[44]

Social peace may have sounded like a goal that was far from the desires of the revolutionaries. Yet, during World War I, that is exactly what they sought. In fact, C.G.T. policy, both during and after World War I, represented an implementation of major reformist ideas. Once the C.G.T. accepted the war, its revolutionary doctrine collapsed, since winning the war required cooperation with all other social forces and the disappearance of the class war.

During the war, C.G.T. leaders served on government commissions and cooperated with all classes. After the war, the C.G.T. adopted a minimum program of reforms, which included the recognition of collective contracts and permanent arbitration commissions. It sent delegates to official bodies such as the Conseil National Economique and the Comité Nationale de

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[44]Keufer, "Le Contrat collectif," p. 2.

Surveillance des Prix. It accepted government subsidies for its unemployment funds. In 1925, it even supported a bill which required compulsory governmental mediation in labor disputes. It practiced the politique de présence, which meant that it wanted its representatives on any body which dealt with questions of interest to the working class. This was the essence of the Keuferite approach, reaching back to his 1891 decision to sit on the Conseil Supérieur du Travail.

After the war, Jouhaux was put in the position of having to defend the practice of collective bargaining; he had to depict it not as a betrayal of the interests of the working class, but as a way of promoting them. Not surprisingly, the new revolutionaries, the Communists, accused the C.G.T. of practicing the politics of class collaboration. But this time it was the revolutionaries who were in the minority. They did not hesitate to split the labor movement and create an opposition organization (the Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire), something Keufer and the reformists never did and probably would never have done.[45]

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[45]Georges and Tintant, Léon Jouhaux, p. 322; Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 333; Gaetan Pirou, Les Doctrines économiques en France depuis 1870 (Paris: Armand Colin, 1925), pp. 85-88; Léon Jouhaux, Le Syndicalisme et la C.G.T. (Paris: Les Editions de la Sirene, 1920), pp. 205-12; Georges Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndical sous la Troisième République (Paris: Payot, 1967), p. 114; Robert Botherau, Histoire du syndicalisme français (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1945), p. 44; Saposs, The Labor Movement, pp. 26-28, 44, 196; Zeldin, France, pp. 274-76; Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale, pp. 116-18; Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations, pp. 839-41.

Except for the Communists, there was a strong desire on the part of all elements of society to maintain the spirit of national solidarity, the brotherhood of the trenches in the postwar era and avoid a repetition of class war. To this effect, the Minister of Labor asked for a report on the organization of relations between workers and employers. Naturally, it was Keufer he chose to write it.

As much as Keufer believed in the collaboration of classes, he never lost sight of the question of the justice due the working class. He made clear in his report that the worker had suffered greatly in the defense of the nation. A spirit of equity was needed in the postwar period; a fairer distribution of wealth was required. The worker, justifiably, expected it. A renewal of class warfare was undesirable because it would be detrimental to the well being of the nation: "Concern for the general interests of the nation must dominate all other considerations of doctrine or school." What was needed was a loyal entente, peaceful discussions, the recognition of reciprocal duties.[46]

The worker would retain the right to strike in Keufer's plan, but it would be more a weapon of enforcement of rules already established between worker and employer rather than a weapon of attack. As the prewar experience, limited as it

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[46]Ministère du Travail, Statistique Générale de la France et Service d'Observation des Prix, Comité Permanent d'Etudes relatives à la prévision des chomages industriels, Rapport sur l'organisation des relations entre patrons et ouvriers par M. Keufer, membre du comité (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1920), pp. 6-8.

was, had shown, methods of conciliation and arbitration, the joint commission, the Conseil Supérieur du Travail, and other such institutions and practices could be very useful.[47]

In typical fashion, Keufer insisted that the institutions and methods of social peace would not work unless "a higher moral value," a spirit of generosity and sacrifice were brought to it by both sides. Also, it would be helpful if serious syndicats patronaux were set up by employers, as that was a necessary precondition for the respect of contracts.[48]

In a recent study, Michael Sabatino DeLucia claimed that the spirit of postwar syndicalism was attributable not to Keufer, but to the head of the Fédération de la Métallurgie, Alphonse Merrheim. DeLucia saw Merrheim as a proto-technocrat, who recognized the need for large-scale organization, centralization, and control by elites (while ignoring the same elements in Keufer's thought)--a doctrine he felt had little in common with either the anarchists or the reformists. Both Keufer and Griffuelhes were backward looking, according to DeLucia, the latter because he distrusted organization and leadership, the former because he pursued a policy of social integration and collaboration, which DeLucia considered to be a variant of

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[47]Ibid., pp. 8, 75-80.

[48]Ibid., p. 82.

corporatism.

DeLucia did make some important points, and he is probably correct in emphasizing Merrheim's role in developing a new approach to labor problems. However, in the context of revolutionary, prewar syndicalism and its struggle against reformism, it seems clear to this writer that it is a misuse of the term to call Merrheim a reformist. The reformist ideology of the postwar era, as practiced by the C.G.T., was the reformism of Keufer. The politique de présence, the arbitration commission, the collective contract were all originally formulated by the Keufer wing.[49]

Keufer had always believed that his doctrine, being more rational, would eventually be accepted: "Those of us who have been struggling for a quarter of a century," he said in 1904, "Remember that different questions have been the subject of worker agitation; experience shows that direct action also will have its period of decadence, as it now has its moment of success, without having an effect other than to occupy worker activists and give them numerous and fatal deceptions."[50] The reformist syndicalists deserve credit, which has hitherto been denied them, for setting the C.G.T. on the

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[49]DeLucia, "The Remaking of French Syndicalism," pp. 5, 9, 34, 37-46, 48, 55, 168-71, 261, 275-76.

[50]Keufer, "Le Congrès syndical de Bourges," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 142 (November 1, 1904), p. 96.

path of modern, and moderate, labor relations. The Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre had been in the forefront of this effort.

CHAPTER V

THE FÉDÉRATION FRANÇAISE DES TRAVAILLEURS DU LIVRE: FLAGSHIP OF REFORMISM

In 1890, the Dijon section of the printers' union passed the following resolution:

> Considering that labor and capital are the two factors of industrial life and public wealth; that between them there must be solidarity and not antagonism; that the former has a right to a decent salary based on the value of his work and his social needs, and that the latter has a right to a profit based on the services he has rendered; that the two factors are joined by an indissoluble bond and are the pillars of modern society, the continuation of their antagonism will lead to ruin. [1]

This resolution sums up the spirit and practice of a remarkable union. Among those C.G.T. federations which can be considered reformist, the Fédération du Livre stood alone. Auguste Keufer and the union he led practiced an exceptionally moderate type of reformism; the printers took the practice of class collaboration further than any other group associated with the Confédération Générale du Travail. Yet the federation never became, as was the case with some other class-collaborationist groups, merely a tool of the capitalist class, and even its

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[1] *La Typographie française*, November 15, 1890.

opponents were forced to respect it for that.

The printers of Paris and the provinces were among the first members of the French working class to organize. Their rudimentary organizations dated from the 1830s. The first union wage scale in France was established by the printers of Paris and their employers in 1843. There were attempts at national federation as early as 1861. Although they were not successful, there was a tradition of cooperation between printers in different cities dating back to the Second Empire.

A massive strike of the Paris typographers in 1878 prepared the groundwork for the federation. The strike, for a ten centime an hour increase, lasted three months, only to fail completely. It cost the Paris union more than 400,000 francs and caused the migration of many printing shops to the provinces. The need for a national organization was keenly felt and in 1881 a founding congress was held in Paris. Printers' unions from twenty cities and towns were present, and another ten joined shortly thereafter.[2]

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[2]On the early history of printer organizations and the federation, see Alfred Hamelin, "La Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre," Le Mouvement socialiste, nos. 23-24 (December 15, 1899), pp. 720-21; Marcel Bar, L'Organisation et l'action syndicale dans la typographie française: patrons, ouvriers (Paris: Imprimerie et Librairie Duruy et Cie., 1907), pp. 131-37, 151-53; A. Journeau, La Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre: son cinquantenaire, des dates, des faits (Paris: Typographie de l'Ecole Estienne, 1931), pp. 12-22; Paul Chauvet, Les Ouvriers du livre et du journal: La Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1971), pp. 13-17; Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Télégraphes, Office du Travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, vol. 1 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1894), p. 826; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Notes historiques, 1881-1932 (Paris: L'Imprimerie l'Emancipatrice, 1933), pp. 5-6; Roger Dombret, La Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre (1881-1960): quatre-vingt-cinq ans de vie et de lutte, des faits, des dates (Paris: n.p. 1966), pp. 10-14; Léon de Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, fédérations, bourses du travail (Paris: Armand Colin, 1902), pp. 181-82.

A manifesto published by the Central Committee, the governing body of the federation, set out clearly its orientation:

> It is the opinion of the Central Committee that it is no longer possible for workers, of whatever school or profession, to stay out of the economic war which is going on. It is a regrettable war, but inevitable, given the unwillingness of the employer class to meet its social obligations towards those who contribute, by their labor, their intelligence and their devotion to the continual increase in national prosperity. Careful observation of the economic phenomena which so profoundly trouble the security of the working class require each worker to make a heavy sacrifice to prepare and assure emancipation: namely, federation. Through the federation, each worker can participate in the gradual improvement of the conditions of the working class.
>
> It is not necessary to resort to violence to end the abuses and injustices of modern individualism; it is necessary primarily to win over men's spirits, to enlighten them as to their rights, to educate them in the notion of duty, so that they arrive at this conviction: that to the concentration of capital, the worker must oppose a powerful, active, devoted federation; that each person must bring his support to the moral and material amelioration of the proletariat by a more equitable division of all the wealth and production of the nation.
>
> We will recall that the most wise, most rational way of obtaining a salary increase or any other improvement is conciliation. The cessation of work, which is often disastrous, must be employed only when conciliation is unsuccessful in spite of all the efforts of the union. [3]

Although this manifesto was unsigned, the influence of Keufer, an original member of the Central Committee, is unmistakable. The emphasis on the duties of the worker, on the rejection of violence and the acceptance of conciliation, on the overriding need for worker unity, to be achieved through sacrifice, were all typical Keuferite themes.

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[3] La Typographie française, December 15, 1881.

The statutes show that, from the very beginning, the federation was oriented toward the attainment of practical trade union benefits and improvements. The statutes established as goals the maintenance or increase of wages, the establishment of a uniform wage scale, the building of solidarity with foreign printers, the achievement of a reasonable limit to be placed on apprentices, the enactment of laws on industrial safety and hygiene, and the elimination of piece work. The early statutes, reflecting the Barberettist leanings of many members, also included as a goal the promotion of cooperatives, but this was later dropped.

In the event of trouble between an employer and a union, the statutes ordained that the Central Committee be notified immediately, so that it could place a delegate on the local strike committee. No strike could be declared unless all attempts at peaceful settlement had failed. If these conditions were met, the Central Committee could then vote to provide each striker with an indemnity, which reached 3.50 francs a day by 1900.[4]

Keufer, who had joined the Paris union in 1872, was elected to the first Central Committee. The federation's early years were stormy. The first secretary proved to be not only inefficient, but also dishonest, and the federation nearly fell

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[4]Hamelin, "La Fédération," p. 722; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Quatrième Congrès tenu à Paris (Bourse du Travail) les 14, 15, 16 et 17 septembre 1887 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1887), pp. 7, 11-12.

apart. Keufer, who was respected for his integrity, was chosen to put the finances of the organization back in order, a job he performed so well that he was chosen secretary in 1884. He held that post until 1920, and during those many years the federation and Keufer were practically synonymous.[5]

The federation was also split into several competing factions. There were two Paris printers' unions in existence after 1886, when a schism occurred between revolutionaries and cooperatists. The latter group joined the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France. It also withdrew from the federation for a time, and the split lasted until 1894. Simultaneously, a struggle went on within the federation for control of the Central Committee. Keufer led the moderates who, although antirevolutionary, were not favorable to cooperatives. The revolutionaries were led by Jean Allemane, who was also the leader of the Parti Ouvrier Socialiste Révolutionnaire. The Central Committee was often divided, and it was not until 1889

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[5]Hamelin, "La Fédération," pp. 725-26; Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 166-67; Chauvet, Les Ouvriers du livre, pp. 22, 28; Notes historiques, pp. 6, 23; Dombret, La Fédération, pp. 14-16; Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, pp. 191-92. Auguste Keufer (1851-1924) was born in Sainte-Marie-aux-mines, Alsace, and lost his father at the age of five months. During his poverty-stricken childhood, he sold papers, cut wood, and rang the church bell. He was apprenticed to a cotton merchant, who fired him when he left work to ring the bells for a funeral. He was then taken in by a printer who taught him the trade. After the Franco-Prussian War broke out, he left Alsace and went first to Lons-le-Saunier, where he was apparently exposed to Positivism, and then to Paris, where he joined the printers' union and also attended the courses of Pierre Laffitte, Comte's successor, and joined the Positivist Society of Paris. Maurice Harmel called his joining a union so soon after the Commune an act of courage. See Harmel, "Auguste Keufer," Les Hommes du jour, August 27, 1910. Also Jean Maitron, ed., Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier, troisième partie: De la Commune à la grande guerre, vol. 13 (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1975), pp. 143-45; Jean Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier en France: des origines à nos jours (Paris: Aubier, 1945), pp. 200-2.

that Keufer established firm control. As a result, growth was slow, with the membership figures hovering around 5,000-6,000 up to 1895. After 1900 growth was steady, reaching 14,089 in 1914. This figure represented approximately sixty per cent of all printers, and was an exceptionally high degree of unionization for France. The number of sections increased to over 160 and included all the major cities in the nation.[6]

The Livre was strongly organized, in accordance with Keufer's belief. It centralized benefits, and collected high dues to pay for the benefits it provided. Up to 1900, dues to the federation were forty centimes per member a month. After 1900, it was successively raised until it reached two francs. This amount was unheard of in a French union, where low dues were the rule. The French worker strongly resisted the idea of union dues, to the dismay and anger of Keufer. He never ceased to emphasize the need for dues which would be sufficient to fund the services provided. It was not enough to proclaim the utility of an institution; one had to be prepared to make sacrifices to give it life. He noted that the London

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[6]Hamelin, "La Fédération," pp. 730-33; ibid., Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 25 (January 1, 1900), p. 32 and no. 26 (January 15, 1900), p. 92; Harmel, "Auguste Keufer;" Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 173, 181; Associations professionnelles ouvrières 1: 841-43, 848-57; Quatrième Congrès, pp. 4, 26; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Sixième Congrès National tenu à Paris (Bourse du Travail) les 27, 28, 29 et 30 juillet 1892 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1892), pp. 15-16; Georges Weill, Histoire du mouvement social en France, 1852-1910 (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1911), pp. 353-54; Chauvet, Les Ouvriers du livre, pp. 28-31; Theodore Zeldin, France, 1848-1945, vol. 1: Ambition, Love and Politics (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 218-19. For membership figures, see Notes historiques, p. 28.

typographers had doubled their dues to build up a strike fund during tough negotiations, "a wise provision which assures victory. I wish our French brothers were motivated by the same spirit."[7]

Strikes were closely regulated by the Central Committee. This was a cause for frequent disputes within the organization, and exceptions to the rules were sometimes made. Basically, the federation paid strike benefits only for official strikes, as defined by the statutes. The list of approved reasons for strikes gradually increased, but they were strictly limited to trade union demands. These included: to obtain a new wage scale or an eight-hour day; to resist a wage cut (but not if the strikers had a higher than average wage to begin with); to enforce the provisions of a contract; when union members were replaced by nonmembers (called sarrazins in the 1880s and 1890s and jaunes thereafter) or by women, or when members lost jobs as a result of the introduction of machinery; when the apprenticeship rules were violated; when members were fired for union activity or for not working on May 1. Regarding the presentation of new wage scales, these had to be approved by the Central Committee. A section

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[7] La Typographie française, February 16, 1891. Also Keufer, L'Education syndicale: exposé de la méthode organique (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1910), pp. 59-64. As part of the necessary discipline and sacrifice, Keufer strongly urged workers to give up alcohol and credit buying: Ministère du Commerce et de l'industrie, Conseil Supérieur du Travail, neuvième session (1900), pp. 441-43.

had to be a member of the federation for six months before it could receive strike benefits. All cases not specified had to be approved by the Central Committee.[8]

The federation did not discourage strikes, but neither did it encourage them. Keufer in particular had been strongly influenced by the memory of the 1878 disaster, which confirmed his general ideological outlook. Even during the strike, he had spoken out against its continuation. He warned his comrades that their spirit and solidarity, as admirable as they were, were not sufficient to win the strike. To persist in it, he felt, would ruin the union, and he urged acceptance of the employers' offer, even though it was less than the union had demanded. His advice had been rejected at the time, but as secretary of the federation he was in a position to impose his ideas more forcefully.

Keufer was convinced that strikes were of limited value, especially during the economically depressed period of the late nineteenth century, when strikers were easy to replace by strikebreakers, and the introduction of labor-saving machinery threatened employment. In addition, the printing trade in particular was dominated by tiny establishments

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[8] Quatrième Congrès, pp. 4, 30-31, 33-42; Notes historiques, p. 28; Associations professionnelles ouvrières 1: 841; Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 324-26; Harmel, "Auguste Keufer;" Chauvet, Les Ouvriers du livre, pp. 32-34; Sixième Congrès, p. 41; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, 8e Congrès National tenu à Paris, Hotel des Sociétés Savantes du 27 août au 1er septembre 1900 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1900), pp. 189-90; idem, 9e Congrès National tenu à Lyon, Salle des Folies-Bergère du 5 au 10 juin 1905 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1905), p. 73. For an example of a strike based on circumstances not covered by the statutes and the Central Committee's response, see La Typographie française, September 1, 1889.

struggling to survive and always seeking to cut costs. They often welcomed strikes as an excuse to get rid of union workers and hire lower-paid women or strikebreakers. Finally, a strike that failed sapped the federation of needed resources. The secretary repeatedly asked the congresses to revise the statutes so as to limit the number of official strikes. He suggested paying benefits only to those who had to resist actual wage decreases or to defend rights already obtained, at least until the industrial crisis had passed and the federation had accumulated a powerful treasury.[9]

In spite of this, it was not unusual for a section to claim the right to strike without waiting for the Central Committee to become involved. This was strongly resisted by Keufer, who emphasized always the need for calm negotiations and for diplomacy in labor disputes. He even went so far as to say that the decrease in the number of strikes was a sign of union vitality--a sentiment Barberet shared.[10]

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[9]Sixième Congrès, p. 19; Auguste Keufer, "Discours préparé pour l'assemblée générale typographique du mercredi 29 mai 1878," in Journeau, La Fédération, pp. 34-40; Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 324-25; Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, pp. 194-95. Chauvet, Les Ouvrier du livre, p. 37, pointed out that the largest number of printing houses had 1-5 workers. Keufer said this was one of the causes of the Livre's moderation: Confédération Générale du Travail, XIVe Congrès National Corporatif (VIIIe de la C.G.T.) et Conférence des Bourses du Travail tenu à Bourges du 12 au 20 septembre 1904, compte rendu des travaux (Bourges: Imprimerie Ouvrière du Centre, 1904), p. 128.

[10]Sixième Congrès, pp. 31, 34-35, 38; Keufer, Rapport du délégué de l'imprimerie de l'Exposition de Boston (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1884), p. 43; Associations professionnelles ouvrières 1: 841; La Typographie française, October 1, 1890, October 16, 1890.

> What strikes me most strongly in the course of events is the complete absence of experience among our brothers, the total lack of precautions and of prudence . . . /they/ seem to think that a spontaneous act of solidarity is enough to guarantee success. . . . there is an absolute necessity to inculcate among all printers the feeling of discipline for the statutary rules, the obligation for all to subordinate all individual measures to the judgement of the Central Committee. . . . too often, our comrades imagine that . . . their situation will improve itself magically. . . . The modern defense of worker interests will, in the future, be better accomplished by negotiations, by diplomacy--the word is not too pretentious--by arbitration, supported by the great batallions of unionized workers, disciplined and punctual in their duties . . . rather than by frequent strikes. . . . We must work with perseverence to teach this, which will be the basis of the cohesion, the power, and the legitimate authority of any serious worker organization. [11]

Yet it is important to recognize that the federation did not, as a matter of policy, reject the strike. It supported many of them, not only in its own industry, but, as a matter of solidarity, in other industries as well. The sums spent to help other unions were truly remarkable and unprecedented in the prewar French labor movement. And, in 1906, the Livre did embark on what was, in effect, a general strike in the printing industry: what they called a grève généralisée.[12]

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[11] La Typographie française, October 16, 1890.

[12] 9e Congrès, pp. 182-84, itemized the financial assistance given from 1900 to the beginning of 1904. Over 14,000 francs were contributed to workers in 149 separate strikes, ranging from painters, dockers, metallurgists, miners, clerks, glass workers, copper workers, building trades workers, and so on. 225 francs were given to printers on strike in Switzerland, Belgium, Austria, Holland, Hungary, and Italy. Hamelin provided a useful summary of French printers' strikes in "La Fédération," Le Mouvement socialiste, nos. 23-24, pp. 727-33; no. 25, pp. 33-38; no. 26, pp. 90, 98. On the 1906 strikes, see Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Dixième Congrès National tenu à Bordeaux, Casino des Lilas, du 18 au 23 juillet 1910 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1910), pp. 45-55, 258. Because of 1906, the federation's strike expenses for the period 1905-9 soared to 782,168 francs. The figure for 1906 alone was 578,758 francs. See Notes historiques, p. 28; Chauvet, Les Ouvriers du livre, pp. 34-35, 47. The number

The federation struck in 1906 for a nine-hour day. Because the official C.G.T. effort was for an eight-hour day, the printers were considered by many to be traitors to the labor movement (although Pouget praised them for at least taking some action). Ironically, the government was more frightened of the Livre than of the revolutionary federations. Police reports described it as the most prosperous, best organized, and most tenacious of all unions. It also considered it to be admirably disciplined and "intelligent." The government knew it could deal with the revolutionary unions, which did not have the resources to support lengthy strikes; the entrance of the printers into the fray, with their bulging treasury and support from other European nations, made its task much more difficult.[13]

The printers struck for only nine hours because Keufer believed in working for gradual, incremental improvements. He followed a strategy that gave the best chances of success

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of strikes, in the long run, were fairly constant: 1887-92--57; 1894-1905 (a period twice as long)--117; 1907-14--187. In 1906 there were 71 strikes. Of that number, forty-one resulted in the nine hour day, eleven in a day of nine and a half hours. In addition, 126 sections obtained either a nine or a nine and a half hour day through negotiations or the use of a joint arbitration commission. See Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, pp. 207-8.

[13]Archives Nationales, Sûreté Générale, F7 13752, "Fédération du Livre, 1905-1910," reports of April 3 and April 19, 1906. For Pouget's complimentary comment, see "Le Congrès syndicaliste d'Amiens," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 181 (December 1906), pp. 381-82. Contrast this to Confédération Générale du Travail, Conférence des fédérations, journées des 5 et 6 avril, 1906, pamphlet in Institut Français d'Histoire Social, pp. 18-39.

with the minimum of risk. Instead of a convulsive action which used up painfully-accumulated resources, he favored a continuous pressure for successive partial gains. In this, he felt he was following the pattern established by American unions, particularly the American Federation of Labor, which he viewed very favorably.[14]

Keufer strongly disagreed with the actions of the Paris section, which in 1906 was controlled by revolutionaries. It had been offered a nine-hour day at wages of seven francs, the prevailing wage for the ten-hour day. Since the Livre had decided to fight for nine hours without a reduction in pay, the Central Committee advised acceptance of the employers' offer. The Paris section, however, insisted on an increase in wages to 7.20 francs, and voted to continue the strike. It was long, costly, and foolish. To Keufer, it was a clear case of what happened when passion triumphed over practicality.[15]

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[14]Keufer, "Les Grèves de mai dans l'industrie du livre," La Revue syndicaliste, no. 15 (July 1906), pp. 51-55; 9e Congrès, p. 71; Sixième Congrès, p. 42. On Keufer's admiration of American unions, see Jacques Julliard, "Diversité des réformismes," Le Mouvement social, no. 87 (April-June 1974), pp. 4-5; Keufer, Rapport du délégué. Samuel Gompers, head of the American Federation of Labor, carried on a correspondence with Keufer. In a letter printed in La Typographie française, June 1, 1890, he informed Keufer that the American pattern for achieving the eight-hour day consisted in having one industry at a time strive for it, supported by the other unions. Keufer also admired the English unions. See "L'Histoire du trade-unionisme en Angleterre," Revue Occidentale, May 1, 1899, pp. 350-58.

[15]Keufer, "Les Grèves de mai," La Revue syndicaliste, no. 16 (August 1906), pp. 88-89. The police reports noted that many of the biggest printing houses in Paris moved to Belgium and Switzerland as a result of the strike. Archives Nationales F7 13752, reports of April 19, 1906 and April 3, 1907.

In similar fashion, Keufer and the federation rejected the idea of the general strike. It was not done lightly. Several membership referenda were held, and the question was debated in lively fashion at more than one federation congress, where Alfred Hamelin made a strong appeal for it. He turned it into a question of solidarity. If it was declared, he asked, could the typographers refuse to join in?[16]

Keufer's views prevailed, however. He pointed out that it was neither an immediate nor a practical possibility. Since public opinion did not support the working class, a general strike would only provoke a terrible repressive reaction. Besides, even on the remote possibility that it could succeed, the working class was not prepared for success. It was not united, and its leaders were neither more competent nor more moral than the current leaders of society.

The secretary also felt that it would not be so easy to change existing society. "A serious and lasting change cannot occur in a radical manner, nor by violence, but only

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[16]The referenda were held in 1895 and 1908. See Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 212-14; Dixième Congrès, pp. 101-2. The police displayed a strong interest in the 1908 vote. They collected a large number of newspaper clippings emphasizing the defeat suffered by the revolutionaries in the C.G.T. as a result of the repudiation of the general strike by the printers. Archives Nationales F7 13752. Also, the federation had been asked by the railroad workers in 1898 and by the miners in 1901 whether it was ready to join them in a general strike. On both occasions, the federation replied that it did not believe in the general strike, but that it would support the miners and railroad workers in their own strikes. It gave 6,000 francs to the miners. Septième Congrès, pp. 167-69; Bar, L'Organisation, p. 214; 9e Congrès, p. 55; "Congres Typographique National de 1889," La Typographie française, September 1, 1889, supplement.

by a persevering action and the moral and intellectual preparation of all the classes."[17] Individuals had to be educated and prepared to accept the kind of society the strikers were trying to create. This was not an easy task, given the ingrained habits and customs of centuries: "Yes, a total regeneration is necessary, but I deny that it can be produced by a simple and brutal change in material or individual organization. The evil is more profound, and more real and durable remedies are needed."[18]

Even workers needed to improve their moral outlook and habits. One of Keufer's biggest complaints about the working class was that those workers who had a secure job and decent wages had no concern for their comrades and would not join unions themselves. Many union members were not sufficiently dedicated; even union officers did not bother to read the notices in the federations newspaper. Finally, all too many workers had a fondness for alcohol.[19]

Keufer's beliefs in this regard were essentially determined by his Positivist presumptions. As a follower of Comte, his ideology was centered around the reform of customs and opinions--moral reform. To this end, he favored the support

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[17] Septième Congrès, pp. 172-74. Also 8e Congrès, p. 182; Keufer, Rapport du délégué, pp. 21, 42.

[18] Keufer, Rapport du délégué, p. 21; La Typographie française, August 1, 1907.

[19] La Typographie française, March 1 and June 16, 1890, September 1, 1891; "Congrès Typographique National de 1889."

by unions of popular libraries, in which the worker could develop the habit of study and self-improvement.[20]

In short, Keufer really opposed the general strike because it was revolutionary. He thought it impossible that the working class could change society by the mere cessation of its services. He assumed civilization followed a slow, continual development, and that the basic transformation of society could occur only when men's sensibilities had been altered. This concept was the key to his belief-system, and its source was Positivism. The claims which he made, and which others have taken at face value, that his Positivism did not affect his trade unionism, are patently unrealistic, although it is true that he did not prosyletize for his Religion of Humanity.[21]

The revolutionaries had no faith in the value of partial strikes for limited objectives. But to Keufer, this was the way in which the worker could and ought to resist abuses and defend his dignity, independence, and wages. If the forces of the working class were truly well-organized, if there was an overwhelming unity and a community of views, then a revolution would not even be necessary. The working

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[20] La Typographie française, December 1, 1890; Conseil Supérieur du Travail, douzième session (1903), p. 50.

[21] Dixième Congrès, p. 225; Associations professionnelles ouvrières 1: 843; Charles Guieyesse, "Les Syndicalistes révolutionnaires," Pages libres, December, 1904.

class would be able, peacefully and gradually, to impose its views on society.[22]

The combination of hostility to the general strike and belief in the partial strike was unusual, if not unique, among the class-collaborationist unionists, most of whom (in practice) were opposed to strikes of any kind. But Keufer's devotion to the strike was sincere:

> I consider the strike as an extreme measure which the workers can avail themselves of in order to acquire a better place in society. Even while hoping that it will become a rare event, I believe that for a long time to come, this means of struggle will be necessary. It has always been, and will remain in the future, the expression of a primordial freedom: the refusal to concur in injustice, exploitation, oppression. It is also a way of making the employer remember his social obligations, if he grasps for personal riches and refuses to the workers . . . the just salary needed to enable them to live with dignity. 23

The partial strike corresponded to the role of the union. It was not an instrument of revolution, but an institution which would fix the conditions of labor which the partial strike would then obtain or protect. There were too many immediate, practical, urgent questions for the union to deal with; it had neither the time nor the energy to engage in abstract, theoretical politics. The capitalists were strong; the workers had to build their strength. The unions had to

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[22] 8e Congrès, pp. 177-83.

[23] Keufer, L'Usage du label dans l'industrie du livre en France (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1912), p. 15. Also idem, L'Education syndicale, pp. 40, 47; idem, "Les Grèves de mai," La Revue syndicaliste, no. 17 (September 1906), p. 114.

provide useful solutions to the everyday problems faced by workers and improve the lives of their members.[24]

As an alternative to the exclusive reliance on strikes, Keufer proposed a policy of conciliation and negotiation through the institution of the joint commission. More than anything else in the reformist program, the joint commission angered the revolutionaries. The idea of sitting down with the employer--the class enemy--to discuss problems courteously or to use good will and compromise was beyond their imagination.

The very statutes of the federation, as we have seen, specified that all efforts at conciliation had to be exhausted before a strike could be called. Many unions had such a clause; in the Livre, however, it was taken seriously. In 1906, more sections obtained the nine-hour day through peaceful negotiations than by strikes. And the tendency within the organization was to settle conflicts peacefully before reaching the stage of a work stoppage. The methodology of conciliation was gradually institutionalized.[25]

Keufer felt that results obtained from amicable discussion were more durable than results obtained by coercion. It always pleased him to point out that even the most revolutionary unions often ended up negotiating to terminate

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[24]Keufer, L'Education syndicale, p. 17.

[25]Hamelin, "La Fédération," Le Mouvement socialiste, nos. 23-24, pp. 727, 733; no. 25, pp. 34-35; 37; no. 26, pp. 90, 98.

their strikes, and even, on occasion, set up arbitration commissions. Although they refused to admit it, he felt this proved the correctness and superiority of his method. He found the constant preaching of revolution in a nonrevolutionary situation to be a mistake. Not only did it alienate the more moderate workers, but it also raised false expectations among the excitable ones.

To Keufer, the union leader had to be a man of method and sang-froid. He had to be able to keep his temper and approach problems with patience. To break up negotiations that might lead to concessions for the workers because of an inclination to revolutionary rhetoric was the height of folly. The constant use of such threates as strikes, sabotage, and bombs in dealing with the capitalists was counterproductive. It did not create an atmosphere conducive to compromise. Worse, it marked a return to a kind of barbarism, whereas the growth of civilization was meant to foster greater pacifism, both socially and internationally.[26]

As bad as using threats and breaking off talks was striking before attempting démarches:

> How can one hope for an agreement under such circumstances? I made clear to the brothers the anger of the Central Committee; I brought home to them the imprudence with which they acted by leaving work without entering into discussions with the employer. . . . They maintained that discussions were useless and were convinced that their employer would not receive them. I answered that that meant nothing; it was their responsibility to ask for an interview . . . if he refused, then their course of action would be clear. 27

Keufer did not even like street demonstrations. When May 1 was celebrated, he preferred meetings and conferences

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[26]Keufer, L'Education syndicale, pp. 39-40, 65-66; idem,

to mass protests.[28]

Even if the mixed commission did not produce brilliant results, it performed an important service. In accepting it, the worker renounced his intransigence. The very idea of making concessions was unpopular with Keufer's more revolutionary comrades, but he regarded the pacific settlement of disputes as a moral duty; concessions were a necessary sacrifice.[29]

In 1895 the Fédération du Livre created an industry-wide joint commission by agreement with the Union des Maîtres Imprimeurs de France, after Keufer addressed the employer congress. The Commission was not a total success, as Keufer himself freely admitted, but it did deal with several important questions, including prison work, piece work, the introduction of new machinery, the length of the workday, the status of women. It fell into disuse after a few years, but was reorganized on the eve of the 1906 strike. Its most important contribution was the elaboration of a set of apprenticeship

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Rapport du délégué, p. 86; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Les Deux Méthodes syndicalistes: polémiques publiées à l'occasion des attaques dirigées contre la Fédération du Livre. Réformisme et action directe (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1905), pp. 35-38; 9e Congrès, p. 84; Dixième Congrès, pp. 223-24.

[27]La Typographie française, October 16, 1890.

[28]Ibid., May 16, 1891.

[29]Keufer, L'Education syndicale, pp. 43-44; 8e Congrès, p. 140; La Typographie française, November 16, 1892; Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, pp. 2-4-5.

regulations and the setting up of a system of arbitration and conciliation to settle all disputes. This involved a complicated three-step arbitration procedure, which, however, was only morally binding. The Livre also promised to refrain from striking while any dispute was in arbitration--no doubt one of those necessary compromises. Unfortunately, the Union des Maîtres Imprimeurs did not have effective control over the practices of individual members, who frequently violated the agreements.[30] This caused Keufer to favor the creation of effective employer organizations. When he stated that publicly, however, he was again accused of betraying the working class. He merely felt that it was easier to deal with an organized capitalist class rather than an unorganized one.[31]

Keufer emphasized that one could expect results only after long and extensive efforts, but he saw the joint commission as a unique opportunity to effectuate a rapprochement between employers and employees.[32]

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[30] 8e Congrès, p. 140.

[31] Septième Congrès, pp. 17-22, 37; 8e Congrès, pp. 127-43; 9e Congrès, pp. 59-60, 309; Dixième Congrès, pp. 215-16; Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 207; Associations professionnelles ouvrières 1: 863-64; Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 309-19; Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, pp. 195-97; Emmanuel Rivière, Syndicats et commissions mixtes (Paris and Lille: L'Action Populaire, n.d.), pp. 5-6, 12-14, 17-18, 20-29; Keufer, "Les Grèves de mai," La Revue syndicaliste, no. 16, pp. 83-88; La Typographie française, October 16, 1890.

[32] Septième Congrès, p. 21; 8e Congrès, p. 140.

> We all know that the joint commissions are not destined to resolve the social problem; but in waiting for the partisans of the Revolution to realize their ideal and attain their goal, it is reasonable to try and obtain improvements without conflict, by the intermediary of joint commissions and, if necessary, by a more energetic action . . . .[33]

Beyond the national commission, Keufer encouraged the formation of local commissions. These were, on the whole, more productive than the national one. The statistics of the Office du Travail show a high incidence of peaceful settlement of disputes in the printing industry.[34]

The creation of the joint commissions brought the Fédération du Livre praise from other class-collaborationist groups such as the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France and the Yellows, as well as from the business community. This fact was not overlooked by the police. Minister of Commerce Alexandre Millerand praised them, and said they were the inspiration for his plan for conseils du travail in each industry.[35]

In his organizing trips for the federation (which were prodigious--in one case encompassing twenty-three cities in twenty-five days) Keufer always made it a point to visit with employers, despite frequently hostile receptions.[36] Furthermore,

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[33] 8e Congrès, p. 140.

[34] Bulletin de l'Office du Travail, April, 1911, pp. 312-13; Associations professionnelles ouvrières 1: 858; 9e Congrès, p. 69.

[35] Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, p. 197; Archives Nationales, F7 13752, clipping of July 7, 1907.

[36] In every town he visited, Keufer met with the printing workers, even if there was just a handful. Often, he visited them in their shops. The appearance of a union leader from Paris often attracted workers from other trades who were interested in unionization. We have no way of knowing to what extent Keufer contributed to the formation of unions in nonprinting industries. However, the examples of provincial unionization cited by Zeldin,

he was eager to work with them when he felt he could thereby advance the interests of his members. When concern was raised over the amount of printing which the church contracted for outside of France, he joined with employer delegates to ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs to request that the Pope provide more work for French printers. He also joined with employers to lobby for a protective tariff. All along, he maintained that many of the employers were hardworking, fair individuals.[37] Keufer did not have any sense of class hatred; rather, he felt that the workers and their employers had a basic common interest, especially in promoting national prosperity and in meeting foreign competition.

The Livre's campaign for a minimum wage provision to be included in contracts given to entrepreneurs doing business for the government is a good case study of the federation in action. Keufer had a particular interest in this reform,

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France, pp. 243-43, 258-59, show that frequently the impulse generated by individuals led to the creation of unions in many industries. In his travels, Keufer sought to give an impetus to the formation of unions where none existed, or to strengthen those already in existence. His biggest task was to convince workers of the importance not only of unions, but of federation. It was not unusual for committed unionists to feel little desire to join a national federation, especially when it entailed a financial sacrifice. Keufer (or another delegate of the Central Committee) also went to an area whenever a strike was called. Sometimes, when nonunionized workers struck, they decided to form a union, and the federation sent delegates to help them in that case also. For some examples, see La Typographie française, February 1, June 16, August 1, October 16, 1890; September 1, 1891; March 1, 1892.

[37] Bar, L'Organisation, p. 258; Chauvet, Les Ouvriers du livre, pp. 26-27; La Typographie française, June 1, November 1, November 16, 1891; Conseil Supérieur du Travail, dix-septième session (1907), p. 102; ibid., dix-huitième session (1908), p. 5.

which benefited not only printers, but workers in the building trades and many other professions. Keufer promoted this idea at federation and C.G.T. congresses, raised it in the Conseil Supérieur du Travail, lobbied for it with ministers and legislators and finally, in 1899, after ten years of effort, convinced Millerand to issue a series of decrees which established the practice.[38] This was a landmark achievement, since it introduced the concept of minimum wages and maximum hours in French labor relations.

> Certain spirits disdain the action of unions and worker organizations for partial demands which they consider as palliatives, powerless to improve the situation of the workers and completely insufficient. They have faith only in the radical remedies or general solutions which tend to transform totally the social system. For myself, especially concerning those things which influence the day-to-day relations between employer and employee, I believe completely in the efficacity of my work, and am certain that with a persevering will we shall finish by triumphing over the numerous obstacles we have so far encountered. [39]

The Fédération du Livre also took upon itself the provision of a great number of bread-and-butter services for its members. The Livre not only had the best strike benefits in France and its own unemployment fund, but a death benefit plan, a health insurance plan, the viaticum (an indemnity for typographers travelling in search of work), a special fund

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[38] Septième Congrès, pp. 91-120; 9e Congrès, p. 55; Keufer, Rapport tendant à rechercher les moyens de parer aux funèstes conséquences du système actuel des adjudications (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1896); idem, Rapport tendant à l'application des décrêts du 10 août 1899 dans les cahiers du charges des adjudications (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1904).

[39] Keufer, Rapport (1896), p. 2.

for emergencies that the sections could draw on, and an orphanage for the children of printers which was supported in collaboration with the employers.[40]

For this, Keufer was accused of being a mutualist--an epithet which was not considered complimentary to a labor leader. Keufer defended the Livre's mutual aid benefits not as an end in itself, but as an organizing tool to attract and maintain members as well as to provide important services. The union, which was the structure charged with developing feelings of solidarity, had to appeal to self-interest to do so. The project for an unemployment insurance plan was begun in the 1890s, a period of stagnation for the federation; it was conceived as a way to attract members.

It followed that the federation had to be well-organized. It was highly centralized, with full-time administrators who were able to wield power effectively. Keufer resisted all attempts by the sections to control their own unemployment funds and viaticum payments. He knew the services would be effective only if they were centralized and the richer sections

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[40]Keufer, L'Education syndicale, pp. 30-33; Harmel, "Auguste Keufer;" Georges Lefranc, Le Syndicalisme en France (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1966), p. 31; Notes historiques, pp. 28-30. The federation paid out unemployment benefits of 140,000 francs for the years 1911-14, while the viaticum averaged from 8,000-11,000 francs a year. Also Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, pp. 187-91; Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 228-44; Sixième Congrès, pp. 49-57, 64-67; Septième Congrès, pp. 59-92, 149; 8e Congrès, p. 73; 9e Congrès, pp. 159-72; Dixième Congrès, p. 218; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Histoire d'une caisse de chômage (Paris: L'Emancipatrice, 1902).

helped support the poorer ones.[41]

In spite of the mutual aid aspects of the federation, and in spite of its moderation, Keufer proudly declared his brand of unionism to be one of struggle and direct action. It was not violent direct action, but it was direct action just the same.[42] The Livre struck, as we have seen, and used the boycott, the label, and the index. Keufer himself introduced the label into France after he learned of it on his trip to the United States. The federation, through its sections, took part in political action. It took sides in elections, not by committing itself to any one party, but by following the Gompers tradition of rewarding friends and punishing enemies. In 1904 and 1910, the Paris section led a campaign of support for all candidates who used the label on their campaign literature. The printers also actively engaged in démarches to ministers, legislators, and municipal councillors. Apparently, Keufer became both adept and effective at this.

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[41] Keufer's statement is in La Typographie française, February 16, 1891. Also Keufer, L'Education syndicale, pp. 59-64; Sixième Congrès, pp. 18-19, 31, 98-99; 9e Congrès, p. 20; Bar, L'Organisation, p. 186; Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 278; Lefranc, Le Syndicalisme, p. 31.

[42] Julliard, "Diversité des réformismes," pp. 4-5, called it a moderate class war which did not negate the concept of classes, but later (p. 16) he claimed that Keufer's reformism had the effect of integrating the proletariat into capitalist society.

The Sûreté Générale has on file a letter from Keufer to the Minister of the Interior, asking for a meeting and threatening to go over his head to the Premier if not given satisfaction. Was it a bluff, or an indication of Keufer's influence? There is another instance of the Minister of Labor, on Keufer's request, asking the Minister of the Interior to transfer work contracted to prisons to private enterprises. In a rather notorious incident, in which Keufer admitted he had been wrong, he went so far as to request a Legion of Honor for a friend of his, who happened to be in the military. Unfortunately, this occurred at the same time as the murder of workers by the army at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges, and provided grist for the mill of his enemies. Keufer refused the award for himself, but it was granted to Gaule, the long-time treasurer of the federation. Keufer was on familiar terms with Socialist ministers such as Millerand and René Viviani, and the Livre went so far as to thank Millerand publicly for his work on behalf of the working class.[43]

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[43] Quatrième Congrès, pp. 26-30; Archives Nationales, F7 13752, letters dated March 1, 1912 and October 19, 1914; Zeldin, France, p. 220; Harmel, "Auguste Keufer;" Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 208, 283-95; Septième Congrès, p. 207; 8e Congrès, p. 220; D. Sieurin, "Le Label ou marque syndicale," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 155 (May 15, 1905), pp. 99-101; Keufer, "Les Grèves de mai," La Revue syndicaliste, no. 17, p. 114; idem, L'Usage du label dans l'industrie du livre en France (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1912), pp. 7-9; idem, "Les Deux Conceptions du syndicalisme: le syndicalisme reformiste," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 146 (January 1, 1905), pp. 34-35; La Typographie française, January 16, April 1, June 1, 1890; April 16, 1891. Pierre Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste reformiste (Paris: Librairie C. Reinwald, A. Schleicher, successeur, 1912), p. 58, agreed that the Livre practiced direct action. Keufer reiterated his opposition to violent methods such as sabotage at the Conseil Supérieur du Travail, dix-septième session, p. 30 and dix-neuvième session (1909), p. 14. Also James Butler, "Fernand Pelloutier and the Emergence of the French Syndicalist Movement, 1880-1906" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1960), p.

Keufer's attitude toward the state in general was somewhat inconsistent. He often said that he distrusted state power, and that government intervention was generally useless. On the other hand, he found it necessary to accept it, and he clearly rejected the liberal ideal of laissez-faire. As time passed, he seemed to have fewer and fewer misgivings about state aid. But in many matters, the federation preferred to obtain improvements through pure syndical action. An examination of several of their goals will further illuminate the philosophy and method of the union.[44]

A difficult and recurrent problem for the printers was that of female labor. In the competitive world of typography, women were often used to replace male labor at lower wages. As a result, there was great hostility toward women on the part of the membership. Early congresses voted to prevent, by any legal means, the use of women in the ateliers. They were also excluded from membership in the federation, even if they were being paid union scale.

327; Confédération Générale du Travail, XVe Congrès National Corporatif (IXe de la C.G.T.) et Conférence des Bourses du Travail tenu à Amiens du 8 au 16 octobre 1906, compte rendu des travaux (Amiens: Imprimerie du Progrès de la Somme, 1906), p. 167.

[44]Keufer opposed government-operated social security systems at the early C.G.T. Congresses, and at the early printers' congresses, yet he wanted the state to take such positive steps as to use only union labor and ultimately supported the 1909 retirement law. See Keufer, Rapport (1896), pp. 43-46; idem, L'Usage du label, pp. 9-10; idem, "Les Deux Conceptions," p. 31; La Typographie française, June 1, 1890; "Le Congrès National Typographique de 1889;" Septième Congrès, pp. 22-23; Confédération Générale du Travail, Xe Congrès National Corporatif (IVe de la C.G.T.) tenu à Rennes les 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 septembre et 1er octobre 1898, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Rennes: Imprimerie des Arts et Manufactures, 1898), pp. 27, 269.

Keufer personally had much difficulty with the issue. He wished that women would remain at home, but he recognized that the demands of modern life made female labor inevitable. Since industry had no conscience and would seek to exploit women who worked, it was the duty of all workers to help women defend their salaries. It was a matter of self-interest. He also knew that, as a matter of right, they could not be excluded from the federation. For a time, he toyed with the idea of separate unions for women, but even that idea was too progressive for the membership, which rejected the idea in favor of the hard-line position.

By 1900, Keufer had come to accept the idea of the admission of women. Several delegates, although still not a majority at the 1900 Congress, accepted the formula of equal pay for equal work. In some cases, however, it was felt that this demand was an effective way to eliminate women from the work force. If an employer had to pay a woman the same as a man, many typographers thought that he would prefer to hire a male.

As a Positivist, Keufer had negative feelings about female workers, but in this case his membership was more intransigent than he was. Recognizing, as Hamelin (the lonely champion of the cause of women in the federation) pointed out, that it was a denial of their socialist principles to exclude the female worker, Keufer tried to move the federation toward a more enlightened attitude. In this effort he was unsuccessful until the last congress before World War I. At the 1910 meeting,

an interim plan was adopted, which permitted any woman employed at scale to apply for membership. After two years, the ranks would again be closed.

However, the policy remained a dead letter, as the case of Emma Couriau showed. Emma Couriau's case became an affaire in the labor movement, feminist circles, and socialist and democratic politics. Not only was she a typographer, and paid union wages, but her husband was also a typographer and a member of the Lyons union. When she applied for membership, she was refused and her husband expelled. The whole sordid business made the Livre the laughingstock of the labor movement, but it was not until after World War I that women were finally admitted.[45]

It would be easy to say that the printers' opposition to women was idiosyncratic, that is to say, unique to the industry and due, perhaps, to the competitive nature of the profession. Also, since the great majority of workshops were small, there was none of the anonymity of the large factory. If a woman was hired, the replacement of a male coworker would

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[45] Quatrième Congrès, pp. 8-11; 8e Congrès, pp. 33-41; 9e Congrès, pp. 100-4; Dixième Congrès, pp. 463-84; Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 264-67; Maximilienne Biais, "Syndicalisme féminin," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 214 (October 1909), pp. 163-64; Madeleine Guilbert, "La Présence des femmes dans les professions: incidences sur l'action syndicale avant 1914," Le Mouvement social, no. 63 (April-June 1960), pp. 127-29, 139-40; L.-M. Compain, La Femme dans les organisations ouvrières (Paris: V. Girard and E. Brière, 1910), pp. 19-25; Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, p. 195; C.G.T., Xe Congrès . . . 1898, p. 179.

be strongly and immediately felt. However, the other labor organizations which adopted a policy of class collaboration also were socially conservative on the issue of women. There is an obvious correlation between their social conservatism and the idea of keeping women in the home. The class-collaborationist unions emphasized conservative morality along with trade unionism. One reason why Keufer fought low wages was that many young printers did not marry because they were afraid that they would not be able to support families on their meager wages.[46]

The federation also had to grapple with the problem of cooperatives. During the 1880s, the principle of helping to establish cooperatives was dropped from the statutes. The partisans of cooperatives had withdrawn from the federation in their dispute with the Paris collectivists, and tried to set up a new federation. The Keuferite moderates and the revolutionaries found they had a common mistrust of the cooperative impulse. And yet, they could not turn their backs on fellow printers who sought either emancipation or improvement via the cooperative. Loans and assistance were extended to them. At the 1892 Congress this practice was questioned, and the making of loans was supposedly stopped. The federation nonetheless continued to provide assistance in special cases.

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[46] La Typographie française, September 1, 1891.

When some members wanted to take the printing of the Typographie française away from the cooperative which printed it, because of the expense and the uneven quality of the work, Keufer objected. He said that one should not judge a shop run by comrades with the same severity one applied to capitalist establishments. All federation printing continued to be done at worker cooperatives, notably the Imprimerie Nouvelle.[47]

In a significant sidelight, it was Hamelin who played a major role in creating the most famous cooperative of the period, that of the glass workers of Carmaux. At the instigation of the federation, he was sent to Carmaux in 1895 to set up a cooperative to employ workers who had been engaged in a long, bitter, and unsuccessful strike. Although the revolutionaries wanted to create a communist cooperative, in which the workers would divide all profits equally among themselves, Hamelin imposed his less radical conception. Shares were sold, not to individuals, but to worker organizations and socialist political groups. The profits from the cooperative

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[47]Hamelin, "La Fédération," Le Mouvement socialiste, nos. 23-24, p. 723; Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 248-56; Associations professionnelles ouvrières 1: 842; Sixième Congrès, pp. 6-9; 8e Congrès, pp. 9-10; 9e Congrès, pp. 44-46, 358; "Le Congrès National Typographique de 1889." The Bulletin de l'Office du Travail, 1906, listed thirty printing cooperatives. Keufer gave his thoughts on what made for a good cooperative in Conseil Supérieur du Travail, neuvième session, p. 442. The question of cooperatives split the reformists generally. See Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste, pp. 92, 115-50 and Félicien Challaye, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et syndicalisme réformiste (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1909), p. 116n.

thereby went to finance the labor and socialist movements. Hamelin served on the Board of Directors of the cooperative. Since the Livre had solicited the support of other Paris unions for Hamelin's mission, the police regarded it as the seed of the C.G.T. To Keufer, it was just another example of how organized workers could act together for their mutual benefit.[48]

The printers made other significant innovations: the label and the commandite. As we noted, Keufer brought back the idea of the label from his 1884 visit to the United States. Its propagation was one of the major activities of the federation. As Keufer said, it did more than inform about union shops; it also guaranteed that the printer in question paid scale, observed the contract, and (after 1906) observed the nine-hour day. The boycott and the index were natural complements of the label. The fact that the use of the label was not widespread in France was a sign to Keufer of the weakness and lack of organization of the French working class.[49]

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[48]Archives Nationales, F7 13752, "Notes sur la Fédération du Livre;" Hamelin, "La Verrerie ouvrière," Action ouvrière, new series, nos. 3 (June 15, 1910), pp. 13-15; 4 (July 1, 1910), pp. 12-15; 5 (July 15, 1910), pp. 9-11; Confédération Générale du Travail, VIIIe Congrès National Corporatif tenu à Tours les 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 et 19 septembre 1896, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Tours: Imprimerie G. Debenay-Lafond, 1896), p. 36; idem, IXe Congrès National Corporatif (IIIe de la C.G.T.) tenu à Toulouse les 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 et 25 septembre 1897, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Toulouse: Imprimerie G. Berthoumieu, 1897), p. 178; idem, XIe Congrès National Corporatif (Ve de la C.G.T.) tenu à la Bourse du Travail de Paris les 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 septembre 1900, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1900), p. 208; Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste, pp. 136, 141. On the glassworkers of Carmaux, see Joan Scott, The Glassworkers of Carmaux (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1973).

[49]Keufer, L'Usage du label, idem, Rapport du délégué, p. 73; Sieurin, "La Label;" Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 207-8; Conseil Supérieur du Travail, dix-septième session, p. 33. Keufer had a collection of eighty-five American union labels.

The commandite was a method of assigning work which was limited mainly to the printers, although it did spread to other industries in a small way. Basically, the commandite meant assigning an entire job to a group of workers. The group then decided how to complete it: who would do what, when, and where. Curiously, it is now enjoying a contemporary vogue. The idea of workers arranging their own work assignments, their own schedules, their own discipline, was appealing in terms of worker dignity and self-development. Today, it is seen as a way of conquering the dehumanizing drudgery of the mindless, repetitive assembly line.[50]

In international relations, too, the Fédération du Livre was a leader. It was the first French federation to form an international trade federation. Keufer's commitment to internationalism was more advanced than his membership's, though, which balked at the idea of having to pay more dues, this time for an international body. The result was that the French were for some years nonmembers of the federation which they created. The founding congress had taken place in Paris in 1889 at the instigation of the Livre. Keufer never stopped propagandizing for it, and in 1903 the membership voted to rejoin its international.[51]

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[50]Chambre Syndicale Typographique Parisienne, La Commandite (Paris: n.p., 1905); Achille Leroy, De la Commandite obligatoire et autres questions typographiques (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1876); Bar, L'Organisation, pp. 222-24.

[51]"Congrès Typographique International de 1889 tenu a Paris (Bourse du Travail) les 18, 19, 20 et 21 juillet 1889," La Typographie française, September 1, 1889, supplement; Sixième Congrès, pp. 98-101; Septième Congrès, pp. 150-65; 9e Congrès, p. 64; Dombret, La Fédération, pp. 22-23.

Although Keufer was an unabashed French nationalist, he believed in the creation of international ties between workers. He saw it as a means of obtaining greater support during strikes. The Printers' International contributed 160,000 francs to the federation during its 1906 strike. Internationalization was also a way of regularizing conditions in the industry, thereby eliminating the spectre of international competitive disadvantage for the French. If every nation had an eight-hour day, there would be no danger in France's accepting it. Keufer approached international federation in the same way as he approached national organization. He wanted universal organization of the working class in order to fight more effectively for just reforms. Internationalization would foster, too, an increased pacifism and reduce the possibilities of war.[52]

In spite of Keufer's impressive achievements as a trade union leader, the leadership of the powerful Paris section passed to the revolutionaries again in the early 1900s. With the obvious support of the C.G.T., they mounted challenges to Keufer's leadership, attacking his moderate ideology, his unwillingness to fight for the eight-hour day, his opposition to the general strike. But although they made a good fight

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[52] Associations professionnelles ouvrières 1: 835; Sixième Congrès, pp. 64-67; Archives Nationales, F7 13752, report of June 20, 1906; Keufer, "Les Grèves de mai " Revue syndicaliste, no 17, p. 115; idem, L'Education syndicale, pp. 56-57; Septième Congrès, p. 205.

of it at the 1905 and 1910 congresses, Keufer's methodology was overwhelmingly approved each time.

In 1905, he addressed his comrades:

> This congress must pronounce on our performance. If the printers no longer have confidence in the method of action which has been followed up to now, if they wish to risk the future of the federation with the method dear to an infirm minority of libertarians and intellectual theoreticians of permanent or violent revolution, if our comrades wish to follow the counsels of these irresponsible intellectuals . . . , I am ready to retire and leave my place to others more disposed to accept responsibility for another method of action. 53

In 1905, his leadership was approved by a vote of 166-2; in 1910 the vote was 137-19-6.[54] Keufer had succeeded in building a remarkable monument to his version of syndicalism.

The Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre was the most successful union in prewar France. No other federation could match its success in organizing workers, building a treasury, providing benefits, and obtaining improvements in working conditions. In addition, the printers initiated the first industry-wide permanent negotiating committee, the first international federation, and introduced the label, the commandite, and wages and hours regulations. It was the envy of even the revolutionary unions. Inevitably, the printers' federation

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[53] 9e Congrès, pp. 74, 93; Dixième Congrès, pp. 85-102, 164-211; Archives Nationales, F7 13752, reports of August 13 and 14, 1908, clipping of November 11, 1905; F7 13753, reports of December 13, 1911 and February 11, 1913; A. Boudet, "Le Comité Central du Livre et la 21e Section," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 203 (October 15, 1908), pp. 196-205; Albin Villéval, "Le Congrès de la Fédération du Livre," ibid., nos. 168-169 (December 1 & 15, 1905), pp. 483-94.

[54] 9e Congrès, p. 93; Dixième Congrès, p. 245.

served as a model for other federations--especially after World War I. It was curious, though, that the federation's moderate orientation was determined by a very different force than that which caused reformism among American, British, and German unions. The foundation of Keufer's reformism--and a major source of reformism in the French labor movement generally--was Proletarian Positivism.

CHAPTER VI

THE PROLETARIAN POSITIVISTS

The Proletarian Positivists represent one of the most curious yet unstudied phenomena of the French labor movement.[1] As followers of Auguste Comte, the founder of Positivism and the Religion of Humanity, a group of workers attempted to synthesize a labor ideology and practice with a religious devotion to Positivism. It was never a mass movement; it affected only a handful of French workers directly. But with a noteworthy dedication and an intelligent, calm approach to social questions, the Proletarian Positivists managed to be active throughout the Second Empire and the Third Republic up to 1914. They attracted some of the most important figures in the French labor movement, giving them an influence all out of proportion to their numbers.

The most prominent, as we have seen, was Auguste Keufer, head of the powerful Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre. Isidore Finance, one of the leading figures of the 1870s

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[1]The only work to deal with the subject is Pierre Boivin, Choix d'écrits (Paris: n.p., 1938). It is mentioned by Henri Dubief, Le Syndicalisme révolutionnaire (Paris: Armand Colin, Collection U, 1969), pp. 20-21; Georges Weill, Histoire du mouvement social en France, 1852-1910 (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1911), p. 191; Jean Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier en France des origines à nos jours (Paris: Aubier, 1946), p. 200.

and 1880s, was also a Positivist. Finance helped organize and actively participated in the early Worker Congresses. He was also an officer of the building painters' union and their delegate to Possibilist Congresses. Albert Gaze, president of the union of Paris cooks and a member of the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France, was a Comtean. François Fagnot, who also belonged to the Livre, was a major personality in Clermont-Ferrand, and head of the local Bourse du Travail in the 1890s. Finance and Fagnot both obtained posts in the Office du Travail, where they were able to further mold the labor movement, mainly through their influence on social legislation. Finance was an Assistant Director of the Office, Chief of the Bureau of Professional Associations, and Secretary of the Conseil Supérieur du Travail. He helped put together the four volumes of Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières,[2] a compendium of labor unions, cooperatives, and mutual aid societies. Finance wrote most of the first volume himself, and the entire work has remained one of the most fertile sources for French labor history.

Fagnot, who contributed to the APO, was the permanent investigator (enquêteur) for the Office du Travail, and also a secretary for the Conseil Supérieur du Travail (C.S.T.). He

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[2]Ministère de Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Télégraphes, Office du Travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, 4 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1899-1904), hereafter referred to as APO.

was well respected among reformists for his work in the Office, and did studies on unemployment insurance and the need for governmental regulation of various aspects of industry. The reformists counted on him, in his role as enquêteur, to make sure that the subsidies given to revolutionary unions for their unemployment funds were not used to support revolutionary activities.[3] Fagnot was also active in the Association Nationale pour la Protection Légale des Travailleurs,[4] as was Keufer. Keufer too was president of the permanent commission of the C.S.T., which coordinated the activities of the C.S.T. in the periods between the yearly meetings.

Yet another Positivist, although not a worker, was Arthur Fontaine, the Director of the Office du Travail. In that capacity, he was a permanent member of the C.S.T. He, Finance, and Keufer served on the committee which decided how to distribute the funds provided by the Minister of Commerce for worker cooperatives.[5]

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[3]On the attitude of the reformists to Fagnot, see La Revue syndicaliste, no. 7 (November 15, 1905), pp. 175-76 and "Echos," Action ouvrière, no. 11 (March 1, 1910), p. 2. Fagnot's studies include Association Nationale pour la Protection Légale des Travailleurs, La Règlementation du travail dans les usines a marche continu, rapport de F. Fagnot, compte rendu des discussions, voeux adoptés (Paris: Felix Alcan, Marcel Rivière, 1913); idem, Les Problèmes du chômage, rapporteurs: MM. F. Fagnot, Max Lazard, Louis Varley, compte rendu des discussions, voeux adoptés (Paris: n.p 1910); idem, F. Fagnot, La Règlementation du travail en chambre (n.p., n.d.); Fagnot, Le Chômage (Paris: Société Nouvelle de de Librairie et d'Edition /Bibliothèque Socialiste nos. 34 & 35/, 1905).

[5]Fontaine, as opposed to the others, did not take an active part in the rites of the religion. For the committee which controlled the funds, see "Petites Nouvelles," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 19 (June 25, 1902), p. 150.

[4]See Chapter X.

Finally, Emile Corra, the spiritual leader of one branch of the Comteans after 1905, served as Chief of the Bureau of Professional Associations and then as Chief of the Bureau of Technical Education. This latter post, which dealt with vocational training, was closely involved with labor matters. After World War I, it was filled by Pierre Coupat.

According to the Positivists, the creation of the Conseil Supérieur du Travail and the Office du Travail resulted from the efforts of Comteans. Dr. Paul Dubuisson was credited by them with having originated the idea. His brother was an Assistant of Jules Roche, the Minister of Commerce in 1891. Dr. Paul Dubuisson, a coreligionist of Keufer, recommended the idea to his brother, who allegedly convinced Roche of the merits of the idea. The brother also recommended Finance, Fagnot, Keufer, and Fontaine for their positions.[6]

The Positivists may have exaggerated their influence in the origin of the C.S.T. and the Office. The idea of joining worker delegates and employer delegates in permanent bodies was not original to the Positivists. The Office du Travail had originated in the appointment of Joseph Barberet in 1880

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[6]Speech of Keufer on death of Dr. Paul Dubuisson, Revue positiviste internationale 5, 7 (October 1, 1908), p. 357; Jean Maitron, ed., Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français, troisième partie, 1871-1914: de la commune à la grande guerre 13 (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1975): 194.

to the Bureau of Professional Organizations. Radical Republicans such as Waldeck-Rousseau had the idea of using unions in organized works of social peace, and it is likely that similar institutions would have been created with or without the Positivists. Yet it cannot be denied that the C.S.T. and Office du Travail became the main conduits for the Positivist influence on the labor movement.

Being a Positivist was something akin to being a member of the later Communist Party. One might join other organizations--even trade unions--but one would never forget one's primary loyalty: to communism. A worker who accepted Comte's teachings would be a unionist, and an active one at that. He would also join the Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes, which grouped all Positivist workers outside their unions and regardless of trade. Finally, he would also be a member of the Société Positiviste de Paris (if he lived in Paris), and would accept the leadership of Comte's successor, who was called the Director of Positivism.

The ties between the Cercle and the Société Positiviste were very close. Fabien Magnin was the founder and original head of the Cercle. When he succeeded to the presidency of the Positivist Society, Isidore Finance became head of the Cercle. When Finance followed Magnin in the presidency, Keufer took Finance's spot as leader of the Cercle. All this was under the authority of Pierre Laffitte, Comte's chosen successor and the Director of Positivism. Laffitte's choice of Charles Jeannolle as his successor led to a split in the

Society in 1905. Keufer became vice-president of the dissident Société Positiviste Internationale, with Fagnot as secretary and Corra as the leader. Finance apparently remained with the remnants of the original society, and ceased to play an active role in the labor movement.[7]

All the Positivists named above, with the exception of Fontaine, took the religious aspects of their faith very seriously, and participated in its ceremonies and rites. They celebrated their marriages and the birth of their children according to the traditions of the cult, and buried their dead the same way. Although they may have been unionists, and sincere ones, they never forgot that they were devotees of a religion also.

In the late 1840s, Auguste Comte decided to make the working class a major object of his propaganda.[8] He was joined in this effort, or led to it, by Fabien Magnin, a carpenter. Magnin (1810-84) was the first Proletarian Positivist. He

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[7]"La Présidence de la Société Positiviste de Paris," Revue Occidentale 5 (November 1, 1880): 481-84. Without becoming too involved in the different personnel changes, we should note that Finance served a second term as President of the Cercle, with Keufer as his vice-president, and that Keufer also presided, from 1901 to 1903, over the meetings of the Société Positiviste. See Revue Occidentale, 15 (November 1, 1885): 400-1; new series, 1 (March 1, 1890): 66-67; 2nd series, 23 (January 1, 1901): 30. On the schism, ibid., new series, 28 (September 1, 1903): 704-14; ibid. (November 1, 1903): 847-57; "Cinquante-cinquième Circulaire addressé à chaque coopérateur du libre subside, extrait," ibid., 2nd series, 33: i-vii; ibid., 32 (July 1, 1905): 45-93; "Constitution de la Société Positiviste Internationale," Revue Positiviste internationale 1 (July 1, 1906): 5-8.

[8]Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), pp. 356-57. Boivin, Choix d'ecrits, pp. 109-11, said that the circle was created in the 1860s at Puteaux, where Magnin worked.

occupied a place in the Positivist firmament second only to Comte and Laffitte.. During the siege of Paris, he refounded the Cercle in the capital. Positivists had played a role in the labor movement during the Second Empire. They attended the Congresses of the A.I.T. One of their number, Arsène Kin, was a signer of the Manifesto of the Sixty and a founding member of the First International. The leader of the British unionists who joined the Frenchmen in St. Martin's Hall in 1864 was Edward Beesly, a prominent English Comtean.[9]

As we have seen, the Cercle sent delegates to the first series of Worker Congresses in the 1870s. Its inability to attract much support among the proletariat reduced its activity, although it sent delegates to the regional congresses of the Possibilists throughout the 1880s. The Cercle was hampered by the fact that as the labor movement grew, the union became the essential unit of organization. The early Congresses had admitted study groups, cooperatives, mutual aid societies, and the like, as long as they had a working-class character. By the 1890s, there was no room for a Positivist circle at a C.G.T. Congress. The Cercle did send delegates to the Zurich Congress of 1893 and the London Congress of 1896 of the Second International. The London Congress was their last act of

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[9]"Hommage du Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes à la mémoire d'Arsène Kin," Revue Occidentale, new series, 1 (March 1, 1890): 66-67; Boivin, Choix d'écrits, pp. 112-13.

participation in the organized labor movement. Here too, there was no place for Positivism in what was essentially the coordinating agency for Europe's Social Democratic Parties. However, through the position of its practioners in unions or government offices, Positivism continued to exercise an influenee.[10]

That Proletarian Positivism enjoyed a substantial role in the labor movement was surprising, in light of their miniscule numbers. Statistics are difficult to obtain, but it seems that they were a veritable handful. On two different occasions, the Cercle claimed a membership of thirty-seven and thirty-eight. Paris was naturally their center, but Lyons was known to have several Positivist workers, and groups existed in Le Havre and Rouen (due mainly to the efforts of Emile Antoine, a bookkeeper). The Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier, in the volumes covering A-M in the Third Republic, listed nine

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[10]"Cercle d'études sociales des prolétaires Positivistes, compte rendu du Congrès de Reims par E. Laporte, délégué du cercle," Revue Occidentale 8 (March 1, 1882): 182-214; Auguste Keufer, "Quatrième Congrès régional de l'Union Fédérative du Centre," ibid. 11 (July 1, 1883): 153-60; "5e Congrès régional de l'Union Fédérative du Centre, compte rendu par M. Reynouard," ibid. 13 (July 1, 1884): 152-54; Keufer, "Congrès annuel de l'Union Fédérative du Centre (POSR)," ibid. 19 (September 1, 1887): 284; Keufer, "Le Huitième Congrès du Parti Ouvrier," ibid., pp. 106-14; idem, "Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes, rapports des délégués au Congrès du Parti ouvrier," ibid. 21 (November 1, 1888): 292-306; "Bulletin de France," ibid., 2nd series, 9 (January 1, 1894): 97-120; "Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes de Paris, le congrès socialiste international de Londres, compte rendu par M. Fagnot, typographe," ibid. 14 (September 1, 1896): 227-48; "Commemoration de Fabien Magnin aux Abrets (Isère)," Revue Positiviste internationale 12 (February 15, 1912): 221-23; Keufer speech commemorating the anniversary of Magnin's death, ibid. 3 (October 1, 1907): 264-68; Boivin, Choix d'écrits, pp. 109-14, 117, 120; Dubief, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire, p. 21; Montreuil, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier, p. 200; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, p. 191.

Positivists: eight workers plus Arthur Fontaine. Four of them were printers; four were from Lyons. Significantly, all had positions of influence in their unions. All in all, it seems safe to say that Proletarian Positivism never attracted more than a hundred workers. The range of professions was broad, however, although confined to the older, skilled, craft industries such as piano makers, engravers, clerks, printers, mechanics, plumbers, building painters, carpenters, and tinsmiths.[11]

Auguste Comte himself is better known for his sociology, his Religion of Humanity, and his right-wing disciples such as Maurras than for a proletarian outlook. Yet Comte had a distinct "socialistic" aspect to his thinking. It was enough to build, if not exactly a movement, at least a coterie of dedicated disciples. Comte's view of class was in some ways socialist. He recognized class distinctions and considered

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[11]The Dictionnaire biographique lists Emile Antoine, bookkeeper of Le Havre; Besse, president of the union of clerks in Lyons; Doublier of Lyons, who attended the C.G.T. Congress of 1901 as the delegate of the Lyons weavers, and had also been a prud'hommal councillor and the president of his union; Roulet, treasurer of the Lyons typographers; and Finance, Keufer, Fontaine, and Magnin. Besse was not part of the Paris group. He became a leader of the moderate Fédération des Employés de France and with a colleague, was the first non-C.G.T. delegate elected to the C.S.T. For more names and professions, see Joseph Barberet, Monographies professionnelles: le travail en France, vol. 4 (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1887): 21. On the membership figures, see "Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes de Paris, deuxième rapport annuel sur le fonctionnement du Cercle pendant l'année 1886, présenté à M. Pierre Laffitte, directeur du Positivisme," Revue Occidentale 18 (May 1, 1887): 390-95; "Troisième rapport annuel du Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes adressé à M. Pierre Laffitte," ibid. 20 (May 1, 1888): 373.

them important. He was angry at the debased position of the laboring classes in society, and desired a modification of existing class relations to achieve an improvement in the treatment of the working class.

On the other hand, he viewed the social problem in moral terms. Man was innately selfish and had to be socialized. That is, he had to be made aware, through education, of his duties and responsibilities toward his fellow men. The ideal society would come about through the inevitable progress of scientific knowledge and the increasing acceptance by the whole society of Comtean morality. To the extent that socialism can be described as an ideology of class consciousness and improvement of the working class, Comte was a socialist. And, as George Lichtheim pointed out, Positivism was an activist doctrine:

> Comte's moral neutrality left the field open for action guided by the desire for improvement of a social order judged imperfect in terms of inherited (secular or religious) morality. . . . His evolutionary doctrine, however determinist in retrospect (or in prospect), had room for the kind of humanitarian impulse that transformed itself into a critique of the established order when it encountered concrete social problems such as poverty or unemployment. 12

However, Positivism was also a doctrine of social integration for all classes. Comte wanted each person to consider himself as a "social functionary"--a servant of society.

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[12]George Lichtheim, "The Concept of Ideology," in The Concept of Ideology and Other Essays (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1967), p. 23.

One of the Positivists' mottoes was "live for others." In the Comtian vision, everyone (including the worker) had a role to play. Society would be organized hierarchically, and each class had a defined position. Existing class relationships, although moralized, were also solidified in Positivism. There was no hatred of capitalism. On the contrary, the businessman had a valuable role to play: he had to organize the productive forces of society so as to satisfy the material needs of the people.[13]

The fundamental doctrine of the Proletarian Positivists was a hierarchy based on generosity. As Keufer put it, the social and economic mission of the working class had to be preceded, and then guided, by the education of individuals as to their social role:

> The violence of the human personality, the preponderance of egotism demands a permanent culture of generous sen-

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[13] On hierarchy, see Pierre Laffitte, "Nécessité de l'intervention du Positivisme dans l'ensemble des affaires humaines," Revue Occidentale 1 (May 1, 1878): 24; Fabien Magnin, "Questions sociales, première question: de l'organisation industrielle et de ses rapports avec toutes les autres branches de l'activité sociale," ibid., p. 105; idem, "Congrès ouvrier de Marseille," ibid. 3 (May 1, 1879): 483-85. On the importance of capitalism, see Magnin, "Congrès ouvrier de Marseille," pp. 490-91; Keufer, "Le Huitième Congrès du Parti Ouvrier," p. 110; "Lettre d'Auguste Comte à M. Bosson, typographe à Paris, 18 janvier 1856," ibid. 2nd series, 2 (January 1, 1902): 136. Also, "Bulletin de France," ibid. 2nd series, 2 January 1, 1904): 49; Boivin, Choix d'écrits, pp. 42-43, 47, 61-62, 130; Dubief, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire, p. 29; Frank Manuel, The Prophets of Paris (New York: Harper and Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1962), pp. 256, 289-90, 303; Lichtheim, "The Concept of Ideology," p. 11. Lichtheim maintained that Comte wanted to eliminate classes as outmoded (p. 24), but it seems more accurate to say that he predicated their continuation, as Manuel, Prophets of Paris, p. 274 and Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, pp. 350-51, agree.

> timents to inspire in man the good will and the devotion of the strong toward the weak. Education along these lines will be the fertile source for the working class to establish the indispensable moral force of their organization. 14

The worker's social duty consisted primarily in forcing the capitalist to act more generously. Also, the worker had the duty to perform his task with proficiency and dedication. In this manner, he made his contribution to the benefit of society.[15] Others, special individuals, would assume leadership, for not everyone was capable of governing.

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[14]"Bulletin de France," Revue Positiviste internationale 3 (August 15, 1907): 148. Also "Cinquantième Anniversaire de la morte d'Auguste Comte au Père Lachaise," ibid. (October 1, 1907): 264-65; Emile Corra, "La Morale politique," ibid. 5 (July 1, 1908): 66-67; Keufer, Rapport du délégué de l'imprimerie à l'Exposition de Boston (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1884), p. 92; idem, L'Usage du label dans l'industrie du livre en France (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1912), pp. 11-12; idem, "L'Education syndicale," Action ouvrière, new series, no. 6 (August 1, 1910), p. 13; idem, "La Ligue Sociale d'Acheteurs," Revue syndicaliste, nos. 54-55 (February 1909), p. 287; idem, Rapport tendant à rechercher les moyens de parer aux funestes conséquences du système actuel des adjudications (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1896), p. 44; Ministère du Travail, Statistique Générale d'Etudes Relatives à la Prévision des Chômages Industriels, Rapport sur l'organisation des relations entre patrons et ouvriers par M. Auguste Keufer, membre du comité (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1920), p. 8; Keufer speech at Fourth Workers' Congress, 1880, Le Havre, quoted in Le Havre, November 17, 1880.

[15]Magnin, "Questions sociales," Revue Occidentale 5 (July 1, 1880): 66-67; "Cinquantième Anniversaire de la mort d'Auguste Comte," pp. 264-65; Keufer, L'Education syndicale: exposé de la méthode organique (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1910), p. 78; idem, "L'Education syndicale," Action ouvrière, new series, no. 8 (September 1, 1910), p. 20.

The Proletarian Positivists had great faith in the efficacy of the super-human who, with an abundance of generous sentiments and only the good of all at heart, would rule.[16]

The governed, although guaranteed freedom to speak, write, and dissent, were required to conduct themselves as good citizens and not take licenses with their freedom. Malevolent criticism of the government was decried. Expecting too much, and expecting progress too quickly, was unrealistic; the masses were warned not to hope for too much. Above all, the governed had to understand that, in the Positivist society-to-come, revolutionary explosions were useless. Their job was to work hard and patiently await those improvements which the rulers saw fit to give.[17]

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[16]Positivists believed in the virtue of leadership. Like the army, like society, business enterprise needed a chief. That was one reason they opposed collectivism. Similarly, they supported strong leaders in the unions. Leaders were to be obeyed. In the Positivist doctrine, leaders were not subject to popular recall, and possessed the right to name their own successors. On the other hand, they were expected to be virtuous and not governed by material concerns. The Directors of Positivism set the example for the spiritual leaders of the society of the future: they lived on the "Positivist subsidy"--contributions from the faithful. See Paul Dubuisson, "Le Congrès ouvrier socialiste révolutionnaire de la région du centre," Revue Occidentale 5 (September 1, 1880): 299; Laffitte, "La Question sociale et les travaux de Paris," ibid. 6 (January 1, 1881): 90; "Cercle d'études sociales des Prolétaires Positivistes, compte rendu du congrès de Reims par E. Laporte," pp. 213-14; Keufer, "Le Huitième congrès du Parti Ouvrier," pp. 110-11. On the limits to criticism, Laffitte, "Nécessité de l'intervention du Positivisme dans l'ensemble des affaires humaines," p. 17; Dr. Robinet, "La Question sociale," Revue Occidentale 5 (July 1, 1880), p. 122. Also Corra, "La Morale politique," pp. 43-44, 47-49, 54-57, 74; Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, p. 350. Marcuse also noted that Positivism carried in it the seeds of authoritarianism and fascism: pp. 342-44, 348-50, 357-58. Lichtheim, "The Concept of Ideology," p. 10, also mentioned this aspect.

[17]Corra, "La Morale politique," pp. 66, 73-75; Keufer, Rapport du délégué, p. 21; idem, "Les Deux Conceptions du syndicalisme: le syndicalisme réformiste," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 146 (January 1, 1905), p. 19; idem, "La Crise syndicaliste," ibid., no. 220 (April 1910), p. 275; Fédération Française des

Not surprisingly, the Positivists greatly admired the Popes of the Middle Ages, whom the Positivists viewed as individuals with great moral authority, presumably no temporal concerns, and who, as representatives of humanity united in a common faith, called men to the performance of their moral duties. It was exactly what they hoped to reconstitute in modern industrial society.[18] Comte felt that the maintenance of the religious sentiment in Russia in his era would allow that nation to convert easily to Positivism.[19]

The Positivists made it clear that the capitalist was incapable of fulfilling this role. The capitalist, like the worker, was a temporal agent with a partisan role to play. The businessman was not qualified to fill the spiritual role. For that, a philosopher-moralist-priest (in the Positivist sense) was needed. A man who scorned material gain and who held ideal sentiments of generosity and altruism was required.[20]

Travailleurs du Livre, Septième Congrès National tenu à Marseille du 9 au 15 septembre 1895 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1895), pp. 21, 173-74.

[18]Letter of Comité de Direction, Société Positiviste Internationale, Revue Positiviste internationale 5 (November 15, 1908): 443.

[19]James Billington, "The Intelligentsia and the Religion of Humanity," American Historical Review 65 (July 1960): 807-8.

[20]Laffitte, "Nécessité de l'intervention du Positivisme dans l'ensemble des affaires humaines," p. 21; Fagnot, review of W.H. Tolman, L'Oeuvre de l'Ingénieur Social in Revue Positiviste internationale 10 (April 1, 1911): 290-91.

The leader had to be strong, with sufficient power to carry out his duties. The Positivists called their desired form of government a "liberal dictatorship." Keufer and his coreligionists rejected parliamentary government as the government of the future. They merely accepted it as the best type of government for the pre-Positivist transition period.[21]

If Positivism was socialist, it was so in a unique sense. The differences between the two were probably greater than the similarities. But in one respect, Positivism fit in neatly with socialist ideas. Proletarian Positivism was ouvrièriste. It wanted the working class to act separately and independently from other classes. This can be seen in the statutes of the Cercle. Only manual or white-collar workers were allowed to join. The group even went so far as to exclude members of cooperatives on the grounds that they were really entrepreneurs.[22]

The statutes give us more information about the extent of socialism among the Proletarian Positivists. The goal of the Cercle was to study the relations of capital and labor and

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[21]Keufer, "La Crise syndicaliste," p. 263; Elections législatives du 21 août 1881, programme de la Société Positiviste de Paris (Paris: Société Positiviste, 1881), pp. 5-6; Dubuisson, "Le Positivisme depuis la mort d'Auguste Comte," p. 172.

[22]"Bulletin," Revue Occidentale 15 (November 1, 1885): 403.

to search for Positivist solutions to social questions. To become a member, one had to accept several basic tenets: first, that social and moral phenomena submit to natural laws. This was the essence of Comte's legacy. Second, that universal suffrage was incapable of finding solutions to difficult social and moral problems. The leaders, not the masses, would run the Positivist society. Third, wealth was recognized as being social in its origins; thus, it had to be used for the benefit of society as a whole. In spite of this, the existence and importance of private property was upheld. Fourth, Proletarian Positivists agreed that wages did not match the true value of services rendered, but could be considered as a necessary indemnity which should enable the worker to live decently. Fifth, they accepted the necessity for a complete reorganization of customs and opinions as a precondition to the installation of any new social order. Finally, all members had to belong to the union in their industry.[23]

The statutes thus reveal not only the exclusively working-class orientation of Proletarian Positivism, but its essentially conservative nature. This has been one of the most confusing aspects of the Comtean ideology and the hardest to

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[23]"Bulletin," Revue Occidentale 15 (November 1, 1885): 402-3.

understand. A revolutionary veneer seems apparent in its ouvrièrist principles: the separation of classes, the development of class consciousness, and the insistence on class purity by rejecting cooperatives and syndical participation in politics. Some historians have gone so far as to claim that it is closer doctrinally to revolutionary syndicalism than reformism. Support for this view was found in Positivists' acceptance of the strike, which distinguished them from the Barberettists who almost completely disavowed it.[24]

These aspects can be misleading. The Positivsits never denied the desirability of capitalism. They accepted the permanence of capitalism and private property. In this sense, they were exceptionally conservative. They sought to develop the consciousness of the working class, not to revolutionize society, but to train it to fulfill a moralizing role in class society which would remain in existence. In this sense, they were reformists in the true meaning of the word; they wished only to modify the existing social structure. They were obviously not equalitarian since they institutionalized hierarchy. The laborer had a role to play. With the proper education, he would be happy in his work if he saw it as his contribution to the total social good. He was, naturally, entitled to a living wage and a decent life. If these had to

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[24]Dubief, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire, p. 43; Boivin, Choix d'écrits, p. 120; Weill, Histoire du mouvement social, p. 191.

be wrested by the strike from the unwilling hands of greedy businessmen, so be it. But the wage earner was to remain a wage earner.[25]

The ideal society would come into existence when all groups recognized their social duties. Fagnot thus logically admired the American steel titan, Andrew Carnegie, for his philanthropic endeavors. Carnegie was a good Positivist example of using wealth according to the law of social morality: helping the weak. Fagnot praised all efforts by employers to help their workers by improving health conditions in the factories, or creating insurance plans, etc. Keufer similarly praised employers who set up retirement funds for their employees.[26]

The ideas elaborated by the Proletarian Positivists, with their emphasis on inequality and social duty, were remarkably similar to Social Catholic doctrine. It does not surprise us that Keufer found it easy to work with Social Catholics. In fact, his relations with them in some respects were better than with the revolutionaries. To their credit, the Positivist unionists were militant and committed in their struggle to obtain a more dignified life for the working man.

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[25]Finance, "Le Congrès ouvrier du Havre, rapport à la Société Positiviste," Revue Occidentale 6 (January 1, 1881): 134; idem, Des Expositions industrielles (Paris: Société Positiviste, n.d.), p. 13; Keufer, L'Éducation syndicale, p. 79; idem, "L'Education syndicale," Action ouvrière, new series, nos. 6 (August 1, 1910), p. 13 and 8 (September 1, 1910), p. 20.

[26]Fagnot, review of W.H. Tolman, pp. 285-86; Keufer speech at Imprimerie Ouvrière, Nantes, in Revue Positiviste internationale 5 (July 15, 1908): 207.

But to regard Proletarian Positivism as revolutionary in any fundamental sense is to miss the point completely.

Proletarian Positivism was in its essence class collaborationist; it believed in the cooperation of all classes--of all citizens--in a moralized society. There was no question of a class war, or of one class triumphing over another. Rather, the working class had to be incorporated into the rest of society. If society could be moralized, the Positivists felt that the interests of all classes would be the same. Even before the triumph of the ideal society, there was much to unite bourgeoisie and worker: republican government, defense of France, mutual recognition of mutual duties. It was for this reason that Comte's followers rejected the idea of candidats de classe. A politician only had to be a republican to win Positivist approval. A man only had to be a good citizen to be admired.[27]

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[27]Laffitte, "Nécessité de l'intervention du Positivisme dans l'ensemble des affaires humaines," pp. 10, 15, 21; Magnin, "Questions sociales, première question: de l'organisation industrielle," p. 130; Dubuisson, "Le Positivisme depuis la mort d'Auguste Comte," p. 165; Dr. Robinet, "La Question sociale," pp. 125-26; Laffitte, "La Question sociale et les travaux de Paris," p. 78; "Cercle d'études sociales des Prolétaires Positivistes, compte rendu du Congrès de Reims par E. Laporte," pp. 184-85, 189; Keufer, "Le Huitième Congrès du Parti Ouvrier," p. 111; "Discours de M. Fagnot à l'Union des Syndicats Ouvriers de Clermont-Ferrand," Revue Occidentale, 2nd series, 6 (July 1, 1892): 109-16; Elections municipales du 9 janvier 1881, programme de la Société Positiviste de Paris (Paris: Société Positiviste, 1880), p. 1; Finance, Exposition Internationale de Chicago en 1893: les syndicats ouvriers (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1894), p. 212; minutes of the Positivist Society meeting of December 15, 1880 in Revue Occidentale 6 (January 1, 1881): 151, 155.

Comte himself viewed the revolutionaries of his era with contempt and hatred; he was more interested in social stability. The Positivist motto (along with "live for others") was "progress and order;" sometimes, progress was subordinated to order. Always, the slowness of progress was emphasized.[28]

The Positivist Society itself was a living example of class collaboration. Keufer might have been a unionist in the Livre, and pursued worker rights against capitalism, but in the Positivist Society he joined with businessmen, politicians, journalists, and others as brothers and coreligionists. It was impossible for Proletarian Positivists to see the bourgeoisie as the enemy when, in the most important aspect of their lives, class had no significance.

The most illuminating example of this attitude was given by Keufer during the postal workers strike of 1909. It is worth recalling that Keufer's devotion to the working class was unchallenged, even by those who were his enemies in the labor movement. All agreed that, whatever his method, he had only the best intentions toward the working class. His attitude to the events of 1909, revealed only in his Positivist writings, show that there were considerations of more importance than the well-being of the working class.

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[28]Lichtheim, "The End of Ideology," p. 11; Manuel, Prophets of Paris, pp. 274-76; Marcuse, Reason and Revolution, pp. 345-47, 351, 357; Laffitte, "Nécessité de l'intervention du Positivisme dans l'ensemble des affaires humaines," p. 10; Keufer, "Quatrième Congrès régional de l'Union Fédérative du Centre," pp. 159-60.

The Postal Strike of 1909, we should remember, was brutally crushed by the government. The postal workers won the sympathy of great numbers of unionists in their struggle, including even the Yellows. Support for the strike was one of the great causes célèbres of the labor movement. In dealing with the strike, Keufer clearly felt he had to choose between the national interest and the rights of labor. He unhesitatingly chose the former. "Have they the right to strike and suspend the national life?" he asked, and answered in the negative. "Society can intervene and react against a cessation of work which, under the pretext of defending individual interests, compromises more or less gravely the interests of the whole collectivity, on a local or national basis." Although Keufer made it clear that he thought the workers should not be abused, that the authorities had to be aware of their obligations to the workers, and that means had to be instituted to allow the workers to voice their complaints, still, "the totality of national interests must not be sacrificed, at the risk of terrible catastrophes, by a strike of unhappy civil servants, if they belong to a public service essential to the nation."[29]

This was a shocking thing for a union leader to state, and it is not surprising that Keufer did not say it directly

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[29]Letter of Keufer to the Société d'enseignement populaire positiviste, in the Revue Positiviste internationale 6 (May 15, 1909): 374-75. Also see Rapport sur l'organisation des relations entre patrons et ouvriers, pp. 6-7.

to the labor movement. Even reformists who might have shared these sentiments talked instead of the dangers of repression if a general strike was undertaken to support the postal workers. It was one thing to have a lack of faith in the possibilities of success for the general strike, or to distrust the communist plan for utopia. It was quite another thing to side with the government in a labor dispute. It showed clearly where Keufer's priority lay--priorities defined by his secular religion.

Part of Keufer's attitude resulted from the Positivist attitude toward the Third Republic. Although their ideal society bore little resemblance to France's parliamentary government of the day, they were firm supporters of it. They felt that the Republic was the best guarantor of order, progress, and national dignity, and they were content to live in a parliamentary regime while awaiting something better. During the Second Empire, they had aligned with the republican forces; during the Dreyfus Affair, they gave their wholehearted support to Waldeck-Rousseau's government of republican defense.[30] They had not, however, favored the Commune; they opposed municipal autonomy since they believed it led to anarchy and weakened the nation.[31]

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[30]"Adresse du Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes de Paris en faveur de la révision du proces Dreyfus," Revue Occidentale 2nd series, 17 (November 1, 1898): 371-73; "Adresse de la Société Positiviste de Paris au Président de la République," ibid., 2nd series, 19 (July 1, 1899): 116; "Addresse de la Société Positiviste de Paris au President du Conseil des Ministres," ibid., 2nd series, 19 (September 1, 1899): 294; "Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes de Paris: Lettre ouverte à M. Waldeck Rousseau," ibid., 2nd series, 20 (January 1, 1900): 73-74.

[31]Elections législatives, pp. 5-6.

However, they also believed that, since the republican form of government was established, that several changes could be made. Primarily, they wanted a stable and disciplined system. The parliamentary anarchy, with the frequent changes of Ministries, offended them deeply. The political reforms they suggested were not designed to promote further democracy. They did favor elected representatives, but in reduced numbers and in a single chamber. Elected by proportional representation, parliament would ensure the airing of all views, but it was seen mainly as a debating society with no role to play in the daily affairs of administration. The ministers, in the Positivist scheme, were to be professional administrators and technocrats; they were to run the government.[32]

The Positivists' conception of government was never clearly defined. In the 1870s and 1880s, they distrusted active, interventionist government, and strongly opposed deficit spending and increased taxes. They traditionally urged their followers to vote only for candidates who promised no

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[32]Ibid.; Elections municipales, pp. 1-2; Paul Foucart, "La République et le prolétariat," Revue Occidentale 7 (July 1, 1881): 105-11; Corra, "Les Devoirs nouveaux des républicains françaises," Revue Positiviste internationale 1 (July 1, 1906): 67-75; idem, "La Troisième République," ibid. 2 (January 1, 1907): 73-74; Finance, "Le Congrès ouvrier de Marseille," Revue Occidentale 4 (January 1, 1880): 174; Dubuisson, "Le Congrès ouvrier socialiste révolutionnaire de la région du centre," p. 304.

new taxes and who would spend money only on necessities.[33] At times, they sounded like the most unreconstructed advocates of laissez-faire, but as time went on they did not hesitate to compromise that position. As one extreme example of their antistatism, they opposed hospitalization in preference to treatment at home. They felt that the government should help those incapable of helping themselves, which meant women and children. Men, on the other hand, should do all they could on their own, and not look to the state for assistance. Thus, at the 1880 Congress of Le Havre, Finance opposed even union control of apprenticeship because he felt that it was an obligation of the parent to take care of the child. It would have been destructive of morality to acquiesce in the abandonment of responsibility.

This also explains why the Positivists rejected for a long time a state retirement plan. It was the individual's responsibility, and his family's, to prepare for old age. The whole question of public assistance upset Positivists. Along with the most conservative economists, they believed that

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[33]Laffitte, "La Question sociale et les travaux de Paris," pp. 89-90; Elections municipales, p. 4. Positivists even opposed the holding of an International Exposition in Paris because they felt it was an unnecessary extravagance. See Keufer, Rapport du délégué, pp. 94-95; Finance, "Des Expositions industrielles," Revue Occidentale 1 (September 1, 1878): 466-68; "Le Centenaire de 89 et le projet d'Exposition Industriel, rapport de la commission nommé par M. P. Laffitte," ibid. 14 (January 1, 1885): 1-11; "Pétition de la chambre syndicale des ouvriers peintres en bâtiments contre le projet d'Exposition en 1889," ibid., pp. 139-42; "Pétition contre le projet d'Exposition Universel de 1889," ibid. 16 (May 1, 1886): 400-6.

welfare disgraced individuals and led to a decline in public morals. People would not care about getting old, or getting sick, or working conscientiously, if they knew that the state would take care of them. If one had to learn to allocate his own resources intelligently, and plan for the future, he would be better off. Furthermore, men would never learn to cooperate with each other if they could get what they needed from the state. Welfare was destructive of healthy social relationships.[34]

Laws were a chimera. Positivists believed it was a mistake to think that mere laws could solve problems. When it was a question of morality, only education could produce results. However, if laws facilitated the process of education, then they were to be welcomed and supported. It was in this area that the Positivists had fewest qualms about governmental action. By legalizing unions, the process of worker education could be enhanced. By separating church and state, general education could increase in quality.[35]

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[34]Finance, "Le Congrès ouvrier du Havre," p. 138; Elections municipales, p. 4; Elections législatives, pp. 11-12; Corra, "La Morale politique," p. 73. Maurice Ajam, a member of the Society and a deputy, published a book in 1910 against state monopolies, Contre l'Etatisme. Also, Des Caisses de rétraite pour les vieux ouvriers, réponse du Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes de Paris au questionnaire dressé par la commission parlementaire (Paris: Société Positiviste, 1880), pp. 5-6; Keufer, "Le Huitième Congrès du Parti Ouvrier," p. 114; idem, "Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes, rapports des délégués au Congrès du Parti Ouvrier," pp. 293-97.

[35]Finance, "Le Congrès du Havre," p. 140.

But no law could make an employer recognize his social responsibilities. Like conservatives, Positivists believed that if the state became too involved in the daily affairs of its citizens, it would become too powerful.[36] They were remarkably untroubled by the fact that their society, if ever established, would be totally statist.

Unfortunately for their doctrinal consistency, the Proletarian Positivists found that they wanted more and more from the state as time passed. Gradually, they modified their doctrine to match their desires. The presence of so many Positivists in the C.S.T. and Office du Travail made sense only if Positivism found some way to accept government action as efficacious. Fagnot developed a complete "shopping list" of legislation Proletarian Positivists desired: laws protecting women and children; guaranteeing a minimum wage on government contracts; setting health standards for factories; establishing the responsibility of the employer in industrial accidents; maintaining the rights of association and coalition; requiring the neutrality of the government in labor disputes; giving aid to the unemployed by providing subsidies to union unemployment funds.[37]

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[36] Des Caisses de retrait, p. 7.

[37] Fagnot, Le Congrès socialiste internationale de Londres: compte rendu et rapport sur les conflits entre le capital et le travail (Paris: Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes de Paris, 1896), p. 10; "Lettre ouverte à M. Waldeck-Rousseau," p. 75; "Bulletin de France," Revue Occidentale, 2nd series, 31 (February 15, 1905): 162-77; Finance, "Le Congrès du Havre," p. 125.

The accent on individuality and the emphasis on morality led the Positivists to strange, or at least different, positions from the rest of the labor movement. Their ideas on property were unique within the C.G.T., although not to the rest of the class-collaborationist movement. Comte had defined property as social in its origin and in its usage. However, he also believed it should remain in private hands. The Positivists thought private property was important for many reasons,[38] not the least of which was that a worker had to have his own home. Only thereby could family life flourish. A worker had to have roots, and these were created by a home, a family, and a nation.[39]

The Positivists held everyone to strict standards, and that included the working class. Keufer repeatedly stressed that it was the duty of the French worker to be technically proficient and to maintain a high level of work. At times, he sounded more like a management expert than a labor leader.[40] Finance complained about the lack of responsibility on the part of the worker, particularly the French habit of leaving a job

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[38]See pp. 54-55, 59-60.

[39]Finance, "Du Travail à la minute," in Questions sociales (Paris: Societe Positiviste, n.d.), p. 12.

[40]Keufer, L'Education syndicale, pp. 78-79; idem, "L'Education syndicale," Action ouvrière, no. 8, p. 20.

with no advance notice. To Finance, this was the height of irresponsibility. Work was interrupted, stability disrupted, and the employer lost money, which ultimately hurt everyone.[41]

Fagnot was displeased with the French worker for another reason: what he considered as the peculiarly Gallic characteristics of the French worker, which made him unwilling to accept the high degree of discipline and organization that German and English unions achieved. The Frenchman had no patience or perseverance. He wanted everything, immediately, in one glorious day of victorious struggle. As a result, he would not devote himself to solid, plodding, self-sacrificing trade unionism.[42]

Much as it held out the hope of justice and a better life for the proletariat, Positivism acted as a force for social peace and patriotism. The Comteans had great admiration for the American Federation of Labor and Samuel Gompers. According to Keufer and Finance, Gompers had succeeded in building the type of labor movement they would have liked to have seen in France: strong unions, organized in federations and linked in a powerful confederation, providing services to their members, dealing peacefully with the employers, and using the

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[41]Finance, "Du Travail à la minute," pp. 11-13.

[42]Fagnot, Le Chômage, pp. 52, 70-71, 87.

strike only in the most extreme situations:

> The unions have thus acquired the habits of order which make them true organs of social conservation, to the great despair of members of the small collectivist party, who have only hatred for the union leaders whom they accuse daily of being traitors in the pay of the government, merely because they do not seek the suppression of capitalism . . . but the incorporation of the worker into society. [43]

All the important attitudes of Proletarian Positivists were determined by their Positivism, not by their working-class condition. Whereas the revolutionaries saw the union as an agent of revolution, and the pure reformists saw it as a force for improving the material conditions of the working class, the Positivists saw it as something more. It was the agent whereby the worker was educated and made conscious of its rights, but as importantly, its duties. It was an instrument of social stability as well as an instrument of social improvement.

Fagnot said that the mission of the union was to regulate the individual tendencies toward strikes and to prevent them as much as possible through negotiations. If the union was strong, Positivists believed that strikes would become rarer.[44] It was from this perspective that the joint commission and the contract assumed their importance. The function of the contract was to limit strikes, and establish

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[43] Finance, Exposition . . . de Chicago, pp. 207-8, 212; Fagnot, review of W.H. Tolman, p. 291; Keufer, Rapport du délégué, pp. 43, 86; idem, L'Education syndicale, p. 39; idem, "Les Deux Conceptions," p. 36.

[44] Fagnot, Les Attributions, pp. 14-15; Finance, Exposition . . . de Chicago, p. 206.

stable, equitable relations between capital and labor. It had the additional advantage of moralizing competition, since it removed wage cutting as a means of improving a business's competitive position.[45]

Of all the types of worker organization--cooperative of production or consumption, mutual aid society, union--the last was best because it worked for all the workers in an industry. Its sense of social morality was higher, since its goal was to protect and defend the interests of all the members of a profession, thus achieving both moral and material improvements.[46] It was the Positivist perspective that made Keufer, Finance, and Fagnot syndicalists and not cooperatists--and more than just reformists.

However, the union was limited, in the Comtean doctrine, exclusively to the economic sphere. It was required to avoid political and religious matters. Keufer emphasized the point that this was the only way a strong organization representing all workers could be created. Fagnot pointed out that the unions had neither the time nor the means to engage in purely theoretical affairs. They had to deal with the immediate, urgent, practical questions which bore on the lives of the laborers.

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[45]Fagnot, Le Syndicalisme anglais (Paris: Bibliothèque Socialiste, Société Nouvelle de Librairie et d'Edition, 1903), p. 5; "Bulletin de France," Revue Positiviste internationale 4 (January 1, 1908): 58-59.

[46]Fagnot, Les Attributions, pp. 3-4.

As Fagnot noted, the English workers had discovered this to their advantage.[47]

Fagnot and Keufer both agreed on what the union should do. It should set and try to increase wages; decrease hours; help the unemployed and the victims of industrial accidents; regulate apprenticeships and limit their number; oppose the employment of women when they took the jobs of men; engage in prud'hommal elections; work to achieve a weekly day of rest; offer professional courses; abolish piece work; run placement services.[48] However, within the sphere of economic ameliorations, the union also had a moral role to play. That role was to make workers conscious of their social obligations, and to help them attain a higher degree of professional efficiency.[49] The Proletarian Positivists insisted that they were engaged in more than mere mutualism--the obtaining of benefits. Fagnot referred to it as a third type of syndicalism, located between revolutionary syndicalism and mutualism. This is best seen in the approach to the reduced workday, which Positivists desired so that the worker would have greater opporunity to educate himself, and also in Keufer's suggestion that, in

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[47]Ibid., pp. 5-6; Boivin, Choix d'écrits, pp. 121-22.

[48]Fagnot, Les Attributions, pp. 9-11; Keufer, L'Education syndicale, pp. 17, 28-32; idem, "Les Deux Conceptions," pp. 23-27.

[49]Keufer, L'Education syndicale, p. 78; idem, L'Usage du label, pp. 11-12; idem, Rapport du délégué, p. 92; idem, "Enquête ouvrière sur la crise de l'apprentissage," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 199 (June 15, 1908), pp. 416-17.

collective bargaining, the workers also had to make concessions.[50]

Interestingly, Fagnot preferred revolutionary syndicalism to mutualism. As he said, at least a revolutionary had a syndicalist spirit. A union permeated with mutualism would soon cease to think of the interests of the whole profession, but only of satisfying the personal interests of its members. This approach was totally conditioned by his Positivist sense of morality.[51]

The attitude of the Positivist workers to industrialization also followed from their religious ideology. Whereas certain elements in the labor movement, particularly in the early phase, looked upon the machine with fear and loathing and tried to prevent its introduction, both Keufer and Fagnot welcomed industrialization. This was particularly noteworthy since they were in a craft which was threatened more than most by mechanization; the composing machine, invented in the United States in the 1870s threatened mass unemployment in the printing industry.

Keufer followed the American pattern in reacting to mechanization. Following his visit to the United States in 1884, he corresponded regularly with the leaders of the American printers' unions to find out how they were dealing with the problem. With their experience to guide him, he led his

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[50]Fagnot, Le Chômage, pp. 176-78; Fagnot, De la Réduction des heures du travail (Clermont-Ferrand: Imprimerie Clermontoise, 1893), pp. 13-16.

[51]Fagnot, Le Chômage, p. 177.

federation down a path of rational, organized acceptance. Contracts were worked out with businessmen to guarantee that currently employed workers would be trained to operate it, and that they would be paid at a higher rate, because their working time (and income) was reduced. But Keufer also emphasized that the machine was an agent of liberation, and ultimately would free the worker of the need to toil long days. Both Fagnot and Keufer thought industrialization was a sign of the progress of civilization and offered untold benefits to mankind by increasing the total wealth of society.[52] Any ideology that desired to obtain peacefully a better distribution of wealth had to look with favor on social developments which offered the promise of permitting such an occurrence.

The question of patriotism made difficulties for the Positivists. For one thing, they were members of an international movement, with confrères in England, Latin America, and many European nations. In Turkey, the President of the Parliament, Ahmed Riza, was a Positivist who had spent several years in France and knew the French group well. Also, the Comteans were theoretically pacifist; they believed the future

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[52]Ibid., pp. 10-16; Keufer, Rapport du délégué, pp. 41-42; ibid., L'Education syndicale, pp. 20-21; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Septième Congrès, pp. 131-38; idem, 8e Congrès National tenu à Paris, Hôtel des Sociétés Savantes du 27 août au 1er septembre 1900 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1900), pp. 18-33, 49; idem, 9e Congrès National tenu à Lyon, Salle des Folies-Bergère du 5 au 10 juin 1905 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1905), pp. 58-59.

would be one of all men living in harmony under the Religion of Humanity. While Keufer rejected the antimilitarism and antipatriotism of the C.G.T., he also rejected war as an instrument of national policy. The approaching European crisis put Positivism to the test.

Of the Positivist devotion to France, there was no question. One reason for their attachment to the Republic was that it had transformed the defeated, vanquished nation into a powerful, respected one once more. As Emile Corra put it: "Patriotism and love of humanity made it a duty of a Frenchman to be a republican."[53]

The Balkan War of 1913 threw the Positivists into confusion. They were torn by whether to take no position, to take sides, or to condemn both sides. Obviously, the personal connection with Turkey through Ahmed Riza affected their decision. Keufer favored a condemnation of the enemies of Turkey on the grounds that it was a case of the strong attacking the weak. He recognized that the Balkan peoples might have legitimate aspirations against Turkey; it was a question he well understood, being Alsatian. Keufer confessed that he had never given up the idea of reconquering the "lost provinces," but that Positivism and the reflection of experience had convinced him that one could not let loose a great war over such a question. He called for an end to the Balkan War and a return to the status quo in Southeastern Europe. In addition, he even

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[53]Corra, "La Troisième République," p. 74.

brought himself to call for a rapprochement with Germany. On the other hand, Keufer favored the Three-Year Army Law on the grounds that it was necessary for the defense of France.[54]

It was obvious that the whole question of patriotism and war required greater analysis, and the Positivist Society devoted a great deal of effort in an attempt to work out a Comtean solution to the problem of a Europe rushing headlong to war. While rejecting any kind of patriotism which was inspired by a hatred of other nations, the Positivists reaffirmed love of country. The patrie was a living reality; it was a product of history and time. It was foolish to assume it would disappear. The nation was a sacred entity; under its protection the family, the basis of morality, created itself and developed. Although Positivists served humanity, they did so in the context of the origins, traditions, and heritage of their past. Since this was the case, the nation had to be independent. Therefore, a strong army was necessary to protect the nation. In addition, it served as a school of civic duty--a needed counterweight to the dominant individualism in that it stressed sacrifice and duty to the nation.[55]

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[54]"Bulletin de France: La Guerre des Balkans et la Société d'enseignement populaire positiviste," Revue Positiviste internationale 13 (January 1, 1913): 24-27; minutes of the May 20 meeting of the Société d'enseignement, ibid. (July 1, 1913): 52-53; Corra, "La Patrie," ibid., pp. 5-8; Keufer, "De l'Antimilitarisme," Revue syndicaliste, no. 18 (October 1906), pp. 160-61.

[55]Keufer response to "La Patrie et l'humanité," Revue Positiviste internationale 14 (August 15, 1914): 143-45.

As the war drew closer, thoughts of rapprochement died down. Although Positivists tried to reconcile their obligations to humanity with their obligations to the nation, they emphasized the latter over the former. As Keufer put it, it would be a mistake to preoccupy oneself with humanity to the exclusion of one's duties to the nation.[56] In August 1914, the Positivists wanted peace, but they had no doubt whatsoever that Germany began the war and wanted to conquer the world. Under those circumstances, there was nothing to do but fight.[57]

The Positivist attitude toward women also derived from an ultimate Comtean concern. The education of the young was the best opportunity to inculcate the principles of social generosity, making it of overriding importance to the Positivists that women be mothers, and fulfill their role in the hierarchy by devoting their lives to the moral education of their children. Furthermore, they believed in a traditional family life. Man needed, as one put it, a lit fire, a set table, and a family gathered around him. There was a gestalt here. It was a matter of social discipline, in part, which was as important in social relations as it was in the economic sphere. The family was the basis of the social order.

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[56]Ibid.

[57]Corra, "L'Expiation," Revue Positiviste internationale 14 (October 1, 1914): 225-27; C. Bildberg, "Quelques mots pour la justification de l'allemagne," ibid. (November 15, 1914): 272-75.

It was in the family that egotistical emotions were first and most powerfully confronted with feelings of generosity and devotion to others. Keufer, who was grudgingly forced to admit the right of women to join unions and have their economic interests defended, revealed in his Positivist writings that he opposed giving women the vote and allowing them to take part in politics.[58]

Other aspects of Positivist syndicalism become more comprehensible once we understand the effect of Positivist doctrine. Although the Positivist workers were adamant about remaining neutral in elections, and probably with good reason, the Positivist Society itself played an active role in elections, published programs, and recommended, if not particular candidates, at least party preferences.[59]

Keufer had said that each citizen was free to engage in politics outside the union--and conversely, that all political opinions should be respected inside it. This was more than a convenient position for him to take; it was mandatory. If the union engaged in politics, he might be in the unpleasant position of being torn between two contradictory decisions. What if the federation endorsed one candidate, and the Positivist Society another? The ideology of political neutrality permitted

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[58]Corra, "L'Education morale positiviste," Revue Positiviste internationale 12 (August 15, 1912): 113-14; Keufer response to "Le Mouvement féministe," ibid., p. 144. Also, Foucart, "De la Fonction industrielle des femmes," Revue Occidentale 6 (January 1, 1881): 45-70; ibid. (May 1, 1881): 430; "Conférence fait aux travailleurs du livre de Marseille par Auguste Keufer," ibid., 2nd series, 8 (September 1, 1893): 257.

[59]Elections législatives; Elections municipales; Dr. Robinet, "Les Elections municipales de Paris," Revue Occidentale 6 (March 1, 1881): 317; "Adresse de la Société Positiviste de Paris a M. Gambetta," ibid. 8 (March 1, 1882): 279-80; "Bulletin," ibid.

Keufer to participate fully in the Positivist movement as well as the labor movement without contradiction. The same type of thinking applied to the idea of respecting all religions and all opinions. If the unions committed themselves to a particular ideology, the Positivists would be isolated, since they had no mass following. The Positivists could only operate in a labor movement that made the assumption that politics and philosophy could be separated from purely syndicalist concerns on which all workers could unite and work together. By promoting such a doctrine, the Proletarian Positivists were able to play a role in the labor movement, and then use their positions to lead the labor movement into channels which were determined by their Positivism.

It is clear to this writer that Keufer, for example, was a Positivist first and a unionist second. He did not necessarily see it that way. He considered himself a worker who believed in Positivism. He never hid it, freely admitting that he was a follower of Comte. But he did deny that he took his Positivism into the federation. Here we must disagree. Keufer never forgot he was a Positivist. As he himself told his brother Positivists:

> I believe that Positivism has a considerable action to exercise in relation to the current battle of ideas

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10 (May 1, 1883): 442-51; "Elections municipales du 4 mai 1884: les Prolétaires Positivistes de Paris," ibid. 13 (July 1, 1884): 155-58; "Adresse du Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes de Paris en faveur de la révision du procès Dreyfus;" "Adresse de la Société Positiviste de Paris au Président de la République."

> and doctrines. It is urgent that the Positivists take a more active part in these debates, and that they put forward their moral and social solutions to the rival ideas, even in the face of the inexplicable indifference of the scholars and intellectuals for Positivism. 60

He considered Comte the modern Messiah, "whose liberating doctrine is destined to regenerate our society."[61] Until that day arrived, the task for Positivists was clear: "All our action must be inspired by this consideration to live not for ourselves, but for others. Such must be our tactic and the value of our morality."[62]

The Proletarian Positivists were too idiosyncratic, too unusual, and too dogmatic ever to be able to win a mass following or to lead the labor movement. Yet they had an influence greater than their numbers would lead one to expect. The accomplishments and influence of the Comteans can be seen in the Conseil Supérieur du Travail, which served as something of a laboratory for the theory and practice of Proletarian Positivism.

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[60]Keufer, "Le Congrès corporatif d'Amiens," Revue Positiviste internationale 2 (January 1, 1907): 109.

[61]Keufer speech on the 116th Anniversary of the birth of Comte, Revue Positiviste internationale 16 (February 15, 1914): 171.

[62]Keufer speech at the Imprimerie Ouvrière of Nantes, p. 207.

CHAPTER VII

THE CONSEIL SUPÉRIEUR DU TRAVAIL: A CASE STUDY IN CLASS COLLABORATION

The Conseil Supérieur du Travail (C.S.T.) was founded in 1891 and met every year, with the exception of 1899, up until World War I. The function of the C.S.T. was to bring representatives of labor and capital together with government officials for the purpose of discussing social questions and seeking practical solutions which might then be translated into law. The C.S.T. was, in effect, the advisory body for the French Parliament on labor legislation. Almost all the social legislation of the 1890-1914 period originated in the C.S.T. Thus, it had an important influence on the working class. It was also the most prominent, and most productive, example of institutionalized class collaboration in the Third Republic. All subsequent joint labor-business-government committees--from the groups set up to organize production and assure labor peace during World War I, to the postwar Conseil National Economique, to the stillborn corporatist comités sociaux of Vichy--were modelled on the C.S.T. and its spin-off, the conseils du travail.

Originally, the C.S.T. consisted of members appointed

by the Minister of Commerce.[1] In 1899, the Conseil was reorganized by Alexandre Millerand, who was in charge of Commerce in Waldeck-Rousseau's cabinet. Thereafter, the C.S.T. comprised twenty-two members each for labor and business. Fifteen worker representatives were elected by the unions. The various industries and trades were divided into fifteen categories. Each union in a category had one vote per twenty-five workers. The prud'hommal councillors elected an additional seven workers. By 1914, the number of industrial categories had been gradually increased, so that there were twenty-four delegates elected by the unions (and an equal number of employer delegates). Besides a number of ex officio members, there were ultimately five Deputies, three Senators and four other individuals appointed at the discretion of the Minister.[2]

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[1]The actual title of the Minister varied, as follows: Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et des Colonies, Conseil Supérieur du Travail, permière session (February 1891); deuxième session (June-July 1892); troisième et quatrième sessions (December, 1893-January, 1894); Ministère du Commerce et de l'Industrie, C.S.T., cinquième session (March 1895); sixième session (December 1896); septième session (December 1897); huitième session (December 1898); neuvième session (June 1900); Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Télégraphes, C.S.T., dixième session (June 1901); onzième session (November 1902); douzième session (November 1903); treizième session (November 1904); quatorzième session (June 1905); quinzième session (November 1905); Ministère du Travail et de la Prévoyance Sociale, C.S.T., seizième session (November 1906); dix-septième session (November 1907); dix-huitième session (November 1908); dix-neuvième session (November 1909); vingtième session (November 1910); vingt-unième session (November 1911); vingt-deuxième session (November 1912).

[2]The ex officio members were the President of the Paris Chamber of Commerce; the Treasurer of the Chambre Consultative des Associations Ouvrières de Production; the Vice-President of the Paris Bourse du Travail (who was himself appointed by the Minister--the Bourse, in return for government subsidies, had to accept an executive commission appointed by the government); the President of the Paris Municipal Council; the Director of the Manufactures de l'Etat; the Director of the Routes, Navigation, and Mines section of the Ministry of Public Works; the Director

The attitude of much of the organized working class was ambivalent at best and hostile at worst toward the whole idea. The subject had first been raised at the 1886 Lyons Congress, the founding congress of the Fédération Nationale des Syndicats. The delegates were asked to consider whether it might be a useful institution. Although some moderates supported the idea, the more radical members of the congress opposed it. Only the Barberettists gave it their support.[3]

The issue of the C.S.T. became hottest after its reorganization and the unions were called on to elect representatives. The C.G.T. was split on the issue and attempted to develop a coordinated approach. At the 1900 Congress, Eugène Guérard spoke in its favor. In his view, the C.S.T. was useful because it gave the workers more leverage on parliament and more backing for the laws it wanted passed. He particularly called attention to its good recommendations on the reform of the prud'hommal councils, and wanted the congress to support

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of the State Railroads; the Director of Technical Education, whose department was under the auspices of the Minister of Commerce; the Director of the Office du Travail; and the Director of Social Insurance, whose department was also located in the Ministry of Commerce. The four discretionary appointments tended to be academics whose fields were law or economics.

[3]See pp. 108, 112. The fact that none of the members of the U.C.S. were chosen as delegates caused them to adopt a certain coolness to it, however: "Décrêt instituent du C.S.T.," Le Moniteur des syndicats, February 1-15, 1891; G. Veyssier, "Le Chômage," ibid., August 11-September 1, 1895; G. Laurens, "Conseil Supérieur du Travail," ibid., June 28-July 18, 1903.

the resolutions of the C.S.T. on this matter. However, the congress objected strongly to the fact that there remained a number of appointed delegates, and therefore it called on the worker members to resign. This they hesitated to do, however, until the subject was more fully discussed at the next congress.[4]

At the 1901 Congress, a lively debate ensued around the issue. Mlle. Bonnévial, the only woman representative on the Conseil, pointed out that the majority of the Minister's discretionary appointees were favorable to the workers. Guérard, this time taking the other side, noted that subsequent Ministers and subsequent appointees might not be as acceptable. On the other hand, Guérard was afraid that if the cégétistes did not enter the Conseil, the jaunes would take it over. Revolutionaries objected that it was irrelevant what the C.S.T. did or what the Yellows did; the Confederal Congresses spoke for the working class; no other body could claim to do so. By a close vote, the congress decided to accept the principle of a C.S.T., but decided it should be composed exclusively of employers and workers in equal numbers. If the resolution were not carried out, the worker delegates were to resign.[5]

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[4]XIe Congrès National Corporatif (Ve de la C.G.T.) tenu à la Bourse du Travail de Paris les 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 septembre 1900, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1900), pp. 92-96.

[5]XIIe Congrès National Corporatif (VIe de la C.G.T.) tenu à la Bourse du Travail de Lyon les 23, 24, 25, 26 et 27 septembre 1901, compte rendu des travaux du congrès (Lyon: Imprimerie L. Lecleris et Fils, 1901), pp. 110-23, 199-200.

Millerand refused to reconstitute the C.S.T. in accordance with the resolution, although he did increase the number of elected representatives and reduced the numer of government officials. This was not acceptable to the revolutionaries, and several federations decided to abstain from C.S.T. elections. Two delegates (Guérard and Riom) resigned, but Guérard returned to it in its next session and became one of its leading figures.[6] This was another example of the more moderate approach taken by Guérard in the face of revolutionary intransigence.

The real issue behind the radicals' dislike of the Conseil was their belief that nothing worthwhile could result from political action, peaceful negotiation, or compromise with the capitalist class. They saw the C.S.T. as an instrument of social peace, which it was. As Griffuelhes put it, it had nothing in common with the fighting spirit of the working class. Worse, it was a danger, because it gave the illusion of progress. If it were truly an instrument of social emancipation, the capitalist collaboration in it would immediately cease; the presence of businessmen in the C.S.T. was taken as proof that it was no threat to their interests. Griffuelhes noted with disdain that Keufer had actually spoken openly of social peace in the Conseil.[7]

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[6]Victor Griffuelhes, "Le Conseil Supérieur du Travail," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 129 (October 15, 1903), pp. 236-39.

[7]Ibid., pp. 226-33; idem, "Les Deux Conceptions du syndicalisme: le syndicalisme révolutionnaire," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 146 (January 1, 1905), pp. 4-5, 13; Paul Delesalle, "Le Congrès syndical de Bourges: l'opinion révolutionnaire," ibid., no. 142 (November 1, 1904), p. 73; Félicien Challaye, Syndicalisme révolutionnaire et syndicalisme réformiste (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1909), p. 21.

The reformists were naturally more wholehearted in their acceptance, but there were variations. Alfred Hamelin, of the Fédération du Livre, had called upon Keufer to resign from it after the first year. Hamelin was angry that the C.S.T. had taken up the question of placement bureaus and had voted to permit the continuation of private agencies, which was exactly what the business interests wanted. Private placement bureaus were a target of much anger among French workers, and had been routinely condemned at even the early Worker Congresses. There were many abuses in the system. Often, it was claimed, the agencies sent only the least qualified workers to fill vacancies, knowing that they would soon be fired and that the placement office would gain another opportunity and another fee to place another worker. The very idea of having to pay to obtain a job was considered somehow immoral. Ultimately, there were riots in the streets of Paris as the C.G.T. sought to have them closed down. Militants wanted all placement to be handled by the trade unions. When the C.S.T. refused to adopt this plan, Hamelin felt the worker members should have withdrawn.[8] Instead, the congress of the Fédération du Livre sanctioned Keufer's work and called on him to persevere.[9] The concept of negotiation

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[8]Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Sixième Congrès National tenu à Paris (Bourse du Travail) les 27, 28, 29 et 30 juillet 1892 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1892), pp. 102-3.

[9]Ibid., p. 102.

was not well understood in union circles at that time, except by a few far-seeing individuals such as Keufer. Even to men such as Hamelin, who was not an extremist, the idea that one could not obtain everything one wanted at once was difficult to accept. The spirit of "aux barricades" was hard to overcome. Hamelin was not the only moderate who was unenthusiastic about the C.S.T. René Montémilard, one of the major reformist leaders after 1906, felt it was a useless institution. He participated in the elections only to prevent any Yellows from getting in.[10] Reformist journals such as the Revue syndicaliste followed its affairs with interest, but it too wondered if the C.S.T.'s resolutions would be translated into law, and recommended that a militant working class be ready to take further steps to ensure that Parliament act.[11]

Keufer, on the contrary, emphasized that the C.S.T. was limited in what it could do. It could not pass laws. It did have to make compromises with the employers; its resolutions were never perfect. Yet, to the leader of the printers, it was better than nothing. Keufer had great faith in the power of discussion. If two contradictory positions could be presented frankly and courteously, men of good will and intelligence could find solutions, even if they were not comprehensive

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[10]Pierre Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste (Paris: Librairie C. Reinwald, A. Schleicher, successeur, 1912), p. 150.

[11]"Le Mouvement en France," La Revue syndicaliste, no. 4 (August 15, 1905), p. 87.

and total. The very fact that the two sides could get together was a worthwhile development.[12] Although the C.S.T. never completely satisfied all segments of the labor movement, it worked well enough that after World War I the C.G.T. officially adopted the politique de présence, which meant that it wanted its representatives on any body which discussed issues of interest to workers.

The C.S.T. held its first session in February, 1891. Jules Roche, the Minister of Commerce, opened the meeting by declaring that the goal of the Conseil was to bring together workers and employers in the common task of finding practical and precise solutions to social problems. Each solution would be part of that incessant progress which was the obligation and honor of a democratic government to achieve. He assumed the delegates agreed with him on two ideas: that progress was desirable and obtainable, and that justice had

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[12]Auguste Keufer, Rapport tendant à l'application des décrêts du 10 août 1899 dans les cahiers des charges des adjudications (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1904), p. 2; Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, 9e Congrès National tenu à Lyon, Salle des Folies-Bergère du 5 au 10 juin 1905 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1905), p. 60; idem, 8e Congrès National tenu à Paris, Hôtel des Sociétés Savantes du 27 août au 1er septembre 1900 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1900), p. 220; idem, Sixième Congrès, p. 102; idem, Dixième Congrès National tenu à Bordeaux, Casino des Lilas, du 18 au 23 juillet 1910 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1910), p. 219; Jeufer, "Les Deux Conceptions du syndicalisme: le syndicalisme réformiste," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 146 (January 1, 1905), p. 27; Ministère du Travail, Statistique Générale de la France et Service d'Observation des Prix, Comite Permanent d'Etudes Relatives à la Prévision des Chômages Industriels, Rapport sur l'organisation des relations entre patrons et ouvriers par M. Auguste Keufer, membre du comité (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1920), p. 219; Carcanagues, Sur le Mouvement syndicaliste réformiste, p. 143.

to be rendered to all citizens. Furthermore, it was the right and duty of the state to intervene in social and economic questions to attain progress and justice.[13]

Although the Conseil had the duty to "render justice," that did not mean that it lacked consideration for the capitalist. Roche made certain to inform the delegates that they must not do anything that would result in harm to French industry, particularly to the benefit of a foreign competitor. "Under the pretext of the rights of labor, we must not create forced unemployment," was how he put it. He cautioned the members to touch the freedom of contract with a prudent hand only. In other words, the interests of the workers would be recognized only insofar as it was convenient for the world of business.[14]

The Minister exercised rather full control. He determined the agenda, and decided that the C.S.T. would consider the questions of arbitration in labor disputes, placement, the mode and periodicity of wage payments, and the possible organization of an Office du Travail. The plan of action for this first session was to have the members divide up into committees, which would prepare reports for presentation to the whole body. After this session, a permanent committee was created to do research and prepare reports in anticipation of the next meeting.

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[13] C.S.T., première session, pp. 7-9.

[14] Ibid., p. 13.

Finance, who was at this time a union delegate, served on the arbitration committee. With him was Count Albert de Mun, the Social Catholic deputy. Keufer served on the committee for the Office du Travail, along with Henri Tolain. The old Proudhonian mutualist was now a Senator. As one can see, many of the figures of class-collaborationist unionism were present.

The committee on placement created the biggest dispute. In considering the question of whether private bureaus should be abolished, it decided in the negative. The basis for its decision was what it called "the most precious freedom to result from the Revolution, the freedom of commerce and industry." Similarly, it rejected the idea that municipalities form public placement services. It did recommend joint bureaus, created by worker unions and employer organizations, which would have the responsibility of placing all workers, whether union members or not. The idea of giving the labor unions an exclusive right of placement was rejected, but the committee did recommend government subsidies for the joint bureaus.[15]

The worker members of the committee opposed these resolutions and presented a minority report, but it failed to get support. Even Tolain opposed their suggestion that if a joint bureau was set up in an industry, private agencies be forbidden. He opposed monopolies, even if they were syndical monopolies.

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[15]Ibid., pp. 19-32.

Keufer, as was to be his method during all his years on the C.S.T., attempted to strike a tone of understanding, courtesy, and conciliation. "We have a delicate question," he said. "Our division shows how difficult it is to make decisions. On the one hand, there are the interests of the workers; on the other, the interests of the private bureaus." Although Keufer favored the suppression of the commercial agencies, he recognized the impossibility of doing so, for the practical reason that there were too many workers and employers who would not use an agency run by a union; the latter because they were afraid they would then have to pay union scale, the former because they might then have to join a union. If one could not eliminate the private bureaus, he saw no choice but to accept the provisions of the committee's report.[16]

There are two aspects of Keufer's thought worth noting here. First, he felt that reform would not work because of the state of mind of employers and workers, confirming his opinion that moral, educative reform was the most important change to bring about; it was fundamental to other reforms. Second, there was an easy willingness to compromise. It was this which angered Hamelin, but also brought Keufer the respect of the non-worker members. He was the only one to gain such respect. In the long run, it proved to be very useful.

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[16]Ibid., pp. 47-48. Tolain's statement is on p. 39.

If Keufer supported a project, it was almost certain to be passed. The employers on the Conseil realized that he would not give his backing to any plan which was too extreme.

The Conseil voted finally to recommend the abrogation of the decree of 1852, which required prefecturial approval to open an employment agency. Thus, the C.S.T. came out for removing restrictions on the industry. It also voted that the government should organize some regulation of private agencies, but the nature of the regulation was left unspecified.

The committee on wages recommended payment of salaries twice a month. In the case of advances, it decided that interest charges should not exceed ten per cent. Keufer amended the report to include the provision that only ten per cent of the sum advanced would have to be paid back at a time. This was to guarantee the independence of the worker who was in debt to his employer. Keufer, as we know, considered the question of worker independence important. Although he disliked borrowing <u>per se</u>, he wanted to ensure that those workers who had to borrow were not bound to their employer through their debts, since a strong union required independent workers.[17]

There was some opposition in the C.S.T. to the creation of an Office du Travail. De Mun was one of those who favored it; Keufer also favored it as we might expect. He admonished his colleagues to remember that it would not solve the social question. However, it would be an instrument that the C.S.T.,

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[17]Ibid., pp. 68-78.

the Parliament, the government, and even the unions could use. He did not think it should be a large body, and he rejected the idea that it have a complete staff of scientists, engineers, statisticians, and the like. He feared that Parliament would be hesitant about creating an expensive structure. Keufer suggested an Office of three men, a chief and two assistants, who would confine themselves at first to centralizing the relevant information collected and scattered in several different Ministries. He suggested that workers and businessmen be included in an advisory capacity for their technical expertise.[18] Keufer never ceased to look at the practical aspects of an issue. To him, half a loaf, or even a quarter, was better than none. If Parliament would not accept a full-sized Office, he could accommodate himself to a small one.

The C.S.T. voted to create such an Office with the mission of collecting and disseminating information relative to labor, its conditions, its relations with capital, and allied questions.[19] We have already seen how the Office became a

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[18] Ibid., pp. 99-102.

[19] The resolution included the following attributes for the Office du Travail: the collection of information on the number of business establishments; the number of workers (categorized by sex and nationality); institutions of social insurance; wages; the length of the working day; mode of pay; causes and duration of unemployment; unions; the number of workers in each industry and their condition; relations with employers; causes of labor conflicts and methods of solution; number of orphanages--the work they did and the wages paid; conditions of apprenticeship; statistics on accidents, on prison labor, on relations with foreign industries; and information needed for social legislation. Ibid., pp. 103-4.

center of Positivist influence. Finance left his seat as a worker delegate to become an employee of the Office. Relations between the Office and the C.S.T. were extremely close. Finance (and later Fagnot) served as secretary of the C.S.T. and of its permanent committee in his capacity as Office official. Many of the studies done by the Office were undertaken at the request of the C.S.T. or the permanent committee.[20] Many of the items studied by the committee with the help of the Office were first suggested by Keufer.

Finance was the reporter for the committee on arbitration at the first session. He recommended that non-compulsory arbitration procedures be enacted into law and envisioned a joint commission of workers and employers operating under the auspices of a local justice of the peace. He also favored permanent councils of conciliation to prevent strikes and conflicts. The arbitration procedure, to be utilized when conciliation had failed and a strike broke out, called for the appointment of a third, independent arbiter from outside the industry. The decision was designed to have a moral effect, since it was not binding. To this end, the committee suggested that the decisions be publicized and placarded on the walls of the town. Recognizing the importance of publicity and the

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[20]For example, Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Télégraphes, Office du Travail, Documents sur la question du chômage (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1896); idem, Note sur le minimum de salaire dans les travaux publics en Angleterre en Belgique, en Hollande, en Suisse, aux Etats-Unis et en France (Analyse des documents officiels recueillis sur la démande du Conseil Supérieur du Travail) (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1897); Ministère du Travail et de la Prévoyance Sociale, Office du Travail, Enquête sur la réduction de la durée du travail le samedi (semaine anglaise) (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1913).

force of public opinion, Keufer offered another amendment which gave unions the right to distribute copies of the decisions without having to pay postage.[21]

The report, as amended, was accepted. The strength of the Positivist influence can be clearly seen here. Keufer was the reporter for the Office du Travail question; Finance for the arbitration question. This meant that they wrote the reports, delivered them, and defended them before the Conseil. The C.S.T. was used as a framework to promote what they considered useful and important. Arbitration, conciliation, Office du Travail, and C.S.T. were all part of the same dynamic. In speaking about the Office, Keufer might have been speaking about all four:

> We do not fall victim to illusions. We know well that this institution will not solve all the actual difficulties, because the transformation we pursue depends on measures that have a higher and more general aspect: the opinions, the habits, and the customs of individuals play a capital role in the evolution of society /and it is these which must be changed/. But, in these tentatives of amelioration, there is a necessary experience, which constitutes a first step towards a better destiny where the worker will finally profit from a more equitable distribution of social wealth. 22

This first meeting of the C.S.T. proved to be one of its most productive. In 1892, both the law on arbitration and conciliation was passed and the Office du Travail was

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[21]Ibid., pp. 109-20.

[22]Ibid., p. 172.

established.[23]

The second session (1892) had to consider the questions of popular credit, worker lodgings, factory rules, and female labor. At the first session, Keufer had been elected vice-president of the permanent committee (the Minister was president). He thus organized the different reports which were presented to the Conseil and himself wrote the report on factory rules.

However, his most interesting ideas came out in the debate on worker lodgings. He felt the question was very important in some respects, but he was unmoved by some of the considerations which were important to the other worker delegates. Keufer deplored inadequate housing for workers. The situation in which five or six persons had to occupy one or two small rooms was horrible because it led to worse consequences. The worker, not feeling at ease at home, looked for satisfactions outside, "which has had enormous consequences from the moral and material point of view." In other words, the worker spent his time in the café, and his money on alcohol.

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[23]For the law on arbitration, its application and usefulness, see Commission du Travail, Rapport fait au nom de la Commission du Travail chargée d'examiner le projet de loi relatif aux conventions collectives de travail, par Arthur Groussier, député. Annexe au procès-verbal de la 2e séance du 5 décembre 1912, Chambre des Députés, session extraordinaire de 1912 (Paris: Imprimerie de la Chambre des Députés, 1912), pp. 33-34, 50-144; Edouard Lozé, Conciliation et arbitrage dans le bassin houiller du Nord et du Pas-de-Calais, 1889-1898 (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1899); Paul Hubert-Valléroux, Le Contrat de travail: étude sur la législation qui règle les rapports entre les patrons et les ouvriers de l'industrie (Paris: Arthur Rousseau, 1895), pp. 418-23; Edward Shorter and Charles Tilly, Strikes in France, 1830-1968 (New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 28-33.

Keufer blamed alcohol for absorbing much of the workers' limited funds with the result that he was either unable or unwilling to pay union dues. As a consequence, the unions remained weak.[24]

It was of particular importance, then, for workers to have commodious lodgings. What about working-class communities? Keufer preferred Paris in the days before Haussmann, when the classes mixed and intermingled:

> In the old days, the wealthy families lived with the workers, beside them, in the same house. They knew their home life. They knew that the workers were honorable men, and they came to their aid during illness or misfortune. There was, then, social solidarity between the two classes. 25

This statement, coming from a labor leader, makes sense in the context of Keufer's Positivism. The idea of the rich helping the poor, and of the classes living together in harmony, was of Comtean inspiration. The independence of the working class was very important for Keufer, but in this case he did not think it could be obtained through class separatism. In fact, he felt that a home situated outside the area of the factory would do more for the independence of workers.[26] He also considered the separation of classes dangerous: it was another way of continuing the class war "which all regret and wish to see end."[27]

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[24] C.S.T., deuxième session, p. 28.

[25] Ibid., p. 29.

[26] Ibid., p. 30.

[27] Ibid.

On the other hand, he was unmoved by the question of who should build the housing, a point which was hotly debated by the proponents of worker cooperatives--who wanted the job--and business interests. Keufer did not care who built them, as long as they were built well. This gross insensitivity to the cooperatives, which were struggling to survive, reflected his Positivist opposition to them.[28]

With Tolain's support, Keufer even opposed the granting of limited liability to workers' associations. He contemptuously noted that although they often began with great enthusiasm, the participants did not realistically appreciate the difficulties. They thought that success was guaranteed, but in most cases they went bankrupt.[29]

Tolain and Keufer also joined forces to oppose granting unions the right to function as credit societies and provide financial support to cooperatives:

> Labor unions have the goal of uniting the greatest number of workers in the aim of defending common interests. If we permit them to transform themselves into banks or commercial societies, they will become tyrannical. If a member wanted to leave the union some day, he would lose the interest his money had earned. 30

Tolain had grown more conservative since the days in which he led the Proudhonian forces in the A.I.T. He found himself in agreement with the rigid Positivist notion on the role of the union and did not favor an expansion of its functions.

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[28]Ibid., p. 38.

[29]Ibid., pp. 57-58.

[30]Ibid., p. 67.

Another issue in the second session demonstrated this. On the question of factory work rules, some delegates favored a worker-employer committee to elaborate the regulations. One might expect Keufer to have been in favor of this, but he was not. He saw certain difficulties in the plan, particularly if the worker delegates, understanding the necessity for a work rule that would be unpopular, helped to introduce it. Workers and businessmen had to defend their own proper interests, and hence, workers should not play a role in the management and administration of the enterprise. It was the role of the union to resist capitalist encroachments on the rights of the workers, not to assist in running the enterprise. Collaboration meant working together to settle problems peacefully; it did not mean that the worker should become the partner of the employer. Keufer did believe that factory rules should be approved by the prud'hommal councils, where the unions could raise objections to them if necessary, and he also favored legislative guidelines.[31] But Comte had prescribed a hierarchy and a division of functions and Keufer clung to it. A revolutionary might have welcomed the chance to take away a part of the capitalists' power. A less doctrinaire reformist might have welcomed it also as an increase in the workers' influence. A different type of class collaborationist, such as a Yellow, would have jumped at the chance for a degree of codetermination. A Positivist had no choice but to reject it.

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[31]Ibid., pp. 81-87.

Concluding its second session, the Conseil voted that the Departments should encourage, by pecuniary means if necessary, the construction of cheap, healthy housing for workers which could be paid for by fractional payments. Following Keufer's suggestion, the resolution specified that the housing should not be concentrated, but built throughout a city. The C.S.T. also agreed, again following Keufer, to call the attention of the parliament to the danger of transforming the labor union into a popular credit society.[32]

After its productive beginning, the C.S.T. fell into a period of stagnation. It did not meet again until December 1893. The agenda for the third session consisted again of Victor Delahaye's plan for popular credit. Delahaye had been one of the signers of the Manifesto of the Sixty, a member of the First International and the Commune, and a prominent moderate unionist. Without wishing to cast aspersions on his mutualist notions, its consideration by three sessions of the C.S.T. (it was also on the agenda of the fourth session) was a mark of the lack of effectiveness of the C.S.T. Instead of grappling with the down-to-earth questions of labor and capital, the Conseil spent its time debating utopian, Proudhonian reforms. Only the Positivists seemed to recognize this trend. Many of the other worker representatives, chosen for their moderation, still accepted mutualist ideas and were very favorable to the idea of popular credit. Keufer knew it

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[32]Ibid., pp. 35-37, 44-45, 71, 144.

appeared strange that a worker would oppose such an idea. Except for his attitude toward cooperatives, he shared the basic outlook of the mutualists, so he tried to explain why he differed with them on this issue.

The problem with popular credit as he saw it was that it had as its goal the creation of cooperatives of production. But worker cooperatives had been notoriously unsuccessful. How could a cooperative succeed? Many private businesses failed, and they were administered by one man. How could a cooperative do well, when leadership was contested and frequently changed, and discipline was difficult to obtain from workers who saw themselves as part owners? The growth of industry made possible by the concentration of capital seemed inevitable to the Positivists. The worker associations of production could never be successful against the modern, powerful, large business enterprise. Furthermore, to the extent that the cooperatives attracted the most intelligent and courageous workers, the associations operated to the detriment of the working class generally. The best defenders of the working class were removed from its ranks; the most active workers were distracted from social preoccupations. Thus, cooperatives were destructive to the unions. Finally, they were impractical in the great industries such as mining and steel, where the workers were most unhappy and least protected.

Keufer's principal objective was that the working class constitute a solid syndical organization which could resist the abuses of capital. "I am not declaring war," he replied

to a member who so accused him. The union "is the organization which will permit the workers to create a favorable public opinion, to make their feelings known, to protect their salaries. It is not an organization of war, but of conciliation and entente. My own federation is not funded for war, or to provoke strikes, but to solve conflicts through arbitration as much as possible."[33] Keufer accepted big business and the need for industrial discipline, organization, and leadership. The best the worker could hope for was fair treatment in his assigned role.

Most of the workers on the C.S.T. favored Delahaye's plan in one fashion or another. Delahaye himself agreed with Keufer that concentration was inevitable, but he denied that the division of society into capitalist and wage earner was also inevitable. There were other forms of social organization. Labor and capital could be reassociated, as they had previously been. During the Middle Ages, capital and labor had been united in the same hand, and the worker had received the true value of his labor. The cooperative could reestablish that happy state of affairs.[34] Tolain went even further. He refused to accept the definitiveness of bigness in industry. Scientific discoveries as yet unknown might permit a return to small ateliers or even family workshops. While he did not agree with

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[33] C.S.T., troisième et quatrième sessions, pp. 22-27.

[34] Ibid., pp. 60-62.

Delahaye that the state should fund cooperatives, he did support a more moderate plan for state aid.[35]

The final resolution voted by the C.S.T. rejected Keufer's point of view, one of the few times that happened. It approved state subsidies to institutions of popular credit, limited liability for cooperatives, and allowed savings banks to lend to a cooperative, but only from their profits, not from the funds of their depositors. This last qualification was the result of a Keufer amendment.[36] Although the government did undertake to provide some financial aid to worker cooperatives, it never did so to a significant extent.

In an attempt to get the C.S.T. away from schemes of social regeneration and back to basic trade union concerns, Keufer moved that the agenda for the next session include more practical considerations. Although Delahaye was back at the fifth session with a plan for a new world monetary system, he had run out of support as his projects became more grandiose. This time, more mundane matters filled the agenda: conseils du travail, or joint committees to deal with questions of wages and working conditions in each industry, and unemployment. Delahaye was instructed to take his plan to the Minister of Finance.

Keufer favored the conseils du travail, but was discouraged by the attitudes of business and labor. He knew that the

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[35]Ibid., pp. 175-77, 209.

[36]Ibid., p. 339.

spirit of conciliation was not strong among workers nor among employers. The infrequent resort to the arbitration law convinced him of this. "I, of all people, am disposed to employ this method," yet he wanted others to realize that it would not accomplish much under existing conditions: "Arbitration, conciliation, pacification will be realized only if the employers are willing to recognize their duties and the obligation they have to treat the worker with good will, respect, and dignity."[37] Too often, the employer refused disdainfully even to meet with his workers. There was still more opposition to bargaining with workers organized into unions. Many employers recognized that negotiation must lead to concessions, and so they rejected all negotiations. Workers, too, obstructed the process. They had to change their manner of presenting their grievances in terms of violent ultimatums and threats. They had to appreciate the economic restrictions which imposed themselves on all, employer as well as employee. The businessman had many responsibilities and many worries. He had to meet competition incessantly; he had to be allowed to make a profit. Both labor and capital had to approach each other with greater understanding.[38]

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[37] C.S.T., cinquième session, pp. 43-46, 96. Finance was more optimistic about arbitration. He reported to the C.S.T. that although it was used only eleven times in 1892, in 1893 it was used in seventeen per cent of all strikes and twenty-five per cent of the time in 1894 (pp. 75-77).

[38] Ibid., pp. 94-97.

The plan for conseils du travail was adopted, but remained a dead letter in Parliament. In 1900, Millerand instituted them by decree, but Keufer's fears were confirmed: they were virtually ignored by employers and unions. The revolutionary syndicalists viewed them as instruments of social peace and tools of governmental control.[39] The idea remained a seductive one, however, and was resurrected whenever social peace became highly desirable, such as during World War I and during Vichy.[40]

On the question of government help for the unemployed, Keufer rejected mere pecuniary assistance as humiliating. Instead, he called on governments at all levels to create public works projects such as highway and sewer construction to give labor to unemployed workers. The session ran out, however, before full consideration could be given to this idea.[41]

By the end of the fifth session, Keufer had established himself unquestionably as the most prominent worker member. He spoke with the most authority. As vice-president of the permanent committee, he made sure that it worked closely with

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[39]See, for example, Hubert Lagardelle, "Chronique sociale," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 45 (November 1, 1900), pp. 563-65; Georges Sorel, "Conseils du travail et paix sociale," ibid., no. 49 (January 1, 1901), pp. 36-41; speech of Louis Niel at XIIe Congrès . . . 1901, p..217.

[40]Martin Fine, "Toward Corporatism: The Movement for Capital-Labor Collaboration in France, 1914-1936" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1971), pp. 17-19, described the efforts during World War I but seemed unaware of their roots in the conseils du travail. Keufer, however, was aware. See Rapport sur l'organisation des relations entre patrons et ouvriers, .

[41]C.S.T., cinquième session, pp. 121-24.

the Office du Travail. Between the fifth and sixth sessions, the permanent committee worked on the question of unemployment which Keufer had first raised. The Office made up a questionnaire, which it then used as the basis for an inquiry. The final report was written by Finance, Keufer, and one other person.

The report which Keufer presented to the C.S.T. was a model of thoughtfulness, practicality, and reasonableness. It was drawn in such a way as to garner maximum support, even from the business representatives. Recognizing the necessity for the aid of the government in settling a problem which the individual by himself was powerless to solve, Keufer and Finance called on the Minister to send a circular to the communes to inform them of the possibility of providing public works projects for the unemployed. By making it a matter of Ministerial suggestion rather than law, they maintained broad support. To satisfy both their own Comtean morality and possible objections from the employers, certain guidelines were suggested. First, the work should be of general usefulness, but not urgent. That way, the project could easily be halted when the workers found private employment again. Second, there should be residency requirements to prevent vagabonds and foreigners from taking advantage of French generosity. Third, work should be paid for on the basis of the completion of a specific job (the commandite) rather than by the day or the hour, which would require the municipality to invest heavily in surveillance to make sure the workers were earning their money. Fourth, workers should be given time to search for jobs in private industry. Finally, the workday should not be longer

than eight hours, and in no case should the wages approach what could be earned in private industry.[42] The government might be the employer of last resort in this plan, but it was not to be a permanent one.

This was not the report a radical unionist might write, but on the other hand, it did introduce the principle of an eight-hour day--something the rest of the French working class would not achieve until 1919. A more radical report might not have been adopted. Keufer and Finance's report was, and the Minister took the appropriate steps. As might be expected, however, the number of public works projects subsequently established did not come close to relieving unemployment.[43]

Continuing in his leadership role, Keufer also raised the next item for consideration by the C.S.T.--the question of the regulation of wages and hours in government-contracted work. Once again, he was the reporter who wrote and presented the conclusions of the permanent committee. Basically, Keufer called for clauses specifying the conditions of work (wages, hours, accident insurance) to be included in government contracts. Although the businessmen of the C.S.T. opposed this as dangerously close to governmental fixing of wages, Keufer responded that it was the role of the state, as an employer, to provide a good example for certain reforms. It was not a strange idea, he pointed out, as it already existed in the United States,

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[42] C.S.T., sixième session, pp. 69-76, 127-41.

[43] C.S.T., septième session, pp. 8-9.

England, Holland, and Belgium.

Keufer was a shrewd labor leader. He knew that it would be impossible to obtain minimum wage legislation for private industry. But it could be obtained in government contract work. Once obtained, it would be both a standard for private industry to follow and a principle which could then be extended. (In similar fashion, the first steps toward nondiscriminatory hiring practices were taken in the United States in those industries which had government contracts during World War II).

The report's first clause stated that the wages and the length of the day must conform to what was normal and current in the area. Keufer's original draft had said that the government, in collaboration with worker and employer unions, would fix those amounts, but this was taken out as a compromise to the capitalists.[44]

The report also recommended that accident insurance paid for by the employer be included in the contract, as well as a weekly day of rest. It was to be made compulsory for the National Government and the Departments, and voluntary for communes. Ever the realist, Keufer accepted the fact that many localities were too weak financially to carry out his recommendations.[45]

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[44]Ibid., pp. 10-20, 71-77. The text of the report can be found beginning on p. 117.

[45]Ibid., pp. 112, 297.

Although Parliament would not legislate Keufer's recommendations, Millerand put them into effect through his decree power. In spite of the fact that this reform affected only a small number of workers, it was a major accomplishment for French labor. Accident insurance, the weekly day of rest, minimum wages and maximum hours--all things for which the French working class was struggling--were first achieved through Keufer's work in the C.S.T. In promoting these reforms, Keufer was acting as more than just a printer; he was serving the whole working class.

The concept of the prevailing wage came up again when the C.S.T. considered the question of marchandage. Marchandage was a process whereby a contractor, who was often a worker, hired out other laborers to work on building projects. He was paid a fee for this by the workers.[46] Often, the contract laborer earned more than other workers, but to Keufer it was a bad precedent for a worker to have to give up part of his pay to get a job. He suggested revising the law to make marchandage illegal only if it led to a wage level less than the currently prevailing rates. That way, those who made more

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[46]Eric Hobsbawm called this and its variations coexploitation. Especially before high degrees of industrialization and concentration of capital, many forms of coexploitation existed, whereby workers made money by organizing the labor of fellow workers. According to Hobsbawm, this contributed to the conservatism of many workers; it was another case of workers hoping to enter the capitalist class. See Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Anchor Books, 1967), pp. 349-54.

would continue to do so, while the rest of the workers would be protected. However, his suggestion was not adopted. The labor delegates wanted to get rid of the whole system; the business delegates wanted to preserve it. As neither side wanted to compromise, no agreement was reached. Perhaps that says something for Keufer's approach.[47]

The ninth session of the C.S.T. (1900) was the first meeting of the reorganized Conseil. The presence of elected delegates drastically altered the structure of the C.S.T. and guaranteed that many of the workers would be more militant than had previously been the case. As part of the reorganization, the body was called on to elect two of their number as vice-presidents. Keufer was the only person to be elected on the first ballot. He was also chosen president of the permanent committee. He served as first vice-president until 1910 and as head of the permanent committee through 1911. The committee was authorized to conduct inquiries, collect documents and statistics, make reports, indicate needed reforms and, upon the request of the Minister, inquire into the circumstances surrounding strikes. As the first vice-president, Keufer had the function of presiding over the sessions on the frequent occasions when the Minister was not present. It would not be

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[47] C.S.T., huitième session, pp. 31-32, 55, 125.

an exaggeration to say that from 1900 to 1905 Keufer ran the C.S.T. However, serving in the chair prevented him from taking much part in the debates, and in that sense his role was curtailed.

On taking the chair for the first time, he said:

> I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for electing me. It indicates very clearly the intention, on the part of the members of the Council, no matter what category they belong to, to give representation to the workers. This is a good augury for the discussions which will take place here. At the same time, it is proof that the council wants to receive the grievances of the workers in order to resolve them. All opinions, all interests, all categories of society are represented in the Conseil Supérieur du Travail, and it gives us assurance that all the questions submitted to the council will be examined, studied and resolved with the greatest competence. . . . I can assure you, gentlemen, that even though I represent the workers, I will not bring less to our debates than all necessary impartiality. I shall end by saying that our opinions, even if they come from different perspectives, must always be expressed with courtesy. That will be the best way for us to accomplish good works. [48]

Upon his sixth consecutive reelection, in 1906, he voiced similar sentiments:

> The questions submitted to us have considerable importance. . . . If we can resolve them satisfactorily, and improve relations between employers and workers, if we can make them more cordial, we will have truly fulfilled our task. . . . In this time of rapid industrial transformations, everyone, employers and workers, realize the necessity of developing the technical knowledge of the working class, and thus to permit them to participate more fully in the national task. [49]

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[48] C.S.T., neuvième session, pp. 72-73. Keufer believed in courteous discussion. He reacted with anger when one worker delegate denigrated discussion, saying that since all opinions were preconceived, debate would not change anything. See ibid., quatorzième session, p. 87 and quinzième session, p. 61.

[49] C.S.T., quinzième session, p. 2.

The main item on the agenda of the ninth session was the reform of the law on prud'hommes. The Office du Travail had sent out 4,755 questionnaires to find out what workers and businessmen thought. The report reflected the responses from 451 unions, 224 employer organizations, 103 prud'hommal councils, 84 chambers of commerce, and 82 tribunaux de commerce.[50]

Keufer had a chance to speak on one aspect of the reform project. He spoke against the participation of women in the councils. He conceded that, legitimately, women could not be refused the right to vote for or serve as councillors. But, speaking for his industry, he believed that no benefit would come from having women councillors: "By introducing it, under the pretext of humanity and the extension of rights, . . . we will produce a veritable social perturbation."[51]

The C.S.T. rejected Keufer's antifeminism, and Parliament went on to pass a law which, following the C.S.T.'s suggestions, broadened the coverage of the councils (as far as the industries covered and the amount of the claim which could be adjudicated) and admitted women to the vote for councillors. But it did not give them the right to serve on the tribunals.[52]

In spite of this success, the atmosphere in the Conseil

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[50] C.S.T., neuvième session, p. 24.

[51] Ibid., pp. 499-500.

[52] For the complete list of reforms proposed, see ibid., pp. 519-24.

became more heated and bitter. The worker representatives, now elected, were more militant; the employer representatives more hostile. There was also a dramatic increase in the number of agenda items. In the old Conseil, there were only one or two items per session, almost always proposed by Keufer. After reorganization, there were dozens. Fontaine, as head of the Office du Travail, was given the job of limiting and controlling the agenda by choosing which suggestions to include.[53]

In the twelfth session the major topic once again was unemployment. There was great disagreement on what to do and how to do it. Keufer again left the chair so that he might speak on the question. Displaying a pre-Keynesian acumen, he reminded the businessmen that, to consume the goods they produced, workers must have jobs and earn money. Besides, it was a social duty to help the suffering worker. If social relations were to be governed by conciliation rather than violence, the employers had to be willing to make concessions.

A national unemployment fund had been proposed. Keufer did not think that was practical. Parliament had just voted a law on accidents and industrial hygiene (the text of which had been elaborated in the tenth session of the C.S.T.) and a proposed retirement system was also before the legislators. Keufer thought they would resist further expenses of this nature.

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[53] C.S.T., dixième session, pp. 3-7, 15-16, 29-32, 145-47, 167.

The idea of municipal subsidies to local societies and unions to permit them to offer unemployment insurance to their members might be more feasible. However, state aid should be given to national trade union federations (such as the Livre) which operated national unemployment funds.

An obligation also rested upon the worker. He had to do without certain things, make sacrifices, save his money, and contribute to his union's unemployment fund. In particular, he had to give up his alcohol, if that interfered with his ability to pay part of the expenses of his own insurance. If both employer and employee approached the question with a willingness to cooperate and make mutual sacrifices, "by the accomplishment of such a beautiful effort we will dissipate hatred and renew more easily good relations between employers and employees."[54] On this occasion, the final resolutions embodied Keufer's suggestions. The government did subsidize union unemployment funds, but only beginning in 1909 and to a limited extent. Here again, the victory was in establishing the precedent, rather than in achieving total satisfaction.[55]

Through 1905, Keufer remained as first vice-president of the C.S.T. Although he took a limited part in the debates, he continued to exercise an influence through his role as president of the permanent committee. The C.S.T. accepted the main outlines

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[54] C.S.T., douzième session, pp. 48-54.

[55] Bulletin de l'Office du Travail, January, 1913, pp. 21-27.

of the permanent committee's report on the weekly day of rest, and called for legislation to establish Sunday as such a day, with certain exceptions.[56] The law on the repos hebdomadaire was passed 13 July 1906.

Ironically, it was the maneuverings of the business respresentatives which restored Keufer to a more active role. They complained that a worker was always in the presidency upon the absence of the Minister and requested that Keufer alternate presiding with the second vice-president, who was, traditionally, a businessman. The workers and capitalists had an arrangement whereby the businessmen supported the workers' candidate for first vice-president and the unionists supported capital's candidate for second vice-president. Beginning in 1906, the Minister ordered alternation in the chair. In 1909, Minister of Labor Viviani extended the principle to the permanent committee, which henceforth had two rotating presidents and separate reports from employer delegates and worker delegates.

Thus, the seventeenth session (1907) saw Keufer return to his role as an active force in Conseil discussions. At that meeting, the proposal was made that legislation relating to the working class be printed up and made available in the factories and workshops. Keufer naturally supported the idea, but added that the brochures should only be printed in shops which had been awarded the union label. This led to strong objections by the businessmen, and spurred Keufer to defend the use of the label. For the sake of compromise, however,

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[56] C.S.T., treizième session, pp. 227-28.

Keufer was willing to drop his demand if the businessmen would agree to having them printed in a shop that paid union scale (but did not necessarily qualify for the label). This compromise was resented by the other worker delegates, who succeeded in obtaining what Keufer originally requested.[57]

Also on the agenda was the question of the commercial capacity of the union. This subject led to a bitter debate between Keufer and the other worker delegates, reminiscent of his debate twelve years earlier with the advocates of cooperation and popular credit. The issues were similar. The C.S.T. had been asked to comment on a bill Millerand had introduced in Parliament, giving unions the right to form sociétés anonymes--corporations--to engage in commercial transactions.

Keufer opposed this. The role of the labor union was to help workers defend their interests, fight the abuses of capital, and create a better distribution of the wealth that labor produced. Since the unions had not even begun to accomplish that task, it would be imprudent to give them the further power to act as a business. We do not need men to direct industrial establishments, Keufer claimed, we need men to lead unions. Whatever commercial establishments were founded, their resources and leadership would be taken from the union. And if they did not succeed, the union would suffer the consequences. Keufer pointed to the failure rate among cooperatives.

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[57] C.S.T., dix-septième session, pp. 29-33, 42-43, 62.

If they had been funded by the unions, the unions would have been crippled. Keufer also attacked cooperatives for displaying an anti-union spirit. Using a history of cooperatives put together by the Office du Travail, he noted that, in 1895, only thirty-seven production cooperatives out of 172 were associated with a labor union.[58]

There was great opposition to Keufer's stand. Among the worker delegates, only Coupat supported him. Others attacked him with a vehemence usually saved for class enemies.[59] However, the business delegates supported him and, in the end, his compromise proposal was carried. It recognized the right of workers (not unions) to engage in commercial and industrial enterprises, but directed the question of unions to the permanent committee for study.[60] The permanent committee presented its report (co-written by Keufer) to the nineteenth session (1909). It called on Parliament to give unions the right to buy, rent, or acquire the machines, tools, raw materials, etc. necessary for the exercise of the profession by its members and to facilitate the sale of finished products without, however, making a profit. This compromise solution was accepted by the C.S.T. and the Parliament.[61] Keufer was happy with it because it enabled the

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[58]Ibid., pp. 100-4, 145-49.

[59]Ibid., pp. 105-26.

[60]Ibid., pp. 155, 214-15.

[61]C.S.T., dix-neuvième session, pp. 195-96.

unions to further the professional interests of its members without making it a matter of earning profits. Thus, the union maintained its essential characteristics and would not degenerate into a capitalist enterprise.

Keufer's participation in the C.S.T. was drawing to a close. The twentieth session (1910) took up the question of work performed at home (almost always by women). Naturally, he felt it was scandalous for women to take in work and disrupt the foyer, particularly if their husbands earned a decent salary. Apart from that he did support a wage scale for the piece work done at home. He thought it could be determined by the prud'hommes, in consultation with the conseils du travail. He wryly noted that this might galvanize the conseils into some useful action since they had barely functioned since their creation. By this method, he hoped that the wages for home-work could be made roughly equivalent to that earned in similar types of factory work. Again, Keufer's skill carried the Conseil, which accepted his plan even though the permanent committee had declared itself opposed to the setting of a wage scale.[62]

1911 was Keufer's last year in the prewar C.S.T. He took the opportunity to restate his faith: "our decisions do not have an absolute efficacity in legal terms, but they do give useful indications to those who make the laws. . . . We are, true, only a consultative committee, but our views can

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[62] C.S.T., vingtième session, pp. 53-58, 115, 119, 127, 165.

be utilized by the legislature or the government, and in that we render a real service."[63]

The achievements of the C.S.T. were substantial. It was responsible for the Office du Travail; the 1892 law on arbitration; the decrees on working conditions in government contracts; the 1903 law on hygiene and safety; the reform of the prud'hommes; the conseils du travail; the 1906 law on the weekly day of rest; government subsidies to union unemployment funds; and the 1909 law extending the laws protecting women and children in industrial establishments to commercial establishments. It may or may not be much, depending on one's perspective, but it was practically all the social legislation of the Third Republic up to that time. Precedents had been set--not only for specific reforms such as the eight-hour day--but for the very idea of worker-business collaboration. All such subsequent bodies were created in the image of the C.S.T. The idea that elected representatives of workers had a role to play in sitting down with representatives of business and government was resorted to ever more frequently as the maintenance of social peace and the incorporation of the working class into the nation became a high priority goal, such as during wartime. To some historians, the C.S.T. was the logical expression of solidarism; to some, it foreshadowed corporatism. Whatever specific label one wishes to attach to it, the C.S.T.

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[63] C.S.T., vingt-unième session, p. 39. Keufer returned to the C.S.T. for a time after the war.

was a pioneer and productive effort in class collaboration.[64]

However, even as Keufer and his colleagues cooperated with capitalism, they kept their eyes fixed on the idea of justice for the French worker. There were other groups which practiced class collaboration but were not so dedicated to the interests of the workers. The most prominent of these, the jaunes, are the subject of the next chapter.

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[64]Theodore Zeldin, France, 1848-1945, vol. 1: Ambition, Love and Politics (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 662, 668, sees the C.S.T. as a manifestation of solidarism. Dragoslav Todorovitch, Le Droit syndical et les doctrines syndicalistes (Paris: Librairie Technique et Economique, 1934), p..51. Martin Fine, "Toward Corporatism," devoted a whole study to the idea of worker-business cooperation, but seemed strangely unaware of the role of the C.S.T. He too, however, sees such cooperation as corporatist. He focuses on such postwar institutions as the Conseil National Economique and the Association Française du Progrès Social. See pp. 2-3, 15-19, 36-37, 149-68, 182, 247, 270.

CHAPTER VIII

YELLOW UNIONISM: THE JAUNES OF FRANCE

In the language of the French worker, no word was more highly charged than "yellow." To its supporters, Yellow unionism meant patriotic, anticommunist unionism. To its opponents, Yellows were strikebreakers, scabs, traitors, and agents in the pay of employers.

Identifying the Yellow unions presents major difficulties. Who were the Yellows? Although there was a specific organization, the Fédération Nationale des Jaunes de France, the adjective Yellow became a generic term of insult applied to strikebreakers or even just to unions which refused to affiliate with the C.G.T. Identification is also difficult because the loosely organized Yellow federation was reorganized several times. Many independent unions never joined the Fédération des Jaunes, although they may have shared its ideological orientation. Other unions which did not formally join actively sympathized and sent delegates to the Yellow congresses. Still other unions, such as the original Yellow ones of Creusot and Montceau-les-mines, joined the Federation and then withdrew after a few years.

Were the Catholic unions Yellow? These groups (which we shall consider in Chapter IX) were generally considered to be

Yellows. However, the specifically Catholic unions held themselves apart from the jaunes. In both Paris and Lyons the Catholic movements preferred independence from the Yellows. Only in the Nord, among the Catholic unions of Lille, Roubaix, Tourcoing, and some of the mining areas were more solid ties established.[1] We shall exclude the Catholic unions which did not participate in the Yellow Federations, as well as the many independent unions which had a similar ideology but remained aloof. Many of these were small, local organizations, and had little impact. However, the failure to capture the support of the independents contributed to the Yellows' eventual demise.

To conservative France, worried about revolution and fearful of the C.G.T., Yellow unionism burst upon French society in 1900 like a bright ray of hope. Organized in opposition to strikes and socialism, faithful to la patrie and social peace, the Yellows were the bitter enemies of the C.G.T. To the bourgeoisie, the jaunes represented the good French worker,

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[1] Among those who refer to the Catholic unions as Yellows are Marcel Landrieu, "Les Syndicats jaunes," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 80 (February 22, 1902), p. 338; Paul Louis, Histoire du mouvement syndical en France (Paris: Librairie Valois, 1947), p. 57; Andre Marsaudon, Les Syndicats jaunes (Rouen: E. Guérin, 1912), p. 32; Maurice Gros, Etude du mouvement syndical ouvrier en France: syndicats "jaunes ou indépendants" (Paris: Henri Jouve, 1905), p. 206; Pierre Delon, Le Syndicalisme chrétien en France (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1961), pp. 14-15. Peter Stearns, "Against the Strike Threat: Employer Policy Toward Labor Agitation in France, 1900-1914," Journal of Modern History 40 (December 1968): 485, is typical of those (both then and now) who equated all strikebreaking with Yellow unionism. He referred to the Ligue d'Action pour la Défense des Intérêts du Travail as a jaune union. It was not a Yellow union in the sense of a group of organized workers in the same profession. It was an employer-organized group of professional strikebreakers, which was not what the jaunes were.

the bonne blouse, uncorrupted by socialist doctrine. For the brief period of time in which the Yellows flourished (1900-1909), they became synonymous with the counterrevolution, and earned the undying hatred of the C.G.T. Yet they obviously corresponded to the felt needs of a significant number of French workers, and the ideas they promoted were not radically different from those of other class-collaborationist unionists. They are a fascinating example of antirevolutionary unionism.

Yellow unionism began in 1899 as a reaction to the strikes undertaken by existing unions. But before the term jaune was actually applied, we can discern groups which corresponded to the Yellow pattern. For example, a railroad workers' union was founded in 1892 by Paul Lanoir, in response to the strikes called by Guérard's union. Lanoir, not surprisingly, became the first national leader of the Yellow movement eight years later. At about the same time as the railroad workers set up their alternative union, a miners' group called the Syndicat de la Paix /Sociale/ was formed. The Paris building trades had a union of workers devoted to peaceful relations with the employer, and one of iron workers which began as an organization for those workers who took jobs in establishments which were on the index of the existing unions. Labor leaders such as Charles Bonne and André Lyonnais, who had attended the early Worker Congresses, also developed

an essentially Yellow approach before the term itself came into vogue.[2]

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[2]The Syndicat de la Paix de Sin-le-Noble was founded in 1894 by fifty-four workers. By 1897 it had only twenty-five members and put itself under the auspices of the local clergy. A similarly named union was created, also in 1894, in Sainte-Barbe. It dissolved in 1897. In 1885 a Syndicat Général des Mécaniciens, Chauffeurs, Conducteurs de Machines à Vapeur de France et Algérie was founded. It represented skilled railroad workers, and refused to participate in the strikes of 1891 and 1898. Also on the railroad, a Syndicat Professionnel des Employés de Chemins de Fer was constituted in 1884. It pledged itself to a work of labor peace, repudiated all violent methods, and promised never to lose sight of the prosperity of the companies. By 1890, it counted 3,500 members. Lanoir's Union Syndicale des Ouvriers et Employés des Chemins de Fer Français began in March 1892. Even then, Lanoir was accused of having taken money from the companies to set it up. Lanoir was welcomed by the directors of the Orléans, Nord, and Est lines and was received by the Minister of Public Works. He was even able to obtain some small improvements for the ticket sellers. However, when he attempted to attend the Workers' Congress of 1892 in Marseilles, he was not admitted. Guérard accused him of having formed a phony union whose only function was to do the bidding of the employers. Lanoir's group set up an orphanage, which was supported by donations from the railroad companies. M. Heurteau, director of the Compagnie d'Orléans (and later the second vice-president of the C.S.T.) was named honorary president. There were allegations that most of the money raised went into Lanoir's pockets. When the orphanage closed in 1895, it had only twelve children. The union itself maintained an ephemeral existence. It was the first union to join Lanoir's Bourse du Travail Indépendante, but there are indications that by then it had only a paper existence. On Lanoir and the orphanage, see Fédération des Bourses du Travail, Union des Syndicats du Département de la Seine, Brochure de propagande syndicale, "La Noire Ame de Lanoir (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1902). On his expulsion from the 1892 Congress, 5e Congrès National des Syndicats et Groupes Corporatifs de France, tenu à Marseille du 19 au 22 octobre 1892, compte rendu (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1909), p. 16; "Congrès de Marseille: V congrès fédératif des chambres syndicales, septembre 1892," Soleil du Midi, September 20, 1892. Other early Yellow-type unions were the Syndicat Libre des Ouvriers Menuisiers du Département de la Seine, which refused to join the building trades strike of 1898 and also joined Lanoir's Bourse, and the Chambre des Indépendants du Cuivre et du Fer, which was formed in 1889. It had 135 members at one point, but had disappeared by 1897. Article V of its statutes said that the principal purpose of the organization was to prevent all conflict between worker and

The earliest Yellow unionists were at first called sausages (saucissons). During the strike at Creusot in May, 1899, a group of 250 men decided that they no longer wanted to follow the existing union in its work stoppage. Instead, they followed M. Schneider's invitation to return to work. Since the factory was surrounded by hostile strikers, management supplied the workers with lunch inside the building. Sausage was served, to the great delight of the strikers, since it was a Friday and it was assumed that the strikebreakers were practicing Catholics. When those who had crossed the picket lines were expelled from the mutual aid society (which was associated with the union), a new, independent union was created. Its first president, C. Mangematin, issued the following declaration:

> We wish to found a union to defend energetically the interests of the workers, and to organize them according to the sentiments of conciliation, peace, work, and liberty. In founding this union, we wish to prevent discord and conserve as much as possible the amicable relations which must exist between workers and employers. [3]

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employer. Lanoir himself liked to think of his union as the first "independent" union (independent in this sense meant without ties to the C.G.T.). See Paul Lanoir, Les Conditions du travail dans les chemins de fer (Paris: Société d'Editions et de Publication, Librairie Félix Juven, 1906), pp. 36-41. On the early examples of Yellow unionism, see Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Télégraphes, Office du Travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, 4 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1899-1904), 1 (1899): 393-94; 3 (1903): 361-63; 4 (1904): 140, 491-98, 512-19, 540-66 and Jean Maitron, ed., Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français, troisième partie, 1871-1914: de la commune à la grande guerre (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrieres) 10 (1973): 327; 13 (1975): 19, 324.

[3]Quoted in Marcel Lefranc, Les Syndicats indépendants du Creusot et de Montceau (Paris: Comité de Défense et de Progrès Social, 1902), pp. 13-14.

The organization, which soon had 5,000 members, held its strength for several years. By 1905, however, it had degenerated into a mutual aid society under complete employer control.[4]

Shortly after its founding, a strike broke out at Montceau-les-mines in June 1899. A group of eight workers decided to resist the union when a second strike was declared for the following January. The new group, led by M. Burtin, was the object of bitter hostility. The Café de la Mairie, where it held its meetings, was attacked frequently. On one such occasion, August 5, 1900, the windows were knocked out by hostile unionists. When the proprietor replaced the glass with yellow paper, the new movement had a name.[5] When the strike broke out, the Yellows found that the mines stayed closed, and they were barred from the communal soup kitchens set up to help the strikers. The Montceau union, which had by this time established contact with the Yellows of Creusot, issued an appeal which was taken up and printed by the rightist press in Paris:

> Because we refuse to join in a union which is anti-patriotic, which performs the work of the enemies of France, we are treated as pariahs in our own country.

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[4]Auguste Pawlowski, Les Syndicats jaunes (Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan, 1911), pp. 18-20; Gros, Etude, pp. 178-204; Archives Nationales (hereafter referred to as AN) F7 13613, "Le Mouvement ouvrier en 1908," ten-page typed report.

[5]The Yellow movement also adopted the yellow broom plant as its insignia. Georges Lefranc, Le Mouvement syndicale sous la Troisième République (Paris: Payot, 1967), p. 109, mentions the plant as the source of the name. First came the windows, then the name, then the plant.

> We cannot take a step without being confronted by the armed patrols of the strikers. If the mines were open, we would not hesitate to return to them, in spite of the threats and the attacks. . . . It is time that, in face of the revolutionary, internationalistic unions, unions like ours are formed everywhere . . . unions of freely organized workers which will uphold the national interest. But to give our young unions the power to fight against those who play the game of England and Germany, the good citizens of France must come to our help, as others help the revolutionaries.
>
> It is necessary to aid us to defend the right to work, to organize our secretariat of the people and other works of social peace which we wish to oppose to the sterility of the unions of hatred and social warfare.
>
> It is for liberty that we fight!
> It is for the French worker that we suffer!
> It is for France that we will triumph!
> Frenchmen, join us! [6]

According to one source, more than 100,000 francs were raised and distributed to the jaunes. Although the amount may be exaggerated, there is no doubt that the jaunes caught the attention of nationalist and rightist circles in Paris. Burtin and Mangematin were guests at the Société d'Economie Sociale, Le Play's organization. The rightist press followed their story and gave them much publicity. Suddenly, all over France, it seemed, Yellow unions began to form.[7]

It was a propitious moment for someone to step forward, and unite the diverse unions into a single organization that could speak with a powerful voice. That man was Paul Lanoir.

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[6] The manifesto is reprinted in Lefranc, Syndicats indépendants, pp. 26-27. See ibid., pp. 18-25; Léon de Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, fédérations, bourses du travail (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1902), pp. 173-74; Gros, Etude, pp. 168-69.

[7] Pawlowski, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 24-25, mentions a Yellow group at nearby Perrecy-les-forges. Gros, Etude, p. 146, claimed it predated the Montceau jaune. Yellow unions were set up in Tourcoing at this time under similar circumstances. See Chez les jaunes par le Conseil Fédéral de la Fédération Syndicale de l'Industrie Tourquennoise (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1906), pp. 1, 31, 51-54, 68, 72. On the growth of the movement generally, see Landrieu, "Les Syndicats jaunes," pp. 337-38; "Jaunes et rouges," Brochure de propagande syndicale, pp. 3-4; Seilhac, Syndicats ouvriers, p. 177; Lefranc, Syndicats indépendants, pp. 21-28.

Posing as the secretary of the Union Syndicale des Ouvriers et Employés de Chemins de Fer Français, Lanoir managed to convince twenty-seven like-minded Parisian unions to join him in founding a Bourse du Travail Independante. It was formally inaugurated on December 27, 1901. The time was ripe. Lanoir was able to obtain subsidies from several industrialists who saw Yellow unionism as a means of blunting the threat posed by revolutionary syndicalism. In addition, several prominent political figures were favorable to Lanoir, including Emile Loubet, the President of the Republic, who received him with a delegation of seventeen Parisian jaunes. Loubet's favorable comments were often reprinted and used by Lanoir to attract support.

Lanoir claimed that the Bourse included 317 unions representing 163,492 workers. These figures are certainly exaggerated. The many reports in the fonds of the Sûreté Générale tell a different story. In the opinion of the police, the founding unions were all more or less fictitious. The money for the Bourse came from businessmen in the metallurgy, mining, and transport industries, plus the nationalist or clerical leagues such as the Ligue de la Patrie Française and the Action Libérale. The Paris Chamber of Commerce also supplied money, and the Alliance Progressiste gave support. The latter was the political organization headed by ex-premier Jules Méline. There was some suspicion that Méline was the intermediary for Lanoir and the industrialists. Although the businessmen wished to break the power of the revolutionary unions, Méline had his eyes on the elections of 1902, and Lanoir did use the jaunes

to support Méline in the legislative elections.[8]

According to the police reports, Lanoir was an adventurer who was clever enough to pretend an importance in the labor movement that enabled him to obtain money from business interests. As one might guess, he kept most of the money for himself. His attempt to win support simultaneously from both reactionary nationalists and republicans eventually caused trouble with Méline, who abandonned him. By 1904, however, Lanoir was able to retire with 20,000 francs worth of annuities (rentes) and two homes, one on the Côte-d'Azur.[9]

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[8]Lanoir, De l'Idée syndicaliste en France et à l'étranger: syndicats révolutionnaires et syndicats professionels (Paris: Société d'Edition et de Publication, Librairie Félix Juven, 1906), pp. 49-50; AN F7 12793, report of January 15, 1903. In addition to stating that the unions in the Bourse existed on paper only, it further stated that Lanoir had been supported by Waldeck-Rousseau, who was trying to create a political counterweight to the reformist C.G.T. unions favored by Alexandre Millerand. In the margin, written in pencil, is the word "non." Was it placed there by the Director, who found the information too sensitive? Or was it, perhaps, just not true? Interestingly, Lanoir's lieutenant, Pierre Biétry, accused Lanoir of being in the pay of Waldeck-Rousseau in Rouges et Jaunes (Paris: Imprimerie A. Lombardin, 1903), p. 28. On Méline and industrial support, see the reports of August 18, 1906 and January 20, 1902. On Lanoir's support for Méline, see L'Union ouvrière, April 1-26, 1902, May 10-17, 1902, March 21-28, 1903. Méline wrote an article for the Bulletin of the Bourse du Travail Indépendante de Lille (January-February 1903), cited in Pawlowski, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 216-17. Biétry also noted that Lanoir was closely associated with Méline's party in Le Socialisme et les jaunes (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1906), p. 94. On the actual inauguration of the Bourse Indépendante, see AN F7 13612, which, although supposedly containing documents on the Bourse Libre of Lyons, has several reports and newspaper clippings on Lanoir's Bourse. See especially the report of December 26, 1901.

[9]AN F7 12793, report of October 11, 1904; AN F7 13612, report of February 20, 1902. Lanoir was born on January 26, 1863, but not much is known about him. By 1890 he was an agent for the Orléans Railroad Company. In that year he stood as an anti-Boulangist candidate in the legislative elections, but withdrew on the second round in favor of the Republican candidate. After his association with the Yellows ended, he ran again for the Chamber of Deputies in 1906, but was not elected. See the Dictionnaire biographique 13: 198.

Curiously, the revolutionary Bourse was not, at first, hostile to Lanoir because he was at first trying to overcome working-class indifference. Some revolutionaries thought the jaunes' push for reforms would help to strengthen working-class consciousness. However, this tolerance proved temporary.

Lanoir attempted to obtain subsidies for his organization from the Paris Municipal Council, which gave money to the revolutionary Bourse. The Council voted 20,000 francs in 1902 (as opposed to 80,000 francs for the revolutionaries) but Millerand refused to approve the expenditure. In spite of this, the Bourse became Lanoir's power base. It did attract some legitimate unions, especially those which were expelled from the collectivist Bourse for failing to show sufficient revolutionary fervor. One of these unions was the Union des Comptables, originally founded by Veyssier under the auspices of the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France.[10]

Four factors favored Lanoir's movement. First, as head of the Bourse Indépendante, he could claim the leadership of the movement. Second, he toured the provinces to assist and stimulate the creation of Yellow unions and independent Bourses. He also tried to convince provincial groups to accept his

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[10]Seilhac, Les Bourses du travail (Paris and Reims: Action Populaire, n.d.), pp. 25-28; Union ouvrière, March 22-29, 1902; Le Premier Congrès National des Jaunes de France tenu à Paris les 27, 28 et 29 mars 1902, compte rendu officiel et sténographique des débats (Paris: Bourse du Travail Indépendante, 1902), pp. 143-44.

leadership. Third, he published a paper, L'Union ouvrière, to spread his message and unite the various Yellow groups. Finally, to solidify his position, he organized a congress, to which he invited all the independent unions of France.[11]

Lanoir found a colleague in Pierre Biétry. Biétry was a watchmaker from Doubs, who had at one time been in the employ of Japy Frères, a major manufacturing firm in the east of France. Gaston Japy was destined to play a critical role in the Yellow movement, but before 1900 he and Biétry had been bitter enemies. Biétry at the time was a socialist and a union activist. At the age of twenty-six, he created a union in the Japy plant, followed by a regional federation. He led the strike movement which swept the east in 1899, gaining national notoriety by attempting to lead a march of strikers and their families--ten thousand strong--on Belfort (and ultimately Paris). Robert Goetz-Girey has said that Biétry's march was still talked about when he was a child.[12] Biétry was arrested at Belfort, released after a short term, only to be rearrested again when he led another strike in 1900.

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[11]Loubet's support was an essential element in Lanoir's propaganda. Loubet had said, in part, "I wish to assure you all of my sympathy. . . . I have always thought . . . that the future for workers was in rational and reasoned organizations. . . . How can one not approve such a beautiful development. . . . between employers and employees there is only one class, the class or producers. It is necessary to say that the men or, as you call them, the politicians who promote hatred, who excite greed, who throw into opposition those who should be united are the most foolish and miserable of people. The work which you have begun has all my sympathy. I salute you for your courage and with all my heart I wish you great success." Union ouvrière, December 28, 1901-January 4, 1902.

[12]Robert Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale française: militants et théoriciens (Paris: Armand Colin, 1948), p. 83n.

Shortly after his second release from prison, he broke with the socialists. The reasons are not entirely clear, but he was expelled from both the watchmakers' cooperative to which he had belonged and the Socialist Party at its 1901 Congress. Then he joined Lanoir's organization and became second-in-command.[13]

Together they embarked on a provincial campaign to spur the creation of additional Yellow unions and independent bourses. The pace was heady, although not so heady as Keufer's organizing tours had been. Lanoir claimed that he had spoken at twenty-five conferences between 1900 and 1901. In Tourcoing, Biétry rushed in by train, spoke for three-quarters of an hour, and then dashed out again to catch another train. The brief appearance led Delcourt-Haillot, who headed a Yellow union in Valenciennes, to note that Biétry's conferences were not useful unless the ground had been prepared first and a local organization already existed.[14]

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[13]Biétry was born in 1872 and died in 1918. Biographical information can be found in Dictionnaire biographique 10: 297-98; Robert Warin, Les Syndicats jaunes: leur histoire, leurs doctrines, 1899-1908 (Paris: Henri Jouve, 1908), pp. 5-24; Pawlowski, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 116-19; "Pierre Biétry," Les Hommes du jour, no. 42 (November 7, 1908); L'Abbé P. Dabry, Un Ennemi des ouvriers: ce qu'est Biétry (Paris: La Vie Catholique, 1906), pp. 7-10; Jean Gauther (Jules Girard), Le Clergé, les royalistes et les jaunes (Paris: n.p., 1907), pp. 11-33. Biétry's expulsion from the Socialist Party came about because of the charge that he had, as a condition of his release from prison, agreed to work for Japy Frères to moderate (or undermine) union activity. The resolution expelling Biétry claimed that he was in the pay of Doubs industrialists and is quoted in Les Hommes du jour. Writers favorable to the Yellows, such as Warin and Pawlowski, merely state that Biétry underwent a change as he saw the error of his revolutionary ways. Biétry's easy shift into the Yellows, and into a position of importance, which coincided with Japy's financial support for the jaunes certainly gives one cause for suspicion.

[14]Union ouvrière, March 1-8, March 19-26, August 2-9, 1902;

Reports in the Archives Nationales indicate that these organizing conferences attracted anywhere from two hundred to eight hundred persons. Sometimes, false pretenses were used to draw the curious. In one incident, the meeting had been publicized as a discussion of local politics.[15] The meetings were equally divided between those designed to lead to the creation of a Yellow union and those designed to give an impulse to an already existing one. For their efforts, Lanoir and Biétry did not ask for a stipend or even for expenses. They had a substantial amount of success. In 1901-2 Yellow bourses were created in Lyons, Nice, Lille, Blois, Amiens, and Marseilles. Numerous Yellow unions were also organized under circumstances varying according to local conditions.

Sometimes, as in St. Die, they were created as a direct result of a visit by Lanoir and Biétry. In Belfort, the jaunes were founded by the Ligue de la Patrie Française, which hoped to use them for electoral support for conservative candidates. The local bourse was set up with money from local businessmen, who actually chose the director. This followed a meeting between Lanoir and the agent of M. Viellard, an ex-deputy and the local notable. On the other hand, in Jeumont, one of Lanoir's organizers approached the local industrialists for financial

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Lanoir, Le Droit à la grève (Paris: Société d'Edition et de Publication, Librairie Félix Juven, n.d.), p. 11n; Chez les jaunes, p. 126; Delcourt-Haillot, "Comment former les syndicats jaunes," La Réforme sociale, 5th series, 3 (May 16, 1902): 768.

[15] AN F7 12793, reports of January 20, 22, 23, February 22, 23, March 10, April 6, August 3, 1902; May 5, November 29, 1903.

assistance and was turned down. In Le Havre, an office was provided by the Franciscan order working with the local businessmen. In Carmaux, the Marquis and the mine company gave money and an office. In Albi, the unions were organized by the Jeunesse Catholique, in league with some Parisian mutualists who had an apparently economic motive--they wanted to use the jaunes to enlist more members for their mutual aid societies. In Reims, the Yellows were supported by a coalition of the conservative political opposition. Two independent bourses were created in Lyons. One, which affiliated with Lanoir, did not survive; the other, remaining independent even of Lanoir, lasted until the war. The former was wholly under employer control; they even chose the administrators. The bourse in Valenciennes was founded with Lanoir's assistance, but by already existing unions. Sometimes, Lanoir was bypassed by Yellow unions which helped each other. This was the case with the Creusot and Montceau unions, which gave much help to the Tourcoing Yellows.[16]

To show their vitality the jaunes of Paris held a banquet in February, 1902. It attracted over one thousand

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[16]AN F7 12793, reports of December 25, 1901; January 22, February 1, 2, March 6, 18, September 17, October 1, 1902; January 14, December 23, 1903; January 23, October 21, November 7, 1904; AN F7 13612; Union ouvrière, August 2-9, 1902; Chez les jaunes, pp. 33, 43-45, 52. The Yellows of Carmaux are covered in Rolande Trempé's magisterial work, Les Mineurs de Carmaux, 1848-1914, 2 vols. (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1971) 2: 763-69, 808-9.

people, including M. Delarbre, the Administrator of the Compagnie de l'Ouest (railroad); M. Périer, who was president of the Comité du Commerce et de l'Industrie pour la Défense Sociale, a conservative employers' group; Gaston Japy; M. Muzet, president of the Société du Commerce et de l'Industrie and ten years earlier the guest of honor at banquets of Veyssier's U.C.S.; and M. Congy, a nationalist deputy. Lanoir used the occasion to attack Millerand and Waldeck-Rousseau and to toast Loubet.[17]

The high point of Lanoir's movement came with the holding of the First National Congress of the Yellows of France. It attracted much press coverage, and 203 delegates. Lanoir claimed that they represented 317 labor unions and 201,745 members. In addition, the syndicats agricoles sent delegates to represent some 380,000 members.

These figures have to be viewed critically and interpreted realistically. In all probability, the agricultural unions did number several hundred thousand. But in any case they were not labor organizations. They were farmers' cooperatives for the most part. In other cases, they were mixed unions of farmowners and agricultural workers; and in still other

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[17] Union ouvrière, February 22-March 1, 1902; AN F7 13613, report of February 16, 1902; Landrieu, "Les Syndicats jaunes," p. 340. Landrieu also claimed that the municipal monopolies such as gas, the Metro, and the tramways supported the bourse. The union of gas company clerks was one of the strongest of the Paris jaunes.

cases, merely landowner associations. They tended to be conservative, even reactionary and royalist, and played no role in the labor movement. After this initial congress, they barely participated in the Yellow campaign, hence they can hardly be considered Yellow unions.

The strongest unions at the congress were those of the industrial north. These were mainly associations of textile workers and strongly Catholic in tinge (but not confessional, i.e., they were not limited to practicing Catholics). They gave their support to the Yellow movement, but were independent of Lanoir. Except for their attendance at congresses, and the fact that their local papers excerpted or reprinted articles of Biétry and Lanoir, they had no close or continuous ties with Paris. They numbered around 15,000.[18]

The Catholic unions in the Nord approached Lanoir cautiously. Although they believed in social peace and class collaboration, they did not want their unions to be subjected to employer control, which they suspected was the case with Lanoir. Leclerq, of the Lille unions, said he would work with

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[18]Accurate figures are very hard to come by. Lanoir reduced his own estimate to 93,409 in 1903. The figure of 100,000 was widely cited: Gros, Etude, pp. 293-96; Robert Brécy, Le Mouvement syndical en France, 1871-1921: essai bibliographique (Paris and La Haye: Mouton & Co., 1963), p. 13; George Mosse, "The French Right and the Working Classes: Les Jaunes," Journal of Contemporary History 7 (July 1972): 202. My own estimate is that the movement never totalled more than roughly 50,000. The 15,000 figure for the Nord unions comes from AN F22 105, which consists of yearly reports filed with the Minister of the Interior, and L'Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, 1904-1905, p. 381.

the jaunes so long as they maintained their autonomy, and he was willing to encourage them to do so. The Lille unions had a hard time deciding whether to adopt the name jaune or not. At times, they accepted it, but at other times they were careful to differentiate between themselves and the Parisian jaunes.[19]

Also in attendance at the congress were the Yellow miners' unions, represented by Burtin of Montceau, Delahaye of Anzin, and Delcourt-Haillot of Valenciennes. Like the textile unions, they were solidly organized and existed independently of Lanoir. Mangematin of the Creusot Yellow did not attend the congress; his union (at the employer's behest, one suspects) decided to remain free of all ties. The miners probably numbered around 8,000.[20]

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[19] Max Turmann, "Rouges et jaunes: le mouvement syndical en France," La Quinzaine, no. 191 (October 1, 1902), pp. 305-6; Le Travail libre (organ of the Lille unions), April 5, 1904, June, 1905.

[20] I have already figured the Valenciennes miners' union with the total for the Nord unions. The Montceau union was estimated at around 2,000 (compared to 5,000 for the "red" union). There were many small miners' unions, with around two hundred members each, at places such as Perrecy-les-forges and Rochebelle. Trempé estimates the Carmaux jaune at 450 in 1903, which was roughly as large as the "red" union. A Syndicat Indépendant des Mineurs du Nord et du Pas-de-Calais was founded in 1902 and claimed 8,000 members, a figure that was accepted by the prefect. Allowing for some exaggeration, however, produces the figure of 8,000. See AN F7 12793, reports of June 19 and July 12, 1907; Trempé, Mineurs de Carmaux 2: 777; Annuaire des syndicats, 1904-1905, pp. 164, 460-61. The Creusot union was widely accepted to have 5,000 members. Stearns, "Against the Strike Threat," p. 485, accepted this figure. Also Annuaire des syndicats, p. 459.

Finally, there were a large number of various and sundry unions, many new, weak, and small. Altogether, perhaps, they represented another 5,000 workers.[21] The Yellow unions did cover a wide range of industries and trades. Clerks were prominent, as well as match makers, transport employees (mainly the clerks and office workers), accountants, bakers, musicians, mechanics, building trades workers, butchers, shoemakers. By 1905 arsenal workers and laundry workers had important unions, as well as port workers, department store clerks, and assorted manufacturing workers. As we have seen, Yellow unionism also made headway among the mass production workers in textiles and mining.[22]

Although such prominent Yellow leaders as Burtin, Jooris of Lille and Delcourt-Haillot attended the Congress, it was

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[21]Police reports on individual unions show the following figures: AN F7 12793, report of April 16, 1902 on Belfort textile workers, 30-100 members; report of August 28, 1906 on jaunes in the Jura, 50-60; report of February 1907 on Brest arsenal workers, around 60. An earlier report of November 4, 1905 estimated 800 workers in six unions: port workers, bakers, coal sellers, department store workers, arsenal workers, and carpenters. The Longwy miners' union took 5,000 subscriptions to Le Jaune in 1905, which indicated a possible membership of several thousand. The total circulation of Le Jaune was 20,000 according to the report of June 24, 1905. A report of July 21, 1904 from Mazamet recognized around 1300 workers in seven Yellow unions out of a manufacturing population of 3,600. By way of contrast, four unions in Mans had only 146 workers. The Mans report is in AN F7 13606. The total membership of the Yellow federation was estimated at 35,000 (report of November 22, 1904) and "less than 100,000" (August 18, 1906).

[22]On the type of unions, see Gros, Etude, pp. 393-96; Union ouvrière, December 28, 1901-January 2, 1902; AN F7 12793, reports of January 23, 1902 and January 16, 1904. The influence of the Yellow movement did not depend as much upon its numbers as upon its notoriety. The fear that a Yellow union could disrupt a major strike worried the C.G.T. and encouraged reactionary politicians.

dominated by Lanoir. He had organized it, planned it, and he ran it. He informed the delegates that the negative part of the Yellow program--its antistrike, anti-C.G.T. attitudes--had captured the public mind. Now it was time to elaborate a positive program. Lanoir disclosed a program that most employers would have had little trouble accepting. Not all the delegates proved so eager, however.

The first significant difference of opinion arose on a resolution introduced by Degueselle of Tourcoing for a ten and a half hour day--if it could be made uniform in Europe and if it would not damage French industry. Leclerc of Lille opposed a standard day for all French workers, but he did support the proposal for a limited work day set by law in each industry. Lanoir enthusiastically supported the first half of Leclerc's argument, but not the second. A uniform law, he claimed, was a violation of the freedom of an individual to work as long as he pleased. The only way to deal with the issue was for each employer and each union to work out a suitable arrangement for themselves. Leclerc feared that the tendency to oppose a law for the reduction of hours meant that the congess was, in effect, defending employer interests. The congress rejected Leclerc's fears, and voted unanimously, less two votes, to reject the principle of a maximum hours law.[23]

Although Lanoir accepted the need for a retirement plan,

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[23]Premier Congrès, pp. 31-36.

he denounced Millerand's proposal for a government-run system funded by contributions of both workers and employers. The worker contributions, he complained, were too high. More importantly, requiring employers to contribute "will cause the certain ruin of the majority of our industrialists." State involvement would result in gross inefficiency and high expenses. The state already had too many civil servants and any enterprise it took over it ran at a deficit. Lanoir wanted autonomous retirement systems, with boards of directors composed of businessmen, workers, and government representatives in equal numbers.

The value of a retirement plan, from Lanoir's point of view, was that it would make the worker more responsible. Knowing that he was working to support himself in his old age would give the worker feelings of attachment to his employer. The employer would naturally want to encourage these sentiments, and so would be willing and eager to make voluntary contributions.

Finally, Lanoir's plan would allow the pension funds to buy shares in industrial enterprises. <u>This would become the heart of the Yellow doctrine: acquiring part ownership of industry by purchasing stock</u>. The project was unanimously adopted.[24]

The over-all theme was expressed by a delegate from the forges of Adour: "Prosperity for the factory means prosperity

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[24] Ibid., pp. 44-61.

for the worker. It is our job to maintain and develop this prosperity."[25] All measures which the congress considered were viewed in this light. Did it help or hurt industry? If it was not good for French business, it was not good for the workers. Two slogans introduced by Lanoir emphasized this concept. One was "Not with the politicians against our employers, but with our employers against the politicians." The other stated that there were two types of capital: labor-capital and money-capital. Both were necessary to production and therefore both had to collaborate. Lanoir later expanded his conception to include intelligence-capital, reminiscent of the Positivist theory that certain individuals provided leadership by virtue of their intellect. Lanoir was not a philosopher, nor was he a sophisticated thinker. But he did have a doctrine, and it was clearly expressed. The worker and the employer needed one another; their interests were common.[26]

The leader of the Bourse Indépendante told the congress frankly that his bourse had been founded with money contributed by businessmen. Enthusiastically he assured his colleagues (and wrongly, as it turned out) that the rent had been paid for ten years. Lanoir claimed that his independence was uncompromised, but he would not give the names of his contributors, other than to say that they were good Frenchmen. He then asked

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[25]Ibid., p. 88.

[26]Ibid., p. 131.

for and received a unanimous vote of confidence. The congress also created a federation, the Union Fédérale des Syndicats Professionels de France et des Colonies, with Lanoir as director.[27]

The congress marked the high point of Lanoir's power and influence. Immediately after, Biétry split the organization to form his own Yellow movement. Shortly thereafter, Lanoir was embarassed and repudiated in his attempt to end a miners' strike, and accusations of thievery were raised against him. In two years, his movement was dead, his bourse closed, his paper nonexistent. Yet as Robert Warin, who made a contemporary study of the Yellow movement, had said, Lanoir "was truly the founder."[28] Biétry's accomplishments surpassed his mentor's, but Lanoir had blazed the way.

Before following the rising star of Biétry, let us spend a few moments examining the ideology developed by Lanoir and Biétry in the early days of the Yellow movement. The fundamentals of the jaune ideology held that a jaune was a good Frenchman, a sincere republican and an honest socialist.[29] Lanoir could easily get carried away: "The jaunes are the proud descendants of Gaul, men of robust spirit . . . generous of heart and loyal and honest of character, who represent the elite of the working

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[27]Ibid., pp. 143-46, 149-52.

[28]Warin, Les Syndicats jaunes, p. 35.

[29]Union ouvrière, February 22-March 1, 1902.

class." More concretely, as a good Frenchman the Yellow unionist wanted France to have "its place" in the world and so supported a strong army.[30] The jaune was a republican because, in spite of its disappointments, the republic was the source of progress and liberty. The Yellows considered themselves to be true socialists, in the French, as opposed to the German Marxist tradition.

To Lanoir and Biétry, socialists such as Millerand and Jaurès represented foreign socialism. They were only opportunistic, cynical politicians driven by an ambition for power. These politicians did not see socialism as a means of helping the working class, but as a means for using the workers to take over the state for their personal benefit.[31] This became a common theme among the Yellows. Le Travail libre, organ of the Lille unions, frequently featured antipolitical cartoons. One, captioned "How difficult it is to be a socialist deputy," showed an extremely fat, gluttonous caracature, smoking a cigar at a gigantic dinner table. Side panels showed that he had lodgings in Paris and Lille, and took vacation trips to Algeria and Amsterdam. Another showed the socialist deputy in a workers' café. His obesity is in glaring contrast to the thinness of the workers. The deputy tells them that if they send him to the Chamber, he will think of them always.

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid., April 12-19, 1902; Biétry, Leur socialisme (Paris: Bourse du Travail Indépendante, 1901), pp. 6-7, 11.

The second panel shows him in the Chamber, where his only concern is a bill providing retirement pensions for deputies.[32]

On what grounds then did the Yellows consider themselves to be socialists? Merely because they believed in improving the condition of the laborers. Their preferred method was profit sharing. To make the worker a partner in an enterprise was practical socialism; it realized the harmony of classes.[33] If there was an enemy, it was not the capitalist. The businessman had his own merit; he produced wealth. Evil was represented by what the jaunes called finance capital--unproductive wealth which engaged only in speculation and manipulation. Since it made profits without actually producing anything, its profits could only consist of money stolen from the true producers. Worker and capitalist, partners in production, had a shared interest in eliminating speculative, finance capital from society.[34]

The "enemies" who crowded into the jaune's rogue's gallery (middlemen and department store owners were also included from time to time) were picked for their ability to demonstrate the essential commonality of worker and employer. As Lanoir had said, it was the worker and the businessman against the politician. To fight capitalism was suicidal; it was the workers who would suffer if the factories were ruined

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[32]Le Travail libre, September 10, 1904; January 15, 1905.

[33]Biétry, Leur socialisme, pp. 28-36.

[34]Ibid., pp. 9-10, 12.

and industry destroyed: "Ah, how beautiful it is when there is work. How preferable it is to these periods of unemployment /brought on by strikes/ so destructive of the sentiments of peace, union and concord."[35]

Since strikes damaged the national economy, the only persons who sought strikes had to be German (or Belgian or English) agents, or traitors in their pay. As Lanoir said at the inauguration of his bourse, our work "is a work of union, concord and social peace which will oppose everywhere the work of division pursued for some years by collectivists and revolutionary professional politicians, who push the workers to hate their employers and organize political strikes."[36]

Their antipolitical bias led them to another point, popular among rightist groups of the era. The Yellows wanted to replace the Chamber of Deputies with a corporatist body which they called a chambre de capacité, providing representation to the economic groups within the nation.[37]

Such was the basic ideology of Yellow unionism. It remained virtually unchanged throughout the history of the movement, although there were some shifts of emphasis and changes in labels. For Lanoir, however, the road was downhill.

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[35]Ibid., p. 52; Union ouvrière, February 22-March 1, May 24-31, 1902.

[36]Cited in AN F7 13612, report of December 28, 1910.

[37]Union ouvrière, February 22-March 1, April 19-26, 1902.

First, as indicated, Biétry formed a rival federation.[38] Then, a miners' strike broke out in the Nord in late 1902. Lanoir made a well-publicized attempt to involve himself, but only succeeded in demonstrating that neither workers nor employers desired his participation.[39] A. Féliers, who had replaced Biétry as Lanoir's assistant and co-organizer, accused Lanoir of pocketing money that was meant for the unions.[40] Finally, he ran for the C.S.T. in 1903, and received thirty-eight votes to Guérard's 1,606. By June, 1903, the Union ouvrière had ceased publication. Lanoir's success depended on the voluntary recognition of his authority by groups over which he had no real control. Once they refused to accept him as a leader, he had no substantial base of his own to fall back on. Biétry, who took about half of Lanoir's Parisian support, showed that he was either totally unscrupulous or had a mischievous sense of humor. He declared that he had left Lanoir when he discovered, to his great surprise, that Lanoir

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[38]Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1906), pp. 71-72, 76-81, 126; idem, Rouges et jaunes, pp. 28-30; Le Jaune, February 12, February 20, February 26, 1904; Union ouvrière, May 24-31, June 14-21, June 21-28, 1902; Pawlowski, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 28-31; Warin, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 40-45.

[39]Union ouvrière, September 20-27, October 11-18, November 1-8, November 8-15, November 29-December 6, 1902; Lanoir, Les Emeutes du Nord (Paris: Publication de la Bourse du Travail Indépendante, n.d.).

[40]Union ouvrière, February 7-14, February 28-March 6, 1903.

had been taking money from businessmen. The police noted that Biétry broke away because Lanoir had refused to share with Biétry the money he was receiving and Biétry thought he could do better on his own. On the other hand, a different report stated that Lanoir fired Biétry because he was stealing from him.[41] Be that as it may, Biétry ran into tremendous difficulties in his efforts to form a rival movement. It took two years to get it on its feet, and even in 1905, Le Jaune had a press run of only 2,000 copies, half of which remained unsold.[42]

In June, 1902, with several other dissidents from Lanoir's bourse, Biétry founded the Fédération National des Jaunes de France. He was given an office for a short time by Congy, the nationalist deputy. Biétry had enough money to print 50,000 copies of his manifesto, but there was no popular response and the federation limped along. In December, 1902 Biétry and his associated decided that the Yellow label was more of a hindrance than a help, so they reorganized as the Parti Socialiste National (PSN). The name is indicative of their ideology, and also perhaps of their place in the history of ideas. To go with the party, the federation became the Union Fédérative des Ouvriers et Syndicats Professionels Indépendants. In February, 1903 the PSN began to issue Le Travail libre (not to be confused with the Lilloise journal of the same name). Only nine issues appeared before publication

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[41] AN F7 12793, reports of October 11, 1904 and August 18, 1906. Also Union ouvrière, May 2-9, May 9-16, 1903.

[42] AN F7 12793, report of August 16, 1906.

ceased. In July, 1903 the Bourse Libre du Travail was founded, but by the following November, Biétry could no longer afford the rent, and decided to stop publishing the paper and cease all activities. Biétry moved into quarters provided by the Action Mutuelle, a shadowy organization apparently funded by business interests to promote antirevolutionary activity. In January, 1904 Le Jaune appeared, along with a new Fédération Nationale des Jaunes de France and a new Bourse Libre.[43]

What allowed Biétry to maintain his efforts for two years and to set up finally a permanent organization? He never stopped trying to obtain funds from whatever sources seemed promising and his efforts were rewarded. Biétry's main benefactors in the period between the break with Lanoir and the attainment of a degree of stability in late 1904-early 1905 were nationalist, clerical, royalist, or industrial groups or individuals such as the Ligue de la Patrie Française, the Franciscans, the Duchesse of Uzès, the Duc d'Orléans, and Gaston Japy. It was Japy's contributions which finally put Biétry on solid ground.

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[43]Pawlowski, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 30-38; Warin, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 45-50, 63-69; Biétry, Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 100-15; idem, Rouges et jaunes, pp. 29-38. Biétry himself gave April 1, 1902 as the date of his bourse, but this is highly unlikely, as the first congress, which he attended and at which he supported Lanoir, did not end until March 29. In May, Biétry was still in Badeval, as his correspondance with Lanoir indicated. The break actually came through their letters. See Biétry, Socialisme et les jaunes, p. 89; Pawlowski, Syndicats jaunes, p. 32. The letters are reprinted in Warin, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 40-45. Pawlowski, p. 38, said that Biétry refrained from attacking Lanoir once his own federation was reconstituted at the beginning of 1904. A careful reading of Le Jaune, February 12, 20, 26, April 23, 1904, shows this was not the case. Lanoir, who was assumed to be retired by early 1904, was still active trying to recapture Biétry's supporters.

The Duchesse of Uzès was reported to have given 12,000 francs which stabilized the federation and allowed Biétry to attract Japy's support. The intermediary for Biétry and Uzès was Gaston Méry of Edouard Drumont's antisemitic Libre Parole. The Libre Parole group wanted to use the jaunes to enhance their own importance; they hoped to build a mass working-class following. The vision of a conservative union movement in support of reactionary politics was a seductive idea for the French right. Méry, who played a leading role in the federation for a time, and was a member of its executive committee, also placed Jules Girard (Jean Gauthier) in the organization. Girard, who was supposedly a lieutenant of Biétry's, reported to the Libre Parole two or three times a week. Ties between the jaunes and the antisemites were close in 1905. Bietry made the Fédération des Jaunes part of Drumont's Fédération Nationale Antijuive, and published articles in Drumont's paper. Le Jaune also publicized antisemitic activities and made Drumont the guest of honor at an April, 1905 Yellow meeting.[44]

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[44]AN F7 12793, reports of October 11, 1904, February 21, April 10, 11, 12, 14, October 6, December 20, 1905; AN F7 12883, reports of April 7, October 12, 17, 1904, February 24, March 21, May 11, 1905; AN F7 12459, April 12, 1905. Girard had previously been a member of the Ligue Antisémitique of Jules Guérin, who was a bitter rival of Drumont. After Girard left Guérin, he tried to form his own Yellow-type antisemitic workers' league. When that failed, he joined Drumont's forces. For Girard's pre-jaune career, see AN F7 12459. Girard was a fascinating character. He was involved in the Fort Chabrol incident, and had a proclivity for assassination plots. He split with Biétry, according to his story, when the Yellow leader became too close to the royalists. According to his Le Clergé, les royalistes et les jaunes, he was Biétry's organizer in Longwy during the 1905 coal strike, during which Biétry cooperated with the mineowners to sabotage the strike.

The Franciscans were another source of support. One report said that the jaunes were mere creatures of the order, but the agent who filed the report was obviously relying on nothing more than Abbé Dabry's book, Un Ennemi des ouvriers, ce qu'est Biétry. Although Dabry probably overemphasized the power of the Franciscans, he did point out the influence of Father Edouard in the federation. Edouard, who went by the name of Théophile in the columns of Le Jaune, was Biétry's closest associate and one of the few to stick with him through the rough 1902-1904 period. On two occasions, Edouard was singled out by Biétry for special thanks--at the conclusion of the 1906 Congress and at the end of the 1907 Congress. In 1904, the Franciscans held their annual meeting at the same time as the Yellow Congress, and they apparently used the opportunity to pay for the jaune gathering. As we have already seen, the Franciscans were also active in supporting some of the provincial Yellows.[45]

The Duc d'Orléans, who spread monetary support to many leagues and groups on the clerical, royalist right, also helped the Yellows. In return, Biétry attended royalist meetings and lent his support to monarchism, although not obtrusively. He also sought subsidies from the Union du Commerce et de l'

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[45] Le Jaune, March 17, 1906, April 20, 1907; AN F7 12793, reports of October 21, November 21, 1904 and August 18, 1906.

Industrie and the Action Libérale of Jacques Piou, a parliamentary Catholic group. It was Japy, however, who finally saved the federation. Like Lanoir, Edouard was perfectly frank about the question of subsidies. Biétry succeeded, he said, "thanks to the goodwill of several true friends of the people who obtained the necessary funds for him and supported him against all attackers, because they believed he had been called to destroy the harmful work of French socialism."[46]

By 1905 the Yellow movement was alive again. However, some doctrinal changes had been made, especially in the Yellow attitude to socialism. At first, the jaunes considered themselves to be socialists--true, French socialists, practicing national socialism. The decision to drop the "Yellow" name came about because Biétry wanted to emphasize the socialism of his unions: "We are above all socialist--but the socialists of sincerity. Those who have appropriated the name up to now are only interested in duping the working classes."[47]

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[46]AN F7 12793, reports of October 11, November 29, 1904; January 20, 25, April 10, 28, December 15, 1905; August 16, 1906. Edouard's quote is in Théophile, Les Cahiers de l'ouvrier (Paris: Le Jaune, n.d.), p. 164.

[47]Manifesto of December 23, 1902, in Biétry, Socialisme et les jaunes, p. 101. He also wanted to appear more proworker than Lanoir. Lanoir, it must be said, realized the danger of being outflanked on the left and tried to trim his sails. At a meeting he attended of the Montceau jaune in April 1903, he did a complete about-face. Calling for a new era of practical reforms, he urged the union to unite with the revolutionaries, if need be, to obtain concessions from the exploiting companies. "Red and Yellow are only first names; our family name is Labor." Union ouvrière, April 11-18, 1903.

The campaign for a French socialism appropriate to the Yellows involved an emphasis on Proudhon as a counterweight to Marx. Proudhon, whose famous cry "property is theft" was usually taken out of context, had actually favored the widespread ownership of it. He was an ideal socialist from the Yellow standpoint. "We dream of giving to those who have nothing. It is necessary that everyone possess. Your /German socialism's/ final goal is expropriation. Ours is: for each one, a parcel of property."[48]

In January, 1903 the PSN condemned the strikes of miners and maritime workers:

> We are in a time of profound and dangerous economic crisis. Our national prosperity, and especially our industrial enterprises are menaced by the political agents of international socialism . . . who incite against one another the members of the great family of production . . . . In the name of socialism, the manipulators in Paris and their puppets in the provinces are systematically ruining our country. . . . In the face of such a danger, it is the obligation of all true socialists to take note of this and take steps to remedy it, by forming a compact group to organize resistance and proclaim a true national socialism. A socialism of love and peace, not hatred and war. A socialism of emancipation and not . . . of strikes. A socialism of lasting reforms . . . but never an irresponsible socialism. . . . We want the emancipation of the working class in a great, rich, prosperous France. 49

Biétry spoke of reconciling property and socialism, but it was hardly possible to combine the two. When the Fédération des Jaunes was reconstituted, and the Yellow name proclaimed again, socialism began to be deemphasized. The

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[48]Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, p. 105; Warin, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 53, 57.

[49]Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 89-92, 95, 103-4.

police suggested that it was necessary to drop the socialist aspect in return for the money that the jaunes were receiving from conservatives. However, although the Yellows were soon marching to the tune of antisocialism, nothing had changed but the label. The doctrine was the same.[50]

Their program called for: "firm and continued ameliorations;" the accession of manual labor to capital and property; opposition to all strikes which were not made necessary by employer intransigence; opposition to all strikes which were not strictly economic in character; the fixing of hours through the mutual agreement of employer and union; war against collectivism, which "places the hand of an irresponsible, anonymous master, harsher than the employer, on the workers;" guarantees for old age; encouragement of all private efforts of charity and benevolence; freedom of association, of education, and of conscience; the right of property for all; commercial capacity for unions and federations of unions; permanent relationships between employers and workers. To facilitate their work, syndicats patronaux were allowed to join the federation.[51]

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[50]The changeover was not immediate, nor was it definitive for over a year. Many members considered themselves socialists. The first issue of Le Jaune reprinted the PSN manifesto calling the Yellows true socialists. Other issues elaborated on the differences between red, German, Jewish socialism and the French variety. Proudhon was praised, as was Fourier, who qualified as a national socialist. Even more pleasing to the jaunes was the fact that the phalansteries recognized the importance of both capital and intelligence as key factors of production independent of labor. The jaunes sent a representative to a banquet honoring Fourier, and the Fourierists sent representatives to the First Congress. At the 1904 Congress, Alfred Poizat, a poet who was active in the federation, still spoke of jaunisme as true socialism, but the Congress definitively rejected it. See Le Jaune, January, 1904; April 30, May 21, June 25, August 20, 1904; April 8, December 30, 1905; Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 208-10; Premier Congrès, pp. 61-63, 127-29. The police report is in AN F7 12793, report of November 22, 1904.

A major emphasis was on profit sharing and stock purchasing: "When five hundred workers have shares in a company, they will be five hundred who will have something to preserve--and thus will assuredly be five hundred anti-strikers. Generalize this, develop it, and we will see no more of socialist demagogy."[52] Biétry's vision, or at least his language, was broad. He considered his work to be nothing less than a national renaissance, leading to a resurrection of the great guilds of the Middle Ages, "in a France made great, peaceful, Christian, and free."[53]

Following the pattern developed by Lanoir, Biétry decided to hold a congress in 1904 to stimulate the federation's growth and to attract more financial support. To guarantee success, he turned to royalist and Catholic groups and asked them to send delegates. He dispatched Vergoz, whom he had hired when Lanoir's bourse closed, to the provinces to organize unions quickly so that he could beef up the statistics indicating the condition of the federation.[54] The congress proved to be a success, in that it did give the impression of a viable, if small, movement. Only fifty delegates attended, and police reports noted that only fifteen of the unions

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[51]Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, p. 121.

[52]This statement was printed on page 1 of each issue of Le Jaune.

[53]Biétry, Rouges et jaunes, p. 32; Le Jaune, January, 1904; March 19, April 2, May 7, 1904.

[54]AN F7 12793, reports of September 29, October 11, October 29, November 22, 1904.

were important organizations.

A handful of industrialists made an appearance, the most important of which were Japy, Laroche-Houbert, and Raphael Toutain, as well as a Senator and two Deputies. The Lille, Tourcoing, and Roubaix federations sent delegates. Caen, Belfort, Montluçon, Cherbourg, and Le Havre, cities which had set up Bourses Libres under Biétry's auspices, were represented. Biétry's Parisian supporters and a smattering of various and sundry unions also came. However, neither Creusot, Montceau, nor Longwy attended. Any legally constituted union which was not a member of the C.G.T. had been invited. Yet the Paris Catholics, the Lyons independents, and the important Fédération des Employés de France stayed away. Victor Faron's Yellow union of laundry workers sent twelve delegates. Faron was a close associate of Biétry, and it is clear that they were trying to give an impression of greater strength than they actually had. Biétry claimed that 322,000 workers were represented, but that was a claim we need not take seriously.

The hall was decorated with the following slogans:

> It is necessary that capital works and labor possesses.
>
> Slavery is when one possesses nothing: neither his tools of production nor the product of his labor. Socialism, which dispossesses everyone, is a slave doctrine.
>
> The worker will be emancipated when he becomes a property owner. 55

55Quoted in Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 211-15. For a summary of the congress, see Pawlowski, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 41-45.

Biétry's opening speech declared that the Yellow movement was, above all, antisocialist. As he explained it, the decision had taken a long time to be made, but it was evident to the leaders of the federation that socialism meant strikes, internationalism, expropriation, and antireligion. It was, he said, a doctrine of death.[56] Not all the delegates agreed. Leclerc, supported by two other northerners, did not want an absolute condemnation of socialism. Biétry, Japy, Laroche-Joubert, Toutain, and Jooris argued for it. When the congress voted the following resolution, the pro-socialists, representing Christian Democratic unions of the Nord, withdrew from further participation in the congress and the movement generally.

> The congress repudiates all socialist principles, whether they be collectivist, communist, revolutionary, or any other kind because their effect is to limit and even suppress the acquisition of individual property. The congress will devote its propaganda to the acquisition of property by the working class. [57]

The congress marked the emergence of Japy as coleader of the federation. Along with Biétry, he dominated the discussions. After the meeting ended, he and Biétry undertook an organizing trip such as Biétry had once taken with Lanoir. He also wrote regularly for Le Jaune, and became, along with Biétry, the ideologue of the federation. The irony of the

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[56] Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 216-21; Le Jaune, May 28, 1904.

[57] Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 232-34, 265-67; Warin, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 74-75.

former enemies working together did not go unremarked, but Biétry was fulsome in his praise for his former employer. He said that if a Yellow movement existed, it was due to Japy, and that their personal cooperation was a living example of what the jaunes hoped to accomplish between employers and employees all over France.[58]

Japy's first major speech at the congress attacked collectivism and parliamentarism. The trouble with parliament, Japy explained, was that it was composed of four hundred lawyers or doctors who knew nothing about the vital interests of the nation. The working classes, which paid the taxes and were the lifeblood of the nation, were deluded into letting civil servants and deputies run the nation. The solution was the chambre de capacité, or economic parliament. Japy envisioned a series of regional parliaments representing all the local trades and industries. No economic laws could be passed by parliament without initial approval by the regional bodies.[59]

An interesting discussion was held on the question of worker cooperatives. The Paris jaunes wanted to encourage them, but did not want them to compete with small businesses. There was, as might be expected, substantial sympathy for the small entrepreneur, since may of the Yellow workers hoped to be one themselves eventually. They suggested admitting small

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[58]Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. v-vi.

[59]Ibid., pp. 239-50.

concerns into union buying cooperatives. This would give the petty bourgeois independent shopkeepers the advantages of large-scale buying. Jooris, however, called on the delegates to recognize the fact that worker cooperatives would hurt local commerce. His colleague Degueselle pointed out that the interests of workers should be the congress' only consideration. The delegates did not accept this argument. They were unwilling to accept a disparity of interest between entrepreneur and worker. Instead they voted that all businesses would be eligible to join Yellow cooperatives.

In reality, the jaunes never actively promoted cooperatives, even though theoretically they should have been enthusiastic about them. The employer presence in the movement made it emphasize the collaboration of classes in existing enterprises, rather than the creation of new types of production units. Japy attacked cooperation as a false idea. Théophile emphasized the difficulties involved. The Paris jaunes did not seem to have created any cooperatives, but the Lille group (Jooris was from Lille) supported a prosperous workers' bakery.[60]

While the congress did establish the federation on a firmer footing, it was not able to establish a broader and

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[60]Ibid., pp. 292-94; Gaston Japy, Réalites et utopies: les idées jaunes, 2nd ed. (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1906), p. 119; Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 19, 64-65, 108; Le Travail libre, June 5, 1904.

more complete program. The Fédération des Jaunes remained basically anti: anticollectivist, antipolitical, antistatist. The Yellows defined themselves in terms of who their enemies were: socialists, strikers, speculators, and Jews.[61]

The dominant motif was anticollectivism. Collectivism was variously described as a German, a Jewish, or a barbarian idea. Since the beginning of time, according to the jaune doctrine, man strove to acquire property. Socialism, in denying this, was actually reactionary. To the jaunes, socialism was only the culmination of the trends toward monopoly and statism. Socialism meant the monopoly of the state over all material resources; the worker would not have a house, tools, nor would he enjoy the fruits of his labor. Even worse, the state would be an arbitrary employer. Every industry run by the state was already a shambles; it was inefficiently run and could not turn a profit. Every state monopoly was a step on the road to socialism. In a way Marx never perceived, socialism was seen by Biétry and Japy as the heir of (state) capitalism.

The politicians, however, had a stake in the creation of socialism. A collectivist state needed organization. It needed chiefs to decide what to construct and what to produce. The civil servants and politicians welcomed collectivism because their power would be increased. The politicians and the bureau-

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[61] Biétry, Rouges et jaunes, p. 19; idem, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, p. 63; Le Jaune, May 28, 1904; Théophile, Cahiers, p. 21.

crats were a parasitical class, because they produced nothing. Worse, they were the possessors of privilege, which was supposed to have been eliminated by the French Revolution.[62]

The only role for the state, other than national defense, was subsidizing mutual aid societies and helping those who helped themselves. In addition, it was to create and maintain a favorable climate for business prosperity. A state which overstepped its bounds required higher taxes, and thus took away from the worker whatever capital he was able to acquire for himself. In this way the state stood in the way of worker auto-emancipation. A socialist state turned the worker into a parasite, since he had to depend on the state for everything.[63]

There were other reasons for hating socialism. It persecuted religion, it was antipatriotic, it was corrupt. Socialist politicians, in the Yellow view, got rich while they wrecked the nation. They set the worker, "lifeblood of the patrie," against the businessman.[64] What the socialists

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[62]Théophile, Cahiers, p. 44; Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 1-2, 5-6, 41, 48-50, 61-62, 165-77, 233; Japy, Réalités et utopies, pp. 34, 137; idem, Cahiers des travailleurs (Paris: Fédération des Jaunes de France, 1905), pp. 3-4, 6-8; idem, Fédération des Jaunes de France: cahiers des travailleurs (Montbéliard: Imprimerie du Petit Montbéliardais, 1905), pp. 1-6, 9-10; Biétry, Rouges et jaunes, pp. 19-20, 120-21; idem, Les Jaunes de France et la question ouvrière (Paris: Paul Paclot et Cie., n.d.), pp. 21, 62-63; Le Jaune, May 28, 1904; Le Travail libre (Lille), April, 1905; Chez les jaunes, pp. 59, 184.

[63]Japy, Réalités et utopies, p. 203; Biétry speech, quoted in Edouard Lecocq, Contre l'oligarchie: pour Marie-Georges Picquart et ses amis (Paris: n.p., n.d.), pp. 238-43; Biétry, Les Jaunes de France, pp. 60-64, 103; Chez les jaunes, pp. 58, 100-2, 115-17, 182-84; Le Jaune, March 16, 1907, August 11, 1906.

[64]Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 9-11, 42, 57, 145-46, 309-11; Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 14, 179, 182; Biétry, Les Jaunes de France, pp. 30-39, 104-5; idem, Rouges et jaunes,

failed to recognize was the importance of capital and capitalism. The Yellows distinguished between two types of capital: finance and industrial. Industrial capital was necessary. It was a mistake to think that labor created everything; in fact, capital alone could exist by itself. The goal of all human effort was to create capital. Industrial capital, moreover, provided work for the worker. Speculation, or finance capital, created nothing but wealth for itself. The industrialist was necessary, and it was natural that the two classes live together peacefully. It was also natural that the businessman be paid for his pain, his work, his risk, and his capital. But it was just too that the worker be made a collaborator in the success of the enterprise. At the very least he was entitled to a decent wage. To the jaunes, there were really two classes: those who produced and those who did not. In the latter group they placed bureaucrats, politicians, intellectuals, socialists, and labor agitators.[65]

It did not follow from these premises that total equality was desirable. There were differences in skill among workers; therefore, there had to be differential pay rates. And if the

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pp. 7-13, 17-18; Japy, Réalités et utopies, pp. 44-45, 284-89; idem, Fédération, pp. 2, 4, 12; Biétry, Le Trépied (Paris: Société Française d'Imprimerie et de Librairie, 1911), p. 95.

[65]Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 13, 18-20, 23, 27; Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 4, 15, 149-50, 320; Japy, Réalités et utopies, pp. 37, 107-8, 111-16, 197-202, 222; Biétry, Les Jaunes de France, pp. 21-22, 41, 108; Japy, Cahiers, pp. 15-16; Biétry, Le Trépied, p. 7; Lecocq, Contre l'oligarchie, p. 364; Japy, Intellectuels exploiteurs (Paris: Fédération des Jaunes de France, 1905), pp. 6-11; idem, Fédération, pp. 11-12.

entrepreneur made a bigger contribution to the success of an enterprise than his employers, he deserved a proportionally higher return.[66]

The Yellows developed an interesting version of a conspiracy theory which tied all their scapegoats together: socialists, financial capitalists, and Jews. Socialism was considered to be an agent of financial, speculative, Jewish capital. The "evidence" was the Jewish money that was behind the socialist press. The socialist politicians were merely the agents of Jewish finance. When these financiers wanted to buy up the stock of a profitable company cheaply, they ordered their socialist lackeys to unleash a strike, or stir up worker unrest. As the company experienced labor difficulties and the price of its stock dropped, it was gobbled up by these speculators. The socialists had betrayed the French worker for the promise of money and power.[67]

Biétry was the most prominent antisemite among the Yellows; not all of his followers accepted his anti-Jewish bias, nor did they think it was relevant to a workers' movement. Poizat, in particular, worried about the influence Drumont exercised on the Yellows and rejected the politics of anti-

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[66]Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 150-51; Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 14-15.

[67]Japy, Réalités et utopies, pp. 32-34. Although Japy was not an antisemite, he did accept the view that socialism was an agent of speculative capital. Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 4, 17-18, 20; idem, Rouges et jaunes, p. 17; Le Travail libre (Lille), June 5, 1905; November 1905.

semitism.[68] But Biétry refused to budge from his position. Japy, who was not moved by religious hatred either, urged that questions of religion be left aside. Yellows should have only one consideration: was a person a cosmopolitan, an exploiter, a politician? If so, he was an enemy, regardless of religion.[69]

Neither Poizat nor Japy had much effect on Biétry. Urbain Gohier, the notorious ex-socialist antisemite was given a great deal of publicity. When the Black Hundreds rampaged against the Jews of Russia following the abortive Revolution of 1905, Biétry went into paroxysms of delight: "On, Russian brothers. Liberate yourselves from the Jews. Scatter their bones across your fields."[70]

The socialist question and the Jewish question were inextricably mixed in Biétry's mind. Jews controlled the stock exchange; they controlled the banks. They destroyed the small rural banks which rendered financial services to the peasants. They manipulated the salaries of the workers. They played with the health of the nation:

> There must no longer be a worker congress that fails to consider the Jewish question. It is the stumbling

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[68] Le Jaune, April 15, 1905; AN F7 127883, report of May 11, 1905.

[69] Le Jaune, May 13, 1905.

[70] Ibid., October 14, 21, November 11, 1905.

> block to humanity's progress. It is necessary to find a solution to it before anything else can be done. The Russians have given us a practical example--extermination of the race. 71

The head of the jaunes maintained that it was not a distraction. To convince those who were not convinced, he undertook to publish, in Le Jaune, the "speech" of the Grand Rabbi of the Sanhedrin, outlining the permanent conspiracy of the Jews against the nation, the cross, and civilization. The Protocols of the Elders of Zion found an enthusiastic publisher in the Yellow movement.[72]

While Biétry was preoccupied with the Jewish conspiracy, Japy attempted to formulate a semiscientific analysis of the beneficial aspects of productive capital. According to the industrialist from Doubs, man was different from animals in that he produced more than he needed to satisfy his needs. That excess production Japy called surtravail, which equaled capital. This surtravail, or capital, was exchanged among men. Later, the use of money facilitated the exchange. As one's surtravail increased (presumably through hard work and the application of intelligence), some men found that they could pay other men out of their surtravail to create even more. Thus, the wealth of the nation was used to enrich its own citizens. The well-being of the nation depended on the creation of new capital, since the more capital there was, the more work there

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[71] Le Jaune, November 18, 1905. Also September 21, October 5, 1907; March 14, March 21, 1908. Théophile, Cahiers, p. 60, noted that Jews would not be allowed in any cooperatives that jaunes might create.

[72] Le Jaune, March 14, 21, 1908. A particularly vile expression of antisemitism is in ibid., January 27, 1906.

was, and the greater the opportunity for all to acquire capital.[73]

The Yellows did try to elaborate a positive program of desired reforms. Since they disliked the parliamentary system, it was incumbent on them to draw an outline of an alternate political system. Their views resembled those of the antiparliamentary right in general: a more authoritarian executive in a more decentralized nation. They favored a reduction in the number of deputies, a lessening of the powers of the Ministers, and direct election of the President under a system of compulsory voting. In this way, they hoped the President would become more than a figurehead, and would serve as an independent authority.[74]

If these political reforms might be considered their minimum program, their maximum program called for a reorganization of French society on a corporatist basis. Although not fully thought out, the Yellows desired a reconstitution of the old guilds, albeit subject to modern conditions.[75] Using traditional corporatist language, they insisted on replacing the politics of parties with a politics based on economic interests. Corporatism was a technique for taking the government out of the hands of politicians (lawyers, intellectuals, professors,

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[73]Japy, "L'Oeuvre syndicale," Le Travail libre (Lille), August, 1905.

[74]Le Jaune, February 1, December 15, 1906.

[75]Japy, Réalités et utopies, pp. 79-85; Le Jaune, May 7, 1904.

and bureaucrats). The jaunes were not clear on whether the chambres de capacité would be solely regional bodies, or whether they would replace the Senate. They similarly left unclear whether the chambres would have a consultative role or a veto power; whether their competence would extend to all matters or just to economic issues. One point was clear: the corporate organization of society would establish class harmony and constitute a counterweight to the arbitrary state.[76]

Biétry was lyrical in describing the guilds. He maintained that the worker was happier, had better working conditions, and had a better chance to become an independent entrepreneur. Of primary importance was the fact that there was a harmony of interest between capital and labor in the guild so that the two classes lived in peace. The unity of syndicats patronaux and labor unions in the Fédération des Jaunes was the first step toward a recreation of the medieval world.[77]

The other positive aspects of the Yellow program were profit sharing and the acquisition of property. Profit sharing was a technique for preventing the alienation of the worker from his production. It made him a capitalist, gave him a

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[76]Poizat in Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 171-72; Le Jaune, November 4, 1905; Japy, Réalités et utopies, pp. 248-53; idem, Fédération, pp. 12-13; Biétry, Les Jaunes de France, p. 20.

[77]Biétry, Les Jaunes de France, pp. 8-15.

stake in the health of his factory and industry, made his interests coincident to those of the owner, and thus replaced the class war with class collaboration. As an added attraction, the increased amount of money in circulation would cause an increase in consumption and thus production and so reduce unemployment.[78]

The belief in profit sharing was easy to entertain but difficult to implement. Théophile maintained that the workers, as participants in the production of a product, had a right to share in the profits. He favored a law to make it obligatory, but not all Yellows agreed, least of all Biétry, who preferred individual agreements made in bargaining sessions between unions and employer groups.[79] When the Yellow Federation underwent another reorganization in 1908, and adopted a more militant program, it included compulsory profit sharing.

There was a certain confusion about the acquisition of real property. On the one hand, the Yellows desired that each worker own his own home. Through the individual ownership of property, man achieved security, dignity, and independence. Even more desirable for the worker was to become a small businessman. But as a social solution for the great mass of

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[78]Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 40-41; idem, Le Trépied, p. 141; Japy, Réalités et utopies, p. 115; Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 187-88.

[79]Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 65, 104-5, 112-12. Biétry favored subjecting large corporations or monopolies only to such a law: Le Socialisme et les jaunes, p. 300; "Deuxième Congrès National des Jaunes de France (1906)," in Le Jaune, March 17, 1906.

workers, the emphasis was placed on coproprietorship through stock ownership. There was a natural connection between profit sharing and stock acquisition. Profits could be given in the form of shares, for example. Or, more commonly, the intelligent worker could use his share of the profits to purchase the stock of the company which employed him. The Yellows advocated making a minimum number of shares available to the workers at an affordable price.[80]

Unfortunately, it would have taken a much more militant movement to force French businessmen to give up any part of their profits, much less make their stock available to the workers. Only a handful of employers ever instituted such schemes; Laroche-Joubert and Japy were the only important ones. Laroche-Joubert, who ran a paper company in Angoulême, even admitted workers to his Board of Directors.[81]

The ideas were not impractical. Many democratic nations are now experimenting with industrial democracy. Codetermination in West Germany is probably the main example. Profit sharing

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[80]Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 48-50, 187; Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 27, 41; Japy, Fédération, p. 13; idem, Cahiers, pp. 5, 21; Le Jaune, December 29, 1906; Poizat speech at Le Jaune banquet, June 1904, quoted in Théophile, Cahiers, p. 177. Interestingly, a bill was introduced in the Chamber in 1909 by none other than Aristide Briand, requiring all companies of a specified size to set aside stock for purchase at a minimum price by workers. Although it was not passed, it is noteworthy that Briand developed the idea in conjuction with a group of C.G.T. reformists such as Coupat and Clueut and a group of Proudhonian mutualists. See M.G. Dézas, "Participation et démocratie sociale: l'expérience Briand de 1909," Le Mouvement social, no. 87 (April-June 1974), pp. 109-39.

[81]A survey was conducted in 1923: Ministère du Travail, Office du Travail, Enquête sur la participation aux bénéfices (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1923). It discovered only seventy-five establishments with profit sharing plans in operation in that year. There were 126 in 1893, according to the Office du Travail. At its height, 168 firms engaged in it. Curiously,

and stock options are not unusual features of major American corporations. In these cases, the motivation, while management-inspired, is the same: create social peace by giving the workers a stake in the "system." There was much that was absurd or inconsistent in the jaune experience, but profit sharing and coproprietorship were not among them. What makes the Yellows significant is that they were a working-class organization in favor of these reforms. They expressed, for a certain number of workers, at least, the desire to be integrated into the nation, as opposed to revolutionizing it.

The jaunes' doctrine included strikes but the statutes of the federation specified the terms. No strike could take place without the submission of written demands and a ten-day waiting period. Employers who belonged to the federation were required to give fifteen days' notice if they planned to close their plant, and were not allowed to fire strikers. In return, the strikers were forbidden from using violence. During the waiting period, an arbitration committee was to

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wages were not found to be higher than in similar concerns without plans. Twenty-seven firms said it made labor relations very cordial. See pp. v, vii, 125-26. According to the Année sociale internationale, 1913-1914, p. 600, stock sharing was nonexistent. The Bulletin du Ministère du Travail et de la Prévoyance Sociale, April 1914, p. 277, counted 114 enterprises engaged in profit sharing, but for the most part, there was no participation in the administration of the company, although there sometimes was a joint committee to deal with questions concerning the operation of the system. A full range of industries was represented, from insurance companies and banks to mining, printing, construction, textiles, transportation, chemical products, paper, food trades, and agriculture. Also pp. 278-79.

be set up by the regional office of the federation. If arbitration proved unsuccessful, the union then had to notify the National Council of its desire to strike, and allow it the opportunity to mediate. Only if the mediation proved to be unsuccessful did the union have the right to strike.[82] As Théophile put it, it was far better to fear strikes than to desire them. The union was urged never to make unreasonable demands, and at all times negotiations had to be amiable and loyal.[83]

It was a rare situation indeed when the Fédération des Jaunes supported a strike, although it did happen. Some observers have misunderstood the extent to which the federation engaged in strikes because they were not sufficiently aware of the distinction between the actual members of the federation and the sympathetic, but independent, unions. The great textile strike in the Nord in 1909, for example, was not a Yellow strike. The unions involved were those Catholic groups which had never formally joined the federation. By 1909, in fact, they had formally disassociated themselves from Biétry. This did not prevent Victor Renard of the C.G.T. textile workers from referring to them as Yellows. They were jaune in the generic but not the technical sense. Biétry was not happy

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[82]Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 335-37. The Lille and Roubaix federations had similar statutes and practices. See Chez les jaunes, pp. 86-87; Le Travail libre (Lille), April 5, 1904.

[83]Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 39-42.

with their collaboration with the C.G.T. in the strike.[84]

In one case, however, the federation was sympathetic to a strike the C.G.T. also supported. When the postal workers struck, also in 1909, the Yellows found it easy to agree with the grievances of the workers against one of their bêtes noires, a state monopoly.[85] Almost all the actual Yellow strikes took place in the provinces. Albi weavers, Brest arsenal workers, Caen tramway workers, and Orléans tobacco workers who had formed Yellow unions engaged in work stoppages. I could find only one strike which took place in Paris, among workers who made cardboard toys on a piece-work basis. They struck to prevent a reduction in earnings caused by the introduction of a slow drying paint which caused a slow-up in production.[86]

If the jaunes did not strike often, neither did they categorically reject them. Because of their origins, however,

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[84]Mosse, "The French Right and the Working Class," p. 202, called it a Yellow strike, although he did recognize that it was a local affair. He misunderstood Biétry's coolness to it, however. Relations between Lille and the federation had not been good for several years, and there was a public break in 1908. See Le Jaune, September 19, 1908, May 8, 1909. The confusion of terms was typified by Renard, who used the word jaune indiscriminately. See Action ouvrière, no. 4 (December 15, 1909). On the strike itself, see AN F7 13195, "Les Royalistes et les syndicalistes (1908-1914)," reports of January 31, March 26, December 22, 1909 and excerpt from Le Réveil du Nord, November 21, 1909; Le Jaune, October 16, 1909; Dictionnaire biographique 10: 213-14.

[85]Le Jaune, March 20, 22, 1909.

[86]Le Jaune, September 23, 1905, February 6, 13, 1909; AN F7 12793, report of February 1907; Le Travail libre (Lille), August, 1905. The Carmaux jaunes joined the "red" union in 1914 in a strike for a better retirement law. Directed against the government, it was a "political" strike, the kind which the federation had always disapproved. The Carmaux union had never formally joined the federation. Trempé, Les Mineurs de Carmaux 2: 811-12.

they could never live down the reputation as an organization of strike breakers. The federation received continual requests from employers for strikebreakers, but protested against this strongly. It was not a professional strikebreaking association, and became angry with those businessmen who continued to treat it as such. When employers formed an organization of their own to supply strikebreakers, the Yellows strongly condemned it. The main complaint the jaunes had against French capitalists was that they refused to work with them, preferring no worker organization at all. Then, when threatened with a strike, or with the organization of a C.G.T. union, they suddenly wanted their help. But after the strike had ended, they once again wanted nothing to do with the jaunes.

It was even more galling to some of the Yellows that so few businessmen joined the Fédération des Jaunes. It seemed difficult for them to realize that any worker organization, no matter how moderate, was undesirable to most French entrepreneurs. Although the demands of the Yellows were moderate, they still required some concessions on the part of the employers, concessions they were unwilling to make.[87]

Two other aspects of the Yellow doctrine and practice should be noted. They were strong believers in mutualism.

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[87] Le Jaune, January 20, April 14, 1906; August 10, November 16, 1907; Biétry, Le Socialisme et les jaunes, pp. 184-87; idem, Rouges et jaunes, pp. 25-27, in which Biétry called on businessmen to make their mea culpa; Czulowski, "Les Erreurs du patronat," Le Jaune, August 31, 1907. For the jaune demands, Chez les jaunes, pp. 58-59; Le Travail libre (Lille), October 10, 1904.

Théophile said that a union without mutual aid was like a body without a soul. All Yellow unions were urged to create self-help institutions, and at the 1909 Congress an attempt was made to set up a central fund to help the individual unions to do just that.[88] The jaunes also campaigned for the Sunday day of rest, which they saw as a combination of Christianity and social justice. Any employer who required his employees to work on Sunday was considered revoltingly greedy, and the Yellows indicated that they would not oppose the practice of not showing up for work on that day. However, there is no evidence that this tactic was actually tried.[89]

During the 1904-1906 period, the Fédération des Jaunes remained essentially a small movement, but they were numerous enough to attract the attention of the right and the animosity of the C.G.T. The term Yellow was the ultimate perjorative expression for a cégétiste to use. The revolutionaries even applied it to Keufer, who was highly insulted by such a usage. On the other side, the right rallied behind the Yellows. The National Council of the federation included a general, an admiral, several industrialists and large landowners, and two literary figures.[90]

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[88]Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 67-78, 143.

[89]Ibid., pp. 13, 81-88.

[90]The list of members is in Le Jaune, April 22, 1905 and AN F7 12793. In addition, there was an ex-Minister of Public Instruction and a journalist on the Council.

Biétry and Japy travelled through France, building support and lashing out at the "reds." Biétry normally drew several hundred people to his rallies, and he usually provoked a counterdemonstration by the C.G.T., which sent out speakers to refute him. Often, these situations erupted into violence. Biétry was physically attacked on several occasions; sometimes a riot would occur. Once, a demonstrator was shot and killed.

In addition to his organizing efforts, Biétry spent much time and effort searching for new sources of money. His agents--employees of the federation, such as Czulowski, Vergoz, Gauthier, Faron--did the same. Often, they found employers unwilling to give any money, although sometimes they were amenable to promoting Yellow propaganda and encouraging their workers to join the Yellow union. On occasion, Biétry's agent appeared to collect money for the federation and then pocketed it for himself.[91]

There was competition among nationalist, clerical, and antisemitic groups to bring Biétry under their wing. In addition

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[91]The shooting took place in Tourcoing. AN F7 12793, file of November 4, 1905. For information on their campaign, reports of March 6, April 10, November 4, 11, 1905; July 23, August 28, September 28, November 17, 1906. A meeting at Arras was publicized by the jaunes as having 1500 persons attend. The police reported 500. See the telegram to Havas, Echo de Paris, Libre Parole and Le Matin in AN F7 12793. The fond also has a telegram from Alençon to the C.G.T. dated November 1906, requesting that a speaker be sent to reply to Biétry, who had just arrived there. Other reports on organizing drives are in AN F7 13606, December 27, 1905 and February 20, 1908; AN F7 12793, reports of March 28, November 15, 1905; February 4, July 3, 25, 1906.

to Drumont, L'Autorité, a Bonapartist paper, gave the Yellows publicity. Guy de Cassagnac, the publisher, had hoped for a working relationship with the Fédération des Jaunes. Clerical groups, particularly in the provinces, established contact with him. In return for contributions, Bietry appeared at their meetings. These groups even agreed to propagate his ideas and distribute Yellow literature. Up to 1905, however, Biétry's closest ties were still to the Libre Parole.[92]

In 1905 the Action Libérale decided to support Biétry. The Action Libérale of Jacques Piou was the most important electoral organization on the right. It was clerical, but republican, which meant that it kept its distance from the antisemitic or antiparliamentary leagues. At first, it was not sympathetic to the Yellows. However, the Action Libérale was influential in the independent unions of Marseilles. When these unions decided to adhere to the Fédération des Jaunes, Piou reconsidered. According to one report, Piou provided Biétry with 1500 francs a month. That seems a little high, even for an organization without financial worries. The Ligue Patriotique des Français, which was affiliated with the Action Libérale, also helped the Yellows.[93] Relations were never close,

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[92]Ibid., reports of October 11, 1904; February 21, March 5, April 10, 12, 14, November 28, December 15, 1905; January 31, September 28, November 11, 14, December 6, 1906. Those reports on the Libre Parole group indicate that Méry helped draw up the statutes of the federation. Henri Leroy, an editor of Libre Parole, moved over to assume the editorship of Le Jaune.

[93]AN F7 12793, reports of October 6, December 12, 1905; November 14, 1906. Piou had originally considered Biétry to be merely an opportunist. He noted that Biétry had failed to make any impact in the Longwy miners' strike of 1904, and that the syndicats jaunes were without influence.

though. The style and substance of the leader of the jaunes was too far removed from the honest parliamentarism of Piou. By March, 1906 Piou's support seems to have ended, except for isolated instances.[94]

Biétry was able to garner support from such diverse groups (which often did not get along with each other) because he professed views shared in whole or part by all of the rightist groups. As one agent put it, he represented the bonne blouse--the good, patriotic French worker--so dreamed of on the right. All the rightist groups wanted a working-class following and the Yellows provided the perfect vehicle. The much publicized attempt of the Action Française to win a working-class alliance was not original to Georges Valois and Charles Maurras. Biétry had the advantage of having been a true worker. His federation was not a royalist group with a smattering of worker members (which was the more common form of organization) but a real union movement. Biétry

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[94]There is a fond on the Action Libérale in the Archives Nationales, F7 12878. It shows a fairly powerful organization, which obtained support from royalists, the congregations, and big industrialists. In 1903 it reportedly had five million francs in its treasury and published six provincial journals. In 1905, it boasted 258 provincial committees and six full-time organizers. All the nationalist deputies attended its 1905 Congress; most of them owed their election to Action Libérale money. By 1907, it had lost its leading position to the Action Française, which competed with it for the francs of clericals and royalists. There were also some reports that it subsidized some C.G.T. unions. It played a role in the Bourse Libre of Saint-Nazaire and the Carmaux jaune. See AN F7 12883, report of May 11, 1905; AN F7 13606, report of September 5, 1906; AN F7 12862, report of February 4, 1908; AN F7 12793, report of July 21, 1904; Trempé, Les Mineurs de Carmaux 2: 808-9; Benjamin Martin, Jr., "The Creation of the Action Libérale Populaire: An Example of Party Formation in Third Republic France," French Historical Studies 9 (Fall 1976): 660-89.

was well aware of this. As one report said, he "plays the worker as some play the fool."[95]

Needless to say, success brought internal difficulties, which were exacerbated by the fact that the price of success was an alliance with antisemitic, or royalist, or antidreyfusard groups, which upset the pure syndicalist elements among the Yellows. Biétry's authoritarian manner alienated some of his followers, such as Victor Faron, who had been one of the early supporters. Others thought the organization was too tame and favored more militant action such as a march on the Chamber. Most importantly, many of the workers in the federation resented the intrusion of nonworkers and resisted the proroyalist and antirepublican atmosphere which accompanied the nonworkers.[96]

To rally the militants and attract new support, Biétry toyed with the idea of an armed attack on the headquarters of the C.G.T. but finally decided (in the tried and true manner) to hold another congress. The police informers did not consider the 1906 Congress (Paris) to have been a great success. They noted that there were 150-200 delegates. However, some appeared only to collect their stipend, and then went off to see the sights of Paris. To fill the hall, many invitations were distributed among right-wing circles, and it was estimated that

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[95]AN F7 12793, reports of June 4, 1905; March 5, August 18, 1906.

[96]Ibid., reports of April 14, 28, 1905; AN F7 12883, report of May 11, 1905. The agent in this last report wondered if the reactionary influences in the federation would paralyze its development as a union movement.

three-quarters of those attending had nothing to do with the federation. The nationalist deputies had been invited, but none participated. They feared angering Piou, on whom they depended for election contributions.[97] Under these conditions, Biétry's claim that the congress represented 500,000 workers was a gross exaggeration.

Once again, the independent unions of the Nord sent representatives. In addition, Toulon arsenal workers, Brest longshoremen, Longwy miners, and the Bourses Libres of Laval, Cherbourg, and Le Havre attended. For the first and only time, the Catholic unions of Paris (with the exception of the powerful Syndicat des Employés du Commerce et de l'Industrie) sent delegates. Along with assorted other unions, the ancient Union des Peintres en Bâtiments, which had been a member of Veyssier's Union des Chambres Syndicales, sent a delegate.

A program was adopted, including mutual aid, abolition of night work in the textile industry, separation of schools and the state, civil capacity for the unions, and an autonomous retirement plan. Resolutions were passed against foreign workers, alcoholism, and a uniform eight-hour day. Finally a resolution called on parliament to pass a law requiring all corporations to set aside a portion of their stock for purchase by the workers.

The biggest debate occurred over the question of strikes. Wayss, a mechanic and long-time activist who represented the

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[97]AN F7 12793, report of March 13, 1906.

pure syndical element, argued that if a strike was declared in a factory by a majority vote, all workers had a duty to support it. Great opposition was expressed to this idea, which attacked the essence of Yellow unionism. Japy, finally, achieved a compromise solution with a resolution stating that the best method of settling labor disputes was through permanent arbitration committees.[98] Obviously, this was not a permanent solution which could reconcile the different factions. The cracks in the Yellow organization were being exposed precisely at the moment of Biétry's greatest achievement: as improbable as it may seem, Pierre Biétry was elected deputy from Brest in May 1906. This too had a dual and contradictory effect. Although it brought Biétry more rightist support, it also exacerbated the syndical elements. The Yellow movement, we may recall, had been founded on a hatred and mistrust of politicians.

In the Chamber, Biétry took little part in the debates, but his presence was strongly felt. On the few occasions on which he attempted to speak, he was greeted with violent disruptions from the left. When he attacked Aristide Briand in virulent and libellous terms over Briand's role in the revision of the Dreyfus Affair, he was temporarily expelled

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[98]The account of the Congress is in Le Jaune, March 3, 10, 17, 1906; Biétry, Les Jaunes de France, pp. 91-92; Pawlowski, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 46-49.

from the Chamber.[99]

Otherwise, he was ignored by the majority. His plan for the state to turn over control of the western railroads to a company formed by the workers received no support. A law he introduced for the separation of schools and the state was likewise ignored. This had long been a part of the Yellow program. Its ideological basis was that the state had no business interfering in matters of conscience. The hidden agenda was the desire on the part of all rightists to reestablish the church schools which had been largely destroyed through the anticlerical campaigns. If parents were given free choice over how to educate their children, Biétry expected that the happy result would be the revival of religious schools.[100]

Apart from these issues, Biétry played no important role in parliamentary politics. However, to the great embarassment of his supporters, he voted to raise the salaries of deputies! Not only had he made a career out of attacking politicians, but he had demagogically accused them of getting rich through politics and caring only for themselves.[101]

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[99]Chambre des Députés, Débats parlementaires, compte rendu in extenso, 9e législature, session ordinaire de 1906, pp. 1975-80; ibid., session extraordinaire de 1908, pp. 1775-76; Jean Jolly, Dictionnaire des parlementaires français: notices biographiques sur les ministres, députés, et sénateurs français de 1889 à 1940 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962) 2: 600.

[100]Débats parlementaires, session ordinaire de 1906, pp. 2928-35; Chambre des Députés, neuvième législature, session de 1910, annèxe au procès-verbal de la 2e séance du 14 février 1910, proposition de loi sur la separation des écoles et de l'état presentée par M. Biétry, député. The idea was common among Catholics.

[101]Le Jaune, December 1, 1906.

In the long run, a true union movement, even a Yellow one, could not survive such outrageous opportunism on the part of its leader. In the short run, however, his election gave the federation a burst of vitality. Royalists, nationalists, Bonapartists, clericals, and reactionaries of all stripes courted him even more enthusiastically. The right, at least, cheered his speeches in the Chamber; the Echo de Paris distributed 100,000 copies of his maiden speech. In what most assuredly was not a coincidence, the federation moved into newer, bigger, more expensive quarters immediately after the election.[102]

Unfortunately for Biétry, his support was dependent upon his ability to lead a mass of workers into the ranks of the right. But the federation had not been growing. It was unable to attract most of the independent unions.[103] The successes tended to be small: a union of department store employees was created in Paris and joined the federation; Le Genêt, a union of male domestics (also in Paris) had a fairly vigorous life.[104] More importantly, Biétry's flirtation with royalism resulted in very bitter feelings. Many militants were on the point of resigning. The nonworker elements in the federations, such as the wealthy landowner A. de Guigné, wanted to drive the

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[102] AN F7 12793, report of August 16, 1906.

[103] Ibid., reports of September 21, 1906; May 11, June 17, 19, July 12, 15, 1907; AN F7 13195, report of November 21, 1908; Fédération Syndicaliste des Jaunes de France, compte rendu des travaux du premier congrès économique et social tenu à Paris les 28, 29 et 30 octobre 1909 (Paris: P. Lethielleux, 1909), p. 63: Léon Verleye, an old militant, said that winning the independents was the main task they had to accomplish.

[104] AN F7 12793, report of February 24, 1907; Le Jaune, September 1, 1906. One of its biggest failures was its inability to win over the 8,000-member Syndicat Indépendant des Mineurs du Nord et du Pas-de-Calais.

republican and syndical activists out of the federation and put the Fédération des Jaunes firmly in the reactionary camp. They had a fair degree of success, but it hurt the organization. Castagnol and Jarry, two original members from the days of the schism with Lanoir, resigned. Jooris pulled his Lille unions out of their position of cordial relations. The 1907 Congress was the last one to which they sent delegates.[105] One informant even thought that Japy was trying to force Biétry out of the federation, although I could find no confirmation of this. Japy himself left the jaunes sometime after the 1907 Congress.[106] Finally, internal rivalries, sometimes based on personal considerations, continued and weakened the Yellows.[107]

When it became apparent that Biétry did not have a mass movement behind him, nor that there was any chance of the Fédération des Jaunes becoming one, his attractiveness waned. His attempt to obtain simultaneous support from rival groups eventually rebounded against him as he came to be regarded as a gros mangeur and a prostitute selling his support to the

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[105] AN F7 12793, reports of January 11, June 15, 1907; Le Jaune, January 5, 1907, May 8, 1909.

[106] AN F7 12793, report of April 15, 1907.

[107] AN F7 12793, report of March 28, 1907, described the dispute between Czulowski, secretary of the federation, and Lecocq, editor of Le Jaune. Apparently, Lecocq had been given a higher salary than Czulowski, five hundred francs a month to three-hundred-fifty. There were also rumors about Biétry and Czulowski's wife.

highest bidder. In the end, no one wanted him.[108]

The 1907 Congress was not a rousing affair. The traditional resolutions were passed condemning state monopolies, an income tax, and the state retirement law. But disputes broke out between Biétry and the other delegates. The head of the federation, who had always opposed a uniform eight-hour day law, came out against the law which mandated Sundays off for all workers. This was ill-received by the delegates, and they rejected his arguments by passing a resolution favoring the Sunday rest. On the retirement law also differences arose. The Catholics from the Nord had decided that it was impractical to ask the unions to handle retirement systems, and that a plan without compulsory contributions would not work either. Therefore, they decided to support the law the government had proposed. In this, they remained in the minority. But when Biétry also opposed the notion of the collective contract, several members had had enough. Although a compromise resolution committed it to further study, it was clear that Biétry was alienating his working-class support because of his unwillingness to press for prolabor reforms.[109]

Biétry no longer responded to a working-class constituency. He had become a politician, moving in political circles. His

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[108] AN F7 12862, reports of November 10, 1908 and January 5, 1909.

[109] "3me Congrès Social, Professionnel, Economique, National et International des Jaunes," in Le Jaune, April 13, 20, 1907. Biétry's dislike of the collective contract was not new. See Le Jaune, February 22, 1908.

decisions were not made on the basis of the interests of the working class, but on the needs of the French right. The syndical elements in the organization wanted actual reforms; Biétry had no real interest in them. The police reports noted that his efforts after 1906 were devoted to creating electoral committees, such as the Ligue Nationale pour la Défense des Jaunes and the Comités Jaunes. Le Jaune spoke of uniting the right and conquering political power.[110]

Biétry managed to obtain some outside support through 1908. His main props were the Ligue de la Patrie Française and de Cassagnac's Autorité. The Action Française also made a brief attempt to win over the jaunes. However, the royalists of Maurras were after bigger game. They lost interest when they realized that there was not a sizable movement behind Biétry. The Action Française felt that it could win over the C.G.T., but to establish its credibility it had to make a complete break with the Yellows.

The Action Française and the Yellows did come together again briefly in 1909, when they both demonstrated at the Sorbonne against Professor Thalamas. Although Mosse implied that they worked together on this, the reality of the situation was somewhat different. They did not coordinate their plans, and there was jealousy among the various groups. The jaunes

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[110] AN F7 12793, reports of August 16, 1906; November 24, 1907; April 1, 5, 1908, May 21, 1908; Le Jaune, December 7, 1907; January 11, 1908; AN F7 13195, report of August 8, 1908.

demonstrated together with the Autorité contingent, not with the Action Française. The recognition that they were in a common struggle led them to grant a certain amount of respect to each other, but that was as far as it went.[111]

Another congress was held in 1908. It was a small affair. The police described it as an eye-opener for Admiral Bienaimé, the head of the Ligue de la Patrie Française. He had thought that the federation was stronger; disillusioned, he left the congress before it ended.

Once the bubble burst, it became obvious that Biétry was only a farceur, a bloated egotist (as the police reports described him). Resignations from the federation came in steadily. His colleagues in the Chamber were aware of this, and it contributed to a further weakening of his position.[112] The financial situation of the federation also deteriorated. Biétry tried unsuccessfully to sell more shares in Le Jaune. By 1909, even the Franciscans had abandonned Biétry; they decided to create their own unions. Things were so bad that the

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[111] AN F7 13195, reports of November 21, 25, 1908; AN F7 12862, reports of February 4, April 22, November 10, 1908; Le Jaune, March 31, 1906; August 29, September 12, 1908; April 24, 1909; Biétry, Le Trépied, p. 108; Maurras, "Triple Réponse au jaune," Action française, August 31, 1908. Once the Action Française broke with the Yellows, it hired two of its officials, Henri Léroy and Noël Gaulois to do working-class organizing for it. On the Sorbonne riots, see AN F7 12862, reports of January 3, 18, 23, 29, 1909, February 3, 1909; Le Jaune, January 2, 23, February 13, 1909. When it was all over, the jaunes praised the monarchists for their courage but reiterated that they had different goals.

[112] AN F7 12793, reports of November 24, 1907, February 5, 1908: AN F7 12862, reports of April 22, December 17, 1908. A few new unions joined, most of which were in Saint-Etienne and were newly created in response to an attempted general strike.

jaunes were forced to admit, for the first time ever, that they were not as numerous as they had claimed.[113]

As his union organization deteriorated, Biétry continued his political adventure. He founded a political party, the Parti Propriétiste. It was organized from top to bottom according to the führerprinzip:

> Frenchmen who believe in God . . . we are organizing to save property.
> The Parti Propriétiste is an organ of combat--its rules constitute a discipline. . . .
> All committees without exception are under the command of a chief, named by the chief of the party. . . .
> The committees' function, other than obeying the orders, instructions, and counsels given directly by the chief of the party . . . are to induce the formation of Yellow unions. . . .
> The party is an organ of regeneration for France. Its goal can be summed up concisely: it will make the counterrevolution, the National Revolution. [114]

When he made Le Jaune the official organ of the party,[115] the syndicalist members had had enough. A formal division was agreed to: the federation was reorganized as the Fédération Syndicaliste des Jaunes de France, and separated from the Parti Propriétiste. In contrast to the previous federation, no employers,

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[113] The admission was made by A. Gautherot, a typographer and long-time Yellow in Le Jaune, August 1, 1908. On the growing weakness, see AN F7 12793, reports of January 11, 28, 1907, March 13, 1907; AN F7 13613, report of March 12, 1909; Le Jaune, August 14, 1909. The only unions which appeared to be active by 1909 were the clerks of the Bazar de l'Hôtel de Ville and of Samaritaine; the domestics; some metal workers; and employees of the omnibus.

[114] In Le Jaune, November 14, 1908. Author's emphasis. For more on the Parti, see ibid., May 23, 1908 and August 8, 1908; Warin, Syndicats jaunes, pp. 82-90.

[115] Technically, Biétry owned the paper and could do with it what he wished. When a company had been formed in 1904 to publish Le Jaune, with money provided by Father Edouard, Japy, and Peugeot, 250 of the 300 shares were taken by Biétry. AN F7 12793, copy of Statuts de la Société Anonyme par Actions du Journal Le Jaune; reports of June 24, February 18, 1905.

priests, poets, admirals, or landowners were allowed to join. All the officers were true workers, although in recognition of his past achievements, Biétry was named honorary president.[116]

In 1909 the federation held a congress, which it called its First Congress, to emphasize its break with the past. Although it was still a Yellow Congress, there was more concern for the working class demonstrated in a more militant fashion than had previously been the case. The congress maintained the primary Yellow goals of coproprietorship, social peace, antisocialism, and limitations on the state (reductions in the number of civil servants, mutual assistance to be autonomous of state administration). In addition, it maintained the jaune commitment to civil capacity for the unions and the chambres de capacité. But the significant actions came in the liberalization of the rules governing strikes. The congress reduced the waiting period to eight days, and permitted strikes to begin upon the expiration of the waiting period, without requiring first the mediation of the federation. Although arbitration procedures were recognized, the delegates called on all unions to establish strike funds.

The importance of department store workers in the federation

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[116]The Executive Committee is listed in Fédération Syndicaliste des Jaunes de France . . . premier congrès, p. 4 and Le Jaune, August 28, 1909. It included six clerks, two shoemakers, one bookkeeper, one typographer, one jeweler, one boilermaker, and one salesman.

was reflected in a set of demands adopted specifically for them. These included a seven o'clock closing time for all stores, Sundays off, a minimum wage, and the right to leave the store during the dinner break. And, in a thorough break from the past, it passed resolutions calling for a ten-hour day, an English week, and the legalization of the collective contract.[117]

But it was too late to save Yellow unionism. By December, 1909 the movement had no more funds. Biétry's powerful supporters had drifted away. There was no mass of workers ready to follow the Yellow standard. In December, Le Jaune appeared for the last time. Clutching at straws, Biétry announced that the name "Yellow" had interfered with the progress of his organization, since it never escaped the stigma of a strikebreakers' movement under employer control. He promised a new paper, La Voix française, with its main issue the separation of schools and the state. Syndicalism, he now said, was not the alpha and omega of the social question.[118] La Voix française appeared for only a few issues. The adventure of the Yellows was over. Biétry did not run for reelection in 1910. Instead, he went to Indochina, where he died in 1918.

And yet, the Yellows had only been the most prominent

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[117] Fédération Syndicaliste des Jaunes de France . . . premier congrès, pp. 5-7, 9, 28-32, 49-51, 53, 55, 77, 16-17.

[118] Le Jaune, December 4, 1909.

expression of an idea that predated and survived them. Soon after the expiration of the jaunes, a new bourse libre opened in Paris. It apparently consisted of entirely different individuals from the Yellow federations, but its program was essentially the same: opposition to strikes and the eight-hour day, for social peace and patriotism. This bourse was the foundation of the Confédération Nationale du Travail which was formed after the war and lasted into the 1920s. It was Yellow unionism under another name. The independent unions of Lyons continued to exist, and even held regional congresses. They affiliated with the bourse libre--something they had never done with the Fédération des Jaunes. There was also a Union Fédérative des Travailleurs Antirévolutionnaires de France, which gave birth to the Fédération des Travailleurs Indépendants de Paris et des Banlieus. The latter group was founded by one Jean Elie Léage (Edmond Léger), who was a carbon copy of Lanoir and Biétry.[119]

Although the jaunes did not survive, they did develop ideas which stayed alive. The ideal of the worker integrated

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[119] On the C.N.T., see David Saposs, The Labor Movement in Post-War France (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), pp. 320-22; Georges Moreau, Le Syndicalisme (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1931), pp. 36-37; E. Martin Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations des métiers (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1922), p. 824; Emile Cazalis, Syndicalisme ouvrier et évolution sociale (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1925), pp. 258-63; idem, Les Positions sociales du syndicalisme ouvrier en France (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1933), pp. 176-86. Cazalis also dealt with the Union Générale des Syndicats Réformistes de France, which was similar to the C.S.T. On the prewar bourse libre, see Bourse Libre du Travail, Union Professionnelle des Syndicats Libres de la Seine, Appel aux ouvrières du bâtiment, four-page pamphlet, n.d., in the Institut Français d'Histoire Sociale; AN F7 13612, report of April 23, 1914. Also in this fond is a handwritten letter from the Syndicats Ouvriers Indépendants du Sud-est to the Minister of the Interior, a booklet summarizing their 1910 Congress, and a wall poster of the Bourse Indépendante de Lyon; AN F7 13615, reports of April 3, May 30, 1916.

into society dominated the French right. The Action Libérale, the Franciscans, the Action Française, the antisemites, Barrès, Drumont, Déroulède--all dreamed of incorporating the working class into the nation. The failure of the Yellows was not as significant as the fact that they showed it was possible to rally a segment of the working class to nationalist, antiparliamentary, and sometimes antisemitic ideas. Mosse called Biétry an earlier version of Doriot, and although I would not quarrel with that characterization, I believe that Zeev Sternhell's analysis is particularly relevant here. As he saw it, there was no room on the left for any revolutionary movement except Marxism. Therefore, a particular kind of ideology grew on the right. It was vaguely anticapitalist in that it believed in some form of social justice for the working class. It was antisocialist, antiparliamentary, and often antisemitic. Its goal was to bind the worker to the nation by assuring him economic security; its main concern was class harmony.[120] The Yellows were firmly situated in this type of outlook. They provided the best example that such an ideology could attract workers.

Another group which used a similar doctrine to build a working-class following was the Catholic syndicalists.

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[120]Mosse, "The French Right and the Working Class," p. 194. Sternhell, "National Socialism and Antisemitism: The Case of Maurice Barrès," Journal of Contemporary History 8 (October 1973): 47-66; idem, "Paul Déroulède and the Origins of Modern French Nationalism," ibid. 6 (October 1971): 46-62.

CHAPTER IX

CATHOLIC SYNDICALISM

Catholic syndicalism forms the third great strand of class collaborationism in the French labor movement. The Catholic unions developed an ideology resembling that of the Positivists and the Yellows. The main difference was that religious principles were the foundation for their doctrine of social peace, social conservatism, and social justice.

The roots of the Catholic syndicalist movement lay in Social Catholicism. Suffice it to say that, for at least seventy years prior to Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum, a school of Catholic thought had formulated the idea that Christian justice required an improvement in the condition of laboring men and women. While accepting capitalism and social hierarchy, the Social Catholics maintained that every worker was due a living wage, and that an employer had to adopt an attitude of Christian love toward his fellow man, especially his workers. In return, the worker owed his employer loyalty, devotion, and honest work. The collaboration of the classes and the resultant social peace would be truly an achievement of Christian justice and charity.

The Social Catholics disagreed somewhat on methods and

goals. One element was strictly corporatist. Another, also essentially corporatist, emphasized the mixed syndicat, in which workers and employers would be jointly organized. Le Play's followers, found mainly among Catholic entrepreneurs, favored laissez-faire capitalism tempered by fair treatment of their employees. Least attractive, until the 1890s, was the concept of a Christian labor unionism; many Catholic circles resisted it. Workingmen's associations had received papal approval in Rerum Novarum. But Leo XIII favored mixed unions, and at the early Christian Worker Congresses, support was strong for this form. Pure labor unions were considered too indicative of class war.[1] However, once Catholic unions became a reality, a great number of Social Catholics rallied to their support.

In an ironic twist, one segment--known as Christian Democrats and typified by Marc Sangnier and the Sillon--took the concept of unionism to another extreme and promoted, for a time, the idea of penetrating the C.G.T. Penetration called for Catholics to avoid their own unions, which were considered too timid and too favorable to capitalism, and enter C.G.T. unions, hopefully to change their revolutionary orientation. Whatever the specific approach, all Social Catholics considered themselves to be "brotherly opponents," striving for the same

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[1]Compte Rendu du Deuxième Congrès Ouvrier Chrétien, Reims, Mai 1894 (Paris: Imprimerie de l'Archévêché, n.d.), pp. 59-72, 408.

results with different methods.[2]

Their presence was ubiquitous in the Catholic unions. The relationship between the syndicalists and the Social Catholics worked two ways. On the one hand, many syndical leaders participated in the Social Catholic organizations and were published in the Social Catholic journals. On the other hand, the leaders of Social Catholicism were deeply involved in the unions, appearing at their meetings, sometimes presiding

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[2]There is an extensive literature on Social Catholicism. For some representative treatments, see John McManners, Church and State in France, 1870-1914 (New York: Harper and Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1972); Albert Gazier, Le Syndicalisme chrétien (Paris: Conférences de l'Institut Supérieur Ouvrier, 1937); J.-M. Mayeur, "Le Catholicisme social en France à la fin du XIXe siècle," Le Mouvement social, no. 57 (October-December 1966), pp. 211-16; M. Rigaux, Syndicalisme et réligion (Paris and Reims: Action Populaire, n.d.); Max Turmann, Le Syndicalisme chrétien en France (Paris: Librairie Valois, 1929); Gerard Thormann, "Christian Trade Unionism in France: A History of the French Confederation of Christian Workers" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1951); Jeanne Caron, Le Sillon et le démocratie chrétien, 1894-1910 (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1967); Parker T. Moon, The Labor Problem and the Social Catholic Movement in France (New York: Macmillan, 1921); Robert Talmy, Le Syndicalisme chrétien en France (1871-1930): difficultés et controverses (Paris: Editions Blond & Gay, 1965); Paul Vignaux, Traditionalisme et syndicalisme: essai d'histoire sociale (1884-1941) (New York: Editions de la Maison Française, 1943); J.-M. Mayeur, "Le Catholicisme social en France," Le Mouvement social, no. 77 (October-December 1971), pp. 113-21; Matthew Elbow, French Corporative Theory: A Chapter in the History of Ideas (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953); Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, Les Débuts du catholicisme social en France, 1822-1870 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1951); Georges Hoog, Histoire du catholicisme social en France: de l'encyclique "Rerum Novarum" à l'encyclique "Quadragesimo Anno" (Paris: Domat-Montchrestien, 1942); Henri Rollet, L'Action sociale des catholiques en France, 1870-1914, 2 vols. (Paris: Boivin, 1947-58).

over them, providing courses and conferences for their members, and contributing to their journals. To cite a few examples: E. Martin Saint-Léon attended the congresses of the Lyons Catholic womens' unions; wrote frequently in their journal, Le Travail de la femme et de la jeune fille; regularly attended meetings of the Syndicat des Employés du Commerce et de l'Industrie (S.E.C.I.); and was head of its commission d'études. This last position was also filled by Henri Lerolle and Henri Bazire of the Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Francaise. Bazire was the main speaker at the 1908 congress of the Lyons unions, and along with Raoul Jay, Marc Sangnier, and Henri Lorin attended S.E.C.I. meetings. De Mun was often the presiding officer at the general assemblies of the S.E.C.I., while Max Turmann and Henriette Brunhes gave courses for the Catholic women's unions of Paris. The Action Populaire, a Jesuit group favorable to Catholic syndicalism, published a yearly review, the Année sociale internationale, devoted to unions and social problems. In return, the Catholic unions displayed an intense interest in the activities of the Sillon, the Unions de la Paix Sociale, the Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Française, and the Semaines Sociales (the congresses of Social Catholicism). Catholic unionists attended the meetings of these organizations and wrote frequently for their reviews. Jules Zirnheld, the president of the S.E.C.I., was on the editorial board of the Association Catholique. His colleague Edouard Verdin addressed the Semaines Sociales of 1905, while the Catholic women's unionist, Cecille

Poncet spoke at the 1911 meeting. Many S.E.C.I. members also belonged to the Sillon. This list of examples could be extended.[3]

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[3]See La Ruche syndicale, nos. 3 (April-June 1903), 10 (January-March 1905), 11 (April-June 1905), 13 (October-December 1905), 15 (April-June 1906), 16 (July-September 1906), 17 (October-December 1906), 23 (July 15, 1908), 40 (March 15, 1909), 43 (June 15, 1909), 50 (February 15, 1910), 2nd series, 1 (October 15, 1910), 3rd series, 2 (February 15, 1910), and the special issue of March 15, 1912; L'Echo des syndicats, nos. 6 (June 25, 1901), 14 (February 25, 1902), 15 (March 25, 1902), 18 (June 10, 1902), 20 (July 10, 1902), 33 (January 25, 1903); Le Travail de la femme et de la jeune fille (hereafter Le Travail), nos. 4 (April 1901), 6 (June 1901), 7 (July 1901), 26 (February 1903), new series, 1 (August 1906), new series, 6 (January, 1907), new series, 7 (February 1907), new series, 8 (March, 1907), new series, 9 (April 1907), new series, 24 (July 1908); L'Employé, nos. 169 (May 5, 1908), 171 (July 5, 1908), 223 (October 25-November 5, 1912), May, 1912. Also, Talmy, Syndicalisme chrétien, pp. 79, 85, 91; R.P. Stéphane-J. Piat, Jules Zirnheld (Paris: Bonne Presse, 1948), pp. 31, 74; Mayeur, "Note critique," pp. 117-18; Michel Launay, "Le Syndicat des employés du commerce et de l'industrie de 1887 à 1914," Le Mouvement social, no. 68 (July-September 1969), pp. 39-40; T.B. Caldwell, "The Syndicat des Employés du Commerce et de l'Industrie (1887-1914): A Pioneer French Catholic Trade Union of White-Collar Workers," International Review of Social History 11 (1966): 244. Abbe A. Vral, Catholique et syndicaliste (Paris: Société d'Editions Populaires La Pensée, 1905), was an example of a supporter of penetration. Zirnheld occasionally complained about the indifference of some Social Catholics to the unions, but he recognized that the unions would not have been possible without them. See Zirnheld, Cinquante Années de syndicalisme chrétien (Paris: Editions Spes, 1937), pp. 23-26, 133. Marie-Louise Rochebillard, founder of the Lyons womens' unions, called Rerum Novarum the charter of the movement in "Chronique syndicale," Le Travail, no. 31 (July 1903), p. 805. The sentiment was echoed by the Parisian women, who considered opening each meeting by reading a passage from the encyclical: La Ruche syndicale, no. 1 (October-December 1902), p. 2 and no. 3 (April-June 1903), p. 35. It was Launay, "Le S.E.C.I.," p. 49, who claimed that many members belonged to the Sillon. Charles Rodier, "Sur Notre Bibliothèque," L'Employé, no. 171 (July 5, 1908), p. 112, urged all members to read Le Play. Finally, Zirnheld, Cinquante Années, described how he worked with de Mun in parliament, how the S.E.C.I. participated with the Sillon, and how Social Catholics such as Henri Lorin and Léon Harmel praised the S.E.C.I. in their talks with the Pope: pp. 40, 60, 65-66, 70, 153.

The most prominent Catholic union was the S.E.C.I., founded in 1887. It was brought into being by Brother Hiéron of the Frères des Ecoles Chrétiennes, an order which operated schools for training young men for the white-collar trades of clerk, bookkeeper, salesman, administrative assistant, etc. The Frères had first created an oeuvre--a lay organization whose purpose was to perform works of faith and devotion and uphold the religion. This oeuvre, the Association de Saint-Benoît-Labre, was composed of the best of the Frères' students. Jules Zirnheld, Charles Viennet, and Edouard Verdin, all leaders of the S.E.C.I., belonged to the Association Saint-Labre. However, since the members were workers, and since the order felt the need to maintain some religious connection with all of its graduates, Brother Hieron decided to create a trade union. It was assumed that the leadership would come from the oeuvre. On September 13, 1887, seventeen young men founded the S.E.C.I.

At first, growth was slow. Catholic employers attempted to dominate the union and succeeded in dividing it; a dissident group set up a new union and placed it under the authority of the employers. The first president turned out to be too interested in self-aggrandizement and grandious plans for Catholic phalansteries under his personal control. After he was forced out, in 1890, the union stabilized and gradually began to grow.[4]

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[4]On the early history and origins, see Zirnheld, Cinquante Annees, pp. 35-44; Piat, Zirnheld, pp. 17-30; Caldwell, "The Syndicat des Employés," pp. 36-40; Edouard Verdin, "Monographie du Syndicat des Employés du Commerce et de l'Industrie à Paris,"

Growth did not come easily. For a long time, the union was dependent on the generosity of friendly Catholic businessmen and the support of the order, which provided it with an office. The revolutionary unions refused to recognize it and tried to exclude it from playing any role in the labor movement. It was not admitted into the Fédération Nationale des Employés, and its delegates were expelled from its 1902 Congress. An unsuccessful attempt was made to exclude the S.E.C.I. from the international congresses of employés. The C.G.T. unions challenged the legality of the S.E.C.I. as a trade union under the terms of the 1884 law and tried to have the Minister of Commerce disqualify it from participating in the elections for the C.S.T.[5]

The hostility of the revolutionary unions did not seem to affect the S.E.C.I., however, whose membership grew throughout the 1890s, albeit slowly. By the early 1900s, the S.E.C.I.

Semaine Sociale de France, deuxième session des cours de doctrine et de practique sociale, Orléans, 31 juillet-6 août, 1905, compte rendu (Lyon: Chronique du Sud-Est, 1905), pp. 36-37; Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie, des Postes et des Télégraphes, Office du Travail, Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières, vol. 4 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1904), pp. 642-49; Gaston de Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques du commerce et de l'industrie (Paris: Editions de la Vie Universitaire, n.d. [1920]), pp. 25-26; Thormann, "Christian Trade Unionism," pp. 38-48; Joseph Boisgontier, Le Syndicat des Employés du Commerce et de l'Industrie (Paris: Jouve et Cie., 1920), pp. 13-17.

[5]Les Associations professionnelles ouvrières 4: 658-59; Launay, "Le S.E.C.I.," pp. 39-43; Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques, pp. 14-16; Boisgontier, Le S.E.C.I., pp. 18-23; Verdin, "Monographie," pp. 37-38; Caldwell, "The Syndicat des Employés," pp. 239-43, 252; Zirnheld, Cinquante Années, pp. 41-44; "Documents syndicaux," La Ruche syndicale, no. 35 (October 15, 1908), pp. 527-29; Charles Viennet, "Les Organisations françaises d'employés," L'Association catholique 66 (September 15, 1908): 181-83.

had established itself not only as the most important Catholic union in France (its claim to being the very first was disputed by the Corporation de la Soierrie Lyonnaise, founded in 1886), but one of the biggest. It pioneered in creating sections outside Paris, and then organized a national federation of Catholic white-collar unions in 1912. After World War I it took the lead in the formation of the Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens and provided its first leaders. Its most dramatic prewar success came in 1911 when Charles Viennet won election to the conseil des prud'hommes--the first such victory for the Parisian Catholics.

The union had 7,000 members by 1913. It had organized white-collar workers in such areas as jewelry, metallurgy, building, food, clothing, chemical, and furniture trades. It had separate sections for bookkeepers, salesmen, stenographer-typists, and bank and insurance company employees. The Syndicat des Employés provided a broad range of services for its members. Indeed, it concentrated so heavily on services that it was accused of being a mere mutual aid society. The S.E.C.I.'s benefits included job placement; courses; financial aid for illness, disability, and death; a restaurant which served low-cost meals; a buying cooperative which bought coal and potatoes for members; cooperative, low-cost vacations; and discounts at Paris stores. In 1907, 956 employés were found jobs by the union; in 1913, 1,292. The courses offered included three levels of accounting, stenography, and foreign languages. The restaurant served 230 meals a day in 1907 and

370 by 1913. The cooperative did 328,000 francs worth of business in 1907 (800,000 by 1914). In 1907, 294 pupils took courses given by the union. Launay estimated that the total number of courses offered before the war was greater than two thousand. The S.E.C.I. also had a service for draftees whereby they were given preinduction training and contact was maintained with them during the period of their military service. L'Employé, the journal of the clerks, had a circulation of around 6,000. The federation which Zirnheld and his associates created, the Fédération Française des Syndicats d'Employés Catholiques, reached 12,000 members in 1913. By 1914, the organization was able to acquire a building of its own. It had won a silver medal at the Paris Exposition of 1900 and a gold medal at the St. Louis Exposition of 1904. By any standard the Syndicat des Employés du Commerce et de l'Industrie was the preeminent Catholic union in France.[6]

It could not be considered a very militant union. It never engaged in a strike before the war (although it did do so afterward), even though it admitted the legitimacy of a work stoppage under certain conditions. It emphasized

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[6]"Assemblée Générale du 10 juin 1908," L'Employé, no. 171 (July 5, 1908), pp. 110-11; Année sociale internationale, 1913-14, p. 528; Caldwell, "The Syndicat des Employés," pp. 238-39, 248, 253; Verdin, "Monographie," pp. 38-39; Launay, "Le S.E.C.I.," p. 52; Zirnheld, Cinquante Années, pp. 39-40, 59; Piat, Zirnheld, pp. 82-83; Charles Viennet, Les Applications de l'idée syndicale chrétienne (Paris: Syndicat des Employés du Commerce et de l'Industrie, n.d.), pp. 11-15, 28-30, 42-45. For a good summary on how the cooperative worked, see "Société coopérative du S.E.C.I.," L'Employé, no. 228 (April 5, 1913), p. 58. Every issue quoted the current prices for commodities, listed the stores at which discounts were available, and listed job openings.

peaceful attempts to improve the condition of its members. The S.E.C.I.'s main forms of action were testifying before governmental bodies on the need for labor laws and making *démarches* to employers. It did achieve some small improvements in working conditions. The union concentrated on immediate, practical reforms. Most important was the Sunday rest, which was desirable both for religious reasons and for labor reasons. After the 1906 law was passed, and for which the S.E.C.I. took some credit, its main thrust was to see that the law was obeyed and to limit the granting of exceptions. Next on its list was the limitation of the working day. It wanted a uniform closing of Paris stores at 7:00 P.M. As Charles Viennet put it, this demand provoked more numerous and vehement protests than the Sunday closing, which caused the S.E.C.I. to reformulate it as a demand for a ten-hour day for all workers. Furthermore, it wanted to achieve an English week, a minimum wage, better safety and health laws, the limitation of child labor, and severance pay. The union also proposed the abolition of food and lodging provided by an employer, since it made a worker dependent, commercial capacity for unions, and an increase in the amount of claims subject to *prud'hommal* litigation. For its long-range goal, the S.E.C.I. looked toward corporatism.[7]

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[7]Piat, *Zirnheld*, pp. 69-70, noted that the head of the S.E.C.I. threatened Sunday work stoppages to enforce the law on Sunday closings, but nothing ever came of it. Turmann, *Le Syndicalisme chrétien*, p. 43, called the union's efforts for

The importance of the Syndicat des Employés lay not

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the Sunday rest its main activity. In 1912, the S.E.C.I. put up posters in Paris asking shoppers not to buy on Christmas day. The union also was able to set up a joint commission with the Union Fraternelle Patronal du Bâtiment, which agreed to honor Sunday as a day of rest. It negotiated with the banks of Paris for an improvement in working conditions, and obtained by Ministerial decree reduced price ticket books for the state railroads. See Zirnheld, Cinquante Années, pp. 50-51, 60-66; Marcieu, Les Syndicats des employés, p. 65; G. Lauret, "Jurisprudence," L'Employé, no. 200 (December 5, 1910), p. 137; "Le Congrès de Lyon," ibid., no. 161 (September 5, 1907), pp. 132-35; Zirnheld, "Le Code du Travail," ibid., no. 169 (May 5, 1908), pp. 65-67; Viennet, "Le Syndicat des Employés du Commerce et de l'Industrie," La Vie syndicale, no. 19 (February 20, 1913), pp. 28-29; idem, "Les Employés et leurs cahiers de revendications," L'Association catholique, no. 12 (December 1910), pp. 597-606; Verdin, "Monographie," pp. 36-38; "Petites Nouvelles," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 3 (March 25, 1901), p. 4. The Sunday rest was a major concern of all Catholic unions. See "Petites Nouvelles," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 17 (May 25, 1902), p. 103; "Syndicat ouvrier du bâtiment," ibid., no. 32 (January 10, 1903), pp. 21-23; "Documents syndicaux," La Ruche syndicale, no. 35 (October 15, 1908), p. 528; Cecile Poncet, "Les Syndicats libres féminins de l'Isère," La Vie syndicale, no. 21 (June 20, 1913), p. 115, for a sampling.

The S.E.C.I. did not make corporatism a prominent part of their everyday program. They prided themselves on their practicality, and felt questions of the economic organization of society were premature; the first necessity was unionization. Zirnheld, Cinquante Années, p. 186. Caldwell, "The Syndicat des Employés," pp. 228-29, noted that the union was deflected "neither by the corporatism of La Tour du Pin and De Mun nor by the democracy of Sangnier." Launay, "Le S.E.C.I., pp. 44-45, felt that LePlay was the maître of the association. As a promoter of social peace, he was certainly respected by it. However, since Le Play had been lukewarm to worker organizations and state intervention, it is difficult to see him as the inspiration for the S.E.C.I. De Mun, on the other hand, even though he supported corporatism, shared with the S.E.C.I. a commitment to social legislation and to worker organization. At the general assembly of the S.E.C.I. in May 1901, he said: "I have always thought that professional association was the remedy to the anarchy which troubles the world. . . . We are with you in improving the popular condition. Continue your work. All those who love social peace will encourage you." L'Echo des syndicats, no. 6 (June 25, 1901), pp. 12-13. Even if they did not emphasize it, the clerks' commitment to corporatism was undeniable. At the 1896 Congrès des Ouvriers Chrétiens (Reims), the S.E.C.I. had adhered to a program which had as its eleventh point "National and proportional representation

only in its own success, but in the fact that it spawned a host of similar unions (although none proved as successful). Even before the Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens came into existence, the S.E.C.I. had played an important role in the spread of Catholic trade unionism. It provided not only the example, but both moral and material support for the Catholic women's unions of Paris and Lyons and the Parisian syndicats chrétiens of printers, metal workers, building workers, domestics, and food trades workers. It helped found unions of clerks in the provinces and gathered them into a federation in 1912.

The most concrete form of assistance came in the form of sending S.E.C.I. delegates to the organizing meetings of other unions, holding "intersyndical congresses," (which Zirnheld called the seed of the C.F.T.C.), and opening the S.E.C.I.'s cooperative to the members of the other Catholic unions of Paris. The men's unions were also given office space by the employés. Since they were located on the rue des Petits-Carreaux, the printers, metal workers, etc., became known as the Petits-Carreaux unions. Also, the courses offered by the S.E.C.I. were open to the members of the other Catholic unions. It was normal to see S.E.C.I. delegates at the

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of professional interests, by a representative chamber of all the bodies in the state." In addition, Zirnheld specifically accepted the concepts of a professional parliament and a corporate structure. He wanted the union to be at the base of the structure, rather than a professional council of workers and employers, as many corporatists wanted. See "L'Organisation professionnelle," L'Employé, no. 170 (June 5, 1908), pp. 89-91; ibid., no. 169 (May 5, 1908), pp. 68-69.

meetings of these groups as well as at meetings of provincial unions. When the Petits-Carreaux unions ran into difficulty (they dissolved and reconstituted themselves a few years later in 1912), the S.E.C.I. provided Gaston Tessier, one of its prominent members, to them as an administrator.[8]

The first syndicats catholiques were created with the S.E.C.I.'s help in 1898: the Syndicat Ouvrier de la Métallurgie, the Syndicat Ouvrier du Livre, and the Syndicat Ouvrier de l'Habillement. Within a few years, they were joined by the

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[8]The activities of the S.E.C.I. in the provinces can be traced in the "En Province" column published in L'Employé on a regular basis. For one revealing (and typical) example, see no. 216 (April 5, 1912), p. 45. On the ties between the S.E.C.I. and the womens' unions, see La Ruche syndicale, nos. 1 (October-December 1902), 5 (October-December 1903), 23 (July 15, 1907), 33 (July 15, 1908), 2nd series, no. 1 (October 15, 1910), third series, no. 3 (February 15, 1912). For the ties to the Petits-Carreaux unions, see L'Echo des syndicats, nos. 2 (February 25, 1901), 20 (July 10, 1902), 34 (February 10, 1903), 35 (February 25, 1903), 57 (January 25, 1904). Also nos. 6 (June 25, 1901), 7 (July 25, 1901). Members of the S.E.C.I. represented the union of women clerks at the congresses of the Fédération des Employés de France. See La Ruche syndicale, nos. 23 (July 15, 1907), 25 (October 15, 1907), 35 (October 15, 1908), 21 (May 15, 1907). Other aspects of cooperation and assistance are in Gaston Tessier, "Deux Journées d'action syndicale," L'Employé, no. 171 (July 5, 1908), pp. 103-7; Viennet, "Nôtre Congrès National," ibid., no. 218 (June 5, 1912), pp. 65-66 and "Compte rendu du congrès," ibid., pp. 66-69; "Syndicats ouvriers," ibid., May, 1912, p. 57; Boisgontier, Le Syndicat des employés, pp. 24, 92-95; Zirnheld, Cinquante Années, pp. 70-74; Viennet, "Le Syndicat des Employés," La Vie syndicale, pp. 29-31 listed the unions of employés founded with help from the S.E.C.I. The list included unions in Bilbao, Spain and Montreal, Canada.

Syndicats Ouvriers du Bâtiment, de l'Alimentation, de l'Ameublement, the Syndicat des Employés de l'Enseignement Privé, and the Syndicat Français des Gens de Maison. Although none of these ever became very numerous, some did display a certain degree of vitality. The printers' union held two congresses, which attracted a number of provincial delegates. It even managed to set up a miniature federation. This federation was noteworthy in its structure. First, it grouped the Paris union with fourteen sections from the provinces. With the exception of Tours, none of the other sections had more than fifty members.[9] Second, the workers' organizations were joined in a Union Syndicale des Patrons, des Employés et des Ouvriers. The Union Syndicale was, in effect, a joint commission, with the added twist of a joint meeting once a

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[9]The figures are based on the apportionment of delegates at the 1905 Congress. With a rate of one vote per fifty members, Tours received two votes, Paris nine. In the secretary's report, a total membership of 1,158 was claimed. At the second congress, the membership was given as 1,060. Premier Congrès de l'Union des Syndicats Ouvriers des Industries du Livre, Paris, 13-14 août 1905 (Paris: n.p., n.d.), pp. 3, 8; Deuxième Congrès de l'Union des Syndicats Ouvriers des Industries du Livre, Tours, 30-31 mai 1909 (Paris: n.d., n.p.), pp. 6, 10. The Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, 1904-1905, credited the Union des Syndicats Ouvriers des Industries du Livre with 712 members (p. 577). It also gave membership figures for the other Petits-Carreaux unions: metal workers--570; clothing workers--132; jewelers--21; building trades--146; furniture makers--96 (pp. 523, 525, 544, 553). The domestic workers claimed 1,169 members in 1905, up from 140 in 1902: "Chronique syndicale," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 101 (December 15, 1905); ibid., no. 31 (December 25, 1902), p. 450. The metal workers union claimed 417 members in 1902 in ibid., no. 29 (November 25, 1902), p. 404. For more on the printers, see Marcel Bar, L'Organisation et l'action syndicale dans la typographie française: patrons, ouvriers (Paris: Imprimerie et Librairie Duruy et Cie., 1907), pp. 175-79, 244, 268-72, 277.

year of all clerks, workers, and employers, which followed a mass and preceded a banquet. In addition to planning the festivities, the Union Syndicale's main achievement was in securing from the employers a commitment to give preferential treatment in hiring to members of the union.[10] Apparently, this arrangement served to attract a number of workers who, after having joined and been hired, dropped out of the union.[11] The joint commission also negotiated a nine-hour day in 1906 in some establishments.[12]

The Petits-Carreaux unions generally followed the pattern of the S.E.C.I. They set up placement bureaus and mutual aid funds, entered Expositions, lobbied in parliament, and generally added their voices to that of the S.E.C.I.. Each union, in addition, had its own set of demands relating to the improvement of conditions in its industry.[13]

There were a number of other labor unions throughout France that were either exclusively Catholic in membership, maintained close ties with the church, or were Catholic in their origin. In this last category were the organizations founded in the Nord by Abbé Six and Leclerc. As these two pioneers

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[10] Premier Congrès, p. 5. The workers and employers also agreed to a union scale identical to the one negotiated by the Fédération du Livre.

[11] "Syndicat Ouvrier des Industries du Livre," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 13 (January 25, 1902), p. 8.

[12] V. Lecerf, "L'Union des Syndicats Ouvriers des Industries du Livre," L'Association catholique 65 (May 15, 1908): 347.

[13] Premier Congrès, pp. 6, 8, 27-60; Deuxième Congrès, pp. 19-36; L'Echo des syndicats, nos. 1 (January 25, 1901), 2 (February 25, 1901), 9 (September 25, 1901), 14 (February 25, 1902), 17 (May 25, 1902), 15 (March 15, 1902), 6 (June 25, 1901), 32 (January 10, 1903).

of Christian syndicalism moved into the camp of the Christian Democrats, they gave the unions in which they had influence a strong religious neutrality. They maintained that their unions were democratic, not Catholic (but not red either). By contrast, the Petits-Carreaux and S.E.C.I. required Catholicism as a condition of membership and engaged in protesting the anticlerical policies of the Waldeck-Rousseau and Combes governments.

Paris had a second group of Catholic unions, founded in 1909, with headquarters on the rue de l'Université. They too were assisted by Zirnheld, and counted roughly nine hundred members in 1913, distributed in several trades. There was also an indeterminate number of small Catholic unions scattered in the provinces. For example, the Catholic arsenal workers of Brest formed a union in 1913 which comprised two hundred members. It seems probable that the Catholic union movement numbered approximately 30,000-50,000, roughly equivalent to the Yellows. To a certain extent this conclusion is modifiable depending how certain unions (like those in the Nord) are classified.[14]

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[14] I have listed the Nord unions among the Yellows, since they gave their support to the jaunes at least until 1908. After that date, one might justifiably subtract them from the Yellow total and add them to the Catholics. For information on Catholic unions see Associations professionnelles ouvrières 2 (1901): 358, 402; 3 (1903): 84; 4 (1904): 648; Jean Maitron, ed., Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français, troisième partie, 1871-1914: de la commune à la grande guerre, vols. 10-11 (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1973-74), 10 (1973): 221-22, 213-14; 11 (1974): 326; Saposs, The Labor Movement, p. 106; Thorman, "Christian Trade Unionism," pp. 41-45; Talmy, Le Syndicalisme chrétien, pp. 39-44, 80-81; Zirnheld, Cinquante Années, p. 34; Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques, pp. 92-96; H. Savatier, "Le Mouvement social en France," L'Association catholique 57 (February 15, 1904): 255-56; A. Albaret, "La Federation Lilloise des Syndicats," ibid. 66 (December 15, 1908):

Catholic unionism was important in that it provided an alternative--another alternative--to the revolutionary syndicalism of the C.G.T. In addition, the Catholics did something more successfully than any other union group in this period: they organized women's unions. Women's syndicalism was not exclusively a Catholic affair, but the Catholics were the only ones to create a loosely-unified network of women's unions. The centers of Catholic women's syndicalism were Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, the Nord, and Isère.

The Associations professionnelles ouvrières attempted to determine the number of women's unions and their membership. According to their statistics, there were 154 syndicats féminins in 1902 with a membership of 13,873. This was out of a total of 48,087 women unionists, including those in majority-male unions and those in mixed-sex unions which were majority-female. By 1910, the Catholic women's unions were claiming around 15,000 members. Even granting the natural tendency to self exaggeration and the probable growth of all types of women's unions, it seems clear that the Catholics dominated in this category. To a certain extent, the C.G.T. preferred mixed-sex unions. While the Catholics did not object to mixed unions, most of the Catholic women's unions excluded men. Catholic organizers did their work in fields that were exclusively, or mainly, female, such as home workers, nurses, and salesgirls. Labor unions were also organized for women teachers, clerks, and clothing workers. It should be noted that the figure of 30,000-50,000 Catholic unionists included the 15,000 women union members, making the women a

very important element in Catholic syndicalism.[15]

Chronologically, the Lyons unions were the first to be formed, and they remained one of the main centers of women's

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[15] Associations professionnelles ouvrières 4: 801-4. The Annuaire des syndicats professionnels, 1914, stated that 89,364 women were in unions by that year. Their figures for 1900 and 1905 were 30,975 and 69,405, respectively. This corresponds to the Associations professionnelles ouvrières statistics. It should be noted that this was out of a female working population of over 2,500,000. The membership figures for the Catholic unions come from several sources: Henri Boisgontier, Les Syndicats professionels féminins de l'Abbaye et l'Union Centrale des Syndicats Professionels Féminins (Paris: Jouve et Cie., 1927), pp. 8, 28-29, 58; L.-M. Compain, La Femme dans les organisations ouvrières (Paris: V. Giard & E. Brière, 1910), pp. 61-62; Auguste Pawlowski, Les Syndicats féminins et les syndicats mixtes en France (Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan, 1912), pp. 8-9, 27, 31, 35-36, 40; Année sociale internationale, 1913-1914, pp. 600-3; ibid., 1912, pp. 400-4. The Année sociale internationale credited the Paris women's unions of the rue de l'Abbaye with 5,514. This corresponds to the union's own figures. See La Ruche syndicale, no. 33 (July 15, 1908), p. 492. When Mlle Beeckmans ran for the C.S.T. in 1909, she received 108 votes. Votes for the C.S.T. elections were apportioned among unions on the basis of one vote for every twenty-five members, indicating that there were at least 2,500 women in either Catholic or antirevolutionary unions in the garment industry. Not all of these were necessarily in Paris, however; there were seventy-nine unions in the Nord, each with a membership of thirty, to maximize their C.S.T. vote. In fact, the Abbaye garment workers claimed only 467 members in 1908, although Pawlowski said they had 610 in 1912. The Année sociale internationale credited them with 950 in the same year. Other unions at the Abbaye were teachers (895), clerks and salesgirls (employées) (1,803), domestics (573), nurses (110). There were two other groups, which together numbered perhaps four hundred. There were around 1,000 Catholic unionists in Lyons and 2,000 in Isère. These figures are from the Année sociale internationale of 1913-1914 and 1910, pp. 265-68. As with the men, there were scattered unions. Every so often a provincial group of anywhere from 35-150 members would write to the Abbaye asking for assistance or wishing to join its federation. See La Ruche syndicale, nos. 48 (December 15, 1909), 52 (April 15, 1910). Pawlowski, p. 40, mentioned an independent union of 3,300. The Année sociale internationale, 1913-1914, pp. 602-3, listed six others, and the volume for 1912, pp. 403-4, listed another handful, many of which, it admitted, it had no knowledge of, including their orientation!

unionism. They were the result of the indefatigible energy of one of the truly remarkable figures in French labor history, Marie-Louise Rochebillard. Although the unions she created were proudly Catholic, she appeared to have had no particular clerical connections. There was no Frère Hiéron (or Père Edouard) to support her. Nor did she seem to have been inspired by close relations with the Social Catholics. She did feel she was honoring the dictates of Rerum Novarum, but in her recollections, she credited her own experience as a salesgirl and clerk as the reason why she became a labor organizer.[16] In 1901, she formed three unions, each with only a handful of members: Dames Employées du Commerce, Ouvrières de l'Aiguille Lyonnaise, and Ouvrières de la Soie. The three unions had identical statutes, shared the same offices, the same journal, and the same services.

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[16]Rochebillard related how she worked a twelve-hour day year round, with no vacations. However, on days in which the volume of business was heavy, she was expected to work as long as was necessary to add up the accounts. There was no seat provided, and in the winter it was cold. The proprietor refused to provide heat because of the danger of fire and the damage (real or imagined) heat did to the goods. She was particularly offended by the assaults on her morality. She was told that to advance, she would have to dress more expensively. When she replied that she could not afford more expensive clothes, she was told to do what all the others did: find a "friend." She finally realized the importance of a union when she had to work one night until 1:00 A.M. She took a cab home that night, but the next morning she presented the bill for the cab ride to her employer. At first, he refused to reimburse her, but she remained adamant and he finally relented. He never again asked her to stay late, she claimed. In her organizing, Rochebillard stressed two themes: unionization as a means of improving conditions, but also as a way to overcome the "horrible isolation"--personal and social, of the young woman worker. "Souvenirs d'une employée," Le Travail, new series, nos. 20 (March 1908), pp. 1002-3 and 21 (April 1908), pp. 1028-29; idem, Syndicats d'ouvrières lyonnaises (Paris and Lille: Action Populaire, n.d.), p. 5.

As the Lyons unions steadily grew, Mlle Rochebillard helped spread women's syndicalism to other areas. The Paris unions of the rue de l'Abbaye admitted being inspired by her, and she attended the founding meeting of those unions. She was directly responsible for the creation of *syndicats féminins* in Marseilles, Aix, Saint-Quentin, Nice, Besançon, and several other areas. She called a congress of independent women's unions in 1906, which instituted a federation, of which she became the director. From this position, she made contact with the Nord women's unions. Finally, she helped establish the second group of Parisian organizations. She was truly the mother of Catholic women's syndicalism in France.[17]

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[17] On the organization and development of the Lyons unions, see Rochebillard, *Syndicats ouvrières*, pp. 7-17, 21-25; Pawlowski, *Syndicats féminins*, pp. 24-30; Marcieu, *Syndicats catholiques*, p. 45; Boisgontier, *Syndicats professionnels féminins*, p. 46; Rochebillard, *Le Travail de la femme à Lyon: monographie de syndicats de femmes* (Paris: *La Réforme sociale*, 1901). For Rochebillard's organizing outside Lyons, see *Le Travail*, nos. 15 (March 1902), 30 (June 1903), 31 (July 1903), 66 (June 1906), new series, nos. 1 (August 1906), 9 (April 1907), 17 (December 1907). Coverage of Rochebillard's activities and signs of her influence in Paris can be seen in *La Ruche syndicale*, nos. 1 (October-December 1902), 5 (October-December 1903), 15 (April-June 1906), 16 (July-September 1906), 29 (March 18, 1908). Two highlights of her career were in 1903, when she ran for the C.S.T. and received 173 votes to 174 for Mlle Blondelu. It was a great moral victory for the Catholics, as Blondelu, of the florists, was a *cégétiste*. In 1906, Rochebillard formed her Fédération des Syndicats Indépendants de Femmes. Although it remained basically a Lyons body, it did establish contacts with the Nord and throughout the southeast. Rochebillard had an important influence in the male independent unions of that area, and her unions participated in the regional congresses of the independents. A second women's congress was held in 1908, at which time Rochebillard proclaimed a campaign for a minimum wage. Practically singlehandedly, she made the question of a minimum wage an issue for the whole Social Catholic and Catholic syndicalist movement. Even those groups not directly associated with her were drawn into the campaign. On the other hand, relations with the Abbaye cooled, apparently because of her flirtation with Biétry (see Chapter X). They continued to vote for her in her unsuccessful tries for the C.S.T., but did not join her federation.

The second major center of women's syndicalism was Paris, where the pattern of the S.E.C.I. was followed closely. In this case, the clerical impetus came from a Soeur Milcent of the order of St. Vincent de Paul. Inspired by Rochebillard, and with the assistance of Jules Guillebert of the Syndicat des Employés, forty-eight women created three unions: the Syndicat des Institutrices Privées, des Dames Employées du Commerce et de l'Industrie, and des Ouvrières de l'Habillement.[18]

Almost immediately, they embarked on a program of mutual aid and professional development, beginning courses and joining the cooperative buying system of the S.E.C.I. As they grew, they devoted much of their effort to expanding their mutualist activities, an effort of which they were particularly proud.[19]

The action of the Abbaye unions was essentially the same as the Lyons unions and the S.E.C.I. They engaged in the

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[18] On the founding of the Abbaye unions, see Boisgontier, Les Syndicats professionnels féminins, pp. 48-54; Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques, pp. 49-51; Pawlowski, Syndicats féminins, pp. 30-32; Turmann, Le Syndicalisme chrétien, pp. 50-52. The account of the founding meeting is in La Ruche syndicale, no. 1 (October-December 1902), pp. 3-13. Interestingly, Soeur Milcent's brother was a collaborator of Albert de Mun and worked organizing agricultural unions in the east of France.

[19] Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques, p. 52; Pawlowski, Syndicats féminins, pp. 48-52, 59-60, 73; Boisgontier, Les Syndicats professionnels féminins, pp. 55, 59, 94-97, 102, 106; M. Décaux, "Les Syndicats professionnels féminins de la rue de l'Abbaye," L'Association catholique 66 (December 15, 1908): 413-21. Programs included placement, a discount plan, a cooperative restaurant, low-cost vacations, a library for members, and funds for illness, unemployment, and retirement. By 1913, according to Mlle Décaux, the first head of the institutrices, over 11,000 placements were made by what had by then become five unions. The many course offerings (1,742 courses were taken) included design, religious instruction, business subjects, hygiene, piano and singing, geography, history, mathematics, fashion, and foreign languages.

C.S.T. elections, promoted the creation of new sections, extended into the provinces, created a formal federation, the Union Centrale des Syndicats Professionnels Féminins, testified before parliamentary committees, worked for social legislation, attended the convocations of Social Catholicism, and promoted moderate, Catholic unionism.[20]

There were a few other groups of Catholic women's unions important enough to merit mention. In ideology, outlook, and action, they did not differ appreciably from the Abbaye and Lyons organizations. Typically, they organized women who worked in the needle trades (often at home), clerks and salesgirls in the banks, department stores, and fashion houses. They supported such reforms as a minimum wage and the English week, wanted improvements and regulation of apprenticeship, practiced cooperative buying and mutual aid, and engaged in various religious activities.

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[20]Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques, p. 53; Boisgontier, Les Syndicats professionnels féminins, pp. 64-78, 122-23, 155; Pawlowski, Les Syndicats féminins, p. 34; La Ruche syndicale, nos. 3 (April-June 1903), 4 (July-September 1903), 9 (October-December 1904), 11 (April-June 1905), 16 (July-September 1906), 17 (October-December 1906), 18 (January-February 1907), 25 (October-15, 1907), 35 (October 15, 1908), 46 (October 15, 1909), 47 (November 15, 1909), 48 (December 15, 1909), 52 (April 15, 1910), 2nd series, no. 1 (October 15, 1910), special issues of March 15, 1912 and May 15, 1912; Décaux, "Les Syndicats professionnels féminins," pp. 413-21. The institutrices were even able to achieve a type of collective contract from the Direction Diocésaine des Ecoles Libres de Paris in 1911. They did not engage in any strike activity before World War I, although they actively took part in the bank strikes of 1917 and 1918, the couture strike of 1917 and the C.G.T. strike of 1919. The Lyons unions, while not actually engaging in any strikes themselves, publicly supported the strike by the employees of the Grand Bazar de Lyon in 1903, when the store took away the workers' dinner hour. Le Travail, no. 26 (February 1903), pp. 605-7.

The most important of these was Mlle Butillard's Parisian unions. Butillard had been an associate of Rochebillard, and this group had more substantial relations with Lyons than the Abbaye did. After World War I, however, both Parisian centers joined the C.F.T.C. Even before the war, they collaborated in joint meetings. Mlle Butillard provided a personal link connecting Paris, Lyons, Marseilles, and the Department of Isère. After having worked with Rochebillard in Lyons, she went to both Marseilles and Isère to help form unions there, before coming to Paris, where she also met Zirnheld. For a time the Marseilles unions and nearby Aix kept up a correspondence with the unions in Isère.[21]

With some few variations, the ideology of all the Catholic unions, male and female, was similar. The basis of Catholic syndicalism was the acceptance of the idea that it was necessary for the worker to associate for self protection. This entailed a certain criticism of capitalism, at least as it was practiced in France at the end of the nineteenth century. "Capitalism constitutes a colossal force . . .; the worker is

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[21]Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques, pp. 45-49, 55-60; Turmann, Le Syndicalisme chrétien, pp. 56-62; Pawlowski, Les Syndicats féminins, pp. 35-40; Dictionnaire biographique 10: 320, 11: 94-95; "Faits sociaux: un congrès des syndicats libres féminins," Association catholique 67 (June 1909): 667-68; "Faits sociaux: au congrès des syndicats libres féminins de Grenoble," ibid. 69 (September 1910): 289-90; "Syndicat des Ouvrières de l'Habillement," La Ruche syndicale, no. 48 (December 15, 1909), pp. 739-40; Cecile Poncet, "Les Syndicats libres de l'Isère," La Vie syndicale, nos. 18 (December 20, 1912), 19 (February 20, 1913), 20 (April 20,1913), 21 (June 20, 1913), 22 (August 20, 1913).

without protection when he is on his own. The workers . . . can, by unionization, create a counterweight to capitalism."[22]

Like the Yellows, Catholic unionists saw themselves as a counterweight also to the excesses, the immorality, the evils of revolutionary, socialist syndicalism, which (according to them) had no respect for the family, property, religion, and the nation. Some of the Catholic unions, notably the women's unions in Voiron, were created under the same conditions as the jaunes--by workers who did not want to follow the established union in a strike.[23]

Capitalism was not regarded as an enemy. As a result,

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[22]Speech of M. Prache, deputy, at meeting of Syndicat Ouvrier des Industries du Livre, in L'Echo des syndicats, no. 2 (February 25, 1901), p. 7; Charles Clavérie, "Opportunité des groupements professionnelles," ibid., p. 3; Piat, Zirnheld, p. 52; speech of Rochebillard at 1906 Congress in La Ruche syndicale, no. 17 (October-December 1906), p. 263; ibid., 3rd series, no. 3 (March 15, 1912), p. 29; Rochebillard, "A Nos Lectures," Le Travail, no. 1 (January 1901), pp. 2-3; "Mouvement syndical," ibid., no. 15 (March 1902), p. 291; Rochebillard, Le Travail de la femme, pp. 4, 20; Xavier Jasmin, "Génèse du socialisme," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 10 (October 25, 1901), p. 2.

[23]C. Poncet, "Comment fonder un syndicat," Semaine Sociale de France, cours de doctrine et de pratique sociale, VIIIe session, Saint-Etienne, 1911, compte rendu en extenso (Lyon and Paris: n.p., 1911), pp. 387-88. Also L'Echo des syndicats, nos. 17 (May 25, 1902), 20 (July 10, 1902), 21 (July 25, 1902), 22 (August 10, 1902), 37 (March 25, 1903), 42 (June 10, 1903), 44 (July 10, 1903), 67 (June 25, 1904). The Echo group came closest to jaunisme of all the Catholic groups. (The Echo was the organ of the Petits-Carreaux unions). In fact, Delcourt-Haillot wrote several articles for them. They attacked socialists in the same way as the Yellows, accusing them of fomenting strikes for political and personal gain. As Charles Clavérie, editor of the Echo, put it: "The industrial proletariat has been dominated in France by the intellectual proletariat. The syndical idea has been spread by lawyers without cases and doctors without clients. Under the influence of these professional politicians, unions have been founded which are not economic, but political; unions devoted not to the interests of their members, but to hatred." Also

the Catholics strongly favored institutions of collaboration such as joint arbitration committees, permanent worker-employer groups, and the like. They had great interest in participating in the C.S.T., and in 1912 succeeded in electing one of their own, Mlle Beeckmans. They also favored the conseils du travail instituted by Millerand, and even claimed credit for the idea.[24]

The goal was social peace: cooperation between the productive elements in society and an end to the class war

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Jean Brunhes, "Vivent les Syndicats," Le Travail, no. 6 (June 1901), p. 111; Rochebillard speech at Valfleury, ibid., no. 31 (July 1903), pp. 807-8; Rochebillard speech at Lille, ibid., new series, no. 9 (April 1907), p. 600; Mlle Gauthier, "Déclaration syndicale," in Jean Oursel, Le Syndicalisme: son origine, son organisation, son role social (Paris and Reims: A. Noël, Maison Bleue, 1913), p. 111; Viennet, L'Ame du syndicalisme," L'Employé, no. 170 (June 5, 1908), pp. 85-86; La Ruche syndicale, special issue of May 15, 1912, p. 0.17; Delcourt-Haillot, "Nécessité d'une organisation syndicale," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 42 (June 10, 1903), pp. 247-48; idem, "L'Organisation syndicale," ibid., no. 44 (July 10, 1903), p. 298.

[24]Deuxième Congrès, pp. 19-20; R.P. Ceslas Rutten, O.P., Les Résponsabilites syndicales (Paris and Reims: Action Populaire, n.d.), p. 17; Viennet, Les Applications de l'idée syndicale, pp. 8-9; Syndicats libres féminins de Grenoble, "Doctrine syndicale," in Oursel, Le Syndicalisme, p. 107; A. Féliers, "Les Conseils du travail," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 2 (February 25, 1901), pp. 5-6; R. Latour, "Le Monde patronal et les conseils du travail," ibid., no. 9 (September 25, 1901), pp. 6-8; Poncet, "Comment former un syndicat," p. 390; idem, "Les Syndicats libres de l'Isère," La Vie syndicale, no. 21, pp. 116-17. In addition to the S.E.C.I. and the printers, the Abbaye clothing workers and employées established committees with the employer unions. The Lyons groups admitted female entrepreneurs if they employed five workers or less, on the grounds that their interests were identical to those of their workers. See La Rucha syndicale, no. 18 (January-February 1907), p. 267 and Rochebillard, Syndicats d'ouvrières lyonnaises, p. 9. A good summary of the joint commissions is in Année sociale internationale, 1913-1914, p. 658. The revolutionary Hubert Lagardelle called the conseils du travail a Catholic idea in "Chronique sociale," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 45 (November 1, 1900), pp. 563-64.

through the amiable and fraternal collaboration of worker and capitalist:

> Our goal is above all to pursue the realization of social peace and not the organization of . . . the class war. While we are firmly resolved to maintain our rights, we are--and we frankly say it--deeply respectful of the rights of the employer. . . . In promoting the organization of unions we are not following a doctrine of hatred but one of true fraternity. Believing in the principle of an entente between employers and workers, we will do everything in our power to prevent conflicts and if, sometimes, we are obliged to accept a struggle, it will only be when it has become absolutely necessary, and manifestly provoked by an obvious violation of justice. 25

Leçerf, president of the Petits-Carreaux printers, put it similarly:

> Believers in the union of classes and the fertile entente between the diverse elements of production, nonetheless, we do not feel that the workers should pay all the costs of this peace and capitulate on each point contested. We do not desire warfare . . . we prefer the amiable negotiation, the courteous discussion, in a word, the conciliation which, when successful, has the advantage of leaving no bad feelings. 26

The union was regarded as an instrument of pacification, which could instill an element of stability and amiability into employer-employee relations. This was regarded as natural, while class warfare was considered as contrary to nature. The primary interests of the two classes were identical; economic prosperity was their common goal. Therefore, it was wrong to hate one another. Disunion meant anarchy; collaboration, on the other hand, gave industry a family-like character.[27]

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[25]Clavérie, "Nôtre But."

[26]Deuxième Congrès, p. 3.

[27]Oursel, Le Syndicalisme, pp. 42-43; Delcourt-Haillot, "Les Erreurs des syndicats ouvriers," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 81 (January 25, 1905), p. 29; "La Lutte des classes," ibid., no. 15 (March 25, 1902), pp. 55-56; "Causeries de M. Jean," La Ruche syndicale, no. 54 (June 15, 1910), p. 852; "Rapport syndical présenté par Mlle Rochebillard au nom de l'organisation," Le Travail, no. 11 (November 1901), p. 209.

As Catholics, the family was important; the idea of creating a familial atmosphere in the workshop was a seductive and recurrent idea.

In asserting the goal of a union of classes, the Catholics nonetheless maintained that the workers should not accept in a servile manner the absolute dictates of the employers. Justice required fair treatment for the employee. Like the Positivists and the Yellows, the Catholics maintained that they were organized for the interests and protection of the working class. Although they rejected the philosophy of class war, they maintained that they nonetheless fought for the interests of the French worker.[28]

On the other hand, they granted to the employer the prerogatives of running his business as he saw fit. The one exception was working conditions, on which he had to collaborate. But the control and direction of an enterprise was entirely the affair of the businessman. The Catholic syndicalists lagged behind the Yellows on this point. They did not consider the question of worker participation on the boards of directors of corporations. Their main concern was that the workers be treated with justice. Like the Positivists,

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[28]"Notice sur le Syndicat Ouvrier de la Métallurgie," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 1 (January 25, 1901), p. 4; Gauthier, "Déclaration syndicale," p. 111; Jasmin, "L'Action syndicale et le répos du dimanche," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 2 (February 25, 1901), p. 9; Premier Congrès, p. 7; Deuxième Congrès, p. 13; Zirnheld, speech to general assembly of Abbaye unions, in La Ruche syndicale, no. 33 (July 15, 1908), pp. 497-98.

they accepted a hierarchical society, and frequently made it a point to say that inequality was a fact of life and could not be abolished. Yet, although some men would always be richer and more powerful than others, each person could expect a minimum of dignity and well being.[29] The Catholics extended their belief in hierarchy into the union. Again, like the Positivists, they believed in a disciplined membership giving obedience to their leaders, who were to be an elite specially educated and extraordinarily devoted to the faith.[30] This aspect of their doctrine meant that they remained remarkably unaffected by the modernist controversy that wracked the Church in the early twentieth century. If anything, they tended to think that the Christian Democrats were going too far. The Catholic unions remained firmly within the traditions of the Church. They challenged neither authority nor property, and willingly

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[29]Gabrielle, "Plus utile qu'un article de modes," Le Travail, no. 15 (March 1902), p. 309; Rochebillard, "A Nos Lectures," pp. 2-3; idem, "Le Bureau technique," ibid., no. 5 (May 1901), p. 91; idem, "Salaire minimum," ibid., new series, no. 17 (December 1907), pp. 887-89; Viennet, L'Application de l'idée syndicale, p. 5.

[30]Zirnheld speech to Lille union, in L'Employé, no. 177 (January 5, 1909), p. 13; Poncet, "Les Syndicats libres féminins de l'Isère," La Vie syndicale, no. 20, p. 85, no. 22, pp. 183-84; M. Décaux, "Dix Années de vie syndicale," p. 22. Like Keufer, the Catholics believed in serious organization and high dues. They admired the English unions in this regard (as did the Positivists). See Paul Guénard, "Les Grèves des mineurs," L'Employé, no. 216 (April 5, 1912), pp. 40-41.

accepted a religious presence in their organizations. The sanctions against the Christian Democrats and the Sillon did not affect them at all.

The acceptance of inequality led to some curious doctrinal twists. Although Catholics generally supported a minimum salary, not all favored equal salaries. The Echo rejected the concept of a minimum wage because it felt the better workers should get higher wages.[31]

All the Catholic unions admitted, theoretically at least, the legitimacy of the strike as a weapon of last resort. Their attitude corresponded to that of the Positivists and the Yellows: strikes could only occur after all attempts at conciliation had failed, and only after a vote of the workers in the plant. Strikes were to be undertaken only for the purpose of improving economic conditions. "Political" strikes were strictly forbidden and no strike which affected the health of the nation or its security was permitted.[32]

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[31]Jasmin, "Vie corporative," no. 32 (January 10, 1903), p. 3; "Notice sur le Syndicat Ouvrier de la Métallurgie," p. 4. The metal workers favored a minimum wage but not a uniform wage. The recognition of employer prerogatives is best stated in Syndicats libres féminins de Grenoble, "Doctrine syndicale," p. 107; Gauthier, "Déclaration syndicale," p. 113; Oursel, Le Syndicalisme, p. 43; "Motu Proprio de S.S. Pie X sur l'action populaire chrétienne," La Ruche syndicale, no. 6 (January-March 1904), pp. 75-77.

[32]Gauthier, "Déclaration syndicale," p. 113; Pawlowski, Les Syndicats féminins, p. 38; "Chronique lyonnaise," Le Travail, no. 26 (February 1903), pp. 605-9; Joseph Arendt, La Nature, l'organisation et le programme des syndicats ouvriers chrétiens (Paris: Action Populaire, "Editions Spes," 1926), p. 287; Rutten, Les Résponsabilités, pp. 17-18; Viennet, Les Applications de l'idée syndicale, pp. 37-38. The S.E.C.I. refused to support a strike of employees of the Bazar de l'Hôtel de Ville in 1909 because it felt the target was ill-chosen; it was one of the few stores that closed on Sunday. On the other hand, it supported the

The Catholic unions upheld the institution of private property. Here too, they were less "radical" than the Yellows and closer ideologically to the Positivists. The Yellows, we may recall, made the acquisition of property by the workers the main point in their program. There was no comparable emphasis in Catholic syndicalism. Like the Positivists, the Catholics believed that the worker would remain a worker. They paid little attention to cooperatives, except for cooperative buying, and even less attention to profit sharing or stock purchase plans.[33]

The role of the union was limited to working for improvements. As Viennet put it, it was a method of substituting social justice for the muscle of the most powerful.[34] But

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Lille independents in their joint strike with the C.G.T. unions in the same year. Also, they pointed out with pride that they refused to supply strikebreakers during the department store strike, even though they opposed it. Viennet, "A Propos de deux grèves," L'Employé, no. 188 (December 5, 1909), pp. 161-62.

[33]The only Catholic union which displayed an interest in profit sharing was the S.E.C.I. section of bank clerks. There was an occasional article about it in L'Employé or L'Echo, but no sustained commitment to the idea. See "Groupes professionnels," L'Employé, no. 216 (April 5, 1912), p. 42; G. Lauret, "Le Contrat de Travail," ibid., no. 204 (April 5, 1911), p. 42. M. Le Boulanger published an article on profit sharing in ibid., no. 199 (November 5, 1910), and there were two articles in L'Echo des syndicats, no. 34 (February 10, 1903) and 37 (March 25, 1903). One small article on production cooperatives appeared in La Ruche syndicale, no. 54 (June 15, 1910), but more typical was Viennet's treatment in Les Applications des idées syndicales, pp. 40-45. He viewed cooperatives solely from the standpoint of purchasing power. In the debate on commercial capacity for the unions, the Echo hinted at a strategy of production cooperatives, but never followed up on it. See nos. 25 (September 25, 1902) and 26 (October 10, 1902). On private property, Semaine sociale . . . 1905, p. 12, "Motu Proprio de S.S. Pie X."

[34]Viennet, Les Applications de l'idée syndicale, p. 4; Arendt, La Nature, p. 8; Premier Congrès, p. 9; Deuxième Congrès, p. 13; speech of Mlle Beeckmans, in La Ruche syndicale, no. 31 (May 15, 1908), pp. 462-63.

for Catholics, of course, the economy did not exist in a vacuum. By carrying out their work, the unions contributed to the moral improvement of society.[35] Where the Catholic unions differed from the Yellows and the Positivists in their demand for improved working conditions was that they felt it was a matter of establishing Christian justice. It was Christ's message that all individuals be treated with dignity and fairness. They felt that through their syndicalism, they were furthering the cause of Christianity.[36] As Rochebillard put it: "For God, family, yourself, and France--organize!"[37] Her cry showed another aspect of Catholic unionism: patriotism. The Catholics were nationalist to the core. France, la belle France, had to be strengthened, defended, and loved. As important as the family was, so France represented the great family for all true patriots. Le Travail took its patriotism so seriously that it regularly printed nationalistic poems and songs. The need to fight foreign competition was regularly

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[35]Rochebillard, "Aux Jeunes filles," Le Travail, no. 2 (February 1901), pp. 17-23; Gauthier, "Déclaration syndicale," p. 111.

[36]Piat, Zirnheld, p. 78; Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques, p. 5; Arendt, La Nature, pp. 85-86; Turmann, Le Syndicalisme chrétien, pp. 37-38; Boisgontier, Les Syndicats professionnels féminins, p. 88; "Motu Proprio de S.S. Pie X;" "Vie syndicale," La Ruche syndicale, 3rd series, no. 3 (March 15, 1912), pp. 29-30; Georges Guitton, Le Syndicat dans ses rapports avec la hiérarchie catholique (Paris and Lyon: Action Populaire, 1921), pp. 2-4.

[37]Rochebillard speech at Valfleury. The S.E.C.I. had a similar devise: "Family, Patrie, State, Property." See "Une Révanche," L'Employé, May, 1912, p. 49. Verdin said there were three primordial institutions, the family, the patrie, and the profession: "Le Rôle social du travail," ibid., no. 188 (December 5, 1909), p. 165.

emphasized.[38]

Along with their patriotic sentiments, the Catholic syndicalists viewed the state as an arbiter, assuring justice to varied social groups. They had no difficulty, unlike the Yellows and Positivists, in looking to the government for labor legislation and relying on the state to implement the reforms they desired.[39] However, they also remained outside of electoral politics. One exception was defense of the church. Catholic unions protested each passage of an anticlerical law.

Although the Catholic unions maintained that they were independent of church control, they made no attempt to hide

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[38] Le Travail, nos. 9 (September 1901), 14 (February 1902), 25 (January 1903). One song, "The Glory of the Flag," concluded thusly: "The foreigner is in retreat. The officer raises his head and proudly dies. His task is finished. He died for the nation, for the glory of the flag." Depopulation was also decried, and French women were urged to bear more children. La Ruche syndicale, no. 43 (June 15, 1909). On foreign competition and the undesirable presence of foreign workers in France, L'Employe, nos. 160 (August 5, 1907), 216 (April 5, 1912), 229 (May 13, 1913); L'Echo des syndicats, no. 49 (September 25, 1903). Generally, the Catholics did not let their nationalism draw them into antisemitism.

[39] Pawlowski, Les Syndicats féminins, pp. 64-66. Pawlowski pointed out that the Lyons unions tended to emphasize syndical action rather than legislation, yet a close reading of the resolutions adopted at their 1906 congress reveals that many of them required legislation or other government action, such as the appointment of more inspectors or government subsidies. Le Travail, new series, no. 1 (August 1906), pp. 280-84. Also Poncet, "Comment former un syndicat," p. 391; Oursel, Le Syndicalisme, p. 35; "Inspection du travail, habitations ouvrières," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 14 (February 25, 1902), pp. 33-34; Syndicats libres de Grenoble, "Doctrine syndicale," p. 108; Deuxième Congrès, p. 35; Discourse of M. Jean, in La Ruche syndicale, no. 51 (March 15, 1910), p. 789; Viennet, Les Applications de l'idée syndicale, pp. 7-8; "Chronique syndicale," Le Travail, no. 3 (March 1901), p. 55; "A propos des retraites ouvrières et de la mutualité," ibid., no. 62 (March 1906), p. 46.

their religious connections. Priests were often present at their meetings, and the unions' social programs often consisted of pilgrimmages and masses. More important was the belief that syndical neutrality in religion was impossible. As Mlle Poncet said, the economic question was based on a moral question, and moral questions were based on religion. Therefore, the union had to base its principles on Christianity.[40]

Even mutual aid, to which the Catholic unions were especially devoted, was seen in religious terms. The concept of helping oneself, and helping one's brothers and sisters was viewed as a basically religious act.[41] Cooperative buying was a Christian duty because it increased the amount of morality in commerce by eliminating outrageous competition.[42] The Sunday rest, and any other reduction in the workday or week, was a religious reform. It permitted workers to attend church and to spend time with their families.[43] Finally, religion

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[40]Poncet, "Comment former un syndicat," p. 392; idem, "Les Syndicats libres de l'Isère," La Vie syndicale, no. 19, pp. 12-13; Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques, pp. 5, 47-49; Viennet speech at 1908 general assembly of S.E.C.I., in L'Employé, no. 171 (July 5, 1908), p. 105.

[41]E.S., "L'Ouvrière lyonnaise moralisée par la 'Mutualité entre Femmes,'" Le Travail, no. 6 (June 1901), pp. 105-6 and no. 7 (July 1901), p. 134; Emile Cheysson, "Le Rôle de la femme dans la mutualité," ibid., new series, no. 6 (January 1907), pp. 478-79; "L'Epargne et la prévoyance," La Ruche syndicale, no. 2 (January-March 1903), pp. 24-25; "Influence moralisatrice de la mutualité," L'Echo des syndicats, no. 28 (November 10, 1902), p. 372.

[42]"Coopération," L'Employé, no. 177 (January 5, 1909), p. 16.

[43]Poncet, "Les Syndicats libres de l'Isère," La Vie syndicale, no. 22, p. 178.

inspired their moderate method. Not only did Catholicism make them accept the institution of private property and social hierarchy, but it also made them understand that it was conscience, not violence, which protected individual rights. The awakening of capitalism's conscience was also a religious reform.[44]

We may find it surprising to learn that the Catholic unions were nonetheless willing to cooperate with the revolutionaries of the C.G.T. This cooperation was limited and hedged with restrictions. The Catholics would join in common demands and common actions with socialist unions when the demands were reasonable and limited to economic improvements. The cooperation could only be temporary, and directed toward the attainment of a specific reform. Although there were not many opportunities before World War I to exercise this cooperation, it became customary in the postwar era.[45]

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[44]Poncet, "Comment former un syndicat," p. 392. Pius X put it as follows: "All Catholics . . . understand the impossibility of resolving the great problem of humanity, the problem of labor, outside of religion. Neutral organization of labor! One might as well say neutral organization of life. . . . To the extent that it is possible, Catholics must organize and affirm their principles: create Christian families, and a Christian professional family also." Année sociale internationale, 1913-1914, p. 456. Religion also required duties of the worker. As in the Positivist creed, he or she had to be a serious worker, interested in professional development. Likewise, he had to seriously fulfill his obligations to his union. Jacques Legras, "Notre Mea Culpa," L'Employé, no. 218 (June 5, 1912), pp. 70-71; Verdin, Le Rôle social du travail," p. 165; Albert Huleux, "La Langue internationale," ibid., no. 160 (August 5, 1907), p. 113; Viennet, "La Vie syndicale," ibid., no. 200 (December 5, 1910), p. 140.

[45]Abbé Vral, Catholique et syndicaliste, pp. 3, 9; Oursel, Le Syndicalisme, p. 104; Viennet, "Pour le répos hebdomadaire," L'Association catholique 63 (January 15, 1907): 11; Syndicats libres féminins de Grenoble, "Doctrine syndicale," p. 106; Premier Congrès, pp. 6, 70; Deuxième Congrès, p. 9.

Even if the Catholics and revolutionaries found they agreed on specific reforms, they differed in that the Catholics wanted the conditions of labor to be regularized in a contract. Different unions emphasized different aspects. The Petits-Carreaux unions approved the no-strike clause, whereas the S.E.C.I. tended to look at it in terms of solidifying improvements and more just conditions.[46] The main problem Catholic syndicalists had with the collective contract was its element of coercion. Those who believed in the "right to work" recognized that a contract defined salary and working conditions for all workers, thus taking away the right of an individual to negotiate his own bargain. This concern did not worry the Social Catholics committed to corporatism. Their doctrine of an organized profession required that rules be made for all by the corporative council (on which sat representatives of capital and labor). It was the syndicalists proper who struggled with the issue. One compromise was found by the printers, who decided that contracts did not have to be obligatory for all workers in an industry, but could apply only to the workers represented by the union. The S.EC.I. dealt with the issue a little differently. They decided that the contract should set a minimum wage, but not a uniform wage.[47]

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[46] Viennet, Les Applications de l'idée syndicale, pp. 17-20; Arendt, La Nature, pp. 16-18, 268-69; Marcieu, Les Syndicats catholiques, pp. 53-54; Deuxième Congrès, pp. 19-22; "Un Contrat collective de travail," L'Echo des syndicats, new series, no. 5 (March 10, 1907), pp. 69-70; Oursel, Le Syndicalisme, pp. 45-46.

[47] Deuxième Congrès, pp. 21-22; G. Lauret, "Le Contrat collectif de travail," L'Employé, no. 205 (May 5, 1911), p. 52; Max Bar, "Livres et revues," ibid., no. 188 (December 5, 1909), p. 166.

Catholic syndicalism was yet another alternative to the revolutionary position of the C.G.T. Although it has been denigrated for its small size and its excessive concentration on mutual aid, Saint-Léon called it the most important syndicalist movement outside the C.G.T.[48] As the forerunner of the C.F.T.C., its historical significance is assured. The French Confederation of Christian Workers, initially, was merely the coordinating body for the S.E.C.I., the Abbaye and Lyons women's unions, and the other existing Catholic unions. Zirnheld and Tessier of the S.E.C.I. became the Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, of the C.F.T.C. Catholic trade unionism displayed a vigorous life from the 1920s to the 1950s. Catholic syndicalism synthesized social conservatism, nationalism, and trade unionism, thus offering the religious French worker a way to defend both his economic interests and his religious beliefs.

Catholic syndicalism, Yellow Unionism, Proletarian Positivism, and reformist syndicalism have obvious similarities. But can these very different groups be considered parts of a

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[48]E. Martin Saint-Léon, Histoire des corporations, p. 810. Also Dragoslav Todorovitch, Le Droit syndical et les doctrines syndicalistes (Paris: Librairie Technique et Economique, 1934), p. 237; Robert Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale française: théoriciens et militants (Paris: Armand Colin, 1948), p. 105. In 1912 Lagardelle said that the Social Catholic movement had an intellectual ferment which the socialists had lost: "Les Catholiques sociaux," Le Mouvement socialiste, no. 244 (September-October 1912).

cohesive movement? It would appear so, both in terms of the ideological kinships and, what is more important, the personal and organizational links which connected Yellows, Catholics, and Positivists. The next chapter will trace these ties.

CHAPTER X

CLASS-COLLABORATIONIST UNIONISM: THE MOVEMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE

Up to this point, we have identified and analyzed different variants of class-collaborationist unionism as exemplified by the Barberettists, the Positivists, the Catholics, and the Yellows. In addition, we have taken note of a broader reformist syndicalism which was compatible with, and often led by, the Proletarian Positivists. Is there any significance to our inquiry, other than the legitimate objective of exposing an alternative to the well-studied revolutionary syndicalist model? I believe there is. It is my contention that there are not four or five separate varieties of class-collaborationist syndicalism. Rather, all the groups mentioned above were but different components of what I have chosen to call the class-collaborationist labor movement. In other words, antirevolutionary syndicalism had a certain coherence. Although it existed in several forms, there were connections between the different forms and continuity between earlier and later forms. The connections were both ideological and, more importantly, personal.

This is not to say that the Yellows were strong supporters

of Keufer's Fédération du Livre or that Jules Zirnheld was devoted to the jaunes--quite the contrary. On the surface, the Proletarian Positivists had tremendous contempt for the non-C.G.T. unions, whether they were Yellow or Catholic. By the same token, Keufer was subjected to the hostility of the Yellows and the Catholics because he belonged to the C.G.T.[1] Catholic syndicalists and Yellows displayed animosity toward each other. But it was a case of not being able to see the forest for the trees. Although the three elements found it easy to stress their differences and jealousies, our improved perspective permits us to see that the similarities could be stronger than the differences. The ties between Catholics, Yellows, and Positivists transcended their differences.

If it was true, as I hope to show, that class collaborationist unionism was a movement and not just a collection of

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[1]See V. Leçerf, "L'Union des Syndicats Ouvriers des Industries du Livre," L'Association catholique 65 (May 15, 1908): 354-55; "Faits sociaux: à la Fédération du Livre, l'influence appartiendra-t-elle aux réformistes ou au révolutionnaires," ibid. 79 (August 1910): 184-85; Deuxième Congrès de l'Union des Syndicats Ouvriers des Industries du Livre, Tours, 30-31 mai 1909 (Paris: n.p., n.d.), p. 10; Premier Congrès de l'Union des Syndicats Ouvriers des Industries du Livre, Paris, 13-14 août 1905 (Paris: n.p., n.d.), p. 7; L'Echo des syndicats, nos. 48 (September 10, 1903), 51 (October 25, 1903); Jules Zirnheld, Cinquante Années de syndicalisme chrétien (Paris: Editions Spes, 1937), pp. 143-46, 151; R.P. Stéphane-J. Piat, Jules Zirnheld (Paris: Bonne Presse, 1948), p. 73. Historians have also made a point of differentiating the jaunes from the reformists: Robert Goetz-Girey, La Pensée syndicale française: militants et théoriciens (Paris: Armand Colin, 1948), p. 27; Jacques Julliard, "Diversité des réformismes," Le Mouvement social, no. 87 (April-June 1974), p. 5.

diverse and isolated groups which rejected the revolutionary approach to trade unionism, then the ideology itself takes on an increased value. I am suggesting that a substantial segment of the French working class was enrolled under the antirevolutionary banner; that the notion of social peace was strongly established by virtue of its widespread influence; and finally, that the class-collaborationist movement was responsible for originating the major techniques and institutions of modern labor-capital relations.

In the Second Empire and at the Workers' Congresses of the early Third Republic workingmen appeared who rejected the class war as a goal and the strike as a method. Instead, they envisioned the normalization of class relations through the peaceful adjustment of differences or the emancipation of the working class through "association," namely the cooperative ownership of productive enterprises. Hostile to collectivism, they upheld the right of all citizens to own property; cooperation was seen as a form of joint proprietorship, not as collectivization.

These moderates, who soon found themselves in a minority position in the labor movement, consisted of two basic groups: Proletarian Positivists and Barberettists. The latter emphasized cooperation; the former, basing their ideas on the belief in the perfection of humanity through the diffusion of the ideas of Auguste Comte, rejected it. However, this programmatic difference was not strong enough to override their

similarities, which were founded on prorepublicanism and anticollectivism.

Barberettists and Positivists grew closer as the collectivists grew stronger, and held a joint congress at Le Havre in 1880 when the revolutionaries seceded to hold their own meeting. Their collaboration did not continue on a close basis after 1880, but they never completely cut their mutual ties. The Positivists sent a delegate to the so-called Fifth Congress run by the Barberettists in 1881, but whereas the advocates of cooperation created their own organization, the Union des Chambres Syndicales Ouvrières de France, the Positivists chose to work within the Possibilist wing of French socialism. Nevertheless, good relations were maintained.

Neither Keufer nor Finance belonged to the Barberettist U.C.S., but Albert Gaze, the Positivist leader of the cooks' union, did. The U.C.S. paper, Le Moniteur des syndicats, publicized the meetings of the Cercle des Prolétaires Positivistes. In addition, it reported on the activities of Keufer and Finance, and occasionally published letters from them.[3] By the 1890s, when the U.C.S. had ceased to exist as a real trade union federation, it aligned itself with reformism as practiced by

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[3]Le Moniteur des syndicats, October 20-27, October 27-November 2, 1882, April 16-22, May 14-21, 1885, November 4-11, 1886, January 8-22, 1888. The cooperatists among the Paris typographers, although not Positivists, were also active in the U.C.S. On the publicity given the Positivist cercle, see February 1-8, 15-22, March 22-29, 1883, January 24-31, 1884. On Keufer and Finance, March 8-15, May 17-24, 1883, January 14-21, May 1-8, 1884.

Keufer. In particular, the U.C.S. was enraptured by the joint commission established between the Fédération du Livre and the Union des Maître Imprimeurs. It saw in such an institution, as did Keufer himself, the perfect way to regulate and pacify labor relations. As the struggle between reformists and revolutionaries in the C.G.T. intensified in the early 1900s, the Moniteur threw its support to the moderates, and opened its pages to prominent reformists such as Edmond Briat, leader of the union of precision instrument workers. Barberet worked with Positivists in the Office du Travail; his successors as Chief of the Bureau of Professional Societies were Emile Corra and Isidore Finance.[4]

Barberet and the U.C.S. discovered profit sharing in the decade after Le Havre, and came to emphasize it over cooperatives as they felt it was a more practical way of improving the wages of workers, of giving them a sense of commitment to their employers, and of establishing coproprietorship. As a result, the U.C.S. looked with favor on the jaunes, especially their initiative in promoting profit sharing.[5] Thus the U.C.S., representing the Barberettist-cooperative wing of the early labor movement, was able to support simultaneously both Keufer

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[4]Ibid., June 11-30, 1897; October 9-29, 1898; November 9-20, 1902 and July 10-30, 1904 carry favorable articles on the joint commission. For their proreformist articles and Briat's pieces, see the issues of January 28-February 17, 1906; December 13, 1908-January 2, 1909; March 7-27, October 24-November 13, 1909; October 11-November 5, 1910; March 3-23, December 1-21, 1907; July 19-August 8, 1908.

[5]Ibid., November 1-21, 1903; June 24-July 14, 1906.

Biétry. Biétry himself gave no indication of familiarity with the work of the U.C.S., but it is possible that Lanoir was cognizant of it, as he was involved in antirevolutionary unionism in the early 1890s. Whether he was or not, the U.C.S. formed an ideological connecting link between the Barberettists of the 1880s and the Yellows of the 1900s.

There were more concrete connections between the Yellows and the U.C.S. Because of Laroche-Joubert's interest in profit sharing, this paper manufacturer who was for a time a leading figure in the jaunes, attended conferences organized by the Society for the Promotion of Profit Sharing. In at least one case, Laroche-Joubert, Barberet and Veyssier served on the same committee.[6] As we have seen, the Union des Comptables, the last active labor union in the Barberettist federation, joined Lanoir's Bourse du Travail Indépendante in 1901 and the Barberettist painters' union attended the jaune congress of 1906.

There do not seem to have been comparable links between the Barberettists and the Catholic syndicalists before 1900. After that date, however, relations were very cordial. A. Artaud, a leader of the U.C.S. in the late 1890s when Veyssier's health began to fail. Artaud became one of the heads of the independent Fédération des Employés de France. This group had broken away from the revolutionary federation and did not belong to the C.G.T. Nor did it join the Yellow federation.

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[6]Ibid., January 29-February 3, 1889.

However, it welcomed the delegates of the S.E.C.I. and other Catholic unions to its congresses (in contrast to the revolutionaries). In return, the Catholics gave their votes to Artaud in the elections for the C.S.T. Artaud and his colleague Besse (also of the Fédération des Employés) were the first non-cégétiste candidates elected to the prewar C.S.T. (and the only ones except for the Catholic candidate, Mlle Beeckmans, in 1912). Besse, by the way, was a Lyons Positivist. The jaunes looked favorably on the clerk's group, even though it did not join Biétry's federation.[7]

On the surface, the Catholics and the Yellows did not have warm relations. This was particularly true for Zirnheld and the S.E.C.I. Zirnheld frequently complained, with reason, that many Catholic employers and clerics, who had never been supportive of Catholic syndicalism, were enthusiastic backers of the jaunes. Catholic businessmen often felt that Zirnheld's brand of unionism threatened their interests while Biétry was considered less dangerous and more pliable.[8] However, the Yellows received a great deal of support from Catholic unions other than the S.E.C.I. The Petits-Carreaux unions, for example, collected money for the Montceau miners in 1900 and the Echo des syndicats devoted a great deal of favorable publicity

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[7]Le Jaune, August 27, 1904.

[8]Zirnheld, Cinquante Années, pp. 133-35, 150-52; L'Employé, no. 145 (June 5, 1906), no. 171 (July 5, 1908).

to the jaunes, especially in the beginning. Mlle Rochebillard was enthusiastic about them; the Abbaye clothing workers' union cast its votes for the Yellow candidate Victor Faron in the 1903 C.S.T. elections. There was a strong feeling among many Catholic syndicalists that they were fighting the same battles alongside the Yellows.[9]

It was relatively easy for individuals to pass from Yellow unionism to Catholic unionism and vice versa, or to maintain a presence in both camps. A. Féliers, who was Lanoir's assistant for a time, was also the editor of the Catholic Echo des syndicats. He had been head of the Bourse du Travail Indépendante, which associated with Lanoir's and then Biétry's groups. Valenciennes offered another example of the ease with which loyalties could be shared. Delcourt-Haillot, one of the leaders of the independent unions of that northern city was a perennial delegate and participant in the jaune congresses. He even took the Yellow label for his miner's union. On the other hand, he considered himself to be a Catholic unionist also, and wrote several articles for the

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[9]L'Echo des syndicats, nos. 3 (March 25, 1901), 6 (June 25, 1901), 7 (July 25, 1901), 10 (October 25, 1901), 13 (January 25, 1902), 15 (March 25, 1902), 16 (April 25, 1902), 19 (June 25, 1902), 21 (July 25, 1902), 22 (August 10, 1902), 30 (December 10, 1902), 33 (January 25, 1903), 37 (March 25, 1903), 40 (May 10, 1903), 42 (June 10, 1903), 44 (July 10, 1903), 45 (July 25, 1903), 52 (November 10, 1903), 94 (August 10, 1905); La Ruche syndicale, no. 3 (April-June 1903); Le Travail de la femme et de la jeune fille, nos. 6 (June 1901), 16 (April 1902), 63 (March 1906), new series, nos. 1 (August 1906), 6 (January 1907), 9 (April 1907).

Echo des syndicats. The same situation prevailed in Lille. Henri Jooris attended the Yellow congresses and also worked with Rochebillard, the Petits-Carreaux groups, and the S.E.C.I. at the same time. His colleague Duquesne attended both Biétry's conventions and those of the Catholic printer' union. The Lille independent union of printers belonged to the Catholic Union des Syndicats Ouvriers des Industries du Livre and the Fédération des Syndicats Indépendants du Nord, which considered itself jaune for some years (although it eventually disassociated itself from the Fédération des Jaunes). At the Second Congress of the Catholic printers, Duquesne opposed a resolution which would have forbid unions from joining Yellow bourses.[10]

Léon Verleye was a long-time jaune who had good relations with the Catholic unions. Verleye was one of the original followers of Lanoir, an important figure in Biétry's federations, and served on the executive committee of the pure syndicalist federation formed after the division of the Yellow movement into the Parti Proprietiste and the Fédération Syndicaliste des Jaunes. In addition, he was an active member of the

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[10] Le Travail libre (Lille), May 5, 1904; Le Jaune, August 27, 1904; L'Echo des syndicats, nos. 42 (June 10, 1903), 44 (July 10, 1903). In addition to his articles in the Echo, Delcourt-Haillot published in La Réforme sociale, Le Play's journal, and wrote several brochures which were distributed by the Action Populaire. "Comment former des syndicats jaunes," La Réforme sociale, 5th series, 3 (May 16, 1902); Le Programme des mineurs jaunes (Paris: Comité de Défense et de Progrès Social, n.d.); Rouges et jaunes dans la dernière grève (Lille: Action Populaire, 1903). For Duquesne's attitude toward the Yellow label, see Deuxième Congrès, p. 37.

Catholic metalworkers' union headquartered on the rue des Petits-Carreaux.[11]

Mlle Rochebillard was one of the most active figures in establishing relations between these two variants of class-collaborationist unionism. She invited Biétry to speak at the congress she had organized in 1906. Although his reception was not entirely enthusiastic, Mlle Rochebillard wanted close relations between the independent unions of the southeast and the Fédérations des Jaunes, even if the semblance of autonomy had to be maintained to satisfy her constituents who were less enamored of Biétry than she was. The police thought that Biétry had intentions of bringing the Lyons unions under his wing through the medium of the supposedly independent federation. It should also be noted that the Lille women's unions which belonged to Rochebillard's group also sent delegates to the Yellow congresses.[12]

The Social Catholics, who provided so much support for Catholic syndicalism, were less inclined to jaunisme. But they were hesitant about condemning it outright. While noting its favorable qualities, most Social Catholics expressed

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[11]Verleye testified to the fact that there were also those who opposed close relations between the two groups in Le Jaune, October 27, 1906.

[12]"Compte rendu du Premier Congrès National des Syndicats Indépendants de Femmes," Le Travail de la femme et de la jeune fille, new series, no. 1 (August 1906), pp. 306-10; Archives Nationales, AN F7 12793, report of December 28, 1906.

a desire to see whether the Yellows were true unionists or merely creatures of the employers. They never condemned the Yellows unequivocably, although enthusiasm for them did wane considerably. Of course, some Social Catholics were wildly enthusiastic about the Yellows, and even some Christian Democrats felt that while Biétry's followers might be adversaries of Catholic unions, they could never be enemies such as the socialists were.[13] Sometimes, whole unions switched labels. The Brest arsenal workers had a jaune union for several years, then a Catholic one.

The Echo des syndicats group also had some links to what remained of Veyssier's organization at the Moniteur des syndicats. The Moniteur had praised the founding of the Echo and the Petits-Carreaux unions. In return, the Echo frequently reprinted articles from the Moniteur. They found each other's philosophy very compatible. G. Laurens, who was one of the principal writers for the Barberettist paper, wrote a column called "Le Mouvement syndical et ouvrier" for the Association catholique, the journal of Social Catholicism.[14]

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[13]Henri Savatier, "Le Mouvement social en France," Association catholique 58 (December 15, 1904): 523-24; L. Créspaux, "Faits sociaux," ibid. 65 (February 15, 1908): 121; Joseph Zamanski, "Chronique," ibid. 65 (June 15, 1908): 429-35; F. Ferdinand Cochet, Les Jaunes (Paris: Arthur Savaète, Editeur, 1907), pp. 15, 20; Max Turmann, "Rouges et jaunes: le mouvement syndical ouvrier en France," La Quinzaine, nos. 191 (October 1, 1902): 285-312; 192 (October 16, 1902): 529-44. The most favorable articles were by Pierre de Bricourt, "Les Syndicats jaunes," Association catholique 61 (January 15, 1906): 48-59 and ibid. (February 15, 1906): 162-72.

[14]Laurens' column appeared in the years 1903 and 1904. Also L'Echo des syndicats, nos. 2 (February 25, 1901), 11 (November 25, 1901), 27 (October 25, 1902), 30 (December 10, 1902), 37 (March 25, 1903), 38 (April 10, 1903), 41 (May 25, 1903); Le Moniteur des syndicats, November 9-20, 1902.

The connections between the Catholics and Keufer were also significant. The Catholic unions were often able to support his moderate approach. For example, they cast their votes for him in the C.S.T. elections. Both the Union du Livre and the institutrices of the Abbaye did this. Although they later decided that this was bad politics--they felt the need to establish their own identities and ran their own candidates after 1901--the Catholics were not unhappy with Keufer in the C.S.T.

The most significant Positivist-Catholic collaboration occurred in two nonlabor organizations: the Association Nationale pour la Protection Légale des Travailleurs and the Ligue Sociale des Acheteurs. All the leading figures of Social Catholicism took part in the Association Nationale, and most were on its Executive Board: Raoul Jay, Henri Lorin, E. Martin Saint-Léon, Jean Brunhes, Léon de Seilhac, and the Christian Democrat Abbé Lémire. In addition, Adéodat Boissard of Le Play's Unions de la Paix Sociale, the Barberettist A. Artaud, Emmanuel Rivière, the Catholic printer, Alexandre Millerand, and Arthur Fontaine were active members. Keufer and Fagnot played leading roles in the society. Albert Thomas, who promoted reformist syndicalism through his journal La Revue syndicaliste, also belonged. It was a perfect meeting ground for men who believed that the improvement of the working class could be accomplished through piecemeal, legislative reforms. Furthermore, the organization was merely the French section of the International Association for the Legal Protection of Workers. As nationalists, both Keufer and the Catholics felt strongly about avoiding any

action which would harm French industry. By internationalizing reform, they felt that they could prevent any undue foreign competition for French industry. The International Association met regularly and was the guiding force behind the abolition of female night work and the use of white phosphorus in the manufacture of matches. It worked closely with the Office du Travail, which carried out investigations for it.[15] The Association Nationale, the Office du Travail, and the C.S.T. cooperated in a campaign to upgrade the working conditions of home workers and to establish a minimum wage for them. The Association Nationale also supported a plan for government subsidization of union unemployment funds. Under Keufer's urging, it also publicly supported the concept of collective contracts. Fagnot and Lorin, the Positivist and the Social Catholic, were coworkers on the international committees of the International Association, while the French delegation to its biannual congresses usually included Millerand, Fontaine, Keufer, Fagnot, Lémire, Jay, Lorin, Seilhac, Saint-Léon, and Brunhes. The Positivists thus maintained a regular working relationship with the Social Catholics. Keufer was also familiar with the efforts of Social Catholic deputies such as De Mun, and viewed them favorably.[16]

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[15]The major study undertaken by the Office du Travail for the International Association was Ministère du Travail et de la Prévoyance Sociale, Office du Travail, Enquête sur le Travail à Domicile dans l'Industrie de la Lingerie, 5 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1907-1911). Rochebillard cooperated with this inquiry (vol. IV, p. 3).

[16]On the Association Nationale, the publications of the society provide a rich source of information, especially those which contain compte rendus of the meetings. They also show the active role played by Fagnot. See, for example, La Règlementation

The Ligue Sociale des Acheteurs was designed to use the power of the consumer to force businesses to institute social reforms and treat their workers decently. It was led by Social Catholics and concentrated mainly on retail outlets, working for the Sunday closing of all shops, a limited work day, and better conditions for the sales personnel. It succeeded in convincing parliament to pass a law requiring department stores to provide stools for its sales force. When the Ligue agreed to respect the union label as a

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du travail dans les usines à marche continue, rapport de F. Fagnot, compte rendu des discussions, voeux adoptés (Paris: Felix Alcan and Marcel Rivière, 1913); La Protection de la maternité ouvrière, rapporteurs: MM. Louis Marin, Paul Strauss, compte rendu des discussions, voeux adoptés (Paris: Félix Alcan and Marcel Rivière, 1912); Compte rendu de la 2e Assemblée Générale du Comité de l'Association Internationale pour la Protection Légale des Travailleurs tenue à Cologne, les 26, 27 et 28 septembre 1904 (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1905); Report of the Sixth General Meeting of the Committee of the International Association for Labor Legislation held at Lugano, September 26 to 28, 1910 (London: P.S. King and Son, 1911); Report of the Seventh General Meeting of the Committee of the International Association for Labor Legislation held at Zurich, September 10 to 12, 1912 (London: P.S. King and Son, 1912); Les Problèmes du chômage, rapporteurs: MM. F. Fagnot, Max Lazard, Louis Varley, compte rendu des discussions, voeux adoptés (Paris: n.p., 1910); Edmond Briat, Les Demands reconventionnelles devant le conseil des prud'hommes, compte rendu des discussions, voeu adopté. Also, Association Internationale pour la Protection Légale des Travailleurs Section Nationale Française, Abbé Lémire, "Le Travail de nuit des enfants dans les usines à feu," 6th series, no. 4 (1911); Adéodat Boissard, "La Loi du 7 mars 1850 et le mésurage du travail à la tache," 5th series, no. 2 (1908); Fagnot, "La Règlementation du travail en chambre," 1st series, no. 7 (1904); Saint-Léon, "Le Travail de nuit des adolescents dans l'industrie français: rapport présenté à l'Assemblée de Genève par la Section Française," 1906. A good general introduction to the organization is John Follows: Antecedents of the International Labour Organization (London: Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1951), pp. 148-175.

criterion for whether an employer was operating his business fairly toward labor, Keufer threw the weight of the Fédération du Livre behind it.[17] The Ligue was also very popular with Rochebillard and with the Abbaye unions. Henriette Brunhes of the Ligue wrote regularly for Le Travail de la femme et de la jeune fille and the women's unions urged their members to join the Ligue.[18]

There was, naturally, hostile feelings between the Fédération du Livre and the Union des Syndicats des Industries du Livre. As a dissident union, the Catholic group was often attacked by the printers' federation; they were even referred to as Yellows. On the other hand, there was an unavoidable recognition that, in practice and in theory, the two were not far apart. The Fédération actually joined with the Catholics in setting a common wage scale and Keufer called the results "very satisfying." He was even willing to compromise on the question of the union label and award it to houses not just employing Fédération members, but also to those who merely paid scale. This would have put the Catholic workers under the aegis of the C.G.T. label and the idea was rejected both

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[17]Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, 9e Congrès national tenu à Lyon, Salle de Folies-Bergère du 5 au 10 juin 1905 (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1905), p. 64; Keufer, "La Ligue Sociale des Acheteurs," La Revue syndicaliste, nos. 54-55 (February 1909), pp. 287-92; idem, L'Usage du label dans l'industrie du livre en France (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1912), p. 15.

[18]Jean Brunhes, "La Ligue Sociale d'Acheteurs," Association Nationale Française pour la Protection Légale des Travailleurs, 1st series, no. 4 (1903); Année social internationale, 1913-1914, pp. 56-60; L'Employé, no. 188 (December 5, 1909), p. 166.

the Catholics and the more militant cégétistes. The incident underscored, nevertheless, Keufer's accepting attitude toward his Catholic rivals.[19] The Petits-Carreaux printers developed their own label which (as they were forced to admit) was rarely used. But they took some measure of satisfaction in the actions they shared with Keufer's group and honored the Fédération du Livre's index. When the Fédération achieved the nine-hour day in 1906, the Catholics were embarrassed that they had not been as militant, and thereafter urged their sections to make the achievement of the nine-hour day one of their top priorities.[20]

Keufer and Zirnheld both attended the 1906 Congress of the Sillon, which considered the question of professional organization. Zirnheld was annoyed at the more favorable reception the sillonistes gave Keufer, but what is significant is that a Christian Democratic organization saw in Keufer and Zirnheld two models of acceptable trade unionism. Keufer's syndical philosophy was so acceptable to the Sillon that it adopted the policy of penetration--Catholic membership in the C.G.T. unions with the aim of derevolutionizing them and giving them a Keuferite orientation.[21]

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[19]Ministère du Travail et de la Prévoyance Sociale, Conseil Supérieur du Travail, dix-septième session (1907), pp. 42-44; Premier Congrès, p. 17.

[20]Deuxième Congrès, pp. 9, 27; L'Echo des syndicats, no. 8 (August 25, 1901); Fédération du Livre, 9e Congrès, p. 60; Marcel Bar, L'Organisation et l'action syndicale dans la typographie française: patrons, ouvriers (Paris: Imprimerie et Librairie Duruy et Cie., 1907), pp. 175-79; Leçerf, "L'Union des Syndicats Ouvriers du Livre," pp. 343, 347-51.

[21]Zirnheld, Cinquante Années, pp. 141-43; Piat, Zirnheld, p. 74; "Méthode confirmé," L'Employé, no. 169 (May 5, 1908), pp. 73-74.

Admiration for Keufer was so widespread that it extended to Lille, where the Catholic unions there looked favorably upon his activities and even supported the printers' strikes.[22] In the C.S.T., on at least one occasion, Raoul Jay and Keufer presented a joint proposal.[23] In 1912, at a meeting held under the presidency of De Mun and sponsored by the Ligue des Acheteurs of Paris to protest exceptions to the Sunday closing law, the speakers were Jay, Sangnier, Lerolle, Zirnheld, and Keufer. On another occasion, Keufer was invited to speak at the Energie française, a Social Catholic journal.[24] Yet another link between Keufer and the Catholics was provided by Emmanuel Rivière. Rivière, a printer, was a committed Catholic, well known in the Social Catholic circles. Rivière was also one of the movers behind the joint commission set up between the Union des Maîtres Imprimeurs and the Fédération du Livre. He propagated the idea of relations between employers and employees among Catholic entrepreneurs, and enjoyed amiable relations with Keufer, whom he admired greatly.[25]

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[22] Le Travail libre, May 5, 1904 and November, 1905.

[23] Conseil Supérieur du Travail, dix-huitième session (1908), p. 198.

[24] Année sociale internationale, 1913-1914, p. 983; Revue Positiviste internationale 4 (February 15, 1908): 193-205.

[25] E. Rivière, Syndicats et commissions mixtes (Paris and Lille: Action Populaire, n.d.); Théophile, Les Cahiers de l'ouvrier (Paris: Le Jaune, n.d.), pp. 153-54.

Even the Yellows had no choice but to support the Positivist leader of the printers. This is not to say that they supported him wholeheartedly or consistently. Any movement as demagogic as the jaunes, with its pretentions to domination, was compelled to attack virulently all other movements. The Fédération du Livre, as a member of the C.G.T., was subjected to several vicious polemics. The reformists were accused of being even worse than the revolutionaries. Not only did they belong to the revolutionary confederation, but the moderates in particular were condemned for their good relations with Socialist politicians such as Millerand and Jaurès. Jaune publicists wanted to draw a distinction between all unions--reformist, revolutionary, and Catholic--and their own. They felt they had to discredit all other alternatives to ensure their own success.[26] However, it was impossible to sustain such a position. When Biétry attacked the Livre on one occasion, he received so many protests from his own followers that he was forced to make a public retraction of some of his criticisms. Among those who forced Biétry's retreat was Emmanuel Rivière, who although not a Yellow, was the kind of employer the Yellows respected and hoped to win over to their side.[27] On the other hand, Keufer had nothing but

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[26]Théophile, Cahiers, p. 53; Pierre Biétry, Leur Socialisme (Paris: Bourse du Travail Indépendante, 1901), pp. 41-42; Le Jaune, April 2, 23, August 6, October 8, 1904; October 20, 1906; May 11, 1907.

[27]Le Jaune, May 7, 1904.

contempt for Biétry and bitterly resented the efforts of the revolutionaries to pin the Yellow label on his union. To Keufer, the jaunes were merely strikebreakers and traitors to the working class.[28]

Keufer and Biétry did have different outlooks on many issues. Their styles were also radically dissimilar. Biétry was a vitriolic demagogue, whose writings dripped hatred. Keufer was always courteous in his controversies. Keufer worked within the parliamentary system that Biétry did not respect. Keufer was tolerant of other nationalities and other religions; Biétry was an associate of Drumont. The monarchist, royalist, reactionary circles frequented by Biétry were abhorrent to both Keufer and Zirnheld.

On the other hand, comparisons can be made. Maurice Gros, in his contemporary study of the jaunes, began his work with a tribute to the Fédération du Livre, the first "grand organisation syndicale pacifique de France."[29] Significantly, Keufer did not show the same hostility to independent unions which, although professing a philosophy similar to the Yellows, avoided their excesses of antisemitism, antiparliamentarism, and demagogy. As one example, Keufer nominated Artaud for

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[28]Fédération Française des Travailleurs du Livre, Les Deux Méthodes syndicalistes: polémiques publiées à l'occasion des attaques dirigées contre la Fédération du Livre, réformisme et action directe (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1905), pp. 10, 39-40; C.G.T., XIVe Congrès National Corporatif (VIIIe de la Confédération) et Conférence des Bourses du Travail tenu à Bourges du 12 au 20 septembre 1904, compte rendu des travaux (Bourges: Imprimerie Ouvrière du Centre, 1904), pp. 101, 128-30; Keufer, L'Education syndicale: exposé de la méthode organique (Paris: Imprimerie Nouvelle, 1910), pp. 41-42.

[29]M. Gros, Etude du mouvement syndical ouvrier en France: syndicats "jaunes ou indépendants" (Paris: Henri Jouve, 1905), pp. 121-22. Even the Action française praised the Livre's devotion

election to the Conseil Supérieur des Sociétés des Secours Mutuels.[30] Biétry, even though he kept a healthy distance between himself and the Catholic unions such as the S.E.C.I., was fulsome in his praise for Catholic unionism. The main ideas of jaunisme, he asserted, came from the syndicats catholiques. The only difference was that the jaunes were neutral in religious matters, and thus could appeal to a wider audience.[31]

Such were the personal and institutional connections. They show differences and emnities, but also cooperation, mutual acceptance, shared endeavors, and at worst, grudging acceptance. Let us briefly sum up the points of doctrinal similarity.

All three movements were nationalistic. They rejected antimilitarism and antipatriotism and firmly believed in a strong army and a powerful France. All three, furthermore, based their patriotism on the organicist conceptions of French conservatism, whose major contemporary exponents were Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras. In common with Barrès and Maurras, Catholics, Positivists, and Yellows believed that the nation

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[30] C.S.T., dix-septième session, p. 4.

[31] Biétry, Les Jaunes de France et la question ouvrière (Paris: Paul Paclot et Cie., n.d.), p. 104n; idem, Rouges et jaunes (Paris: Imprimerie A. Lombardin, 1903), pp. 21-25; idem, Le Socialisme et les jaunes (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1906), pp. 9-11, 65-67; Théophile, Cahiers, pp. 154-57.

was a historical reality, a natural extension of the family (which they also held sacred), a source of rootedness for mankind which, in the modern world, needed roots. What limited internationalism they exhibited was based on the idea of cooperation between nations which were sovereign and prosperous. Zirnheld, Keufer, and Biétry all desired a France grandissante.

Their recognition of the family as another historical reality led them to an antifeminist position. The woman belonged in the home, raising children inculcated with social morality and patriotic sentiments, to say nothing of religion (although here the Positivists differed from the other two in the substance of what religion should be taught). Even the Catholic women's unions looked forward to the day when their members would become mothers and housewives.

In methodology, all three viewed the strike as a weapon of last resort. That the Livre was willing to use it more frequently than the jaunes or the Catholics does not negate the doctrinal similarity. All groups required that efforts of conciliation and arbitration be attempted before a strike, that the strike have the support of the great majority of the members of a plant or industry (a two-thirds or three-quarters vote was the usual figure) and that strikes be limited both in scope and in demand. They were to be conducted for strictly economic motives: to achieve an improvement in working conditions. No general strike, revolutionary strike, or political strike

was permissible. Strikes could only be "corporate," which is to say limited to an industry. The Livre did accept the grève généralisée, the simultaneous strike against all firms within an industry. The Yellows and Catholics were not as clear on this point, but the Nord Catholics engaged in just such a strike of the textile industry in 1909 and the Parisian unions joined similar strikes after World War I.

Since the class collaborationists desired social peace and cooperation between the classes, their norm of labor relations was an amiable discussion of specific problems. Preferably, this process of discussion would be institutionalized in a permanent joint commission or, in the case of the Yellows, a joint federation uniting employer organizations and labor unions. This method was also tried by the Catholic printers. We may recall that the U.C.S. formed a joint commission as early as 1881 with the Union Nationale du Commerce et de l'Industrie. The C.S.T. was the expression of this philosophy on a national level. In contrast to the revolutionaries, the Catholics, Yellows, and reformists were eager to win election to the C.S.T. and to participate in its work. All three groups also encouraged and looked with favor upon the formation of syndicats patronaux. It was felt that the organization of employers made it easier to create joint commissions and make them viable. Keufer was taken to task by the revolutionaries because he had spoken of his desire to see the employers create their own organizations.

Good administration and regular dues were stressed by Zirnheld as much as by Keufer, in contrast to the studied lack of organization among the revolutionary libertarians in the C.G.T. Biétry was less involved in this aspect of union organization, perhaps because he emphasized contributions to the federation, i.e., himself, rather than the payment of dues to a worker's own union. He did, however, believe in strong leadership from the top.

All three agreed that union funds should be used to develop mutual aid institutions. Mutualism was a major theme of class-collaborationist unionism. In contradistinction to the revolutionaries, the class collaborationists emphasized the idea that the role of the union was to be an agency of self-help. In a way, the concept of mutualism was an alternative to socialism. It was the association of workers, not the socialist state, which would provide for the needs of all. Imbued with either the Christian spirit of brotherly love or the Positivist antiegotistical spirit of social responsibility, individuals would care for each other. This was essentially a conception of moral duty.

The antirevolutionaries were not ouvrièrist to the extent that their rivals were. Although they might have expressed fears of state power, they looked to legislation for reform. Even Biétry, for all his antistatist propaganda, became a parliamentarian. Although Keufer and Zirnheld remained aloof from parliamentary electoral battles, it is no less true that each worked closely with political groups. Zirnheld was in close contact with De Mun and the Social Catholic deputies;

Keufer was an associate of Millerand and well known among the Socialist deputies, especially since he was a member of the Socialist Party. There were always political groups which sought to work with the moderate unions as a way to encourage the kind of trade unionism that the politicians considered desirable. Waldeck-Rousseau patronized Veyssier, Méline worked with Lanoir, and the reactionaries supported Biétry.

None of the groups under discussion, with the exception of the U.C.S. in the 1880s, actively promoted cooperatives, although all paid lip service to the idea that they might be useful. Actually, the cooperative movement developed apart from the labor movement after 1890, although there were many linkages between cooperatism and unionism and many individuals were active in both. We have seen that there was some support for cooperatives on the part of Catholics, Yellows, reformists, and Positivists. For the most part the class-collaborationist groups accepted the capitalist economy and the system of private property. This did not cause them to sing the praises of unfettered capitalism. The advocates of social peace made it very clear that many capitalists were not imbued with the proper sentiments of social justice and exploited their workers. It was the job of the union to change that situation. In both Positivist and Catholic cases, it was again mainly a question of morality. The Catholic unionists wanted employers to act as they felt good Catholics should behave, which is to say by treating each individual with dignity and justice. The Positivists believed that private property was held in trust for the society as a whole, and thus had to be used for the good of the whole

society. Both groups did not recognize an absolute right to property; duty and obligation required that property be administered in a moral manner.

The Yellows made private property a doctrinal fetish. As they saw it, the purpose of syndicalism was to assist the worker in acquiring his own piece of property, mainly through profit sharing and stock sharing schemes. Although this did not attract great support from Catholics and Comteans, it did have roots in the ideas of association and cooperation advanced by the early congresses and Barberettists.

The Yellows were more in line with the other class collaborationists on the question of social inequality. All three groups believed that inequality was an iron law and that hierarchy was both necessary and desirable. This meant, logically, that there would always be entrepreneurs and that there would always be workers. While the Yellows advocated profit sharing and coproprietorship to the point where they sometimes sounded as if that would lead to the elimination of capitalism, the presence of businessmen in the Fédération des Jaunes meant that capitalism would always be treated with consideration. The jaunes stressed the point that there were different elements which contributed to production and that capital, being one of them, was as necessary (if not more so) than labor. The Catholics and Positivists tied in their ideas about hierarchy to their concept of social morality. Although an economically dominant class would always exist, that class had to accept the social obligations and responsibilities that went with its superior position.

It might also be observed that Positivism claimed to be a religion, with similarities to Catholicism. They shared such concepts as the need for a spiritual power to oversee society; a social hierarchy in which all groups had rights but also duties; the improvement in the moral level of society through the generalized observance of the religion.

The Yellows, although they presented themselves as religiously neutral, were in fact vigorously pro-Catholic and Biétry frequently expressed his admiration for the Catholic unions. As a result of this shared religious perspective, the unions of social peace opposed such republican reforms as state control of education and laicization. Positivists, Catholics, and Yellows desired religious schools in which their preferred religion could be taught.

Finally, they had common enemies. To Zirnheld, to Keufer, and to Biétry, a major enemy was the revolutionary, the collectivist, and the extremist. Positivists, Catholics, and Yellows often seemed to struggle more energetically against the revolutionary elements of the working class than against the capitalist system.

According to the class collaborationists, the great mistake of the revolutionaries was that they saw the classes as enemies and they sought the violent overthrow of the existing society and its replacement with a collectivist one. By promoting class war, they undermined the nation. Collectivism was either chimerical or just evil. In place of the destructive class war, the class collaborationists had a vision of a national society in which social conflicts, if not entirely

resolved, at least could be settled amicably and peacefully. They were prone to emphasize the common interests of worker and employer, particularly focusing on the desirability of a prosperous France providing employment for all. Far from challenging the economic system, they wished to aid the industrialist in his search for profitability. They saw the worker as a permanent figure. One could improve his conditions, or raise his standard of living, but the concept of a radical transformation of society was foreign to them.

The disclosure of the coexistence of different labor groups with similar ideas in prewar France has a certain interest. The pacific syndicalist movement has been largely neglected in favor of the revolutionaries and it would be worthwhile merely to redress the balance. Class-collaborationist syndicalism was more than the sum of a few individuals leading a few different unions. Although it manifested itself in different forms, on the whole it had continuity and coherence. We are justified in speaking of a class-collaborationist movement.

Unions never organized more than a weak minority of all French workers in the prewar era. It is significant, then, that at its height, the class collaborationists rivalled the C.G.T. in numbers. In spite of small absolute numbers, the influence of the class collaborationists was greater than that of the revolutionaries.

Class collaborationists were responsible for the creation

of the major organizations of the French working class: the bourses du travail, the C.G.T., and the C.F.T.C. In addition, they originated the politically independent labor confederation and the international trade federation. The ideas and methods of class-collaborationist syndicalism came to be adopted--over time--by most of French labor, including the communist-led C.G.T. of today. The revolutionary general strike has been abandoned for legislative reforms and strikes for piece-meal economic gains. Negotiation, arbitration, and the collective contract--class-collaborationist ideas--are commonplace. Even during the great strike wave of 1936, a major demand of the strikers was for the recognition of collective bargaining. While profit sharing, coproprietorship, and the commandite have not been as significantly historically, they are enjoying a contemporary vogue and may yet become the major legacy of the moderate unionists--as the label, the boycott, and the national committee of labor, business, and government delegates have become. Finally, the class collaborationists were in the forefront of the fight for whatever legal improvements were won by the French working class before World War I.

Class collaborationist unionism expressed the desire of an important segment of the French working class to improve its position and defend its rights, while at the same time integrating itself into the nation, and maintaining the traditional form of government and economic system. In rejecting

the revolutionary approach, class-collaborationist syndicalism provided the basic prescription for all labor movements and all governments which desired to fuse the national and the social in the hope of thereby solving the vexatious problem of the modern age.

GLOSSARY

This glossary explains some of the key terms used in the dissertation. Often, unionists had their own vocabulary and used terms in special ways, especially when they used words as labels to describe their opponents. Thus a word such as collectivism had a very specific meaning when used by moderate unionists around 1880, a meaning which may not correspond to contemporary usage. Also, meanings changed over time, and sometimes words were used very flexibly.

arbitration and conciliation - these terms referred to ways to settle labor disputes. Conciliation, as used in the law of 1892 on arbitration and conciliation, referred to negotiations between employer and workers before a strike occurred, in an attempt to prevent a strike. Arbitration meant the settling of a strike through the intervention of an outside, neutral party. However, unionists often used arbitration in the same sense as conciliation. Finally, arbitration was also used to describe a contractual procedure to settle disagreements based on the interpretation of a contract.

association - a general term to indicate workers constituting

themselves into an organization; usually a union, but the cooperative and mutual aid society were also considered forms of association.

chambre syndicale - see syndicat

collectivism - in the usage of the 1860s-1880s, collectivism meant the ownership of all means of production by the state. It was also used as a synonym for the revolutionary socialists of the Jules Guesde variety in the 1880s. By the turn of the century, it was used to describe those who sought to abolish private property. Collectivism was distinguished from cooperatism. Cooperatives were not considered to be usurpations of private property; the cooperative was seen as a way to diffuse property ownership. However, some cooperatives could be collectivist. See cooperative of production.

cooperative of consumption - a buying cooperative in which purchases were made on a wholesale basis for the members of the cooperative. Often, these were operated by unions, which purchased necessities such as fuel or basic foods for its members. Sometimes, a cooperative of consumption might be associated with a cooperative of production and purchase raw materials for its members to use in the manufacturing process.

cooperative of production - a unit of production (factory, workshop) which is owned by the workers who work in it. A collectivist

or communist cooperative of production is where all workers receive an equal share of the returns. In a noncommunist cooperative, workers buy shares in the cooperative and receive a return proportional to the number of shares they own. A noncommunist cooperative might even hire other workers on a straight wage basis.

corporate - as distinguished from corporatist, corporate referred to an industry. Thus, a corporate congress was a congress of all the unions in a given industry. A corporate strike was the strike of all the firms in a given industry. This was sometimes called a corporate general strike and was also referred to as the grève généralisée.

libertarians - a term used by reformist syndicalists to describe anarchosyndicalists, members of the C.G.T. who had anarchist backgrounds and rejected collectivism under state control but believed in a society organized in terms of free groups of producers who owned the means of production and entered into voluntary agreements with other similar groups of workers. In this sense, they were Proudhonian. They were also revolutionary. See revolutionary syndicalism.

mutualism/mutual aid - the practice whereby a group of individuals contribute to a fund which then pays benefits for specific reasons such as unemployment or illness. As an example of

self-help, it was greatly prized by moderates. Mutualism was sometimes applied not only to specific forms of mutual aid, but to the whole range of worker-initiated and worker-run institutions, such as cooperatives. As a political term, mutualism was applied to moderate workers who emphasized the creation of cooperatives as the main thrust of union activity and rejected violent revolution. Thus, Barberettists were often called mutualists.

reformist syndicalism - unionists in the C.G.T. who did not believe in the general strike or violent revolution, but preferred the piecemeal improvement of working conditions.

revolutionary syndicalism - unionists in the C.G.T. who believed in social revolution by the general strike. They rejected parliamentary action and believed the emancipation of the working class could come about through the efforts of the workers themselves as part of an unremitting class war.

strike - there were different types of strikes. The partial strike meant a strike against a single factory or company. It was "partial" in that it was not directed against every firm in the industry. The grève généralisée was the strike against all firms in a single industry. The grève générale was the strike of every worker against all industries and businesses in the nation.

syndicalism - derivation from the word syndicat (see below). It means unionism, as in Catholic syndicalism, revolutionary syndicalism, etc.

syndicat - literally, group. It came to mean union. However, since both employers and employees could form groups, it is sometimes necessary to distinguish the syndicat patronal, or employers' association, from the syndicat ouvrier, or labor union. The syndicat mixte had both employers and employees as members of the same organization. In the 1860s and 1870s, the term used instead of syndicat was chambre syndicale, which also required specification, as in chambre syndicale ouvrière and chambre syndicale patronale.

Yellow - when used by revolutionary syndicalists, it meant a strikebreaker, or a worker in the pay of his employer to sabotage the workers' union. It was also used to describe antirevolutionary unions. In its most specific sense, it referred to those who associated themselves (however loosely) with Lanoir and Biétry.

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