1

National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service

Services des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

CANADIAN THESES

THÈSES CANADIENNES

NOTICE

The quality of this microfiche is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this film is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30. Please read the authorization forms which accompany this thesis.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microfiche dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, examens publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de ce microfilm est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30. Veuillez prendre connaissance des formules d'autorisation qui accompagnent cette thèse.

**THIS DISSERTATION
HAS BEEN MICROFILMED
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED**

**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE
NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE**

National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

0-315-22140-2

35

Canadian Theses Division

Division des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

PERMISSION TO MICROFILM — AUTORISATION DE MICROFILMER

• Please print or type — Écrire en lettres moulées ou dactylographier

Full Name of Author — Nom complet de l'auteur

Henri Harry Thaler

Date of Birth — Date de naissance

September 20 1951

Country of Birth — Lieu de naissance

Paris France

Permanent Address — Résidence fixe

4250 Marcell #19 Montreal Quebec
H4A 2Z6

Title of Thesis — Titre de la thèse

Nationalism and the Working Class:
A Study of Two Union Centrals in
Quebec

University — Université

Carleton University

Degree for which thesis was presented — Grade pour lequel cette thèse fut présentée

M. A.

Year this degree conferred — Année d'obtention de ce grade

1984

Name of Supervisor — Nom du directeur de thèse

Dennis Olsen

Permission is hereby granted to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

L'autorisation est, par la présente, accordée à la BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA de microfilmer cette thèse et de prêter ou de vendre des exemplaires du film.

L'auteur se réserve les autres droits de publication; ni la thèse ni de longs extraits de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans l'autorisation écrite de l'auteur.

Date

May 1st 1984

Signature

Henri Harry Thaler

NATIONALISM AND THE WORKING CLASS:

A STUDY OF TWO UNION CENTRALS

IN QUEBEC

by

HENRI HARRY THALER

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

CARLETON UNIVERSITY

OTTAWA ONTARIO

APRIL 1984

LICENCE TO CARLETON UNIVERSITY

In the interests of facilitating research by others at this institution and elsewhere, I hereby grant a licence to:

CARLETON UNIVERSITY

to make copies of my thesis:

Nationalism and the Working Class:
A study of two union centrals
in Quebec

or substantial parts thereof, the copyright which is invested in me, provided that the licence is subject to the following conditions:

Only singled copies shall be made or authorized to be made at any one time, and only in response to a written request from the library of any university or similar institution on its own behalf or on behalf of one of its users.

This licence shall continue for the full term of the copyright, or for so long as may be legally permitted.

The Universal Copyright Notice shall appear on the title page of all copies made under the authority of this licence.

This licence does not permit the sale of authorized copies at a profit, but does permit the collection by the institution or institutions concerned of charges covering actual costs.

All copies under the authority of this licence shall bear a statement to the effect that the copy in question "is being made available in this form by the authority of the copyright owner solely for the purpose of private study and research and may not be copied or reproduced except as permitted by the copyright laws without written authority from the copyright owner."

The foregoing shall in no way preclude the granting by the author of a licence to the National Library of Canada to reproduce the thesis and to lend or to sell copies of the same. For this purpose it shall also be permissible for Carleton University to submit the abovementioned thesis to the National Library of Canada.

Signature of Witness

May 3 M.A.
Date Degrée

Signature of Student

Secretary
Department of Student

The undersigned recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
acceptance of the thesis

NATIONALISM AND THE WORKING CLASS:

A STUDY OF TWO UNION CENTRALS

IN QUEBEC

submitted by

HENRI HARRY THALER B.A. (Hons), Concordia University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of Master of Arts.

Professor Dennis Olsen
Thesis Supervisor

Chairman,
Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Carleton University, 1984.

LIST OF TABLES

<i>Table</i>		<i>Page</i>
1.	Composition of Membership of the C.S.N. by sector of activity % 1960 - 1981	90
2.	Union Central affiliation of working class in Québec over seventeen year period	122
3.	Regional unemployment rates expected at different levels of the Canadian unemployment rate	125

LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure</i>		<i>Page</i>
1.	Historic Evolution of Union Centrals in Québec	83
2.	Indicator of Employment by Industrial Group in Québec, 1961 - 1969	142
3.	American Imperialism and National Capitalism	150

APPENDICES

- A. General Resolution for the Defense of the Working Men and Women Interests in the Struggle Against National Oppression of the Québécois People, C.S.N.
- B. General Statement: Position de la C.S.N. face au référendum, Le Travail, 11 avril, 1980, C.S.N.
- C. National Issue: Labour Response, F.T.Q.
- D. Resolutions, 12th Congress of the F.T.Q., 1971.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

N.B. The majority of names in this listing have not been translated, and therefore retain their francophone designations. This has been done, as it is the manner by which they are referred to in Quebec.

AFL-CIO:	American Federation of Labour - Congress of Industrial Organizations.
ALN:	Action Libérale Nationale.
ASIQ:	L'Action Socialiste Pour l'Indépendance du Québec.
CAP:	Comité d'Action Politique.
CCF:	Commonwealth Coopérative Fédération.
CCSNM:	Conseil Central des Syndicats Nationaux de Montréal.
CCT:	Conseil Canadian du Travail.
CEQ:	Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec.
CIC:	Corporation des Instituteurs Catholiques.
CMTC:	Congrès des Métiers du Travail du Canada.
CNTM:	Conseil des Métiers du Travail de Montréal
CSN:	Confédération des Syndicaux Nationaux.
CTC:	Congrès du Travail du Canada.
CTCC:	Confédération des Travailleurs Catholiques du Canada.
CRO:	Commission des Relations Ouvrières.
FPTQ:	Fédération Provinciale des Travailleurs du Québec.
FTQ:	Fédération des Travailleurs du Québec.
FUIQ:	Fédération des Unions Industrielles du Québec
MQF:	Mouvement Québec Français.

NPD: Nouveau Parti Démocratique.
NPD-Q: Nouveau Parti Démocratique Québec
PLQ: Parti Libérale du Québec.
PSD: Parti Social-Démocrate.
PSQ: Parti Socialiste du Québec.
PQ: Parti Québécois.
RIN: Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale.
RN: Rassemblement Nationale.
UCC: Unions des Cultivateurs Catholiques.
UN: Union Nationale.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>CHAPTER</i>	<i>PAGE</i>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ^e	ix
ABSTRACT	x
INTRODUCTION	1
The Problem	2
I. <u>MARXISM AND NATIONALISM</u>	6
The Literature to be Examined	6
Marx: Class and nationalism	8
Lenin and the National Question	13
Nairn and Hobsbawm	16
Bourque and Monière	18
Gramsci	20
Summary	23
II. <u>FORMAL NATIONALISM</u>	28
A Definitional Term	29
Politicization	31
The periods under investigation	32
The Duplessis Era	34
The Political Re-emergence of Nationalism	38
Summary	46

CHAPTER	PAGE
III. <u>A WORKING CLASS HISTORY</u>	52
Extraneous Influences	52
Catholic Syndicalism	56
The Development of Working Class Organizations	58
Working Class Action and the National Question	64
The F.T.Q., an Organizational Background	67
The F.P.T.Q./F.U.I.Q. Merger: A legacy or a divided working class	73
The C.T.C.C./C.S.N.	76
Summary	82
IV. <u>THE WORKING CLASS AND THE QUIET REVOLUTION</u>	88
Methodological Note	88
The C.S.N. and Reformism	90
An Appraisal	96
The F.T.Q. and Working Class Politics	98
The F.T.Q. and Political Parties	105
Summary and Conclusions	112
V. <u>THE FORM OF WORKING CLASS NATIONALISM</u>	119
The C.S.N./F.T.Q. and the Growth of the Repressive State	119
The C.S.N.; the State; and the Endurance of reformism	124
The C.S.N. and Class Composition	131
The F.T.Q./C.T.C. Relationship.	137

An Attempt to Delineate Bourgeois Nationalism	139
Radicalization and Reform	143
The Centrals and the Parti Québécois	147
The Manifestos	149
Nationalism and the Socialist Project	153
An Absence of Options	155
Summary and Conclusions	156
 VI. <u>MOBILIZATION FOR THE REFERENDUM</u>	161
The Period Preceding the Referendum	163
Bill 45 and the Limits of Reform.	165
The C.S.N.: Workers and Nationalism	167
The F.T.Q.: The Politics of Nationalism	174
The C.S.N. and the F.T.Q.: Variations in Response and Summary	180
 VII. <u>FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS</u>	185
A Theoretical Summation	185
Working Class Nationalism: A Reformulation	188
The Relationship of Workers and Union Spokespersons	192
 REFERENCES	201
 APPENDICES	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee members, Dennis Olsen and Wallace Clement, for their helpful suggestions in the final draft of this thesis. I am indebted to my dear friend Laurie Whitehurst for her unfathomable emotional support and critical suggestions throughout this long year. I would like to thank Tricia Murphy for her care and precision in the typing of this thesis. Finally this work is dedicated to my father, Bernard Thaler, who instilled in me from a very early age an appreciation for the political moment.

ABSTRACT

The relationship between class and nationalism within Quebec has often been posed, by Marxists and non Marxists alike, in the now classic framework of a rising regional and petite bourgeoisie. This thesis argues, on the contrary, that nationalism is appropriated and expressed by various class interests under the pervasiveness of hegemonic dominance. In this respect, the present study examines the relationship between the working class and this protean ideological form. The case study selected for this task has been the Confédération Des Syndicats Nationaux and the Fédération des Travailleurs de Québec. Through the use of the formal nationalist discourse, I have attempted to extrapolate workers concerns, as expressed by these two organizations, from the existing complex of class alliances. In this process, the thesis enunciates the effects which the contemporary nationalist discourse has had upon the disorganization of working class ascendancy in the political sphere. As well, the present study sheds light upon the continuing crisis of hegemony for the current formal nationalist discourse.

INTRODUCTION

This study has been prompted by an abiding interest in the often vague and uncertain relationship between class and nationalism. I hope to advance the relative and explanatory nature of these complex elements. Prior to an elaboration of the thesis statement, the present work is enveloped in terms of particular goals. Pragmatically, I intend to explore the current conjuncture in Québec through what I have come to understand as a distinct working class expression of nationalism. Equally, I am attempting to better situate the theoretical question of class and its inherent interests within the general contexture of ideological discourse.

Considering the intent of this study, a fundamental appreciation of at least two interwoven analytic approaches related to an explanation of nationalism informs our endeavor.

- a) The development of political, social and economic factors which have contributed to an understanding of the nation and class dichotomy within the framework of uneven development.
- b) The articulation of a theoretical dimension which, while maintaining the determinacy of class interests avoids a reductionist inference of ideas concerning nationhood.

I will assume the first constituent approach to nationalism as the materialist background within which to locate this study. It is the

second element, however, which is the problematic theme of the actual investigation.

This work has a more specific and timely purpose. This interest concerns the explanation of processes involved in the (dis) organization of the working class on the battleground of the nationalist polemic. This is particularly poignant during a period in which the hegemony of the current debate is being exhausted by a recurring economic crisis. It is within this period of contraction that an absence of *political will* by the working classes in Quebec, as represented *through the labour centrals*, becomes most evident.

There have certainly been no lack of analyses which in conclusion bemoan the shortage of working class parties within Quebec and Canada as a whole. Few, however, have attempted to explain the nature of this political silence, by determining the ideological components and hegemonic construction of nationalism by various ascending classes, *from the perspective of the working class*. This, in its essence, is the research agenda of the present monograph.

The Problem

In effect, my purpose remains two-fold:

- a) to uncover a distinct working class dialogue from within the national question, particularly from the 1960's onwards;
- b) to offer a theoretical perspective within which to better understand class and its relation to a protean ideological landscape termed nationalism.

The thesis statement evolves naturally from the constant juxtaposition of these two research premises. *Therefore, I will argue that our understanding of nationalism in Quebec, while often presented as a homogenous phenomenon initiated by a rising bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie, has yet to be informed - and henceforth remains an incomplete notion - through an articulation of working class interests with the formal nationalist dialogue.* In this regard, nationalism from the point of view of the working class becomes a marginally expressed ideology which has been and continues to be appropriated by the larger - hegemonic - nationalist discourse. The effect of this appropriation, as I have already suggested, has resulted in the contemporary political vacuum.

The present study begins with a general discussion of the Marxist confrontation with nationalism. It is here that I will address the difficulty which various conceptual mini-paradigms within Marxism have had with the concept of nationalism. This discussion will act as an intellectual history as well as a literature review of relevant debates. While offering an exposition of the problematic, which remains a moot area in current Marxist thought, I will add various theoretical applications, particularly those of A. Gramsci, to inform the present case study.

Having considered the theoretical dimension of this thesis - which will be refined throughout the work itself - I will present a specific case analysis of the Confédération des Syndicats Nationales (C.S.N.) and the Fédération des Travailleurs de Québec (F.T.Q.). Both of these union centrals share common yet variable developmental histories,¹

Over the course of several key chapters, I will examine the positions adopted by the two centrals regarding nationalism, and thereby attempt to situate this dialogue within the complex of the contemporary hegemonic nationalist debate. The thesis will then conclude with a reformulation of the nationalist problematic and its contribution towards a more acute political assessment of class relations.

NOTES

- 1) It should be pointed out, that the Labour centrals within Québec maintain a particularly close structural as well as ideological relationship to their constituent unions, which has not necessarily been the case in the remainder of Canada. It is for this and other reasons, which will become self-evident as we progress through the study; that both centrals should be seen as the leading edge of the working class within the province.

CHAPTER I

MARXISM AND NATIONALISM

The Literature to be Examined

The association of class and nationalism had provided an intellectual and pragmatic political agenda of much debate with Marxist thought. The essence of the polemic revolves about the inherent and seemingly irreconcilable priority of one historic category and its explanatory features, to the detriment of the other. Attempts to redress the contradictory nature of these two concepts have seen various interpretations.

This chapter will review the main problematic of this thesis by drawing out some major theoretical considerations. The debate, however, is large and scattered amongst various distinct concerns, all of which would be impossible to adequately address in this study. Therefore, the presentation of theoretical argumentation will be selective yet closely follow a particular line of historical and intellectual development.

The review begins with Marx's own reference to the national question, and that of two of his foremost interpreters on the issue, H.B. Davis and S.F. Bloom. The chapter will similarly draw upon various facets of nationalism found in Lenin's appraisal of the problem. For Lenin, nationalism and its changing role in class struggle attained a particular immediacy with regards to the political expediencies

which he encountered in his everyday practical activity. For Lenin this culminated in an effort to solidify the national adhesion of various ethnic *nationalisms* within his revolutionary *regroupement*.

The interest in nationalism amongst many theorists can be situated within the context of their own historical concerns. Such developments have, of course, consistently placed the phenomenon of nationalism within the ongoing posturing of social classes. In this respect, H.B. Davis¹ has argued that Marx and Engels wrote the Communist Manifesto when the trading bourgeoisie was conquering world markets while in the process, breaking down national barriers; hence the scant importance nationalism maintained in Marx's general elaborations. Lenin, on the other hand, wrote in an age when the bourgeoisie, while continuing their expansive rush, were becoming more exclusive and hence more *nationalistic*. The issue of class and nationalism had in this context re-emerged within the framework of early nineteenth century imperialism, which Lenin addressed in some detail.² More recently the issue of class and nationalism has again become a problem during a period of de-colonization and contraction of the world economy. This period brings to fruition the reification of dependent states and their internal as well as external class relations. Of particular importance in this area of study has been the scholarly analysis of development theorists such as S. Amin and A. Emmanuel.³

The problem of nationalism and class has been extended, however, beyond the limits of underdevelopment in a third world sense. Various writers, particularly T. Nairn⁴, have attempted to reconcile nationalism, as an explanatory category, and class under the general rubric of

uneven development and the dependent state. It is perhaps Nairn's work on the British state and the phenomenon of Scottish nationalism which best introduces us to similar theoretical concerns of various scholars in Quebec, most notably G. Bourque⁵ and D. Monière.⁶ Nairn, as well as his counterparts within Quebec have attempted an explanation of the complex maneuverings of class interests within the ideological structuration of nationalism. These inquiries will be briefly assessed.

This thesis will derive its own theoretical orientation from various assumptions formulated by A. Gramsci.⁷ Gramsci, like Marx, dealt with nationalism tangentially. However, though his general concerns were elsewhere, his contribution to an understanding of the problem at hand has been of critical importance. This becomes particularly salient through various applications of the concept of hegemony. It is, in fact, this understanding which guides the necessary empirical confrontation found in the present study.

Marx: Class and Nationalism

The issue of nationalism, though an implicit undercurrent within Marxist concerns, has, however, been a relatively undeveloped notion in much of Marx's own work. H.B. Davis contends that this is not in small part due to the general neglect of a systematic political theory within Marx's early and later monograph.⁸ Without doubt, nationalism as a legitimate area of study has been relegated to a secondary and epiphenomenal nature precisely because of the analytic primacy accorded to class analysis. In this regard, the contradictions arising between the two concepts creates a cancelling effect in the production of analytic terms. Marx's legacy on the unfolding of relations of production, in

this regard, clashes to a most significant degree with an approach stressing apparent political and cultural connotations. Perhaps most importantly, nationalism in this sense has been removed from an understanding of the determining forces of social relations and is often merely seen as the ideology of a rising bourgeoisie.

There is much speculation and concrete analysis of Marx's understanding of nationalism. A worthy starting point, however, would be to briefly survey Marx's - and at times Engels' - view of the subject. Perhaps the most striking comment upon Marx's general grappling with the phenomenon of the nation or nationalism is the relatively little attention it procured within his general theoretical and practical concerns.

S.F. Bloom⁹ has argued that Marx used the term nation and nationhood in less than rigorous terms. In fact, early mention of these various terms are fraught with ambiguity. As Bloom has shown in his meticulous and seminal study of national concepts within Capital, Marx often made reference to the nation with considerable laxity. The nation in this regard was used as a synonym for country, state and occasionally the ruling class of a country.¹⁰

The general thrust of Bloom's argument merits some consideration. Marx, in Bloom's view, considered the national question in an indirect manner. Therefore, nationalism becomes an implicit notion within the many monographs. It is in the totality of Marx's analyses regarding the problematic of modern and earlier societies wherein one finds a national perspective. In this light, for Marx a nation as well as a society represented a degree of autonomy and self-consciousness.

Society as a dynamic process in this respect creates the nation which was often depicted in Marx's writing as the *necessary historical background, i.e.* traditions, questions of unification.¹¹ These conditions were then set against the better defined structures of class relations.

Marx and Engels' most direct political position regarding nationalism was best seen in the Manifesto:

The workingmen have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. Since the proletariat must first of all acquire political supremacy and must rise to be the leading class of the nation. Their struggle, however, must constitute the nation and it is itself national, though not in the bourgeois sense of the word. (12)

The above phrase enables us to view, within Marx's own work, the issue of the nation placed in a concomitant relationship to class. We find here a notion of political self-determination within a nationalist framework which remains a process of an internal class dynamic.

The issue of nationalism and Marx's statement that the working people of the world have no country was, however, far from resolute. I. Cummins¹³ asserts that the theory of proletarian internationalism was being born in a period of an emerging *national consciousness* ranging from Ireland to Eastern Europe. Cummins argues that Marx's understanding of nationalism is best sought in his treatment of specific cases. Therefore, one finds a sympathy for Irish nationalism given the specific forces of social relations in that country. Also, from Engels' perspective we are shown a particularly strong antipathy towards small collectivities striving for nationhood Engels' tracts, to a large extent, committed these nations without history to the class forces of

their larger neighbours.

One of the ways researchers have tried to assess Marx's thought regarding nationalism has been to decipher his use of the constructs: *the national class* and *the universal class*. These understandings are particularly useful for our present purposes given their nascent Gramscian implications. Marx's interest in German national unification as developed in his introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law¹⁴ was presented as a step - in a broad sense - towards the creation of a universal class. National interest in this regard was analyzed as the ability of German workers to organize upon a national scale and in so doing, ultimately replace bourgeois nationalism. The notion of a universal class - or a national class, they are used interchangeably - is therefore defined as a class which comes to power nationally and enacts the international characteristic of its class. This is certainly the importance which Marx attached to the Irish question. The issue, he argued, was to:

. . . awaken a consciousness in the English workers, that for them the national emancipation of Ireland can be no question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment, but the first condition of their own social emancipation. (15)

The problem of the universal or national class, however, requires further elaboration. This is particularly true given the present effort to locate within Marx's own writing a framework within which we can place class and nationalism while building towards a theory of working class nationalism.

Bloom posits the horizontal notion of class and vertical concept

of nationalism as fundamental inquiries into the process of class struggle. This dichotomy, he argues, is resolved through Marx's use of the concept of the *national class*. This class, Bloom argues, assumes a leadership role regarding the organization of production and the content of social, political and legal institutions.¹⁶ This, he asserts, is the point in Marx's work wherein class meets the nation. The *national interest* in this regard is subservient to the interests of the national class, a role traditionally occupied by the bourgeoisie.

H.B. Davis questions the usefulness of the *national class* concept, so central to Bloom's understanding of Marx.¹⁷ For Davis, though there are many references in Marx's work referring to the *leading class*, *national class* and *universal class*, caution should be exercised in their explanatory value. Davis, in this sense, finds within Bloom's classic study a notion of common purpose hovering tenuously over the battlefield of contending classes.¹⁸

G. Haupt, M. Lowy and C. Weill also discuss the relationship between class and nationalism in Marx's work but without considering the aforementioned emphasis on the *national class* concept. An analysis of national implications in Marx's work, they assert, must first recognize the absolute primacy of class above any other historic category. The nation in this regard is:

- a) a transitory category that corresponds to the development of capitalism and its peculiarities;
- b) there is an absence in Marx's work of an explicit theoretical position vis à vis nationalism. There is an implicit assertion in Marx's work not to treat the problematic in an autonomous manner, i.e. giving it a theoretical status.
- c) The notion of nationalism often developed incidentally is, however, present in all of Marx's work as a condition of historic legacy. (19)

For Marx, according to Haupt et al., the issue of nationalism, in whatever context, was never a goal in itself, but an instrument with which workers may or may not pursue their own interests. Certainly, this was an important element in Marx's and Engels' analysis of German unity in 1848. As Haupt et al. point out, Marx supported the unification issue during the 1860's of Italy and Germany as a revolutionary event even as he acknowledged the immediate benefits accrued by the bourgeoisie. Marx's writing on the Irish question was another example of how he dealt with the problem. It is within the Irish question that Marx and Engels in fact dealt with the notion of the *oppressed nation* and their understanding of the dialogue between national interests and the progression of working class interests. This was, however, always placed within the larger context of the class struggle outside the exigencies of the particular nation-state. In fact, as Marx and Engels argued, Ireland was the key to the English question as England was the key to resolving the European question.

Lenin and the National Question

Lenin was undoubtedly the most influential Marxist thinker dealing with the question of nationalism at the turn of the century. He addressed the issue at some length in his essay Questions of National Policy and Proletarian Internationalism.²⁰ The work, in large part, was a reply to Luxembourg's position on the irreconcilability of the class and nation dichotomy. Lenin, Lowy has argued, understood better than his contemporaries the dialectic relationship between internationalism and the right of self-determination. Lowy contends that Lenin's insights showed that:

- 5
- a) the freedom to secede makes possible free and voluntary association in the long term between nations.
 - b) only recognition by the workers' movement in the oppressor nation of the rights of the oppressed nation to self-determination can help to eliminate the hostility and suspicion of the oppressed. This ultimately would unite the proletariat of both nations in the international struggle. (21)

A reading of Lenin's writings on proletarian internationalism would seem to confirm Lowy's assertions. Certainly Lenin's position on the Irish rebellion of 1916 and Norway's secession from Sweden are examples of Lenin's attempt to fuse questions of class and nationalism. For Lenin, the secession of Norway from Sweden was not to be understood as the resulting nationalism of a bourgeois class, but rather in the

. . . close alliance between Norwegian and Swedish workers, and their complete fraternal class solidarity gained from the Swedish workers' recognition of the right of the Norwegians to secede. (22)

Lenin approached the issue of nationalism - albeit in a more direct theoretical manner than Marx or Engels - with a significant amount of qualifications. In various tracts he called upon social democrats of large countries to fight national oppression and support the right of self-determination.²³ This right, however, was not always extended to smaller countries.

The complex relationship of the working-class to nationalism was more ambiguous. Although Lenin spoke of the right of self-determination of nations, his view of the actual role of the working-class within nationalist movements was met with less than sterling approval. Working-class overtures towards nationalist movements were, as Davis argues, an organizational nuisance which split the centralized party Lenin was

attempting to build into national sections.²⁴ Lenin's polemic against the Jewish Bund was perhaps most indicative of how he viewed national aspirations which presented obstacles to his vision of a centralized political body.

Lenin's approach to nationalism can then be summed up in the following observations. As J. Mascotto contends, Lenin essentially saw the national struggle and class struggle as having a common identity wherein the latter element would ultimately integrate the former. Nationalism was, in this regard, a superstructural manifestation of capitalism which would be regulated by the appearance of the socialist order.²⁵ Lenin's major contribution, in Lowy's view, has been his recognition of the relative autonomy of the political process to which nationalism as an active force was best relegated. Therefore, whereas Marx, Engels and particularly Luxembourg have left us with an epiphenomenalist consideration of nationalism, Lenin clearly situated the question of self-determination. In this regard, Lenin stated that nationalism belonged

wholly and exclusively to the sphere of political democracy. (26)

The methodological foundation of nationalism for Lenin, as Lowy argues, was then to be understood in the realm of *the right of political secession*. Lenin, in this regard, by recognizing the relative autonomy of the *political* avoided, in the context of the revolutionary moment, the subjectivism and reductionism so endemic to an appraisal of the class and nation dichotomy.²⁷ This was achieved precisely by the analytic isolation of the nationalist problematic.

Nairn and Hobsbawm

Most representative of the new Marxist approach to the question of self-determination is the work of T. Nairn. Nairn equates the growth of nationalism with the *political entry of the lower classes into history*. Nationalism, in this regard, becomes a joint product of external pressure and an internal balance of class forces.²⁸ In this view, nationalism arises when conscious middle class elites react to the phenomenon of uneven development through the mobilization of myth and the alliance of popular forces in a given society. The populist element of nationalist or revolutionary nationalist movements receives its impetus from this dynamic interplay of class relations.

National self-determination, he argues, whether of the left or right, is never independent of class structure. It has, however, become the mobilizing ideology most effective in portraying the common concerns of a given society, and its perception of its own development. Nairn argues for an amended version of Lenin's conception of self-determination. In this sense, whereas Lenin's grappling with the problem took place within the context of the multi-national state, new theorizing must take place in view of the uneven development of modern capitalism.

For Nairn, the silent intellectual interim between the vibrant 1914 debates of Lenin and Luxembourg and the recent theorizing in the area of class and the nation is linked to various historic weaknesses in Marxist studies. Principally, our area of concern is one in which Marxism has tended to be particularly vague, i.e. the analysis of political structures and the state, particularly the bourgeois democratic state and its accompanying ideology. Secondly, in areas where

Marxism is particularly strong, i.e. historical development, orthodoxy has prevented new approaches until the recent growth in developmental studies.²⁹ Nairn's contention, in a reformulation of Lenin's dictum, argues that nationalism has been the necessary alliance sought by the middle class with the working class in the form of a new political complex. This process is particular to the current stage of capitalist development in the first as well as third worlds.

E. Hobsbawm has become Nairn's most articulate interlocutor in relation to the national question and Marxism in general.³⁰ For Hobsbawm, the nationalism described by Nairn requires no further theoretical effort by Marxists. Briefly, in a rebuttal to Nairn's thesis, he argues three salient points. Firstly, addressing Nairn's assertion of the positive characteristics of nationalism in the global capitalist system, Hobsbawm argues that independent states are clearly dependent on this very economy which transforms sovereignty into a modern form of dependence. In fact, as Hobsbawm argues, transnational neo-colonialism favours a maximization of sovereign states to effect a minimization of power under which foreign capital will have to operate.³¹ Secondly, Hobsbawm argues that there is a danger that territorial demands would come to be seen as the criteria of a potential nation. Hobsbawm's concern here is that this assumption becomes the accepted criteria for satisfying the aims of groups. This second reservation ties in well with his third concern, which is the problem of how to organize the coexistence of various ethnic linguistic factors in indivisible areas under the guise of nationalism to the exclusivity of one or the other. In Hobsbawm's view, nationalism, far from clarifying class relations,

at best obscures and prohibits the development of socialism within individual nation-states. Hobsbawm, in this respect, finds Nairn's arguments unconvincing regarding the sought-after synthesis within Marxian thought.

Bourque and Monière

The Nairn and Hobsbawm debate has its counter-part in Québec within the work of G. Bourque and D. Monière. Briefly, for Bourque, the nation remains an ideological construct as it retains no material base. In effect, Bourque's main proposition reads,

La structuration de la dominance des rapports de production capitaliste sur les forces productives nécessite la constitution d'un marché intérieur lequel détermine l'apparition de la question nationale. (32)

Nationalism in this sense, as determined by the social relations of production, remains a bourgeois ideal. The true interests of the working class - socialism - are blocked by the prevalence of these bourgeois ideologies. Nationalism, in this regard, is absolutely dependent upon the mode of production and waits only to disappear with the advent of socialism. A critique of this view is found in D. Monière's perception of the problem.

Monière argues that nationalism is neither an ideology of a particular class nor an ideology structurally linked to a particular mode of production. It is rather a representation of a collectivity which is used by different class interests in the struggle for control of the state.³³ National movements in Monière's understanding originate in opposition to the effects of political centralism.

Nationalist ideology corresponds equally and most decisively to the creation of national markets and the growth of a reserve labour force. What could be seen as bourgeois nationalism becomes in fact the negation of diverse nationalities and may in reality constitute a form of national oppression. In this light, Monière asserts,

Le nationalisme ne peut signifier l'affirmation d'une différence ethnique, linguistique et culturelle, fondée sur le contrôle des bases matérielles. Il a plutôt signifié historiquement aculturation, régression et folklorisation des différences ethniques, linguistique et culturelles. Le nationalisme bourgeois est essentiellement unificateur et centralisateur. (34)

For Monière, the crisis of national unity is precisely the manifestation of class struggle between the Canadian bourgeoisie, and the regional indigenous bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie who are attempting - particularly the latter - to associate themselves with the assumed interests of the working classes. Monière's analysis is most fruitful given his association of nationalism with various class interests. For Monière, the working classes in Quebec have a vested interest in the national question given their regional circumstances within the general context of uneven development in Canada. In Monière's view, it is in the interests of the working classes in Quebec to support the premise of sovereignty-association. He argues that the acquisition of greater powers for the Quebec state would by the nature of class alliances in Quebec, only serve to strengthen the working classes. Monière's analysis of the working class position in Quebec unfortunately stops short of what could have been a promising discourse of the class nature of nationalist expressions. It is this omission which leads him

to conclude that the working classes adopt - if only as a political strategy - the premises of sovereignty-association.

What Bourque lacks in his rigidity regarding the nationalist dynamic, equally eludes Monière in his assessment of the coinciding strategies of class interests, i.e., sovereignty-association. What is needed is a method by which - in a historically illustrative and comparative sense - one can discern the political ramifications of class and its nationalist expression.²⁵

Gramsci

Antonio Gramsci's conceptualization of the relationship between structure and super-structure is at the core of the theoretical approach to this study. Primarily, we should determine the value of applying Gramsci's thinking on the subject of ideological formation in the development of a world view, towards a study of nationalism. Gramsci did not deal in depth with the phenomenon of nationalism *per se*. He, however, poses a framework with which to understand national concepts. To do justice to Gramsci, however, before we proceed it is clear that he constantly placed the international socialist concern - a tradition in which he greatly shared - within the context of the national dimension. Given this acknowledgement, he states:

. . . the internal relations of any nation are the result of a combination which is original and - in a certain sense unique: these relations must be understood and conceived in their originality if one wishes to dominate and direct them. (36)

Nationalism, in this sense, was for Gramsci a combination of forces which the working class had no choice but to interpret against a background of

particularistic tendencies in an effort to *nationalize* their own interests.³⁷

The notion of *hegemony* used in this study can be understood as a moment wherein a class has been able to articulate the interests of other social groups by way of ideological struggle. C. Mouffe argues that Gramsci's concept of hegemony goes further than the notion of class alliance; rather, hegemony refers to:

- . . . a complete fusion of economic, political, intellectual and moral objectives which will be brought about by
 - a) one fundamental group and groups allied to it through the intermediary of ideology, b) when an ideology manages to spread throughout the whole of society determining not only economic and political objectives but also intellectual and moral unity. (38)

Hegemony, for Gramsci, was achieved by *transformism* and *expansiveness*. As he contended in The Prison Notebooks, transformism is indicative of parties of the *left* and *right* who merge their interests in the form of common political programs. This aspect of hegemony is synonymous with the notion of passive revolution, wherein class interests become neutralized through political groupings. A transformist hegemony, as Gramsci argued, is a process of class absorption wherein the class striving for hegemony extends its ideological hold over . . .

- . . . active elements produced by allied groups and even of those which come from antagonistic groups and seemed irreconcilably hostile. (39)

The above form of hegemony - and this can be read as a type of corporatism - entails a strong dose of political domination, and implies the absorption of elites.

The opposite of transformist hegemony is expansive hegemony. Expansive hegemony results in a consensus wherein the interests of the popular classes would be adopted by the hegemonic class and thus give rise to the creation of a genuine *national popular will*. These implications for a study of nationalism, viewed through the notion of transformism and expansiveness, therefore, have two components;

- a) the ability to neutralize class interests;
- b) the articulation of class interests which through their full development would ultimately bring to the foreground their inherent contradictions. (40)

An understanding of hegemony in this regard would suggest that ideology through its material base - social class - *develops inter-class subjects which manifest themselves politically*. The essence of the problem, as Mouffe rightly points out, rests in the understanding of the nature of ideology within the development of a given hegemony and the process whereby we can reconcile the adoption of one world view by a social class with apparent and differing interests. Intellectual and moral leadership becomes a particular issue here. For Gramsci, intellectual and moral leadership is the cement of the collective will, i.e. a hegemony which acts as a unity of dispersed wills. Hegemony is precisely hinged on this aspect of emerging leadership which implies a re-articulation by intellectuals of the existing hegemony. Ideology, in this regard, attains a certain autonomy. In this sense, ideologies are the wills of previous hegemonies - tradition, culture - which are constantly articulated and re-articulated by the working class. As Mouffe suggests, it «does not consist of the confrontation of two already elaborated and closed world systems.»⁴¹

Mouffe's analysis of Gramsci's approach to ideology is instructive and merits citing in some length.

The conception of ideology found in the practical state in Gramsci's problematic of hegemony consists therefore of a practice which transforms the class character of ideological elements by the latter's articulation to a hegemonic principle differing from the one to which they are at present articulated. This assumes that these elements do not in themselves express class interests, but that their class character is conferred upon them by the discourse to which they are articulated and by the type of subject thus created. (42)

It is this understanding of Gramsci's use of ideology, within the context of transformist and expansive hegemony, which informs my own usage of the concept *formal nationalism*. This notion will be elaborated upon in the following chapter.

Summary

In this chapter, I have surveyed various writers in an effort to establish a substantive, if brief, intellectual background to the problems addressed in this thesis. In this regard, I have looked at Marx's own view of the relationship between class and the nation. In this appraisal, Haupt et al. have been brought forward to determine the exact nature of Marx's relegation of the national question to an epiphenomenalist status.

H.B. Davis and S.F. Bloom's work have in a similar manner been examined to clarify the debate surrounding Marx's use of the *national class* and *universal class* concept. This formulation as we have seen, was less than rigorous in Marx's seminal writings.

Lenin's understanding of the national question distinguishes

him as the first major theorist to draw the problem away from its marginal position and offer it a political saliency. In this respect, Lenin forecast the determining potential of nationalism as a mobilizing force, although he himself often avoided the inherent territorial and organizational implications. Nairn, on the other hand, writing in a more contemporary period, extended Lenin's dictum towards a combined strategy of conscious middle class elites, who through the mobilization of a popular base addressed the consequences of uneven development.

Bourque's and Monière's perspectives have been examined as examples of the diversity of the current debate within the Quebec literature. Their differentiated approaches are indicative of the complexity of explaining from the position of *historical materialism* the imputed requirements of a mode of production against the prevalence of diverse ideologies which have *inter-class characteristics*.

The survey of all the above authors has provided the aforementioned background to the present problematic. In broad historic terms, this remains a question of class and nation as well as containing implications for the state and nation dichotomy. The conceptualizations of Gramsci, and the observations of Mouffe offer a framework within which to locate these various dualities. In this regard, Gramsci's notion of hegemony binds together many of the concerns of the theorists we have reviewed. This is achieved principally by his elaboration of the complexity of associations amongst and between classes in their progression towards political realization.

NOTES

- 1) Horace B. Davis, Nationalism and Socialism, Monthly Review Press, New York and London, p. 205.
- 2) V.I. Lenin, «Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism,» Collected Works, 1916.
- 3) (a) Samir Amin, Class and Nation, Historically and in the Current Crisis, London, Monthly Review Press, 1980.
(b) Arghiri Emmanuel, Unequal Exchange, NLB, London, 1971.
- 4) Tom Nairn, The Break-Up of Britain, Verso, 1981.
- 5) Gilles Bourque, L'Etat Capitaliste et la Question Nationale, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1977, p. 361.
- 6) Denis Monière, Les Enjeux de Referendum, Editions Québec/Amérique, 1979.
- 7) Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, Ed. Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Smith, Lawrence and Wishart, 1971.
- 8) H.B. Davis, op. cit., pp. 3.
- 9) S.F. Bloom, The World of Nations: A Study of the National Implications in the Work of Karl Marx, New York, Columbia University Press, 1941.
- 10) S.F. Bloom, op. cit., p. 16.
- 11) It is noteworthy to recall that much of the actual political arrangements which were dominant in Marx's era were concerned with the issue of unification. The same concern for unification and its class relevance was to be a continuing point of contention which overshadowed the debate between Luxembourg and Lenin.
- 12) K. Marx and F. Engels, The Communist Manifesto, Washington Square Press Inc., New York, 1966.
- 13) Ian Cummins, Marx, Engels and National Movements, Croon Helm Ltd., London, 1980.
- 14) I. Cummins, op. cit., p. 14.
- 15) K. Marx, F. Engels, Ireland and the Irish Question, New World Paperbacks, New York, 1964, p. 294.

- 16) S.F. Bloom, op. cit., p. 59.
- 17) Horace B. Davis, op. cit., p. 76.
- 18) Davis, op. cit., p. 76.
- 19) Georges Haupt, Michael Lowy, Claudie Weill, Les Marxistes et la Question Nationale 1848-1914, editions l'étincelle Montréal, 1974.
- 20) V.I. Lenin, «Questions of National Policy and Proletarian Internationalism,» Selected Works of V.I. Lenin, International Publishers, New York, 1967.
- 21) Michael Lowy, «Marxists and the National Question,» New Left Review, 1976.
- 22) V.I. Lenin, op. cit., p. 79.
- 23) H.B. Davis, op. cit., p. 199.
- 24) Ibid, p. 199.
- 25) Jacques Mascotto, Class Contre Nation, Le Combat Perdu de Lenin, Les Editions Coopératives Albert St. Martin, Collection 'thèses', 1979, p. 151.
- 26) Lenin, «The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination,» Collected Works, Vol. 22, p. 145.
- 27) M. Lowy, op. cit., p. 51.
- 28) Tom Nairn, The Break-up of Britain, Verso, 1981, p. 41.
- 29) Ibid, p. 88.
- 30) Eric Hobsbawm, «Some Reflections on the Break-Up of Britain» in New Left Review, No. 105, Sept. 1977.
- 31) This idea is picked up by J.H. Ehrenreich. He argues that . . . «nationalism leads not towards socialism but towards the integration of the working class into the capitalist class system and towards the integration of the less developed countries into the capitalist world-marketplace.» See John H. Ehrenreich, «Socialism, Nationalism and Capitalist Development» in Review of Radical Political Economics, Vol. XV, No. 1, Spring, 1983.
- 32) Gilles Bourque, L'Etat Capitaliste et la Question Nationale, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1977, p. 361.
- 33) Denis Moniere, Les Enjeux du Referendum, Editions Quebec/Amérique 1979.

- 34) Ibid, p. 36.
- 35) In this regard, this thesis will be primarily concerned with political expressions (how one mobilizes one's class interest) rather than linguistic and other cultural factors which so often define the nationalist position of the Québécois as a *people*. This is not to deny that the centrals in question were not concerned with these issues. Certainly their approach to this genre of nationalist discourse can be seen in their various briefs ranging from their positive reaction to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism to their equally positive position towards unilingualism. This type of analysis is not, however, within the concerns of this thesis, although it remains an evident undercurrent and will doubtlessly appear in various peripheral contexts.
- 36) Antonio Gramsci, The Prison Notebooks, eds. Quinton Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971, pp. 240.
- 37) Ibid, p. 241.
- 38) Chantal Mouffe, Gramsci and Marxist Theory, London 1979.
- 39) A. Gramsci, op. cit., p. 59.
- 40) C. Mouffe, op. cit., p. 183.
- 41) C. Mouffe, op. cit., p. 194.
- 42) C. Mouffe, op. cit., p. 194.

CHAPTER II

FORMAL NATIONALISM

In this chapter I will begin with the task of outlining a perspective concerning nationalism which has been informed by our previous theoretical discussion. This chapter will contain the content of what I have come to understand as *formal nationalism*.^{*} The historicity of nationalism will be brought forward in a brief summary of the autonomist tendencies of the Duplessis era, the Lesage regime and various petite-bourgeois *independentiste* parties of the sixties, culminating in the seeming poly-class appeal of the Parti Québécois.

Having outlined the dominant expression of nationalism, particularly in the forties, fifties and sixties within Quebec, I will offer a succinct appraisal of the national question within the working classes during these same periods. This will be achieved principally by an examination of the Fédération Provinciale du Travail du Québec (F.P.T.Q.), the Fédération des Unions Industrielles du Québec (F.U.I.Q.), and the Confédération des Travailleurs Catholiques du Canada (C.T.C.C.). The two former federations were the precursors to the Fédération des Travailleurs au Québec (F.T.Q.), and the latter was to become the confederation des Syndicats Nationaux (C.S.N.), following the central's deconfessionalization in 1960.

^{*}Formal nationalism is a term I have constructed to elaborate a host of class expressions of a complementary and antagonistic nature.

A Definitional Term

Formal nationalism is to be understood within the context of transformist and expansive hegemony. The term offers, in this respect, a framework within which to examine the absorption of allied and antagonistic groups into forms of *passive* as well as *direct* consensus. The relationship of *formal nationalism* and working class nationalism is of an osmotic nature, with the former often integrating the latter. The specificity of this integration, throughout varying periods of crisis, exposes the inherent class contradictions of the ongoing alliances.

The term *formal nationalism* will be used throughout this study in the above manner. In this respect, it differs from my use of such terms as *nationalism* and *neo-nationalism*. These two terms are broad in their implications, and are best seen as having a *catch-all* characteristic. More properly, nationalism is perhaps best seen as a notion closely tied to an articulation of territorial interests with roots in nineteenth century Europe. Neo-nationalism finds its fullest elaboration in the process of decolonization occurring within the mid-twentieth century and more contemporary reactions to regional under-development. My use of the term *formal nationalism* has a greater specificity. In effect, it explains the two former expressions. In this regard, *formal nationalism* is an operational term pointing to the nature of class discourse. I have perhaps given the term an even greater specificity by basing most of the forthcoming analysis within the political sphere.

Formal nationalism thus becomes a discursive forum for political and social articulations of uneven development. In this regard, it has historically appeared as a powerful instrument of a traditional and

new petite bourgeoisie. Through these varied expressions, the effects of regional inequality upon the working classes - given the absence of a partisan political form - finds an immediate expression through these inter-class subjects. In effect, what I hope to convey with the use of *formal nationalism* as a definitional term, is the dominant epochal form of alliances which attempt to speak for rising classes as well as the working class in the historic movement towards a new social bloc. In present day Quebec, this collective dialogue is usually expressed by the new petite bourgeoisie.¹ This has occurred, as we shall see later, through the successful integration of several strands of petite bourgeoisie nationalisms which culminated in the form of consensus reached by various class interests in the Parti Québécois.

The relationship between bourgeois nationalism and working class nationalism will be explained within this conceptual molding. *Formal nationalism* as the dominant expression of class discontent has taken various forms in Quebec. This occurrence is best seen in view of the format and development of political alliances as well as - certainly in the sixties and early seventies - the accelerating rate of cultural production within the province. The format of political alliances are most vivid during periods of transition and social transformation. In this regard, the national question arises most significantly during periods of economic crisis which are, in effect, the reorganization of social relations between classes.² This has historically been the case, in Lower Canada during the crisis of the 1830's; the particulars of the Mercier regime at the close of the nineteenth century; during resistance to the Duplessis regime; and the enormous structural impact of the

war economy. A similar reformulation - as we will see later - has taken place during the Levesque regime, wherein the national question again arises as the state expresses its inherent class bias during protracted periods of capital contraction.³ Prior to discussing the development of working class interests within the national question, it would be useful to define the notion of *politicization*.

Politicization

The concept of politicization, as Lipsig-Mummé has argued, has had an ambiguous career.⁴ Two trends define the term; the European Marxist tradition and American Parsonianism. Within the Marxist tradition, the term acquires a macrosocial dimension within the contextual framework of structural confrontation. Politicization in this regard becomes synonymous with class consciousness.

. . . a process by which a class comes first to recognize the need to challenge the state in the furtherance of its own interests, and second to mobilize its resources to realize that challenge. (5)

Parsonianism, however, as Lipsig-Mummé asserts, had taken the concept of *crystallization of consciousness* and reduced it to the pursuance of a single issue. Politicization in this sense becomes

. . . a process by which any group of individuals or organizations sharing either a broad spectrum of interests or concerns over a single issue, come first to recognize the need to influence whatever Establishment retains the capacity to block the realization of their goals, and second to mobilize their resources to obtain that influence. (6)

This second concept, as Lipsig-Mummé argues, is indicative of the growth

class will be briefly appraised. The consequences of these three factors have, in their respective periods, shaped the structural organization of the Quebec labour movement. In this sense, these influences have brought their own particular interpretations of class conflict to the developing struggle of the Quebec working class. The British inroad was dominant from 1850 to 1880. The thrust of American unionization efforts were thriving until the 1920's, whereupon the Catholic syndical impetus became most evident and lasted until 1960.

British unionism, certainly in the period in which it became an actor within the developing economy of the province, brought with it a spirit of accommodation.¹ Within Britain, the socialist tendencies in the labour movement and the Chartist resistance had been declining since the 1840's. The relation of organized British labour with the state at this juncture was to join in the harvesting of capitalist production. Emphasis was placed upon occupational organization, stressing wage questions and working conditions. Political action was developed through the mechanism of occupational preservation and short term economic gain. It should be noted here that we are talking to a great extent of craft unionism. This faction of the labour force was by no means indicative of the general conditions of the working class in Britain which was already proletarianized.

British influence in Quebec reflected this approach to labour organization. However, unlike the British case, the trade union movement of the period was to a large degree representative of a significant portion of the Quebec working class, particularly within the anglophone community. The British-inspired unions were chiefly concerned with

organized workers as well as a distinct re-emergence of the national question in the centrals in an equally distinct emerging working class format.

The above periods will be elaborated upon in the following chapters as they are, in effect, composite parts of the thesis statement. It should be pointed out that little up until this point has been mentioned about the State and the present study's perspective of that question. This has been purposefully done, as I do not intend to enter a protracted discussion of the State, but rather draw upon its implicit presence in the concept of hegemony. However, having said that, I think it incumbent to at least situate my position regarding unions and the State. In this regard I see the centrals as *independent* organizational structures of the working class.

The following discussion of currents in the notion of *formal nationalism* are by no means exhaustive. This is not the place to extrapolate all of the forms of nationalism which have appeared *outside* the working classes. In this sense, I bring forward various ideologies which have been present during the Duplessis era. The appraisal of the Lesage period is more succinct. Briefly, the reasons for this are that in the Duplessis period, confrontation between the centrals and the state were acute, lending itself to vivid contrasts. The Lesage conjuncture - the period of a collective forward movement - was characterized by a general period of *modernization* and will be addressed more critically in our analysis of *working class positions* within the prevalent forms of nationalism during the period.

This chapter will elaborate upon less moderate nationalisms within the Liberal party and various petit bourgeois groupings outside the mainstream of political activity. These will be examined in some detail, as they have a particular bearing upon the articulation of the national question within the two centrals, particularly in the early and later seventies.

The Duplessis Era

The difficulty which arises in historical analysis is determining a point of valid departure. I have chosen the Duplessis period as it represents a significant change in social relations of production, characterized by a declining traditional bourgeoisie; an ascending new petite bourgeoisie; massive structural changes within the working classes, and the rapid proletarianization of the rural-populace.

The Duplessis era is a vibrant precursor to the events which were to unfold in the sixties.⁹ The anatomy of support for Duplessis' form of provincial autonomy was indicative of a particular transition period within the province. Posgate and McRoberts argue that Duplessis anti-statist nationalism was prompted by the close association between his party and private economic interests. It was this relationship which was the essence of the Duplessis regime, i.e. proclaiming itself the protectorate of French Canadian interests while consistently opposing any measures which would concretely assert this position. For these authors, it was the prevalent nationalist ideology within the Duplessis period which accounted for the general lag of political modernization.¹⁰ This traditional ideology was understood in agrarian

terms and survived well into the 1940's.¹¹ Nationalist ideology as a recipient of *idées reçues*, particularly within an agrarian context, created a suspicion of the state - amongst the traditional bourgeoisie - and hence promoted a great reliance upon the church as a social actor. A.J. Belanger has shown that this was not entirely the case amongst Quebec's traditional petite bourgeoisie,¹² and pinpoints the thirties as a period - if in minute terms - of a greater politicization of the traditional petite bourgeoisie and the emergence of the nationalist intellectual. This expression found its form in the Action Libérale Nationale (A.L.N.) which was later subsumed under the control of Duplessis' Union Nationale (U.N.).

The Union Nationale was the result of a merger with Duplessis' Conservative Party and the A.L.N., a party of the traditional petite bourgeoisie faced with increasing threats of proletarianization.¹³ The fusion of these two parties represented the appropriation of *progressive* - statist - elements in the A.L.N. It was these elements which were most immobilized by the actions of Duplessis. However, the Union Nationale, while incorporating the A.L.N. - traditional petit bourgeois concerns - equally represented the interests of an emerging regional bourgeoisie. Duplessis' autonomist position regarding the central state will be viewed in this study within the context of his support of the regional bourgeoisie and traditional petit bourgeois interests.

In the decade of the thirties, the economic crisis of small regional capital as well as the reproduction of large capital provided the Union Nationale with a determining political movement. The Duplessis regime, as other regional governments in Canada, found itself creating

policy within the context of massive entries of American capital into markets crucial to Canadian as well as the regional capital of small and medium enterprises. Bourque contends that Duplessis favoured the regional bourgeoisie and traditional petite bourgeoisie, however, not to the detriment of outside capital. Rather, Duplessis' concern was to give regional interests a greater maneuvering position.¹⁴ The pervasivity then of a *formal nationalist* ideology became a political factor by the expansion of local markets through indigenous capital, thereby preventing the deterioration - if temporarily - of the traditional petit bourgeois element. These elements, with the collusion of the ruling political factions, tenuously maintained the soon-to-shift hegemonic structure through their relationship with the ideological apparatuses of church, school and social service.¹⁵

The Union Nationale's relationship with the rural and urban working classes has been examined by various researchers. M. Pinard has looked at working class support for the Duplessis regime and has attempted to discern whether this support had a nationalist or economic base. This, however, has been an erroneous way of determining this relationship.¹⁶ It would seem that a more propitious approach would be to examine the working class during this period of significant restructuration, particularly the relationship between the union centrals and the large non-syndicated working population. This type of questioning might give us the background to the voting conditions from which Pinard has offered rather qualified conclusions. This *genre* of analysis has yet to be attempted, and is not the task of our present endeavor. However, a few words on the structural components of the

working classes during this period should be highlighted.

Within the Quebec of the thirties, small agricultural production continued to remain an important economic factor, and the rural populace retained a significant role in the ongoing processes of social classes.¹⁷ Class relations during this period were characterized by a significant rural population and a nascent working class that retained strong ties with the rural economic environment. In this regard, Quebec's particular transition to capitalism accorded to small land-owning agricultural producers and rural workers a socio-political weight of greater proportional significance than perhaps similar developments in the rest of Canada.¹⁸

The Duplessis regime, in power during this transitional period, was characterized by concessions as well as active repression of agricultural labour as well as the urban working classes - often pitting the non-unionized against unionized workers - within the context of rapid structural economic changes. Nationalism, in this transition, reacquired a particular rural characteristic, given the nature of existing class relations and alliances. These relations underline the significance of immobilizing the rural populace through concessions, thereby stemming what resistance may have existed to wage labour and increasing proletarianization.¹⁹ These processes equally took their ideological cues from the emerging interests of a regional bourgeoisie as well as a traditional petite bourgeoisie similarly facing proletarianization. It is within this type of political economy that Duplessis' constitutional stance is best regarded. Therefore, the radicalism of Duplessis' autonomy and the conservatism of his social politics cannot

but be understood in this context.²⁰ This was a contextual form wherein class alliances - nationalism - would assure the development of capitalism in a region wherein small agricultural production still represented a concrete social reality.

The Political Emergence of Nationalism

The nationalism of the sixties finds expression in various strains of political action contained within the general climate of politicization during the period of the Lesage regime. The Lesage government came to power during a period wherein the conservatism of the Union Nationale was no longer a plausible political position. While the Liberals did in fact institute a host of reform programmes, its popularity rested almost entirely upon a new emerging petit bourgeois stratum. While the Lesage regime enjoyed the more corporatist tendencies within the union movement - particularly the C.S.N. - it drew the suspicion of a disorganized working class facing new structural and ideological positions. The nationalism of the Liberal party is contained in the *maitres chez nous* concept. This nationalism was concerned with the expansion of state apparatuses in the interest of Quebec as well as Canadian and American capital. Principally, there was no independence option vis-à-vis the federal state within this political ideology.

Various political groupings emerged during the period of the Quiet Revolution and in the years immediately following. These political parties were most indicative of a particular type of class formation of the period. These parties were the Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale (R.I.N.), the Ralliement Nationale (R.N.), and the Mouvement Souveraineté Association (M.S.A.); all precursors

of the Parti Québécois. The R.I.N. was founded in 1960. It was not the first independentist party to emerge, but perhaps the most successful ideologically as well as electorally, for the period. It was preceded by l'Action Socialiste pour l'Indépendance du Québec (A.S.I.Q.), and l'Alliance Laurentienne. The R.I.N. was formed by individuals who refrained from presenting the notion of Quebec nationalism under either socialist (A.S.I.Q.) or corporatist (l'Action Laurentienne) assumptions.²¹ The R.I.N. became a party in 1963. D. Monière describes the class nature of the R.I.N. as wholly petit bourgeois. In fact, the two founding members, Marcel Chaput and André d'Allemagne, both worked for the federal civil service during a period when francophones were severely under-represented. The R.I.N. locus of support was found amongst students, teachers and the professions. As Monière argues, the R.I.N. was prevalent and reflective of a period which was characterized by a weak regional bourgeoisie and emerging new petite bourgeoisie, who were increasingly turning to the state to advance their class interests.

Bourque has argued that the R.I.N. was composed of those individuals who were rapidly replacing the clergy within the ideological apparatuses of the school and written media, as well as occupying middle positions in government administration. This class, he continues, was perfectly placed to address the disequilibrium which existed in the private sector over such issues as language, job opportunities for francophones, etc. etc. It was from this class that a radical neo-nationalism emerged.²² The platform of the R.I.N. consisted of encouraging workers' participation in business, profits and ownership,

and expressed approval of the idea of joint management. R.I.N. policies were committed to the nationalization of all monopolies. Yet there was little within their platform which suggested a further socialization of the means of production or the task of procuring basic structural changes to the structure of Québec society.

The R.N. represented another significant - in relative terms - nationalist party of the period. Together, the R.N. and the R.I.N. garnished 10% of the popular vote in the 1966 elections.²³ The R.N. represented a coalition of traditional petit bourgeois concerns, faced with the peril of their declining influence. For this group, finance capital spoke English and the national struggle was the only resistance to their increasing proletarianization.²⁴

Much analysis has determined the Mouvement Souveraineté Association to be of a significantly different nature than the R.I.N. or the R.N., which the M.S.A. movement was to incorporate. The M.S.A. developed the strategy of *souveraineté* as opposed to *indépendance* stated in the platforms of the two former parties. The M.S.A. represented the interests of a new technocratic faction of the petite bourgeoisie.²⁵ This coalition of interests favoured not only state expansion, as did the Rinistes, but rather an expansion of the regional bourgeoisie with whom they identified their interests.²⁶

The M.S.A. had a relatively short lifespan prior to its incorporation within the Parti Québécois. The aims of the M.S.A. on constitutional matters were, as Levesque states,

. . . une option susceptible de réconcilier la réalité de l'interdépendance (c'est à dire de l'association) avec les exigences de la souveraineté politique nécessaire au développement des nations modernes où l'Etat joue un si grand rôle dans la vie économique, sociale et culturelle des peuples. (27)

Y. Vaillancourt argues that the link between the M.S.A, R.I.N. and R.N. is put into a clear perspective through their individual understanding of the nature of economic association.²⁸ The M.S.A. philosophy as expressed in Levesque's monograph, Option Québec saw the concept of sovereignty expressed as a vague *liberation of the people*. The content of association is perhaps more revealing. Association for the M.S.A. was principally economic and only secondarily of a political nature.²⁹ The format of association consisted of a monetary union, a combined customs and tariff policy, the coordination of fiscal policies, similar import/export conditions and similar policies towards labour existing between the two proposed sovereign states of Québec and Canada.

The M.S.A congress in 1968 handily showed the predominance of the sovereignty association option of Levesque over those positions of the R.I.N. and R.N. Deliberations between the R.I.N. and the M.S.A. were, however, long and laborious, before an amalgamation could be established. On the other hand, negotiations with the R.N. developed in a favourable manner rather rapidly. As Vaillancourt and Bourque both argue in separate monographs, the R.N., led by Gilles Gregoire, was a political formation marked by the interests of a traditional rural petite bourgeoisie with a conservative and rural

socio-economic orientation; thus permitting an easier integration within the M.S.A. structure. The R.I.N. presented a more formidable task in view of their eventual absorption. This was principally due to the presence of a stronger grass-roots orientation and their fundamentally urban petit bourgeois and liberal socio-economic outlook.³⁰ V. Murray has, however, compiled a convincing study to show that the distance between the R.I.N. and the M.S.A. actually began to reach greater forms of conciliation with the departure of André Ferretti from within the R.I.N. ranks. Ferretti represented the more liberal-minded faction of the R.I.N. His departure presented the momentum to Pierre Bourgeault to move the R.I.N. closer - if for purely electoralist purposes - to the M.S.A. platform.³¹

R. Denis, drawing from R. Pelletier's analysis, points out the differing understanding - in political as well as economic terms - of the national question in the R.I.N.³² The R.I.N. had two general tendencies, often presented as those of A. Ferretti and the more dominant tendency of P. Bourgeault. The Ferretti faction maintained ties with various socialist coalitions, most notably the Parti Socialiste de Québec, and such reviews as Parti-Pris. For Ferretti, according to Denis, the R.I.N. had the possibility to be a party of and for the workers, resolutely engaged in a reversal of the present economic and political order. The Ferretti faction equally rejected electoralist strategies and stressed popular agitation by party members.³³ Ferretti's approach contrasted sharply with the major tendency in the R.I.N. - that of the Bourgeault persuasion. The Bourgeault tendency was directed towards regional decentralization within Québec

and greater citizen participation. Bourgeault's view consisted of a program which would better integrate private enterprise and foreign investment into a general economic system which envisioned the role of state corporations to be significantly expanded.³⁴

Prior to the 1968 convention wherein the integration occurred, the R.I.N., who had until that point been the elder spokesperson of nationalist politics in the province, cleaned house, leaving the Bourgeault faction with a strong mandate from the central council. The schism actually occurred in 1967 when the two aforementioned prevalent political attitudes reached a confrontational stance. This occurred with the Ferretti faction arguing for the socio-economic liberation of Quebec rather than the strictly political option adopted by the Bourgeault faction - which was consonant with the stand of the M.S.A. The split eventually took place with the Ferretti group resisting integration into the M.S.A., clearly stating the impossibility of collaborating with a party that seeks an *indépendantiste* mandate for a select minority.³⁵

The events which followed the April 1968 convention led rapidly to the creation of the Parti Québécois in a new congress held in October of that same year. The following discussion will not by any means give an exhaustive account of the positions taken in a multitude of congresses, relating to the P.Q. stance, on the national question since its formation.³⁶ Rather, what I will submit in a highly schematic form, is the hegemonic expression of several interests within the Parti Québécois regarding the national question. As with our previous analysis, I will refrain from integrating the role of the working classes,

as perceived through the union centrals, at this stage of the inquiry.

To recapitulate briefly, at the moment of fusion between the R.I.N., R.N. and M.S.A., class interests could best be expressed as follows:

- a) The M.S.A. represented disenchanted Liberals led by Levesque who promoted the sovereignty-association option. Independence was not necessarily a desired result.
- b) The R.N. represented a small *independentiste* group of the right whose nationalism consisted of rural petit bourgeois interests.
- c) The R.I.N. represented - certainly the dominant tendency of Bourgeault - the myth of neutrality of the state as the only tool for national liberation. In this regard, the R.I.N. allusions to socialism were conducive to their ideology of nationalism as the expression of a single social class:- Québec - dominated by English Canada. This, as Bourque has argued, was an often recurring theme of the proletarian nation ingrained in the statist politics of the R.I.N. (37)

The Parti Québécois' early proclamation of sovereignty-association is clearly expressed in various positions outlined for the electoral campaign of 1970. Y. Vaillancourt has documented these positions, which he examines at some length, from the Parti Québécois booklet, La Solution.³⁸ I will register some of Vaillancourt's observations for the reader, as they will serve to highlight various tendencies within the syndical* movement to be discussed later in this study. Vaillancourt, therefore, sees the main tendency within the P.Q. to be comprised of the following elements and characteristics.

*Although the terms syndical and syndicalism have various meanings, my own usage refers to the organization and development of a workers movement in Québec.

- 1) L'objectif constitutionnel poursuivi par le P.Q. est la souveraineté et l'association. Toutefois, l'expression souveraineté-association n'est pas formellement utilisée.
- 2) Le volet 'souveraineté politique' du projet constitutionnel du P.Q. est, paradoxalement défini en termes principalement économiques: la souveraineté renvoie d'abord à la «souveraineté budgétaire» du peuple québécois comprise comme «la récupération complète et la propriété absolue des impôts que nous payons - avec le pouvoir d'affecter cette masse de ressources fiscales aux dépenses qui seront considérées, par nous et nous seuls, comme prioritaires.» «L'accession à la souveraineté» «passe par l'élimination d'un des deux palliers du gouvernement.
- 3) Le concept d'indépendance est occasionnellement utilisé comme synonyme du concept de souveraineté.
- 4) Le volet association économique avec le reste du Canada renvoie entre autres:
 - a) à l'union monétaire (la communauté monétaire).
 - b) à l'union douanière (le marché commun).
 - c) à des «ententes requises concernant la voie maritime, les chemins de fer . . . »
 - d) à la coordination des politiques fiscales.
- 5) L'association est présentée comme souhaitable mais pas comme nécessaire: «L'accord sur les modalités d'une association n'est pas une condition sine qua non de l'accession du Québec à son indépendance.»
- 6) La démarche pour accéder à l'objectif de la souveraineté-association comprendrait deux grandes étapes:
 - a) D'abord, il y aurait «une accession pacifique à la souveraineté» par la voie électorale. Cela signifie qu'une fois élu, le P.Q. pourrait proclamer l'indépendance.
 - b) Ensuite, il y aurait négociations des «modalités d'application» de la souveraineté acquise. En cas d'échec des négociations» le Québec devrait procéder unilatéralement.
- 7) Sur le plan de la politique étrangère le Québec «demandera son admission à l'ONU» et se retirerait probablement «d'alliances militaires comme NORAD et l'OTAN.» (39)

The above stated characteristics, as Vaillancourt argues, were essentially those of the M.S.A., with slight alterations.⁴⁰ Successive congresses of the P.Q. witnessed further changes in terminology.

However, as Vaillancourt asserts, after examining various resolutions taken during P.Q. congresses from the early seventies to the «D'égal à égal»⁴¹ document in 1979, the elements of the original M.S.A./P.Q. pact cited above remains the constitutional policy of the present day Parti Québécois.

Summary and Further Considerations

The project of the Parti Québécois is at the forefront of the hegemonic condition of the national question. Whatever other elements or characteristics are involved in this hegemony revolve about the central goal of the P.Q. which - as clearly seen in their constitutional stance - is the creation of the most favourable conditions for regional capital. This enlargement of the spaces of regional capital necessarily entails a process of reorganization of social relations. It is herein that we see the complexity of these social relations and their political manifestations, i.e. the P.L.Q., who favour regional capital but not at the expense of pan-Canadian capital, and the P.Q., which intends to expand the base of regional capital not at the expense of Canadian capital, but as a partner with it.⁴²

The appeal of the Parti Québécois, as the Union Nationale before it, holds various lessons in an effort to understand the nature of class alliances under the rubric of nationalism. The similarity of the U.N. and the P.Q. can be seen not merely in their electoral strategies

and manipulation of the nationalist issue, but rather in the stability of their social base. For the U.N. it was originally the petite bourgeoisie drawing farmers and rural labour into an alliance which provided stability; as for the P.Q. it has been new petite bourgeoisie and its appropriation of working class interests. Nationalism has played an important role in both of these seemingly diverse periods. The former invoked the historic particularities of the rural national vocation of *les canadiens*. The latter delineates the economic difficulties - particularly the burden of unemployment carried by the working class - as the federal consequence of national oppression.⁴³ These nationalisms took place within various class perspectives of uneven development. In the case of the U.N., farmers and agricultural labourers with no political vehicle outside of the Duplessis regime, succumbed to the necessary form of class alliance through their increasing exposure to proletarianization. The equally favourable prejudice the working classes had towards the P.Q. - as the party with structural links to the working class, and fundamentally addressing issues within the under-development of Québec - could be seen in the same light in the absence of any other clear options.

NOTES

- 1) In a rather succinct yet convincing article, A.G. Gagnon and M.B. Montcalm discuss the mobilization of discontent withing Quebec due to the altered distribution of economic activity in Canada. This situation, they argue, gives Quebec elites interested in selling Quebec's independence to the Quebecois an invaluable political resource. Alain G. Gagnon and Mary Beth Montcalm, «Economic Peripheralization and Quebec Unrest» in Journal of Canadian Studies Summer 1982, Vol. 17, No. 2, p 32-42
- 2) Gilles Bourque «Comment faire avaler la couleuvre La trahison des clercs revisitée» in Au Delà du Parti Québécois, Centre de formation Populaire, Nouvelle Optique, Montreal, 1982
- 3) Bourque argues that the relationship between economic crisis and the national conflict is a necessary but not sufficient cause of the periodic resurgence of the national question. In this regard he argues that a more propitious approach would be an examination of the regional specificity of Quebec and bourgeois political situations to the crisis i.e. centralization versus decentralization amongst other factors.
Ibid, p. 127
- 4) Carla Lipsig-Mummé, «Quebec Unions and the State: Conflict and Dependence» in Studies in Political Economy, p. 123
- 5) Ibid, p. 123
- 6) Ibid, P. 123
- 7) Leo Roback, «Les Formes Historiques de Politisation du Syndicalism au Quebec» in G. Dion, ed., La Politisation des Relations du Travail Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1973, p. 17
- 8) Carla Lipsig-Mummé, Ibid, p. 123
- 9) Duplessis' Union Nationale gained power in 1936 and literally held it until 1960 with a Liberal regime in power between 1939 to 1944. This twenty-four year period is colloquially referred to in Quebec as la grande noirsoir.
- 11) Dale Posgate and Kenneth McRoberts, Quebec, Social Change and Political Crisis, McClelland and Stewart, 1976, p. 65
In 1941, 35% of the Quebec population lived in rural areas and less than 30% were engaged in agriculture.

- 12) Andre J. Belanger, L'apolitisme des Ideologies Québécois: le grand tourant de 1934-36, Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1974
- 13) G. Bourque, op cit p. 131
- 14) G. Bourque, op cit p. 133
- 15) G. Bourque, op cit p. 134
- 16) Maurice Pinard, «Working Class Politics: An Interpretation of the Quebec Case», Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology VII, 2 (1970), p. 87-109.
Pinard attributes support for the Union Nationale by the working classes as deriving from purely economic reasons, rather than the nationalist aspirations of that class. Pinard's assessment is misleading given the structural differentiation of the working class in 1936, 1939, and 1962. Furthermore, there is an explicit assumption that the U.N. understanding of nationalism was the only formed adhered to by the developing working classes. This has yet to be proven. Pinard bases his assumption upon the switch of allegiance of the working class vote in 1939 from U.N. to the Liberal party. It should be remembered that it was under the Liberal regime of Godbout that nationalization of such utilities as Montreal Light and Power - the precursor to Hydro-Quebec - began.
- 17) Gilles Bourque et Gilles Dostaler, Socialisme et Indépendance. Boreal Express, Montreal 1980, p. 145
- 18) Ibid, p. 143
- 19) It is an assumption on my part that resistance to wage labour occurred during this period. There is no detailed documentation or analysis to my knowledge on this development. It seems that this juncture in Quebec history is still waiting for its C. Pentland.
- 20) G. Bourque and G. Dostaler, op cit p. 144
- 21) Gilles Dostaler, «Le R.I.N.: Un Parti de Gauche?» in G. Dostaler and G. Bourque, Socialisme et Indépendance, Boreal Express, Montreal, 1980.
- 22) Gilles Bourque, «Comment Faire Avaler la Couleuvre ou «La Trahison des clercs revisitée» in Au Delà du Parti Québécois C.F.P., Nouvelle Optique, 1982, p. 139.

- 23) Denis Monière, Ideologies in Québec, University of Toronto Press Toronto, 1981, pp. 264.
- 24) G. Bourque, op. cit., p. 138.
- 25) G. Bourque, op. cit., p. 163.
- 26) The M.S.A. emerged in 1967 led by René Levesque with the development of the constitutional debate within the P.L.Q.
- 27) René Levesque, Option Québec, Les Editions de l'Homme, 1968, Montreal, p. 7.
- 28) Yves Vaillancourt, «La Position Constitutionnelle du M.S.A.-P.Q. de 1967 à 1979. Mai 1979, Centre de Formation Populaire, Document de Travail.
- 29) Ibid, p. 10.
- 30) Ibid, p. 13.
- 31) Vera Murray, «Le Parti Québécois: Les tensions au sein de l'alliance indépendantiste,» in Politique Aujourd'hui, numéro 7-8, 1978. A. Ferretti quit the R.I.N. in 1968 to form the Front de Libération Populaire (F.L.P.)
- 32) Roch, Denis, Luttes de Classes et Question Nationale au Québec 1948 - 1968, Presses Socialistes Internationales, Montreal, 1979, p. 516.
- 33) Ibid, p. 516.
- 34) Ibid, p. 517.
- 35) Ibid, p. 520.
- 36) For a good account of these positions see Yves Belanger «Alliance de Classes et nature de classe du P.Q. Etudes de quelques Legislations du P.Q.,» and Yves Vaillancourt, La Position Constitutionnelle du M.S.A.-P.Q. de 1969 à 1979 in Au Delà du Parti Québécois, C.F.P. Nouvelle Optique, Montréal 1982.
- 37) G. Bourque, «Trahison des Clercs,» op. cit., p. 142.
- 38) La Solution, Le Programme du Parti Québécois présenté par René Levesque, Editions du Jour, Avril 1970.
- 39) Yves Vaillancourt, «La Position Constitutionnelle du M.S.A.-P.Q. de 1967 à 1979,» Document de Travail, C.F.P., Mai 1979, pp. 23-25.
- 40) These alterations were the substitution at times of sovereignty-association by the term independence. This, Vaillancourt contends, may have been inserted to appease R.I.N. militants. Ibid, p. 25.

41) D'égal à égal, A P.Q. publication directed by Pierre Vadeboncoeur. This document consisted of four porpositions concerning the independence issue. Published Feb. 23, 1979, Executive Committee of the Parti Québécois.

42) G. Bourque, op. cit., p. 45.

43) G. Bourque, op. cit., p. 146.

CHAPTER III

A WORKING CLASS HISTORY

This chapter will contain an over-view of the development of the working class in Quebec. The review will take us through various extraneous influences upon the syndical movement in the province. Also, I will outline for the reader the relationships between several working class organizations faced with the specter of state legislation. This chapter is, by definition, a summary of working class struggles which I hope will offer a sense of historic continuity to the overall study. In this regard, various tendencies which I feel merit mention in this broad historical sweep will be taken up in greater detail as we situate union positions concerning nationalism within a more contemporary contextual setting.

The latter part of this chapter offers a detailed analysis of the forerunners of the F.T.Q. and the C.S.N.. In this chapter I will present the various political movements which have characterized the differentiated backgrounds of the two centrals. It is hoped that this type of exposure and analysis will very clearly situate our more immediate concerns which take place more specifically through the sixties and onwards.

Extraneous Influences

The British, American and clerical effect upon a nascent working

class will be briefly appraised. The consequences of these three factors have, in their respective periods, shaped the structural organization of the Quebec labour movement. In this sense, these influences have brought their own particular interpretations of class conflict to the developing struggle of the Quebec working class. The British inroad was dominant from 1850 to 1880. The thrust of American unionization efforts were thriving until the 1920's, whereupon the Catholic syndical impetus became most evident and lasted until 1960.

British unionism, certainly in the period in which it became an actor within the developing economy of the province, brought with it a spirit of accommodation.¹ Within Britain, the socialist tendencies in the labour movement and the Chartist resistance had been declining since the 1840's. The relation of organized British labour with the state at this juncture was to join in the harvesting of capitalist production. Emphasis was placed upon occupational organization, stressing wage questions and working conditions. Political action was developed through the mechanism of occupational preservation and short term economic gain. It should be noted here that we are talking to a great extent of craft unionism. This faction of the labour force was by no means indicative of the general conditions of the working class in Britain which was already proletarianized.

British influence in Quebec reflected this approach to labour organization. However, unlike the British case, the trade union movement of the period was to a large degree representative of a significant portion of the Quebec working class, particularly within the anglophone community. The British-inspired unions were chiefly concerned with

skilled workers, given the low market demand for unskilled labour, and what Pentland² has described as the resistance of French Canadian workers towards wage labour. Irish workers, who filled the vacuum created by French Canadian resistance, remained largely unorganized. The Irish workers dominated the unskilled urban employment sector within Quebec until the 1870's. Their eventual entry into railroad construction in other parts of Canada opened wage employment possibilities for French Canadian workers within Quebec.³ French Canadian workers at this juncture offered less resistance to wage labour than they had a few decades earlier in view of the heightened crisis of what remained of the seigniorial land tenure system. Political action, therefore, during the period of British influence within Quebec was based upon limited occupational objectives, stressing the desire for self-regulation of the unions.

The entry of American unions occurred in the early 1880's,⁴ led by the organizing initiative of the Knights of Labour. The Knights of Labour, in a larger sense, represented the adjustments of the labouring classes in the United States to the exigencies of the developing relations of production. The Knights brought with them a particular form of political action not yet attempted in the province. This format consisted of influencing the state with regards to the betterment of the relations between capital and labour. The Knights of Labour equally initiated the first concerted efforts towards the organization of unskilled labour.⁵

The reformist tactics of this organization led to various electoral attempts in municipal as well as federal elections. Perhaps the

most significant effect, however, was the fracturing of the then young tradition of occupational organizing within Quebec. The assemblies of the *Knights* were virtual forums for the trades as well as the unskilled. Out of a total number of 64 locals founded by the organization between 1882 and 1902, 39 were exclusively trade-oriented and 25 were of a mixed nature.⁶ This was quite remarkable given a) the absence of any unskilled associations only twenty years earlier, b) the uneasiness of skilled tradesmen to be associated with unskilled labour.

The *Knights* were politically active in pressing for the nationalization or municipalization of public services, progressive income taxation, access to education for workers and the struggle for the ten hour day. The association was instrumental in its demands for the first favourable piece of legislation for the working classes in Quebec - the manufacturing law of 1885.⁷ This law established the ten hour day (60 hours a week) for women and children. The allowable period of time for men was fixed at twelve hours a day (72 hours a week). The law furthermore disallowed the employment of boys under twelve years of age without parental permission. The age for girls was set at fourteen. The law, though established in 1885, was not effective until 1889 when inspectors were appointed to investigate violations.

The legacy of political action left by the *Knights of Labour* was based upon an ideology of the cooperation between labour and capital.⁸ This ideological commitment was at once indicative of a utopian socialism of the European strain, as well as a particular early

American view of the emerging industrial frontiers; in which workers and capitalists equally shared the fruits of production.

The reasons for the relative decline of the Knights of Labour are numerous and complex. These factors range from the disappearance of principal occupations in the association ie. leatherworkers, carpenters, cigar-makers, to the difficulty of organizing skilled and unskilled workers.⁹ Within Quebec the *Knights* equally came under frequent attack from the clergy for their religious neutrality. Cardinal Taschereau in 1884 obtained a dictum from Rome forbidding membership in the association. These factors contributed to the relative decline of the *Knights*, but do not appear to be sufficient reasons. The relationship between the decline of the association and the emerging strength of the American Federation of Labour, as the spokesperson for all its labour groups, would offer clearer answers. This question must be posed in a larger consideration of the American state and its particular adjustments to the political alliances experienced with its own working class. This discussion is certainly beyond the scope of this paper. The virtual disappearance of the *Knights* in the United States in 1893 occurred in Canada nine years later. Within Quebec, there were certain chapters which held out until the early thirties. The void left by the *Knights* opened a considerable area of development for national unions, particularly given the growing ranks of the unskilled.

Catholic Syndicalism

The first significant entry into this area of organizing were the Catholic unions. We should, however, point out prior to a discussion

of the influence of Catholic syndicalism, a qualifying note. The clergy was not the only association to fill the role left open by the Knights of Labour. As Rouillard¹⁰ has pointed out, non-confessional provincially-based unions did exist prior to the entry of the Catholic syndicates in 1907 and the Confédération des travailleurs catholiques du Canada (C.T.C.C.) in 1921. One such group was the Congrès Nationale des Metiers et du Travail (C.N.M.T.C.). The union organization was a provincial outgrowth of the Congrès des Metiers et du Travail au Canada (C.M.T.C.). The C.N.M.T.C., which disappeared in 1908, was principally involved in the organization of unskilled labour.

Clerical intervention in the working class movement within Quebec first occurred in the early 1900's, most notably through disputes involving labour/employer relations in the shoe industry. The general entry of the clergy into the organized labour movement has been attributed by various writers to a general distrust of international non-confessional associations. This is perhaps the primary expression within Quebec history of the clerico-nationalist theme. However, it would be an oversimplification to attribute the entry of the good clerics into ostensible workers' movements, solely in terms of nationalism. Syndicalism was itself a well implanted ideology within the church since the papal *Rerum Novarum* encyclical of 1891.¹¹ The position of the church hence moved considerably from a rejection of unionization to an indeterminate embrace.

The various unaffiliated Catholic unions (precursors of the C.T.C.C.), as Rouillard explains, held particular views on class relations. Class issues were often addressed in their various provincial

meetings. The emphasis was clearly upon

. . . cautioning the working class against the internationals who would suggest that the fundamental interests of workers and employers diverge. Compromise was always possible between the two. (12)

The C.T.C.C., established in 1921, shared similar views to those expressed in the pre-war period. The social doctrine of the clergy, and the nationalism inherent in a Quebec based union were the basic orientations of Catholic syndicalism. The C.T.C.C. suggested the creation of a professional association of employers which would bargain with labour in the spirit of Christian fraternity. The relations of the C.T.C.C. and the state were complex. State apparatuses on the federal level had little to do with the association per se, preferring to negotiate solely with the C.M.T.C.; a tactic Gideon Robertson (federal Minister of Labour) orchestrated in order to weaken the "One Big Union". The provincial state, though lacking a labour ministry, was significantly implicated by virtue of its immediacy to the struggle in whatever form it appeared. The C.T.C.C. was, however, looked upon with suspicion by the various regimes of the day, as the clerics' venture into syndicalism entailed the prolongation of their political influence.

The Development of Working Class Organizations

In the period prior to the Second World War, the two main labour syndicates in Quebec were

- a) the international unions represented by the C.M.T.C. and its Quebec faction, the F.P.T.Q.;
- b) the C.T.C.C., which founded the Corporation des

instructeurs (C.I.C) and later became the C.E.Q.

This period is distinguished by inter-syndical conflicts particularly between the C.M.T.C. and the C.T.C.C. The C.T.C.C. accentuated its nationalistic rhetoric against the perils of international unions. The international unions, for their part, accused the C.T.C.C. of being an apparatus of the employer due to their lower wage settlements.

The time-frame of the Second World War is a much neglected period with respect to literature dealing with the working class in Quebec. It would appear, however, to be most significant in view of the rapid growth of war-related industries. Thousands of new workers found the most stable employment they had encountered since before the depression.¹³

In 1941, the state reacted to the massive growth in the labour force by applying its authority over all war-related production. This was achieved by reviving the *Industrial Disputes Act*, tabled in 1907. This act outlawed all strike action during a period of obligatory conciliation. The state, in this manner, intervened within the process of class relations to halt the increasing concessions won by the working class in strike action. From 1941 to 1944, the annual number of work stoppages was four times higher than the preceding decade. In 1942 alone (the anniversary of the conscription crisis), there were 133 work stoppages.¹⁴ The international unions affiliated with the A.F.L. as well as the C.T.C.C. were active in this resistance. Various stoppages, such as the Alcan Strike in 1941 at Arvida, saw the use of the army as strike breakers.

The resistance of the working class during the war period prompted a new strategy by the state. This is indicated by a shift of

power to the provincial arena i.e. the first labour code of the province of Quebec was enacted in 1944. The labour code was to stay in effect until 1949. In its essence, it addressed the imbalance of class forces created during the war as expressed in a settlement of the juridicial boundaries of collective bargaining, the limits of strike action, and the certification of unions.

The labour code of 1944 was based to a great extent on the Wagner Act adopted in the United States in 1935. The Quebec Labour Code was, however, built with some further stipulations. The Quebec Act guaranteed union formation, but retained that power within the apparatuses of the state. In effect, it was the state which determined if a union was representative of workers in a given enterprise. Union certification would be determined at this juncture by the Commission de Relations Ouvriers (C.R.O.). Unions thus required certification from the C.R.O. prior to negotiating with enterprises or initiating strike action. The most significant aspect of this legislation, however, remains the mechanisms surrounding the period of renewed collective bargaining. The law permits union members to change syndical allegiance if they so desire.¹⁵ This stipulation has become the *raiding clause* which would plague relations between the C.S.N. and F.T.Q. to the present day.

The labour code concretized the political and legal interests of the dominant classes, if not their immediate economic concerns.

The act created - for the first time in Quebec - an obligatory collective agreement in the form of a signed binding contract. In the case of an impasse, the act provided for obligatory conciliation

with an officer from the good offices of the new labour ministry. A further stipulation - contrary to the Wagner Act - resulted in the creation of a conciliation council. The council was composed of a labour representative, a representative of the employer and a representative of the ministry. While this conciliation board met to reach an agreement, all strike action was suspended.

The labour code of 1944 severely restrained all strike action in the private sector.¹⁶ As well, an adjunct to the code outlined the relationship of the public sector employee and the state. Equally addressed were the police - having gone on strike in 1943 - who were prohibited from affiliating with a union central.

An understanding of class relations in Quebec cannot be fully reached without mention of the general climate of repression in the United States. The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 followed the large strike actions of 1945 and 1946 in the automobile and chemicals industry.¹⁷ The act was in essence a repeal of the Wagner Act voted upon in 1935, the heyday of the New Deal. The new act imposed - with the threat of decertification - upon unions an obligation to furnish precise status information in terms of financial records and relations with its members. The act opened the door for state intervention, in amending the organization of inter-union mobilization. As well, the act defined issues surrounding the strike option. The most notable of these was the sixty-day notice, thus creating the wild-cat category for work stoppages outside the exigencies of state control. Furthermore, the state reclaimed under the rubric of *Presidential license* the right to repeal all strike action that would endanger the national security.

The Taft-Hartley Act formulated in the beginning of the Cold War, was directed towards halting the further politicization of unions in the United States. The growth of the working class in general during the war period placed the principles of Comperism as but one syndical strategy amongst many. The Quebec state and the Duplessis regime were not slow to follow the general repression of working class action in the post-war period. In 1946, the enactment of the infamous *rule number one* of the Commission des relations Ouvriers (C.R.O.) was put in place.¹⁸ *Rule number one* was a vague construction which stated that, first and foremost, in order to be recognized a union must be ready to negotiate in *good faith*. This obscure premise was an effective mechanism for discreditation of militant unions. When the C.R.O. judged a union representative of its members, they furnished a certificate of accreditation which remained the property of the C.R.O. Such certification was withdrawn when the discretion of the union or that of the regime changed. When strike action did occur with decertified unions, the state by the principle of non-recognition simply did not enter negotiations. Rather, particularly violent policy intervention took place, as was often the case during the Duplessis era.

In 1949, the Quebec state introduced a new labour code, Bill 60. The previous code was for all effects and purposes a restatement of the Taft-Hartley Act. This new code contained all the principles for dismantling unions which *rule number one* of the C.R.O. found to be outside the bounds of certification. The code presented modifications to the *closed shop* system, voting procedure during a strike call and the

internal organization of executive councils. Within the same year, Bill 60 was tabled to concretize the implications of the newly installed labour code. Bill 60 dealt primarily with local issues such as recourses to arbitration during grievance procedures. The bill contained particularly harsh individual penalties if found "operating outside the established norms of contact between employer and employee".¹⁹

The tabling of the bill was immediately followed by a six-day strike by the Corporation des Instituteurs (C.I.C.). The teachers' union had its certification repealed by the C.R.O. due to its strike action. An appeal to the Supreme Court was pursued by the C.I.C. to counter the decertification. In 1953, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled against the action of the commission.

These contradictions continued throughout the fifties. In 1954, the Duplessis regime tabled Bills 19 and 20. These bills were designed to consolidate already repressive legislation. The bills concentrated upon *communist ideas* and *communist agitators*. Suspicion of any such presence resulted in immediate decertification. The threat of decertification was used in this sense to force the Syndicat International des Pompiers de Montréal, to sign a contract giving them a five cent an hour increase, after the Duplessis regime found evidence of a member of the union executive having belonged to the Canadian Communist Party ten years earlier.²⁰ Bill 20 was used to decertify the C.I.C. again. The bill had a retroactive clause thus annulling the 1953 decision by the Supreme Court in favour of the union. The C.I.C. again turned to the federal state apparatus and regained its union designation in 1959.

Working Class Action and the National Question

The following is a brief chronology (1951-1976) of political action by the working class in Quebec outside the parameters of strike action. The summation equally includes the dates of the major critical manifestos of the three union centrals.²¹

The Duplessis Years (1944-1960)

- 1944 - 1951 The election of the first (and last) C.C.F. deputy in the province; elected in Rouyn Noranda riding.
- 1951 - 1954 The C.T.C.C. attempted to form civic action committees. These groups met with successive failures.
- 1954 - 1956 The congress of the Fédération des Unions Industrielles du Québec (F.U.I.Q.) adopted its Manifeste au peuple du Québec, calling for a social democracy but rejected the formation of a workers' party.
- 1956 A coalition of labour groups formed the 'Rassemblement' to oppose Duplessis.
- The C.C.F. changed its name in Québec to Le Parti Social-Démocratique (P.S.D.).

Period of the "Quiet Revolution" (1960-1966)

- 1960 The first 'left-oriented' independent workers movement was created named l'Action Socialiste.
- In September of 1960, the F.T.Q. gave its full support to the federal New Democratic Party.
- 1961 The newly named Parti Social-Démocratique dissolved in 1961, with most of its members joining the federal NDP.
- 1963 This year saw the formation of the Parti Socialiste du Québec (P.S.Q.).

Ten year period
following the "Quiet
"Revolution"
(1966 - 1976)

- 1968 The Conseil central des syndicats nationaux de Montréal (C.C.S.N.M.) recommended to its membership to vote NDP in the federal election.
- The subject of the C.S.N. annual congress was "The exploitation of workers outside the workplace."
- 1970 The C.S.N. advised its membership to vote Parti Québécois.
- The Front d'Action Politique (F.R.A.P.), a municipal party composed of C.S.N., F.T.Q. and C.E.Q. militants organized to oppose the Drapeau regime in Montreal.
- The F.T.Q., C.S.N. and C.E.Q. jointly protested with the New Democratic Party against the imposition of the War Measures Act.
- 1971 The first of the C.S.N. 'critical' manifestos appeared, titled "We can only count on our own means."
- The F.T.Q. followed with its manifesto "The state, the source of our exploitation."
- 1972 The C.E.Q. manifesto was titled, "Schools in the service of the dominant class."
- 1973 The C.S.N. and the F.T.Q. called for the national independence of Quebec.
- 1974 The second C.E.Q. manifesto appeared titled "School and class struggle in Quebec."
- 1976 The F.T.Q. officially gave its full support to the newly elected Parti Québécois.

The actions of the working class from 1944 to 1976 - and perhaps more so in the present juncture - is best typified by the low level of political struggle during repressive periods, as well as times of ostensible social reform. Integration by coercion of the Duplessis

regime, and integration by consensus during the Lesage regime created the basis for a particular ambivalence within the labour movement. It would seem, from a following of the events, that the return to coercive regimes in the form of Johnson's Union Nationale and Bourassa's Liberals began to clarify for the centrals the relation of labour to the state; witness the tenor of the three manifestos. This clarity did not last too long, in political terms: It is here that the national question and the position of labour, particularly in the seventies, attains some significance. Within Quebec, nationalism, in this sense, had entered the realm of an ideological configuration which continues to have important implications for the relative absence of working class political action in the present juncture, as it had in the early sixties. It is through the ideology of nationalism that the state proposed to incorporate class struggle.

The relative absence of political action cannot, however, be fully explained by the presence of nationalism. The phenomenon of class alliances finds its impetus in various ideological systems - most notably liberal democracy. Nationalism, however, does offer a method of analysis to better understand the acceptance - hence, absence of political struggle - of recurring class adjustments within the contradictions of the state. N. Poulantzas takes our consideration one step further when he argues:

. . . bourgeois nationalism could not have had such an enormous impact on the working class unless it rested on the materiality of the constitution and the struggles of the working class, or unless it was linked to the genuinely working class aspect of national ideology. (22)

The F.T.Q. - an organizational background

The F.T.Q. formed in 1957 through an amalgamation of the Fédération Provinciale de Travail du Québec (F.P.T.Q.) and the Fédérations des Unions Industrielles du Québec (F.U.I.Q.). The F.P.T.Q. was consolidated in 1938 in Trois Rivières as the provincial representative of the Congrès des Métiers du Travail du Canada (C.M.T.C.).²³ The F.P.T.Q. received its jurisdictional capacities from the C.M.T.C. charter. Raoul Trépanier, a tramway worker in Montreal, was its first president. Trépanier was also a member of the Liberal party.

The F.P.T.Q., as Tremblay has argued, was indicative of two prevalent themes of the period. These themes were the absolute dependence of regional controls upon the C.M.T.C. and the relative strength and autonomy of individual locals *vis-à-vis* the provincial central. The syndical role of the F.P.T.Q. was within specific areas:

- a) to campaign on educational questions
- b) to propose programs of social legislation
- c) to cooperate with government to improve workers' conditions of existence
- d) to distribute information concerning organized labour
- e) to influence public opinion and promote the spirit of international trade unionism.²⁵

The above duties of the F.P.T.Q. were clearly the shared goals of the American Federation of Labour (A.F.L.) and its counterpart, the C.M.T.C. The F.P.T.Q., however, was less than efficient, even in implementing these rather confining tasks of trade unionism. The central was not particularly pervasive throughout the province. L. Roback

concludes that this ineffectiveness is perhaps most evident in the F.P.T.Q.'s relative absence and lack of submission to the Tremblay Commission in the fifties, concerning the constitutional question. This was in sharp contrast to the F.U.I.Q. who - though younger and less numerous - submitted considerable documentation to the debate.²⁶

The F.P.T.Q. arena of jurisdiction was severely limited by the centralized nature of the C.M.T.C. The negotiating strength of the central was reflected in its relative percentage of the unionized working class. Affiliation was not mandatory even if one belonged to the C.M.T.C. In 1956, between 25 and 30% of the Quebec workers affiliated with the C.M.T.C. belonged to the F.P.T.Q.²⁷ Of these workers, the great majority belonged to trade unions. This indicated a further marginalization of the central in the sense that it had little organizing impetus in the industrial sector, and often displayed an adversarial position to the growth of industrial unionization.

In an attempt to locate the ideological forebearer of the F.T.Q., the F.P.T.Q. can be placed in the following light. The central represented the international concerns of trade unionism. Although its structure was implemented to address provincial matters, its peripheral position in the day-to-day struggles of the working class of the period alienated it from the actual conditions under which those workers functioned. L. Roback puts it well when he asserts that the F.P.T.Q. was largely dominated by the prevalent characteristics of trade unionism, i.e. the autonomy of syndical groups, concentration upon localized action; and a minimal preoccupation with independent structures of society. This type of ideology was not consistent with the emergence

of an industrialized labour force based primarily in factory production.

The Fédération des Unions Industrielles du Québec (F.U.I.Q.) was established in 1952 to coordinate the activities of industrial syndicalization within the province, and act as a representative towards the Quebec state. The F.U.I.Q. represented the provincial apparatus of the Congrès Canadien du Travail (C.C.T.). The F.U.I.Q. was the recipient of two large traditions of North American unionism;

- a) The progressive industrial movement represented by the Committee for Industrial Organization (C.I.O.).
- b) The socio-nationalist movement (in broad Canadian terms) represented by the establishment of the C.C.T. (28)

The F.U.I.Q., however, reflected more than degrees of organizational differences between the C.C.T. and the C.M.T.C. As R. Denis has argued, the F.U.I.Q. maintained at its origins an ideology of independent political action. The genesis of this tradition can be traced to the C.C.T. recognition of the Commonwealth Cooperative Federation (C.C.F.) as the political voice of the Canadian Labour Movement. The F.U.I.Q. clearly was the recipient of this ideal of a workers' party.²⁹

The F.U.I.Q. is perhaps best characterized by its adherence to political action. In its 1954 congress, the leadership of the central under Raymond Lapoint and Fernande Daoust called for political activity against Bills 19 and 20. This form of political action was to concretize itself in a proposed alliance with the Parti Socialiste Démocratique (P.S.D.) under the direction of Thérèse Casgrain, as well as in their

the purpose of extracting favours from the regime while serving the purposes of the state; for example, by refusing to join the F.U.I.Q./C.T.C.C. cartel to oppose anti-syndicalist legislation.

The ideological make-up of the F.U.I.Q. can be further explained in view of its own internal tendencies, one of which supported an autonomist social democrat approach to unionization and a more conservative faction which favoured a neutralized federally oriented structure. The fusion with the F.P.T.Q., whose affinity lay with the conservative faction of the F.U.I.Q., initiated the momentum by the autonomist faction - which, incidentally, was the more dominant tendency - who thought that a merger with the F.P.T.Q. would strengthen the more conservatively inclined elements within its own central. It is similarly for these reasons that the F.P.T.Q. and the conservative sector of the F.U.I.Q. opposed C.T.C.C. entry.³⁷

The fusion of the F.P.T.Q. and the F.U.I.Q., as mentioned earlier, took place amidst a general atmosphere of structural reorganization of working class organizations in North America. Within the province, the C.M.T.C. and the C.C.T. represented a total of 175,000 workers. Of this number, the newly formed F.T.Q. represented 65,000 members, 32,000 of which formerly belonged to the F.U.I.Q.³⁸ The newly formed F.T.Q. was wholly dependent upon the charter of the C.C.T. The F.T.Q. in this regard did not, through the merger, develop greater jurisdictional capacities vis-à-vis its centralized parent organization. In fact, it was created as a regional expression of the C.C.T. with designated provincial powers. This situation was further exasperated by the organizational difficulties within the F.T.Q. as it confronted the

claims for provincial governments. This claim, to which the F.U.I.Q. was most amenable, was not carried within the C.C.F.'s general platform. The F.U.I.Q. equally put forward the concept of two nations, which was similarly rejected by the C.C.T. as well as the C.C.F.³¹ The debates of this period are well enunciated in the annual convention of the C.C.F. of 1955, wherein the F.U.I.Q. demanded a greater representation for the French character of Canadian unions in international conferences, as well as the overall administrative makeup of the C.C.T.

It should be underlined, if briefly, that the central, though certainly more homogeneous than the F.P.T.Q. - in that it was composed largely in the ongoing organization of unskilled labour - incurred significant amounts of dissension amongst its own rank and file as to its chosen political options. This dissent culminated in a rejection of 108 votes against 69 for the formation of a third party in Quebec with a distinct autonomous structure from that of the C.C.F.³² Without entering into a protracted discussion of the debates within the central during this period, two tendencies concerning party formation were dominant. These outlooks were behind the rejection of an autonomist workers' party affiliated with the F.U.I.Q. The political action of the F.U.I.Q. occurred within various contradictions. These discrepancies were later to be inherited by the F.T.Q. These contradictions are found in the centralizing faction within the F.U.I.Q., which supported a federal approach to social democracy, juxtaposed against the autonomist view which demanded a more regionally weighted political response to uneven development.

The fusion of the F.P.T.Q. and the F.U.I.Q. represented an admirable undertaking, given their opposing organizational approaches. To a very large extent, the merger of the F.U.I.Q. and the Confédération des Travailleurs Catholiques du Canada (C.T.C.C.) would have seemed more logical given the similarity of their stance taken against the Duplessis regime. Certainly this was in marked contrast to the F.P.T.Q. acquiescence to various manoeuvrings of the state during the same period. To trace the amalgamation of these two significantly different centrals (the F.U.I.Q. and the F.P.T.Q.) it is necessary to place their concurrence within a larger geo-historical context.

The creation of the F.T.Q. was part of the greater syndical movement which had its origins in the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. merger of 1955. The effects of the A.F.L. - C.I.O. pact had an immediate effect on the labour movement in Canada. In April 1956, the C.M.T.C. and the C.C.T. joined to create the Congrès du Travail du Canada (C.T.C.) representing more than one million of Canada's 1,350,000 syndicated workers.³³

The F.T.Q. was founded in 1957. The new central represented less than 30% of the syndicated work force adhering to the C.T.C. in the province. This type of organization, wherein association to the central was on a voluntary basis, was clearly a legacy of the F.P.T.Q. As mentioned earlier, C.M.T.C. policy did not require their locals to belong to the Quebec central. This presented a novel situation for the F.U.I.Q. within the merger, who were traditionally the sole representatives of the C.C.T. within the province.

The F.P.T.Q./F.U.I.Q. merger: A legacy for a divided working class

The negotiations leading to the merger of the F.P.T.Q. and the F.U.I.Q. were long and laborious. As mentioned earlier, the merger of these two centrals occurred as a general process which was initiated at the level of the A.F.L. - C.I.O. and C.M.T.C. - C.C.T. bureaucratic structure. The specificity of Quebec's circumstances, however, requires a special consideration, particularly given the existence of the C.T.C.C., which by virtue of its exclusive provincial base posed the contextual problem of the national question in syndical as well as class terms.

Briefly, the relationships between the three centrals, prior to 1957, were characterized by a variety of processes, one of which was an impetus on the part of the C.T.C.C. to seek amalgamation with the F.P.T.Q. and the F.U.I.Q. This was attempted in the hopes of structurally molding a united working class movement. These attempts from many quarters, however, degenerated into debilitating raiding practices and inter-union hostilities which became most prevalent in the early sixties.³⁴ Various facets of the relationship between the centrals prior to the F.T.Q. fusion should be pointed out. Syndical collaboration between the F.U.I.Q. and the C.T.C.C. remained particularly high, since their combined efforts in the 1949 Asbestos strike, as well as the struggles in 1952 in Louisville and 1953 in Noranda.³⁵ The semblance of the C.T.C.C. and the F.U.I.Q. were the result of their common position as sole spokesmen for working class struggles against the Duplessis regime and that government's repressive legislation, particularly Bills 19 and 20.³⁶ The F.P.T.Q. was absent during these struggles. Their actions during these periods consisted of lobbying techniques with

the purpose of extracting favours from the regime while serving the purposes of the state; for example, by refusing to join the F.U.I.Q./C.T.C.C. cartel to oppose anti-syndicalist legislation.

The ideological make-up of the F.U.I.Q. can be further explained in view of its own internal tendencies, one of which supported an autonomist social democrat approach to unionization and a more conservative faction which favoured a neutralized federally oriented structure. The fusion with the F.P.T.Q., whose affinity lay with the conservative faction of the F.U.I.Q., initiated the momentum by the autonomist faction - which, incidentally, was the more dominant tendency - who thought that a merger with the F.P.T.Q. would strengthen the more conservatively inclined elements within its own central. It is similarly for these reasons that the F.P.T.Q. and the conservative sector of the F.U.I.Q. opposed C.T.C.C. entry.³⁷

The fusion of the F.P.T.Q. and the F.U.I.Q., as mentioned earlier, took place amidst a general atmosphere of structural reorganization of working class organizations in North America. Within the province, the C.M.T.C. and the C.C.T. represented a total of 175,000 workers. Of this number, the newly formed F.T.Q. represented 65,000 members, 32,000 of which formerly belonged to the F.U.I.Q.³⁸ The newly formed F.T.Q. was wholly dependent upon the charter of the C.C.T. The F.T.Q. in this regard did not, through the merger, develop greater jurisdictional capacities vis-à-vis its centralized parent organization. In fact, it was created as a regional expression of the C.C.T. with designated provincial powers. This situation was further exasperated by the organizational difficulties within the F.T.Q. as it confronted the

two distinct traditions of trade unionism and the growing importance of industrial organization.

It should be underlined at this point that the particular forces of class struggle during the late fifties pushed the F.T.Q. beyond its divisional type of authority and into the general political struggle which characterized the C.T.C.C. These forces were evident in the Murdochville strike of 1957. Several aspects distinguished this event. Primarily, the Murdochville confrontation contained the seeds of working class struggle as well as the concrete format of a nascent nationalism which extended itself through various classes.³⁹ The Murdochville strike placed the F.T.Q. in a direct confrontational stance against the Duplessis regime, however, with support from a multitude of sources. The consequences of this was the momentary unification of a divided working class, securing for the time a combined strategy against the state. The increasing political crisis of the state equally had its effect upon the newly formed central. In this regard, two final observations can be made concerning the *period of formation* of the F.T.Q.:

a) The central, despite its organizational weaknesses could not but emerge as a spokesperson for Quebec workers rather than merely their French Canadian representatives, given the growing momentum for greater syndical recognition amongst workers, particularly in mining (witness the protracted strike at Noranda Mines). These struggles brought out the inherent contradictions of the F.T.Q., wherein they were increasingly implicated in a notion of conflict with distinct and complex regional ramifications, without the institutional tools to meet that challenge.

The continuity of class struggle amidst many varieties of nationalist sentiment, particularly at Murdochville, leads us to our second observation.

b) The premise of working class nationalism as well as many other class forms was evident by the mounting dissent towards the dominant political expression of nationalism of the period, i.e. Duplessis autonomism. While in the larger structure of Quebec society a new hegemony was in the making, the F.T.Q. confronted, perhaps for the first time, within the then existing structure of class forces, the political dimension of the national question. It was similarly the inherent class antagonisms in the cementing of this new hegemony which prompted the entry of the F.T.Q. as a distinct, if uncertain, political actor in the rapidly approaching changes of the sixties.

The C.T.C.C. - C.S.N.

The C.T.C.C. was formed at Hull in 1921. As E. Forsey has stated, the aim of the central was

. . . to promote and safeguard the general
interests of Catholic syndicalism in Canada. (40)

The actual onus of syndicalization efforts were, however, mostly restricted to Quebec. The C.T.C.C., in the early years of its mandate, represented one quarter of all registered workers in the province. In these early years of formation, the C.T.C.C. recruited workers from the ranks of the international unions and the older national unions such as La Fédération Ouvrière Mutuelle du Nord (F.O.M.N.) and the Corporation Ouvrière Catholique (C.O.C.). Also, the newly formed catholic

central recruited in traditional industrial sectors and what existed of the then service sector neglected by the international unions.⁴¹

The goals of the newly formed central, according to M. Tétu were three-fold. They addressed:

- a) the inequality of social classes
- b) the inherent harmony of capital and labour
- c) national autonomy⁴²

R. Denis has, however, argued that the actual format of concerns adopted by the C.T.C.C. were closer to an active campaign of class collaboration,⁴³ promotion of discrimination between catholic and non-catholic workers, and the primacy of religious authority over and above class interests.⁴⁴ J. Rouillard's assessment of this early period gives us the necessary background within which to view the observations of the two former authors. For the founding members of the C.T.C.C., the question of class was inextricably linked to the doctrines of the church characterized by the *Rerum Novarum* encyclical. Within this context, the C.T.C.C. offered itself as a catholic syndicalist response to American dominance in the trade and industrial union movement. This response was couched in terms of a larger Canadian nationalism, yet not without its paradoxes. Nationalism within the early C.T.C.C. often appeared as a French Canadian response to international unions, which they saw principally as a threat to a larger Canadian identity. This seems to have been the context within which the central defined its own political and social presence. In this regard, internationalism carried with it a non-confessional quality which threatened the well-ingrained doctrine of *ecclesia over class*.

The C.T.C.C. throughout this period defended a particular concept of Canada as a nation with a significant dual composition. What was specifically sought from the Canadian government by the central was the loosening of relations that the Canadian state maintained in its foreign relations policy, particularly with Great Britain and the United States.⁴⁵

The notion of nationalism and the social doctrine of the church produced a syndicalism wherein a paternalism of the French working classes was assumed by a clergy attempting to reconcile the interests of workers to that of a rural petite bourgeoisie attired with its own nationalist sentiments and interests. The early formation of the C.T.C.C. gives us, in this regard, an example of efforts to fuse class solidarity and the solidarity of the community into a common perspective.

The attempt to maintain control of the growing labour market in Quebec outside the C.T.C.C.'s actual organizational structure was a prime concern of the clerics. This was most clearly the case with the C.T.C.C. initiative in the rapid creation of L'Union Catholique des Cultivateurs (U.C.C.) when that area of organization was approached by the more militant farmers' unions of Ontario and Western Canada.⁴⁶ L.M. Tremblay offers a most succinct appraisal of the C.T.C.C. in the first twenty years of its formation:

L'idéologie de la C.T.C.C. à ses débuts peut être résumée de la façon suivante. Celle-ci se définit comme un missionnaire dont l'objectif est la défense de valeurs Canadiennes-Françaises traditionnelles contre ses adversaires qui sont l'industrialisation et le syndicalisme neutre au moyen d'une organisation

syndicale réformée qui agit dans le respect de l'ordre et de l'autorité en collaborant avec le patronat et les pouvoirs socio-politiques. (47)

The decade of the thirties was for the C.T.C.C. a general period of decline, as was the case with much syndicalism in Canada. Within Quebec from 1929-1930, the number of syndicated workers fell drastically from 85,000 to 65,000. The period of economic expansion just preceding the war, however, saw a doubling of this same number. The Second World War itself precipitated a massive growth of 83% in the Labour Movement in Quebec. This, of course, stemmed principally from war-related industries. In 1945, the syndical movement numbered 180,000 workers, or 20% of the total labour force compared with 12% in 1931.⁴⁸

The period of the forties to the sixties was a time for significant expansion for the C.T.C.C. as well as a duration of increased confrontation with the state. I will discuss this period briefly by interpreting the analysis of the C.T.C.C. within the larger context of syndical growth. The de-confessionalization of the C.T.C.C., although completed in 1960 (signified by an official distance from clerical control), was actually a process which began following the Second World War.⁴⁹ Over and above the general separation between church and state that was occurring within the society at large, the confessional nature of the C.T.C.C. posed several contradictions for the labour movement. This was certainly the case given the then prevalent atmosphere of proposed syndical unity between the F.P.T.Q., C.T.C.C., and the F.U.I.Q. R. Denis suggests that it was when the delegates of the C.T.C.C. opted in their 1956 convention to seriously

consider merging with the C.T.C. that the official debate on de-confessionalization occurred within the central.⁵⁰ The confessional nature of the central was, in fact, seen as prohibiting its greater growth. Contraction within the C.T.C.C. had already begun during World War II in its unsuccessful struggle to attain the lion's share of the newly syndicated. Also, the C.T.C.C. was placed in a delicate situation, given the implementation within Quebec of a similar law to the Wagner Act in the United States. The Wagner Act regulated labour force relations by stipulating that only one union could represent a given enterprise. This situation put the C.T.C.C. into a position where it was battling international unions for the allegiance of non-catholics, to maintain a presence on the factory floor.

These particular discrepancies disappeared with the complete de-confessionalization in 1960. During the rather long and arduous manner in which de-confessionalization took place, the possibility of syndical unity was ever present.

The issue of syndical unity was endemic to the format of Labour/Capital relations within Quebec during the forties and fifties. In effect, it was the common struggle of the working classes against an increasingly repressive regime which added a commonality to various struggles. In this sense, there was a unified syndical reaction, particularly between the F.U.I.Q. and the C.T.C.C. against Bill 5 in 1948, Bill 60 in 1949, and Bills 19 and 20 in 1954. The F.U.I.Q. supported the C.T.C.C. in the Asbestos Strike, the Dupuis Frères and Louisville strikes. The C.T.C.C. reciprocated by supporting F.U.I.Q. unions at Noranda in 1953.⁵¹ The reasons, however, for the failure of

the syndical movement in Quebec to merge given their common struggles from a general dominator of working class interests, as well as the organizational consideration of cross-jurisdictions in a host of industries, remains significant. This, I would argue, is illustrative of the particular form of disorganization amongst the working classes and the implication of this state of affairs for an understanding of the National question. The F.P.T.Q. relationship with the C.T.C.C. would be seen in terms of the organizational character of international unions in Quebec and the response of a more indigenously based movement. Relations between the F.P.T.Q. and the C.T.C.C. were less than cordial, and consisted of intense raiding practices initiated by C.M.T.C. affiliates as well as the F.P.T.Q.⁵² Relations between the C.T.C.C. and the F.P.T.Q. improved considerably after the merger of the F.P.T.Q. and the F.U.I.Q.

Relations between the C.T.C.C. and the F.U.I.Q. were more aligned ideologically. The F.U.I.Q., as I have mentioned earlier, offered a working class voice, critically addressing the underdevelopment of Quebec. This necessarily not only placed the F.U.I.Q. in direct political confrontation with the Duplessis regime, but equally distinguished it from the F.P.T.Q. as a significant regional representative. The C.T.C.C., although having had different origins, was not removed from a similar type of nationalist expression. Both directed their criticism towards what they perceived as a regionally imbalanced political structure. M. Grant, to this effect, has argued that discernably the only significant distinction one could make between the C.T.C.C. and the F.U.I.Q. was the absence in the

former of a catholic tradition.⁵³ Certainly, the F.U.I.Q. and the C.T.C.C. collaborated in the first *common front*, of which the F.P.T.Q. refused participation. Also, the F.U.I.Q. and the C.T.C.C. formed cartels in various industries (prior to the F.P.T.Q./F.U.I.Q. merger) and jointly participated in informational and educational campaigns. However, regardless of the natural affinity of the F.U.I.Q. and the C.T.C.C., the new realities of North American syndicalism within Canada witnessed by the C.M.T.C. and C.T.C. merger, precipitated the F.P.T.Q./F.U.I.Q. fusion, and similarly created a lost opportunity for a greater syndical unity.

Summary

In this chapter we have examined the growth of working class organizations in Quebec. Figure one offers a graphic illustration of this historic development. It has been shown that the organization of the Quebec working class has been subject to a particular combination of extraneous and indigenous influences.

What I have hoped to convey in this selective approach has been the increasingly territorial definitions of class struggle. These conditions of production were becoming more evident in the nature of syndical organization. The more indepth examination of the F.P.T.Q./F.U.I.Q. merger and the development of the C.T.C.C. points to the contradictions inherent in these working class organizations, as they attempted to develop a regional voice. In the case of the newly formed F.T.Q., this expression represented a crisis of internal organization which was not to be resolved until the late 1960's. In the case of the C.T.C.C. the notion of self-redefinition was endemic

HISTORIC EVOLUTION OF UNION CENTRALS IN QUEBEC

to the process of de-confessionalization, which symbolized a departure from the immediate influence of a traditional petite bourgeoisie.

The national question during the forties and fifties for the working class was chiefly one of structural organization. However, this process whereby working class organizations were coming to terms with their determining regional characteristics, was equally a period of petite bourgeois mobilization. The expression of these social practices and activities on the part of a new petite bourgeoisie, saw its political ascendancy in the early sixties.

NOTES

- 1) Fernand Harvey, Le Mouvement Ouvrier au Québec. Boreal Express, Montreal, 1980, p. 39.
- 2) Harry Clare Pentland, Labour and Capital in Canada, 1650-1860, Lorimer, Toronto, 1981.
- 3) Ibid, p. 119.
- 4) Louise-Marie Tremblay, Le Syndicalisme au Québec: l'idéologies de la CSN et la FTQ, 1940-1970, Presses de l'Université de Montréal, Montréal, 1972.
- 5) Fernand Harvey, «Les Chevaliers du Travail, les Etats-Unis et la Société québécoise 1882-1902» in Le Mouvement Ouvrier au Québec, Fernand Harvey (ed.), Montréal, Boreal Express, 1980.
- 6) Ibid, p.77.
- 7) R. Rumilly, Histoire de la Province de Québec, Les Ecoles du Nord-Ouest, Montreal.
- 8) Louise-Marie Tremblay, «L'Influence Extragère en matière de direction syndicale au Canada» in Relation Industrielles II, 1964, p. 36-53.
- 9) Histoire de Mouvement Ouvrier au Québec (1825-1976), à C.S.N., C.E.Q. coédition, Montreal, 1979.
- 10) Jacques Rouillard, «Les Syndicats Nationaux au Québec de 1900 à 1930», Les Cahiers d'Histoire de l'Université Laval, 1979.
- 11) Ibid, p. 159.
- 12) Ibid, p. 159.
- 13) Charles Lipton, Histoire du Syndicalisme au Canada et au Québec (1827-1959), Montreal, Parti-Pris, 1976.
- 14) Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier au Québec (1825-1976) à C.S.N./C.E.Q. coédition.
- 15) Le Code du Travail, Province de Québec.
- 16) Jean Real Cardin, Influence du Syndicalisme national catholique sur les droits syndicaux québécois, Institute Sociale Populaire, Montreal, 1957.

- 17) H. Gregg Lewis, Unionism and Relative Wages in the United States, University of Chicago Press, 1963.
- 18) Les Ouvriers de Sainte-Nazaire, Les Editions Syndicalistes, 1964.
- 19) Robert Rumilly, M. Duplessis et son Temps, Québec Presses, Montreal 1973.
- 20) Roch Denis, Luttes des Classes et Question Nationale au Québec, 1979, Presse Socialiste Internationale, Montreal.
- 21) This chronology is taken from l'histoire du mouvement ouvrier au Québec, a co-edition of the C.S.N. and the C.E.Q. The original chronology dates from 1916 to 1977.
- 22) Nicos Poulantzas, State, Power and Socialism, Verso, London, 1978.
- 23) Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier au Québec (1825-1976) un co-edition C.S.N./C.E.Q., Montreal, p. 92.
- 24) Louise-Marie Tremblay, Le Syndicalisme Québécois, Idéologies de la C.S.N. et de la F.T.Q., 1940-1970, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1972, p. 126.
- 25) Ibid, p. 127.
- 26) Leo Roback, «L'idéologie de la F.T.Q. Evolution Historique», in Histoire des Travailleurs Québécois, Bulletin du R.C.H.T.Q., Vol. 4, No. 3.
- 27) Michel Brossard, L'idéologie économique de la fédération des travailleurs du Québec, M.A. thesis (Industrial Relations), l'Université de Montréal, 1969, p. 201-202.
- 28) Leo Roback, op. cit., p. 6.
- 29) Tremblay, op.cit., p. 131.
- 30) Roch Denis, Luttes des Classes et Question Nationale au Québec, 1948-1968, Presses Socialistes Internationales, Montreal, 1979, p. 160.
- 31) Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier au Québec, op. cit., p. 141.
- 32) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 162.
- 33) Tremblay, op. cit., p. 134.
- 34) Tremblay, op. cit., p. 137.
- 35) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 167.
- 36) Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier, op. cit. p. 135.

- 37) Much of the impetus for inter-syndical structural unity came from the F.U.I.Q. which had hoped that by bringing in the C.T.C.C., the more collaborationist factors in the F.P.T.Q. (with whom it was facing an imminent merger) would be neutralized.
- 38) L.M. Tremblay, op. cit., p. 138.
- 39) The strike equally pitted a new emerging petite bourgeoisie against the Duplessis regime. The strike offered this class an opportunity to confront the regime.
- 40) Eugene Forsey, History of Canadian Trade Unionism 1812-1902, p. 6.
- 41) Jacques Rouillard, Histoire de la C.S.N. 1921-1981, Boreal Express, C.S.N., Montreal, 1981, p. 67.
- 42) Michel Tétu, «Les Congrès qui décidèrent de la fondation de la C.T.C.C. (Québec 1917, Trois Rivières 1919, Chicoutimi 1920)», Relations Industrielles, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1963, p. 202.
- 43) This type of class collaboration program is evident through the granting of honorary positions, within the C.T.C.C. to clergymen, merchants and professionals. This was similarly the practice of the F.M.O.C.
- 44) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 87.
- 45) J. Rouillard, op. cit., p. 82.
- 46) Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier, op. cit., p. 69.
- 47) L.M. Tremblay, op. cit., p. 26.
- 48) Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier, op. cit., p. 90.
- 49) J. Rouillard, op. cit., p. 177.
- 50) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 152
- 51) J. Rouillard, op. cit., p. 180
- 52) This period is well documented by Le Travail 1956-1957, the official voice of the C.T.C.C.
- 53) Michel Grant, La F.U.I.Q. et l'action politique syndicale, M.A. thesis (Industrial Relations), l'Université de Montréal, 1968, p. 50.

CHAPTER IV

NATIONALISM: THE WORKING CLASS AND THE QUIET REVOLUTION

Methodological Note

The following chapter will be divided into three distinct time periods. Chapter four will cover the period of the Quiet Revolution; 1960 - 1965. Chapter five will offer an analysis of a somewhat longer period ranging from 1966 to 1976. Chapter six will bring our understanding of working class nationalism within the two centrals into a more contemporary perspective, ending with the referendum.

The method of analysis evident in the appraisal of all three periods will consist of an interpretation of primary source documents published by the two union centrals. I will also be relying upon secondary sources of evidence. The analysis will be taken up in an interwoven manner, threading together often disparate yet nonetheless specific strains of nationalist expressions within the labour movement. The evolvement of these positions will be highlighted by the two centrals' dialectic relationship with the ongoing processes of *formal nationalism*.

The Quiet Revolution represents a period in recent Quebec history which marks the advent of a new national ideological form. What has, however, distinguished this notion of national consciousness and the working class element dormant in this hegemony? The neo-nationalism of the Quiet Revolution had, as its ideological ancestor, the ultra-

conservative nationalism of the forties and fifties, generated to a great extent by the French Canadian petite and big bourgeoisie supported by the Duplessis regime. This bourgeoisie was composed in its essence by non-monopolistic Quebec capital, traditionally forced to operate in the context of structural alliances with American capital.¹ The form of national consciousness was mostly articulated by a traditional petite bourgeoisie whose immediate interests were tied to the greater development of a dominant regional class. Within the various political configurations and confrontation between the traditional petite bourgeoisie and the new emerging petite bourgeoisie, the concerns of *formal nationalism* changed course.

National consciousness, in this regard, developed a *Québécois* content rather than a French Canadian current with the political identification of greater regional interests. According to Mascotto and Soucy, this period was characterized by the demise of the concept of nationalism as *une idéologie de survivance* with a particular French and catholic persona within the context of Canada.² It was replaced by the enunciation of a consciousness geared towards the affirmation of socio-political and cultural rights of the francophone collectivity. This notion is not dissimilar from my own utilization of the term, *formal nationalism* for the period of the early sixties. Within this alliance, nationalism was offered as a homogenous and monolithic event, distinguished only by its autonomists and/or *indépendantistes*, but resolutely silent in its articulation of inherent working class interests.

The C.S.N. and Reformism

The C.S.N. entered the decade of the sixties having surmounted a vast array of structural changes. In May 1961, Jean Marchand was elected president. He succeeded Roger Mathieu. The Marchand period, which lasted until 1965, was characterized by the transformative project of the Lesage Liberals.³

A review of minutes of annual congresses throughout the Marchand period offers us a perspective on these important years. The 40th congress of the C.S.N. in 1962 occurred within a span of great expansion for the central. Specifically, massive reform of the educational system and the development of the social service sector by the state created a significant reservoir for the syndical movement. As Table one shows, the public service sector representation within the C.S.N. increased roughly 100% in a six year period. Similarly, industrial and skilled workers decreased in relative terms.

Table 1: COMPOSITION OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE C.S.N. BY SECTOR

OF ACTIVITY % 1960 - 1981

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1981</u>
<u>Public Service</u> <u>Sector</u>	27	52	67	56
<u>Industrial and</u> <u>Skilled workers</u>	73	48	33	44

SOURCE: Rouillard, Histoire de la C.S.N. 1921 - 1981.

J. Rouillard has argued that during the larger separation of church and state as well as the internal de-confessionalization within

the C.T.C.C./C.S.N., the union central clarified its position to a certain degree on the national question. For Rouillard, it was during this early period that the francophone dimension of the central acquired a particular geo-political quality.⁴ However, much as this may have been the case in strictly cultural terms, the period under consideration suggests more. Major themes throughout the union literature were in fact attempts to clarify the role of the C.S.N. with the state in both its provincial and federal forms. This type of dialogue occurred within the structural symbiosis of the central with the modernization projects of the Lesage Liberals.

The Moral Report of the President to the C.S.N. congress in 1962 is informative precisely due to the absence within its many concerns of the prevailing notion of *rattrapage*; a dominant component of *formal nationalism* of the day. As Roback and Tremblay contend quite correctly, while the *catching-up* ideology saw its political expression with the Lesage Liberals, the C.T.C.C./C.S.N. had clearly been addressing the question of regional disparity from the early fifties, as had the F.U.I.Q.⁵

Issues raised in the 1952 congress covered various concerns of the day, most notably the climate of increasing automation.⁶ A significant theme of the report was addressed to the popular rural nationalist appeal of the Social Credit Party within Quebec.⁷ Marchand counselled the membership to abstain voting for the Party given their anti-labour philosophy. The 1962 congress dealt specifically with various strategies for political action in view of federal and provincial state structures. Marchand addressed himself to the 1959 'Constitution of the C.S.N. concerning the substance of its political action.' A condensed version

of positions taken in 1959 were:

- a) to reaffirm the C.S.N.'s independence towards political parties.
- b) to pledge the complete freedom of affiliated organizations regarding political action as long as it caused no prejudice to the general interests of the movement.
- c) to restrict political interventions on the part of the President or the Secretary General during electoral campaigns. (8)

Marchand brought up these resolutions with a view towards cautious yet important amendment. This reassessment must be seen within the support of affiliated locals for the New Democratic Party, and the more immediate provincial political stage wherein the Lesage Liberals were dominant. In effect, Marchand's amendments were intended to address the lukewarm support by the central for the N.D.P.; the greater support of the N.D.P. in the locals; and the central's increasing reformist pact with the provincial state.

Marchand sought to change various precepts of the 1959 charter. Primarily, the political independence of the C.S.N. would be left intact, i.e. trade unions and politics would remain disjointed realities lest political opinions weaken and divide the union. However, the President or the Secretary General should have the power to make political interventions during election campaigns.⁹ Marchand went further and suggested that the Confederal Board of the C.S.N. should, under certain circumstances, recommend support for a Party of its choosing. As mentioned previously, the proposed amendments signified that on a federal level, there was an indication that the N.D.P. - regardless of its problems in Quebec - was in fact the party of the

worker, and should thereby merit Labour's support within the province. This was particularly true given the support of the party amongst C.S.N. locals and the more official acclaim of the N.D.P. by the F.T.Q. On the provincial level, C.S.N. overtures to the N.D.P.'s political project dissipated given their growth and ideological affinity to the modernizing provincial Liberals. What, however, was the accord between the C.S.N. and the state concerning the constitutional component of the national question? L. Roback and L.M. Tremblay point to the *nationalist* orientation of the C.S.N. during this period. This ideology, they contend, expressed itself as a pact between two nations, with the C.S.N. stressing the need for a renewed federalism, strongly favouring bilingualism and biculturalism.¹⁰ However, the commitment to the notion of a renewed federalism must be further developed. Within the 1962 Moral Report, the concepts of Canada and Quebec were often placed within the general colourings of the world economy. Little mention was made of regional economic disparities, themes so prevalent in the fifties as well as the later sixties. It appeared as if the general climate of modernization and expansion identified with the Lesage Liberals was accepted within the central itself and hence the absence of their own voice on the issue. As the 40th session of the C.S.N. congress clearly showed, political strategies concerning the constitutional debate were, however, still alive. On the question of provincial autonomy, the C.S.N. position was to «unequivocally reap all constitutional benefits due to the Québécois.»¹¹ Although the C.S.N. documents of the early sixties often referred to the political interests of the working classes in terms of non-partisan action, etc., the issue

of provincial autonomy was repeatedly couched in the notion of *the people*.¹²

The forty-first congress which took place in 1964 resembled the 1962 session in many respects. The major theme was, however, less the evident strains of political alignments which were at the apex of various positions taken during the previous congress. The 1964 session returned to a more traditional discussion of the economic development of the province, and the pressing problem of intersyndical relations, particularly given the intense raiding practices between the C.S.N. and the F.T.Q.¹³

The national question for the C.S.N. represented a contradiction in terms of its own political orientation. The two congresses of 1962 and 1964 suggested a measure of autonomy which was not dissimilar from the left oriented expression of the Lesage Liberals exemplified by the Levesque faction. However, the C.S.N.'s regular yearly memorandum submitted to the federal Cabinet was also indicative of its own self-perception as a *pan-Canadian central*, if not in practice then at the very best, ideologically. The concerns of the 1960 memorandum stressed the need for the Canadianization of the economy; the nationalization of Bell Canada; and the opening of relations between Canada and the I.L.O.¹⁴ A solution to the problem of economic dependence upon the United States was suggested in terms of an expansion of the public sector.

The memorandum in the following year stressed the economic dependence of Canada, as well as raising the question of constitutional repatriation.¹⁵ The C.S.N., through this document, commented upon the need

to incorporate the bi-ethnic and bi-cultural character of Canada within the constitution. The larger context within which these appeals were occurring was that of a greater alliance between the central's actions and the interests of the provincial form of the state. It is little wonder that the C.S.N. in its 1964 memorandum to the Cabinet would plunge more deeply into the then current centralization/decentralization debate.¹⁶ In a sense, the vicarious quality of the previous memorandums, whereby the central expressed its regional concerns in view of a notion of greater Canadian independence, had come to an abrupt end.

In the 1964 memorandum, federal/provincial relations were pervasive. The C.S.N. discourse offered various approaches towards power sharing, with greater revenue generating power for the provinces. Also, the immediate need for federal/provincial conferences was stressed. The demands of the C.S.N., submitted to the federal Cabinet, had obviously become quite close to the general political debate between the province and Ottawa. L. Leborgne has argued that the C.S.N. was not only in accordance with the Liberal project of state reform, but an active instrument of the diffusion of its accompanying ideology of nationalism.¹⁷

Leborgne submits that, given the prevailing circumstances of the period, it was inevitable that the militants within the C.S.N., as well as the progressive sector of the provincial Liberals, would share a common ideological framework. This commonality was fixed, particularly with the emergence of new class factions in the sphere of unproductive labour, towards pushing forward the reforms of the Quiet Revolution. In this regard, the Marchand outlook of reformist attachment to the provincial Liberals was not unique and was shared by many militants,

In his introduction to the sixth convention Provost stated,

We have taken good stops with the province.
It will bring the working class advantages
they would not have gained with a slavish
attitude. (27)

The last remark was obviously meant for the C.S.N. which was perceived by the F.T.Q. as absolutely acquiescent towards the Liberal party. The F.T.Q. thus found itself quite literally ensnared by the nature of reform, which was increasingly being enacted on a provincial stage. This situation was further complicated by the active nurturing of the F.T.Q. alliance with the N.D.P. by the provincial Liberals who utilized the pact to justify excluding the F.T.Q. from an organizational slice of the public and para-public syndicalization prize.

What was the political orientation of the F.T.Q. as witnessed by the 1962 convention?

We are for humanizing our technical society with a
Christian democratic socialism inspired by the
N.D.P. (28)

Provost further defined the political ideology of the F.T.Q. as stemming from the Catholic church.²⁹ The isolation of the F.T.Q., however, was not a factor to be ignored, regardless of the central's reliance upon a federally inspired democratic socialism of the N.D.P. This isolation, as we can see in the 1962 congress, led to a more conciliatory approach to the Lesage Liberals. Therefore, because of the political isolation of the F.T.Q. there was great stress placed upon creating a provincial wing of the N.D.P. Several paradoxes arise here,

position became, in effect, the central of the Quiet Revolution. This was certainly the case, if for no other reason than having had the entire syndicalization of the public and para-public sector strategically placed under its organizational jurisdiction.

The relationship of the C.S.N. and the federal state was perhaps more ambiguous. It appears from an appraisal of the literature emanating from the central that there was an acute awareness of speaking to two distinct power centers; the common thread being a strong dose of reformism. The C.S.N.'s analyses concerning the functions of the state, it seemed, were wholly directed at the provincial form. This type of dialogue was absent in federal memorandums - with the exception of the constitutional debate in 1964. On the federal level, the issues were expressed in terms of a greater *Canadianization* of the economy.

The emphasis upon regional disparities began to manifest themselves again as of the national congress in 1966. This was concurrent with the defeat of the Lesage Liberals, and the increasing awareness of the failed promises of the Quiet Revolution for the working classes.

Perhaps most importantly, however, was the changing nature of the C.S.N.'s perception of the state, which was becoming increasingly repressive in its provincial form. It was these occurrences which showed the preliminary signs of a shift in the perception of the *neutral state*. This change, as we shall see, was the first step in a more defined articulation of working class nationalism within the central.

The F.T.Q. and Working Class Politics

The relationship of the F.T.Q. and the national question will be examined through a series of historic instances. Given the nature of interconnections between the C.S.N. and the provincial Liberals during the time frame under consideration - 1960 to 1965 - I will similarly be examining the pervasivity of the F.T.Q. connection in the realm of provincial politics. In this regard, I will look at some length, at the F.T.Q. relationship with N.D.P. efforts within the province. It is hoped that this type of analysis will situate the condition of the national question within the central for the period.

The Officer's Report submitted to the fifth Convention of the F.T.Q. in 1960 sums up the attitude of the central towards the provincial election which swept in the Liberal Party. The President of the F.T.Q. at the time was Roger Provost. Provost held the post from 1957 to 1964. At the 1960 convention, Provost argued that the F.T.Q. could not in good faith participate in the coming provincial election, as there were essentially no differences in the offerings of the two provincial parties.

The workers of Quebec find it impossible to make a real choice which corresponds to their collective interests or to the deep aspirations of the population as a whole. (20)

The political solution to this impasse, as suggested by Provost, was in the development within Quebec of the New Democratic Party. It was this party, he argued, which would give Quebec workers a real choice in the 1964 provincial elections.

The F.T.Q., in contradistinction to the C.S.N. entered the period of the sixties more inclined towards structural affiliation with a *workers party*. Certainly this was due in large part to the F.T.Q. link with the C.T.C. which had already committed itself to the N.D.P. platform. In his introduction to the 1960 convention, Provost outlined the F.T.Q. perspective towards traditional provincial parties in Quebec.

Today, we have another new government which has made us new promises and which apparently contains some loyal friends of the working class. We will not change our political outlook, however, which is non-support for either of the two parties. We must maintain our political orientation all the more because the foremost problem of the hour - which will unfortunately likely be the major problem of the years to come - is unemployment. And there exists not one single example of a political party with a traditional philosophy which has taken effective measures to solve this problem, except in times of war. This ideology, or the absence of ideology, and the interests they represent mean that the old parties invariably stop in the threshold of real reforms and full employment. (21)

The attitude of the F.T.Q. towards provincial parties, as Provost's monologue indicates, was less than embracing. It is important, however, to acknowledge that the statement made in 1960 had as its precedent a history of provincial parties which made no pretenses towards concessions to the working classes. As Provost indicates, at the beginning of his statement, the Liberal party presented a new dimension, i.e. it contained, in his words, *loyal friends of the working class*.

The relationship of the F.T.Q. and the Liberal party is examined by F. Cyr and R. Roy in an effort to explain the reformist tendencies within each apparatus.²² On an ideological level, a comparative analysis

of various declarations adopted by the F.T.Q. in 1959 and the Liberal program of 1960 showed little disagreement as to proposed reforms. This situation, our two authors argue, was a central reason for the F.T.Q. effort to clearly delineate its approach towards state reform from that of the Liberals. Certainly - as a political strategy for a central committed to a pan-Canadian party - this may have been the case in view of the essential reform needed by the Quebec state.

A more propitious analysis, however, should consider the various strains within the F.T.Q. It was these channels which gave direction to a particular tradition of mobilization. Primarily, the appeal of the F.T.Q. - aside from its structural links with the C.T.C. - to the N.D.P. is contained within a sense of reform which was immersed in a tradition of addressing the federal form of the state. This characteristic was tied to a dual nation perspective wherein active support was given to a party whose *raison d'être* was reformism, and necessarily had a trans-Canadian identity. This ideal of mobilization finds its roots in the F.P.T.Q. and the federally inclined faction of the F.U.I.Q. within the F.T.Q. The second tradition found in the F.T.Q. - and represented by the autonomist faction of the former F.U.I.Q. was, in political terms, *Quebec-oriented*. This faction was visibly effected by the various strains of neo-nationalist positions held in many quarters of Quebec society, not least of which was in the provincial Liberal party itself.²³ It was both these elements - particularly in 1960, prior to the schisms over the nature of the new Quebec party - as well as a desire to include the C.S.N. in a common political project which informed Provost's following statement

of the fifth convention.

If the united union movement together with its natural allies in the working class does not take decisive action to fill the gaps through the formation of a new popular and democratic party, it will bear the responsibility for the excesses which will not fail to result from the scattering of progressive forces. (24)

At this early juncture of the Quiet Revolution, the F.T.Q. was relatively isolated in its criticism of the Lesage regime. The adversarial position which was so evident in 1960 was, however, beginning to show signs of conciliation by the next year. An indication of the central's somewhat ambiguous situation concerning its relationship with provincial political realities was evident in Provost's address at the sixth annual convention. On April 19th Provost declared,

. . . After nine months in power, the Liberal government had not yet brought forth a solution to unemployment. . . (25)

underlining the fact that in March 1961, Quebec had 23,000 more unemployed than in March of the previous year. Yet while the central lashed out at the government for its performance on the employment issue, it was particularly active in various reformist projects of the state initiated by the Liberals. These apparatuses were the Conseil Supérieur du Travail, Le Comité Régional de Placement, and le Comité Consultatif de l'Assurance Hospitalisation.²⁶

The expansion of the Quebec state naturally found an ally in the reformist stance of the F.T.Q. Relations, it appeared, had undergone a change in degree from the critical stance of but one year earlier.

In his introduction to the sixth convention Provost stated,

We have taken good stops with the province.
It will bring the working class advantages
they would not have gained with a slavish
attitude. (27)

The last remark was obviously meant for the C.S.N. which was perceived by the F.T.Q. as absolutely acquiescent towards the Liberal party. The F.T.Q. thus found itself quite literally ensnared by the nature of reform, which was increasingly being enacted on a provincial stage. This situation was further complicated by the active nurturing of the F.T.Q. alliance with the N.D.P. by the provincial Liberals who utilized the pact to justify excluding the F.T.Q. from an organizational slice of the public and para-public syndicalization prize.

What was the political orientation of the F.T.Q. as witnessed by the 1962 convention?

We are for humanizing our technical society with a
Christian democratic socialism inspired by the
N.D.P. (28)

Provost further defined the political ideology of the F.T.Q. as stemming from the Catholic church.²⁹ The isolation of the F.T.Q., however, was not a factor to be ignored, regardless of the central's reliance upon a federally inspired democratic socialism of the N.D.P. This isolation, as we can see in the 1962 congress, led to a more conciliatory approach to the Lesage Liberals. Therefore, because of the political isolation of the F.T.Q. there was great stress placed upon creating a provincial wing of the N.D.P. Several paradoxes arise here,

however. Primarily, as mentioned earlier, the F.T.Q. was faced with an expansion of the provincial state, particularly in the economy. Also, as regards the Lesage regime, there was the increasing profile of the *left wing* of the party whose social policies resembled to some extent those of the N.D.P. Provost's position at the 1962 congress showed signs of the continuing inability of his central to remain attached solely to a federal social democratic strategy.

We deplore our position in the provincial election. We had to suggest to our members that they choose the lesser of two evils and gave indirect support to a party that is basically capitalistic for the sole reason that it solemnly pledged to nationalize most of the private electric companies without delay. We were convinced our recommendation was something that from a strict labour viewpoint we would surely live to regret; but as leaders of an important group of citizens we are equally certain that in the absence of N.D.P. candidates we had no other choice. (30)

We can say with some certitude that the F.T.Q. relation to the existing social forces within the province were underlined by the persistence of the national question. This can be seen in:

- a) the growth of the Quebec state, and the concomitant isolation of the F.T.Q. from the political arena, while participating in the reformist practices of the state.
- b) the inability of the F.T.Q. to institute a viable arm of the N.D.P. within the province, to be the political form they clearly sought. Both of these aspects are related to the new historic emergence of the national question. The isolation of the F.T.Q. should in this sense be appraised equally through the growing importance of the C.S.N. The C.S.N. faced none of the two above stated conditions as acutely as the F.T.Q. (31)

L. Roback sums up the relationship which the F.T.Q. and the C.S.N. have historically maintained with the Quebec state and the ironic turnabout

which was brought about by the growing nationalism within the province.

Le sentiment nationaliste, la prise de conscience de soi comme nation qui a connu une éclosion durant et à la faveur de la révolution tranquille a posé à la F.T.Q. un vieux problème mais en des termes nouveaux dans une conjuncture nouvelle. Jusqu'à-là l'appel nationaliste de la C.T.C.C. s'était avéré relativement peu fructueux parce que les syndicats internationaux et pan-Canadiens étaient tellement plus efficaces sur le plan des négociations collectives grâce à leurs ressources financières et techniques. Or, la C.S.N. des années 60 se montre drôlement efficace grâce à ses structures centralisées qui la rendent en mesure de déployer le maximum de des ressources sur un front particulier. Ceci assorti de la nouvelle receptivité de la carte nationaliste (surtout anti-américaine) faisant de la C.S.N. une rivale plus que redoutable. (32)

As Roback argues, given the decline of efficiency by the international unions confronted with the more efficient structure of the C.S.N., the F.T.Q. was less effective in maintaining a collective front in its various struggles with the state. It was precisely this drawback that the F.T.Q. was simply not as entrenched a central as the C.S.N., due to its reliance upon the C.T.C. to ratify its decisions, which precipitated a certain crisis of identity.

The evident need for a greater autonomy from the parent body, in view of its wavering influence in the province, saw its first expression in the 1963 convention. At the convention, support for the N.D.P. was once again restated, particularly in view of the «sensational reforms obtained by the Quebec trade union delegation at the Regina Convention.»³³ On the provincial scene, the internal debates regarding the continuing inability of founding a Quebec based N.D.P. were becoming evident. I

will return to some of the dynamics which have plagued this formation later in this chapter. However, within the 1963 convention the outlook was without doubt less than optimistic.

The situation is far from clear since the schism that recently split the Leftist forces in Quebec. The effort in this regard to found a provincial N.D.P. has been seriously undermined. On the other hand, we are frequently required to support the provincial government in its autonomist struggles with Ottawa and in the implementation of certain economic and social reforms that run into the opinionated resistance of private interests. (34)

During this period, while the F.T.Q. was attempting to delineate a policy towards its increasingly weak political position within Quebec, and hence a reevaluation of its own structure as a central, the project for the implementation of a Quebec wing of the N.D.P. continued. If, therefore, the need for a fundamental restructuring of its own position and a clear policy towards the increasing importance of the Quebec state underlined one dimension of the national question within the central, the emergence of the Parti Socialiste du Québec (P.S.Q.) exposed the internal ideological debate.

The F.T.Q. and Political Parties

Roch Denis has offered a detailed analysis of the formation of the P.S.Q. The basic framework of the following discussion, to which I will integrate implications for the F.T.Q., is indebted to his research.³⁵

In June 1961, the F.T.Q. published a position paper on the nature of Confederation and provincial rights.³⁶ This document differed significantly from the then prevailing view of Canada.

La Fédération des Travailleurs du Québec croit que le Canada est formé de deux nations: la nation Canadienne-Française et la nation Canadienne-Anglaise. L'Acte de l'Amérique Britannique du Nord implique le respect de leurs droits respectifs; c'est selon notre interprétation le résultat d'un pacte entre les deux nations qui forment le Canada. (37)

This notion of Canada was in keeping with the F.T.Q. ideology of social democracy, i.e. a recognition of the veracity of autodetermination. Within a few months of the F.T.Q. declaration, the provincial committee of the N.D.P. released a statement which defined their philosophy towards the constitutional question as very close to that of the F.T.Q.³⁸

The declaration regarding the constitution by the F.T.Q. and the position of the provincial committee, defined the position of the Québec delegation at the 1961 founding of the N.D.P., wherein the concept was entrenched in the new party's constitution. Denis argues that this coming together of a federal focus and a position of provincial autonomy was, however, seen differently by the two main actors; that is, the Quebec delegation and the national council of the N.D.P. For the Quebec delegation, heavily weighted with former F.U.I.Q. members, the two nation concept presented a starting point for structural changes in the constitutional framework of Canada. For the national council it represented somewhat of an end point; but more importantly it contained the entry into the social fibre of Quebec politics.³⁹ Certainly, this type of disjuncture at the federal level provided the background for a more dramatic complex of attitudes to appear provincially.

The F.T.Q. launched a significant recruitment campaign for the N.D.P. with an objective of finding 10,000 new members. At the

conclusion of 1962, the realization was clear that the campaign had met with little success. Part of this was due to the relative lack of militancy amongst the N.D.P. concerning issues of importance within the central, most notably the nationalization of private electric companies. As we have seen in our earlier review of the presidential report for 1962, the N.D.P.'s non-implication in various issues created political contradictions for the central. This lay behind the façade wherein the F.T.Q. was counselling workers to participate in the growth of N.D.P. forces within the province, as well as telling its membership to vote Liberal in an effort to secure nationalization.

The foundation of the 'New Party' in Quebec was scheduled for 1963. According to Denis, the provisional council of the N.D.P.-Q. had two major tendencies⁴⁰ expressed by

- a) representatives of the F.T.Q.
- b) representatives of the Parti Socialiste Democratique (P.S.D.) (41)

Briefly, the F.T.Q. representatives argued for a new federal pact.⁴² This pact was not based upon negotiations between ten provinces but between two founding nations. This pact was essentially based upon the autodetermination of the two founding nation concept. The second tendency, however, proposed the confederal pact which accorded Quebec a large political and administrative autonomy.⁴³

A further divergence between the two groups was the question of party affiliation to the centralized N.D.P. structure. F.T.Q. representatives maintained the necessity of retaining an organic link with

the federal wing.⁴⁴ The debate between the two tendencies continued throughout 1961 to 1963. A particular high point in the argumentation, pointing to the tenor of the debate, was N. Perusse's statement - a representative of the F.T.Q. Perusse noted in the F.T.Q. journal Le Monde Ouvrier, the problem which a non-affiliated N.D.P. in Quebec would become.⁴⁵ The comment immediately solicited a response from twenty signatories of the provisional council who offered a rebuttal to Perusse's statement by arguing for a socialist and independent Québec. The official F.T.Q. policy of the day counselled its membership away from considering an independent Quebec branch of the N.D.P.

During this period, Le Monde Ouvrier did not miss a chance to denounce the *separatists* and *intellectuals* who were behind the independence option.⁴⁶ The 1963 party foundation occurred in this general climate. The choices before the delegates consisted of three options within the framework of the two dominant tendencies. These were;

- a) the creation of an autonomous party affiliated with the federal N.D.P.
- b) the creation of two parties, i.e. a provincial section of the N.D.P. and an independent Quebec party.
- c) an independent party which saw its electoral terrain as both provincial as well as federal. (47)

Without entering into a protracted discussion of the format of the 1963 convention, I will briefly mention several determining factors. The first and third of the above mentioned options were backed by the official F.T.Q. policy. Through the effort of Emile Boudreau, a former president of the P.S.D. and a member of the Syndicats des Métallos (F.T.Q.) a compromise between the two dominant tendencies was reached. This approach entailed a reformulation of the second option. The

Bourdreau solution was well accepted by adherents within and certainly without the F.T.Q. For the proponents of a closer association with the N.D.P., which in fact was the official F.T.Q. policy, the Boudreau compromise, although having overcome the impasse, was far from ideal. The outcome resulted in the solidification of the provincial wing of the N.D.P. and the creation of P.S.Q. What, in effect, was presented as a structural compromise between two approaches to the national question, was actually more representative of a schism amongst the progressive left in Quebec. These divisions created a weak N.D.P.-Q. and a relatively stronger P.S.Q. which nevertheless was to disappear a few years later. The F.T.Q.'s position under these circumstances created an uncertainty as to the nature of its political options.

The schism of the N.D.P.-Q. and the P.S.Q. contained significant ramifications for the F.T.Q. Primarily, the result was to severely compromise their own notion of an effective and unified workers' party. The effect was thus an official support of the N.D.P.-Q. on a federal and provincial level, which had become a type of moral support, given the impact of differing opinions within the central itself.

The division within the F.T.Q. regarding the nature of political expression was a harbinger for the amassing of contradictions within its own structural organization. These discrepancies were to fully come out at the 1965 convention. Prior to a discussion of that convention, it would be worthwhile to comment upon more general relations which were occurring between the state and the working classes, particularly in 1964.

The issue in 1964 for the union movement was Bill 54. The bill,

restricting the right of syndicalization and containing severe adjustments to the strike option, heralded the diminishing *partnership* of the Quiet Revolution. Bill 54 was a response to a growing number of strike actions in the province. A review of strike action shows that there were 70 strikes in 1963 and 100 in the following year.⁴⁸ Moreover, while the increase in strike action is certainly an indication of a hardening line amongst private employers as well as the state, a more fruitful indicator is the duration of strike action.⁴⁹ In this regard, 1963 saw 917,140 working-days lost whereas in 1964 the number had risen to 1,580,550.⁵⁰ The repressive character of Bill 54 allowed the syndicalization of civil servants, but prohibited their affiliation with a union central. The bill was denounced province-wide. The F.T.Q. rallied for a general strike against the legislation. Lesage announced major modifications to the bill. Syndical pressure had obtained a more progressive labour code, which was eventually adopted in 1965 in the *Loi de la Fonction Publique*. The new act gave provincial civil servants the right to strike and affiliate with a central - which was designated to be the C.S.N. The bill's restriction, however, was to prohibit civil servant unions from engaging in partisan political activity.⁵¹

The 9th congress of the F.T.Q., held in 1965, was a turning point in the development of the central. The congress was molded by various events. Certainly, the schism between the N.D.P.-Q. and the P.S.Q. was a notable example, as well as the increasing conflict with the state, as exemplified by Bill 54. Events of equal importance were the growing militancy of C.S.N. struggles and the trend set by the 1964 postal

strike wherein the F.T.Q. assumed for the first time a formal negotiating posture.

Structural polarization occurred with the death of Provost. The election of a new president concretized the two dominant themes within the central. The principal candidates were F. Daoust and L. Laberge. Each represented a different political orientation. Daoust, who had profound ties with the P.S.Q., represented the industrial manufacturing sector. Laberge, a former machinist and central executive, however, won the election by a margin of one vote. Daoust became vice-president.⁵² Laberge addressed his leadership to the polarized nature of the F.T.Q. Certainly, the task before the new president, given the circumstances surrounding the period, was to offer, if but for the moment, a more precise political orientation. In this regard, he walked the middle ground well. Through an expounding of syndical pragmatism he offered a counter-offensive to the Daoust tendency. Laberge, perhaps most importantly, rallied the polarized factions by clearly asserting the need for a greater F.T.Q. presence in Quebec, which entailed an autonomous position from the C.T.C.

Laberge's ideological stance at the 9th congress marked a new approach for the F.T.Q. This entailed addressing the national debate within the central as well as in the larger society. In this regard, he situated the events of the Quiet Revolution in class terms. He denounced the period as a product of intellectual and petite bourgeois nationalists. Furthermore, he argued that the support of the working classes should not be assumed in a supposedly classless project. Laberge addressed the national question with his option of double allegiance.

- a) on a political level there must be a national consciousness of Quebec as well as Canada.
- b) on a socio-economic level there can be no other consciousness than that of the international class. (53)

The task remained, however, to better define the role of the F.T.Q. and its actual concept of territorial jurisdiction. To this end, Laberge offered the basis of a change in status, from a legislative central of the C.T.C. to a union central within Quebec with *entrenched decision-making powers*. In a sense, what Laberge had done was to address the essence of the national question for the working class organization, by giving it a strong regional character which would clarify its role in the face of the provincial state.

Conclusion and Summary

1960 to 1965 presented a period of significant economic growth and the concomitant development of a modernizing petite bourgeoisie. What I have hoped to show in the preceding chapter was the differentiated role of the F.T.Q. and the C.S.N. within those many instances. The period in view of class forces, occurred under the hegemony of a neo-nationalist ideology with highly varied political forms. The state at this particular juncture required a modernizing ideology - pursued by the Lesage Liberals - to coincide with its initial projects of reform. This reformism was taken up by both centrals in question. However, the relationship between the state and the working classes, as seen through the development of the national question was not a *completely successful hegemony*. This was particularly evident given the weak nature of class alliances during the Lesage period. Rather, this time frame is better seen as containing the seeds of a new social bloc which would more

clearly emerge in the mid-seventies. Further evidence of the uncemented nature of the then existing hegemony was the state of *formal nationalism*. *Formal nationalism* as a category was itself characterized - as we have seen - by a host of political expressions *seeking new alliances*.

The C.S.N. and the F.T.Q. came to their respective positions in the developing hegemony from different working class traditions, yet they were faced with the same ideological problematic; that is, the appropriate form of political response to the national question. For both of the centrals, the national question during the period was of a structural character, yet distinguished from the previous decade by a *reformist orientation, given the requirements of the modernizing state*.

The C.S.N. engaged in a particular form of trade union collusion with the state to the exclusion of the F.T.Q. Dofny and Bernard have argued that, given the period of modernization and the changing composition of the central, the C.S.N. could not but become *the central of the Quiet Revolution*.⁵⁴ In this regard, the exercise of hegemony was *more effectively embracing with the C.S.N. than with the F.T.Q.* Certainly, there are various reasons which one can submit to explain this type of capitulation. Primarily, the C.S.N. had the necessary political and ideological form; that is, a profound structural integration within the territorial boundaries of the Quebec working class.

NOTES

- 1) Jacques Mascott & Pierre-Yves Soucy, Sociologie Politique de la Question Nationale, Editions Coopératives Albert St. Martin, Montréal, 1979, p. 95.
- 2) Ibid, p. 96.
- 3) Histoire de Mouvement Ouvrier du Québec (1825-1976), une co-édition C.S.N./C.E.Q., p. 151.
- 4) Jacques Rouillard, Histoire de la C.S.N. 1921-1981, Boreal Express, Montreal, 1981, p.
- 5) Leo Roback, Louis -Marie Tremblay, «Le Nationalisme au sein des Syndicate Québécois», TIRE-à-part 35, in Revue Canadienne des Etudes sur le nationalisme, 1979, p. 245.
- 6) Moral Report of the National President of the C.N.T.U., 1962 Convention.
- 7) Marchand's critique of the Social Credit Party was directed at Gilles Gregoire, the leader of the provincial faction. Gregoire was later to form the Ralliement Nationale (R.N.) which ultimately joined forces with the Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale (R.I.N.) and the Mouvement Souveraineté Association (M.S.A.) to create the Parti Québécois. The namesake *Parti Québécois* is also accredited to Gregoire.
- 8) Moral Report 1962, op. cit., p. 48-49.
- 9) Moral Report 1962, op. cit., p. 50.
- 10) L. Roback and L.M. Tremblay, op. cit., p. 246.
- 11) Procès Verbal de la Quarantième Session du Congrès de la C.S.N., Montreal, 1962.
- 12) Ibid, p. 64.
- 13) Procès Verbal de la Quarantième Session du Congrès de la C.S.N., Montreal, 1964.
- 14) Memorandum of the C.N.T.U. to the Federal Cabinet, 1960.
- 15) Memorandum of the C.N.T.U. to the Federal Cabinet, 1961.
- 16) Memorandum of the C.N.T.U. to the Federal Cabinet, 1964.
- 17) Louis Leborgne, La C.S.N. et la Question Nationale depuis 1960, Editions Albert St. Martin, 1976, p. 12.

- 18) Not least of which were G. Pelletier and P. Trudeau who although never formally belonging to the C.S.N., nevertheless maintained close ties.
- 19) Procès Verbal de la Quarante-et-une Session du Congrès de la C.S.N., Montréal, 1962, p. 156.
- 20) Officer's Report Submitted to the Fifth Convention of the F.T.Q., November 17, 18, 19, 1960, p. 4.
- 21) Ibid, p. 1.
- 22) Francois Cyr and Remi Roy, Elements d'Histoire de la F.T.Q., Editions Coopératives Albert S. Martin, Montréal, 1981.
- 23) It was in this period that the R.I.N. formed as a pressure group also soliciting support from various labour militants.
- 24) Officer's Report, 1960, op. cit., p. 5.
- 25) Officer's Report Submitted to the Sixth Convention of the F.T.Q., November 23, 24, 25, 1961, p. 15.
- 26) Officer's Report 1961, Ibid, p. 2.
- 27) Officer's Report, Ibid, p. 1.
- 28) Officer's Report Submitted to the Seventh Convention of the F.T.Q., 1962, p. 1.
- 29) Officer's Report 1962, Ibid, p. 1.
- 30) Officer's Report 1962, Ibid, p. 2.
- 31) Aside from the already mentioned relationship of the C.S.N. with the Liberal Party from 1960-65, the central also enjoyed an organizational structure which gave it a particular national character. The C.S.N., in this regard, is based upon a horizontal structure of power dispersed throughout the province. The F.T.Q. is less structured, receiving its legal status from the C.T.C. and based upon strong federations of local unions.
- 32) Leo Roback, «L'idéologie de la F.T.Q. évolution historique,» in Histoire des Travailleurs Québécois, bulletin RCHTQ, No. 4.3, 1977, p. 16-17.
- 33) Officer's Report to the Eighth Convention of the F.T.Q., November 22, 23, 24, 1963.
- 34) Officer's Report 1963, Ibid, p. 1.

- 35) Roch Denis, Luttes des Classes et Question Nationale au Québec 1948-1968, Presses Socialistes Internationales, Montréal, 1979.
- 36) Déclaration de la Fédération du Québec sur la Confédération et les Droits Provinciaux, F.T.Q., Montréal, le 12 juin, 1961
- 37) Ibid, p. 6.
- 38) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 312.
- 39) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 316.
- 40) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 321.
- 41) The P.S.D. was the Quebec representative of the C.C.F.
- 42) The conseil provisoire du Nouveau Parti Démocratique restructured itself after the 1961 formation of the N.D.P. The conseil was composed of thirty members; ten representatives of the F.T.Q.; ten representatives of various N.D.P. clubs in Québec.
- 43) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 328.
- 44) This was by no means a unanimous position of the F.T.Q. A faction of the F.T.Q. represented by Daoust was more disposed towards a greater autonomist position.
- 45) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 336.
- 46) R. Cyr and R. Roy, op. cit., p. 81.
- 47) R. Denis, op. cit., p. 337-338.
- 48) Les Grèves au Canada, 1967, Ministre de Travail, Ottawa.
- 49) The longer strikes of the period involved 1,000 employees of the Régie des Alcools (C.S.N.) who went out on December 4th, 1964. Their action ended February 18th, 1965. Hydro Québec employees struck for five weeks in 1964. Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier, p. 154.
- 50) Les Grèves au Canada, op. cit.
- 51) Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier, op. cit., p. 153.
- 52) Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier, op. cit., p. 151.
- 53) Inaugural Speech of the President, Ninth Congress, 1965, p. 12. It is interesting to note that Laberge's approach was not dissimilar to our earlier discussion of Lenin and the national question wherein unity became a motivating force for a clarification of the problem.

- 54) Jacques Dofny and P. Bernard, Le Syndicalisme au Québec, Etude No. 9, Equipe Spécialisée en relation de travail, Bureau du Conseil Privé, Ottawa, Imprimeur de la Reine, 1968, p. 17.

wherein 50% of its members were in the public and para-public sector - amongst other equally relevant factors the centrals and the state were on an obvious collision course.

As we will see in an appraisal of C.S.N. and F.T.Q. literature for the period, the premise of *formal nationalism* had various adherents. The mid-sixties was characterized by a split in the Liberal party over numerous issues endemic to the national question. The U.N. of Johnson and Bertrand portrayed another facet more akin to the autonomist platform of Duplessis. The C.S.N. and F.T.Q. were increasingly forced to clarify their positions on these matters. It is these clarifications which I will use to gauge the substance of nationalism within the working classes.

The C.S.N. and the state: the endurance of reformism

The 42nd congress of the C.S.N. in 1966 was indicative of the growing militancy of the central vis à vis the state.⁹ It was the first congress chaired by the new president, Marcel Pepin. Pepin expressed clearly the disappointments of the previous years for the working classes in Quebec. These observations were put forward mostly in terms of the underdevelopment of the province. Pepin urged the necessity of preserving the full political weight of Quebec in provincial matters to counteract the imbalance in economic development. The imbalance to which Pepin was referring was most evident in the levels of unemployment throughout the province. These levels remained consistently higher than the national average.

CHAPTER V

THE FORM OF WORKING CLASS NATIONALISM

In this chapter I will be bringing forward selective documents which have been published by the two centrals from 1966-1976. These papers have dealt with the growing definition of nationalism within the centrals as well as more marginal yet equally important considerations such as political action. The period under consideration is, from a sheer historical viewpoint long and - perhaps moreso than the previous period of 1960-65 - significantly complex in view of class alliances. It is not the goal of this chapter, nor has it been of the former, to present a complete chronology of position papers or documents outlining this or that perspective of the two centrals. Rather, what I hope to show are the *most representative* as well as some of the *less examined* documents of this period. It is these documents which will inform our understanding of the dimensions of working class nationalism, particularly during a period of very real state repression, and the rising tide of petit bourgeois nationalism. Working class nationalism within Quebec, as we will see in this chapter, expresses its fundamental elements as inseparable from the socialist inquiry.

The C.S.N. - F.T.Q. and the Growth of the Repressive State

The conclusion of the Quiet Revolution found the syndical movement within Quebec in a fragile position. The dynamism of the period opened the specter of union participation in a series of state

mechanisms such as the Société Générale de Financement (S.G.F.), the Caisse de Dépôts et de Placements and l'Office de Planification. However, the ideology of a common purpose, the cement for these alliances was, in view of our definition of formal nationalism, going through a crisis. This is evident from the absence of cohesion amongst the new factions in power. In this regard, the technocratic attempts to further the gains of nationalist ideologies conflicted with a neo-capitalist faction which was content with the structural changes already acquired. The program of the technocratic faction was finding political expression in the left of the Liberal party and eventually the M.S.A./P.Q. collective.¹

The developments within the C.S.N. and the F.T.Q. during this juncture can be concretely typified by

- a) a substantial change in the composition of union membership given the public sector expansion;
- b) the defeat of the Liberal regime;
- c) the increasing animosity between the centrals and the state, which was already beginning to show in the last year of the Lesage mandate.

The last point is particularly pertinent given the acquiescence of the centrals towards the state through the early sixties. Mascotto and Soucy argue that the interests and type of nationalism reminiscent of the social bloc identified with the Quiet Revolution, had reached the frontiers of its own capacity for change.² This capacity entailed the contextual framework of reformism which could not maintain the type of policies advocated by the two centrals, particularly the F.T.Q.

Our two authors enumerate some of these still-born policies as a substantially watered-down hospital insurance plan, slow progression in educational reform, and unsatisfactory reforms to the Labour Code.³ This last point solicited a strong reaction from the syndical movement which resulted in a march upon the Quebec Legislative Assembly.

These failures of the Quiet Revolution were certainly at the base of the disenchantment with the Liberal regime. However, as Moscotto and Soucy point out, instead of retreating to the classic posture of working class organizations, i.e. a greater inward emphasis upon syndical organization during periods of crisis, the two centrals utilized the social dynamic of the period to radically inform its view of social forces in the larger society. Certainly, this seems to have been the case given the nature of discourse during the period. In one sense, the radicalization of the two centrals from the mid-sixties could be seen within the context of an absence of any other form of political organization firmly entrenched in the popular masses.⁴

As a consequence of this situation the centrals became, by necessity, the sole polarized formation for working class grievances. These circumstances were not only operative for the then current plethora of social questions given the trauma of economic and compositional changes within the working classes, but as well the centrals took upon themselves another function. This role was to act as a repository for various class interests on the national question while attempting to clarify its own voice.

In 1966, the unionized working class in Quebec was composed of 540,000 persons, 35% of the active labour force. Of this number,

55,000 belonged to the C.I.C./C.E.Q., 150,000 adhered to the F.T.Q. - out of 350,000 members of international unions - and 200,000 belonged to the C.S.N. Table two shows this distribution over a 17 year period.

Table 2: Union central affiliation of working class in Quebec over seventeen year period

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>
C.I.C./C.E.Q.	28,000	55,000	70,000	80,000
C.S.N.	94,000	200,000	245,000	200,000
F.T.Q.	100,000	150,000	230,000	260,000

SOURCE: Document de Travail, Centre de Formation Populaire.

The political ascension of Daniel Johnson's Union Nationale in 1966 was marked by a changed relationship between the centrals and the state. During the Lesage regime, the fruits of a neo-gomperism blossomed from legislation favourable to the then perceived interests of the working class. The various "projets de lois" were seen by virtue of successful, however intense, lobbying efforts as geared towards the interests of the collectivity. This was uniformly the case, as both centrals were active participants in state reform regardless of the level of recalcitrant rhetoric, particularly on the part of the F.T.Q. During the Johnson regime, we begin to see a division wherein the state uses its ideological apparatuses to distinguish the public interest from that of the centrals' demands. Johnson saw the role of the state in more coercive terms than his predecessor, and certainly

this is born out by the regressive labour legislation he helped to enact, particularly Bill 25 and Bill 15.

The Johns (1966-1968) and Bertrand (1968-1970) regimes were on the whole less entrenched in the particular composition of social forces which typified the Lesage period. The Union Nationale represented a rear-guard reaction to the changes which had occurred during the Quiet Revolution, particularly the acquisition of greater powers from the federal state. It should be stressed, however, that the U.N. did follow through on various projects of the Lesage Liberals, particularly educational reform.⁶ According to Lemieux, Union Nationale support in 1966 was of a rural nature and found its electoral base amongst the non-working class.⁷ The less reliance the Johns /Bertrand regimes placed upon state intervention in the economy could be seen in a comparison of expenditures with the previous Lesage government. D. Latouche's inquiry into the area of expenditure during these periods has given some interesting results. Latouche found that since 1960 total expenditure by the Quebec government rose steadily, reaching a significant increase of 29% over the year before - in constant dollars - in 1965. During the first year of the Johnston government, expenditures rose by only 9.6%. There was an elevation of 13.7% in 1967. Each following year, expenditure rose less than 10%. In 1970 expenditures decreased by .3% in constant dollars.⁸ The above figures can explain the political and social prerequisites of class forces represented by the U.N. These were regional interests which were less tied to the expanding technocracy of the state. However, given the new structural composition, particularly of the C.S.N. -

wherein 50% of its members were in the public and para-public sector - amongst other equally relevant factors the centrals and the state were on an obvious collision course.

As we will see in an appraisal of C.S.N. and F.T.Q. literature for the period, the premise of *formal nationalism* had various adherents. The mid-sixties was characterized by a split in the Liberal party over numerous issues endemic to the national question. The U.N. of Johnson and Bertrand portrayed another facet more akin to the autonomist platform of Duplessis. The C.S.N. and F.T.Q. were increasingly forced to clarify their positions on these matters. It is these clarifications which I will use to gauge the substance of nationalism within the working classes.

The C.S.N. and the state: the endurance of reformism

The 42nd congress of the C.S.N. in 1966 was indicative of the growing militancy of the central vis à vis the state.⁹ It was the first congress chaired by the new president, Marcel Pepin. Pepin expressed clearly the disappointments of the previous years for the working classes in Quebec. These observations were put forward mostly in terms of the underdevelopment of the province. Pepin urged the necessity of preserving the full political weight of Quebec in provincial matters to counteract the imbalance in economic development. The imbalance to which Pepin was referring was most evident in the levels of unemployment throughout the province. These levels remained consistently higher than the national average.

Table 3: Regional Unemployment Rates Expected at Different Levels of the Canadian Unemployment Rate

(Assuming average 1961-64 relationships)

<u>Expected unemployment rate in region</u>					
<u>Assumed unemployment rate in Canada</u>	<u>Atlantic Canada</u>	<u>Quebec</u>	<u>Ontario</u>	<u>Prairie Region</u>	<u>British Columbia</u>
%	%	%	%	%	%
2.5	4.3	3.8	1.4	2.0	2.3
3.0	5.1	4.4	1.8	2.3	3.0
3.5	5.9	5.0	2.3	2.6	3.6
4.0	6.8	5.6	2.7	2.8	4.2
5.0	8.4	6.8	3.6	3.3	5.5
6.0	10.0	8.0	4.4	3.8	6.8
7.0	11.7	9.1	5.3	4.3	8.0

SOURCE: Economic Council of Canada, Staff Study, No. 15.

The Moral Report of 1966, titled A Society Built for Man, addressed various issues. To a great extent, the monograph called for a democratization of the workplace as well as a rationalization of the economy.¹⁰ These issues were not very different from views expressed in previous presidential reports. This, however, was the period wherein the C.S.N. had just completed its first round of negotiations with the state for salarial policies in the public sector. The effects of these negotiations were evident in the report. Pepin left little doubt as to the new perspective of the central towards the state.

Comme employeur le gouvernement provincial où ses agences se sont révélées parfois au moins aussi durs que l'entreprise privée. Les difficultés que nous avons rencontrées à l'Hydro par exemple, sont de ce nombre. Nous comprenons mal que l'Etat puisse copier les méthodes les plus mauvaises des entreprises privées

ou plutôt nous croyons le comprendre trop bien; il nous est apparu assez clairement au cours de plusieurs de nos négociations avec l'Etat où avec ses agences à la régie des Alcools, par exemple où à l'Hydro, que ces négociations se déroulaient sous l'oeil vigilant des grands intérêts privés et que ceux-ci n'entendaient pas voir le gouvernement adopter à l'égard de la main-d'oeuvre des attitudes plus sociales que celles dont eux-mêmes étaient disposés à faire preuve envers leurs propre employés. (11)

However, there was a contradiction here regarding the C.S.N. outlook towards the state, which would continue for years. This contradiction rested upon the realization of the state as a vigilant employer, no more or less favourably disposed to the working classes than the private sector, and the state as the «spark plug for the economy.»¹²

The view of the state, expressed in the President's Report, though less consistent with previous neutral explanations, was only so by degree. The central's perception of its own role was perhaps most indicative of its lack of clarity as to the purpose of its relationship with the state. In this sense, the role of the union movement was not to politicize dissatisfaction, but rather to consolidate indirect influences. The state in this regard was

. . . the public authority which discloses itself to be either unable or not particularly willing to impose its will on private power. (13)

The C.S.N.'s ideological perspective was not far removed, at least in pure analytic terms, from a common theme prevalent amongst new petite bourgeois elements of the period. As Pepin elaborates

. . . the state must intervene and not leave the economic domain to big capitalism. It must re-assert its pre-eminence. (14)

Furthermore, Pepin argued that the state was neglecting its obligation to inform the public upon economic matters. His following statement most clearly situates the contradictions he was presenting:

We must say, that up to now the state's role has been one of ~~interer~~ to private capitalism. It supplies the infrastructure, and tends to the development of qualified personnel. It should with the help of representative bodies align itself more with the public vote. The state must re-insert into the economic monopoly an element based on other social forces besides capital alone, which would however continue to play an essential role for the future since it would have integrated its effort with that of democratic society. (15)

Certainly, there had been a change in perspective of the C.S.N. from the period of Keynesian state policies of the sixties. The neutrality of the state clothed in terms of social democracy was upset, if only by degree. What emanated from the 1966 convention was an increasing awareness of confrontation with a state intent on the expansion of big extraneous capital. This condition, as seems evident from Pepin's discourse, presents a period of exclusion as well as forceful integration. The exclusion element can be seen as a rejection of a type of reformism habitually practised by the C.S.N. as no longer being tenable by either party. The necessary link between a sympathetic state and the syndical movement, i.e. partisan political action, was ruled out as a strategy. The integration element directed at the central's power was already evident in the last year of the Lesage regime, but particularly clear with Johnson's implementation of Bill 25.

Within the C.S.N., the image of the state acquired two faces - a perception shared by a rising petite bourgeoisie attempting to convince the regional bourgeoisie of the validity of its political project.

These were:

- a) a dynamic structure whose interventionist quality had been muted;
- b) a structure favourably annexed to the interests of big capital.

The state as a dynamic structure was in keeping with the developing hegemony of nationalist ideological elements within the general sphere of class formations. Struggles to revive the dynamism of state intervention in the economy and to remold the dialogue between labour and the state was at the base of this perception by the central. Often, the struggles of labour and new petit bourgeois concerns in other areas acquired very concrete forms. This certainly was the case in the now famous C.B.C. strike to affiliate with the C.S.N., which the Canada Labour Relations Board refused to accredit. The second aspect of the state as favourably disposed to big capital again coincided with new petit bourgeois struggles against the prevalence of monopoly capital intrusion. Their own interests lay in the encouragement of indigenous capital of a non-monopolistic character. This not to suggest that the interests of these two classes were concurrent. They were not. The central's perspective of capital and the state were confrontational by their inherent class nature. This was not the case with the new petite bourgeoisie. However, what did cause a collusion of interests was the lack of a viable instrument of political expression

by the working classes during a period of intense petit bourgeois mobilization. This mobilization was centered precisely on the national question which had at its very heart a quest for state power. The C.S.N. remained, in this regard, a receptacle of latent political class interests with no legitimate ideological or practical channel. These interests, as will be shown, were to find expression within the political project of a new emerging social bloc, which utilized the ideology of neo-nationalism as a motor for their vision of Quebec society. However, prior to enumerating the forms of consentful integration, the C.S.N., as the F.T.Q., was faced with the nature of coercive integration.

In 1967, the C.S.N. announced a project to create 108 *Comités d'Action Politiques (C.A.P.)*. These committees, situated in each county of the province, were designed to give workers a non-partisan forum to counterpose repressive legislation by the state.¹⁶ The committees, as elaborated in The Second Front document, drew the debate beyond a supposed *first front* of collective negotiation, and inserted the ideal of workers' mobilization *outside the workplace*.¹⁷ What, however, was the significance of The Second Front, given the occurrences outside the traditional concerns of trade unionism? Primarily, the concern of the document was with the deterioration of the workers' objective condition in the province. What was needed was massive state reform, particularly in the field of consumption.

L. Leborgne has argued that The Second Front document serves as a base for all future critiques of the state by the C.S.N.¹⁸ While I would concur that The Second Front contains the seeds for a radical assessment of the state, it remains remarkably vague. This is particularly

evident given the terse negotiations which had just occurred between the central and the state. The Second Front was a call for concerted non-partisan political activity; a significant step beyond negotiations in the sphere of production. Within the document itself, however, there was little mention of the dual space of state power in Canada, which would have implicated more clearly the central into the very apex of the regional question. Given the absence of this perception, the state was, as in previous documents, a pliable center of power which was neglecting its duty to the working classes.

The general orientation of the C.S.N. is better expressed in a less known monograph published after the 1968 congress. The document Positions¹⁹ incorporates the general spirit of The Second Front as well as other related concerns. The state and capital are seen to be in a position of imbalance. Capital does not negotiate with the state, rather, it dictates its interests.²⁰ The state, in this regard, is no longer democratically implicated in the economy, as it has no command over economic decisions. This attitude was not far removed from Pepin's earlier remark in 1966 wherein, during the first round of salarial negotiations, he alluded to the private interests which were carefully watching settlements in the public sector. Juxtaposed against this notion of a captive state was the C.S.N.'s perspective upon the exact role of the state in a social democracy. The state, in this regard, should represent the common good against the private interests of capital.²¹

Un Etat ainsi obligé de redresser ses normes
d'efficacité prendra l'habitude de se comporter
d'une manière plus compatible avec les exigences
de ses responsables. Le corps de l'Etat n'en

deviendra que plus actif, plus apte aux décisions plus dynamique et par conséquent plus stimulant pour l'ensemble de la collectivité, laquelle deviendra plus capable de réaliser vraiment sa révolution tranquille... (22)

The C.S.N. and Class Composition

The C.S.N.'s essential outlook towards the state - outside of its important, however nascent confrontational posture - was embraced by the growing hegemony of national interests represented by a new emerging *left* as well as *right* oriented petite bourgeoisie. This developing hegemony - in the sense of its presence in civil society - was based upon the long-hoped for transformative project of the Quebec state. These coalitions were, in the absence of a clear articulation of a singular political project by the C.S.N., the political bases for the incorporation of working class interests.

However, outside of the general process of class relations exterior to the C.S.N., there was an *interior* element of equal importance. The ideological concurrence of the C.S.N. within the new emerging social bloc cannot be separated from its own class composition, particularly the massive entry of non-productive workers with the expansion of the state sector. The C.S.N., prior to 1960, was composed of workers primarily in the industrial sector. Given the privileged position of the central under Marchand and during the Liberal regime, the C.S.N. received the syndicalization approval for the public sector employee, as opposed to the F.T.Q. L. Le Borgne²³ and C. St. Pierre,²⁴ working with a Poulantzian framework, have attempted to situate the new petit bourgeois ideological function within the C.S.N.

Briefly, the C.S.N. was hardly a homogenous unit of productive

workers, but rather attracted various factions of the non-productive sector. These new entries were composed of factions of the working class as well as those of the new petite bourgeoisie. The C.S.N. did not as a central represent the class interests of the new petite bourgeoisie unionized within its sphere of influence. However, this is not to discount the ideological impact that this class faction had upon the development of a neo-nationalist ideology within the central, which had maintained, historically and structurally, non-aligned although reformist working class positions. In this regard, locals such as the Fédération Nationale des Enseignants du Québec (F.N.E.Q.)²⁵ put forward a powerful ideology of statism cum nationalism. This was a clear ideology enunciated in its own class interests - however, expressed within an organization which had not yet formulated its own position in regards to class perceptions of the national question.

V. Lapalme and B. Normand describe these occurrences well, particularly the interaction of class factions within the central in view of the relationship between the leadership and local membership. I will examine this area in more detail later in this study. For the moment, Lapalme and Normand's contentions shed a certain light on our present discussion.

Il faut préciser que le mouvement ouvrier est composé non seulement de différentes couches de travailleurs (travailleurs du secteur productif, travailleurs des secteurs non-productif, travailleurs des grandes entreprises syndiquées, travailleurs non-syndiqués des petites usines, etc.) mais aussi de certaines couches des classes intermédiaires ou de la petite bourgeoisie salariée - tel les enseignants, des ingénieurs, des cadres, des professionnels, etc.

Bien que ces factions petites bourgeois ne dominant pas en nombre, le mouvement ouvrier elles jouent néanmoins un rôle majeur au niveau de la direction des organisations de travailleurs tant syndicales que populaires et politiques. Ainsi, par exemple, dans les centrales syndicales la grande majorité des dirigeants et les permanents ont reçu une éducation propre à cette classe petite bourgeoisie (étude en droit, en économie, en relations industrielles, etc.) et surtout même si quelqu'un est originaire ouvrier et n'a pas fait ses études - l'exercice de ces occupations entraîne des avantages matériels et des conditions de vie qui les placent nettement au-dessus du travailleurs moyen. Même dans les organisations politiques locales tels les comités populaires, les comités d'action politique - il y a au niveau de leur direction une certaine hégémonie d'une faction petite bourgeois (intellectuel, animateur, etc.) (26)

The heterogeneous nature of the C.S.N. most certainly created a great atmosphere of contradiction. Perhaps this was most evident in the central's critique of the state, wherein on the one hand we clearly see a tendency towards confrontation by virtue of its implication in practical struggles, as well as an affinity towards state expansionism.

It was precisely this ambiguity which created a particular outlook towards asserted political action. These actions, as of 1968, were:

- l'action relative au crédit à la consommation
- éducation (cours, collèges, etc.)
- la critique de l'ordre social actuel
- l'action syndicale au niveau de la convention collective pour autant qu'elle remet en question la structure de l'entreprise
- les manifestations, marches, assemblées, etc. à l'occasion de certains projets de loi (Bill 54, Bill 25)
- les observateurs auprès de certains corps publics municipalités, comités, etc.
- les déclarations sur des projets de loi
- les mémoires sur diverses questions publiques
- le contenu politique directe au niveau municipal dans certaines localités (Chapais, Sorel)

- l'organisation systématique des travailleurs par comtes et par quartiers (comités d'action politique)
- l'action politique relative à certains objectifs de la C.S.N. et les travailleurs. (27)

The above assertions of political activity were in keeping with the non-aligned ideology of the C.S.N. Yet these positions, through their wide interpretations, provided a further basis for informal alliances with the current of neo-nationalist discourse. This was particularly evident in the political action committees which were generally composed of progressive new petit bourgeois factions. These committees maintained ties with neo-nationalist groups, particularly of the sympathetic left within the R.I.N./M.S.A. and ultimately the P.Q. complex.

While this type of ideological influence from within the central was evident, it was certainly not representative of the dominant approach to the nationalist issue, but rather remained peripherally important. In this sense, the C.S.N. kept a cautious distance from petit bourgeois nationalist sentiments which surrounded Bill 63 in 1969.²⁸ This was equally the case in the C.S.N. refusal to join the Front Pour une Québec Français, which was composed of such groups as the Société Sainte Jean Baptiste as well as the Central d'Enseignants du Québec (C.E.Q.) and the Parti Québécois. The contradictions of its heterogeneous membership were, however, quite evident in both events. This was particularly the case given the C.S.N. rank and file within the teaching sector, who were ideologically implicated by the language of instruction issue. These locals eventually brought pressure for an official participation on the part of the Confederal Council of the

central. This represented for the C.S.N. a first entry into a popular *formal nationalist* platform. The entry was, however, tempered by various qualifications. While calling for a unilingual policy in concert with a host of nationalist groups, Pepin stated quite clearly that the language question was not primarily a syndical problem:

... We are not a club of French Canadians here, but of workers. (29)

I do not mean to suggest that it was solely petit bourgeois influences through the absorption of formal nationalist ideals which provided the entry for the C.S.N. into the language issue. This would certainly be a simplification. The C.S.N. had traditionally adhered to the fast-fading ideal of bilingualism, perhaps moreso than its (bilingualism's) original spokespeople. This was due to its distinct democratic structure of representation of its anglophone workers. However, the C.S.N. did address the language issue outside the bounds of the bilingual thesis through its notion of the francisization of industrial relations, i.e. French in the workplace as well as being the language of the collective agreement.

The formality of the C.S.N.'s emergence in the language debate was but a symptom of the growing political and social strength of new petit bourgeois elements. The election in 1969 of Michel Chartrand to the Conseil Central des Syndicats Nationaux de Montréal (C.C.S.N.M.), a powerful coalition of unions in the Montreal area, was indicative of the alliances which the adherents of neo-nationalism would find in the C.S.N. It was under Chartrand that the C.C.S.N.M.

became the most nationalistically inclined grouping within the central. It was similarly the C.C.S.N.M. which officially supported the P.Q. in their first election attempt in 1970, over and above the objections of the Confederal Council of the C.S.N.

The concern for French language rights were once again outlined in the Moral Report of the President in 1970, A Camp for Liberty.³⁰ The report is particularly interesting, as it represents an interlude of reflection for the central. This interlude was positioned between the critique of the *state as employer theme* of The Second Front and the more critical documents, of a socialist strain, which were to follow in the early seventies. The 1970 report addressed the undercurrent of forceful integration practised by the state.

More and more in our union life, and in our organizations, we will have to face up to labour ministry manpower policies which will seek to make unionism some sort of appendage to the joint power of the state and employers. (31)

The document A Camp for Liberty clearly expressed the ongoing concerns of the central at the start of the new decade.

- a) It was obvious that language had now become an issue within the C.S.N. Language, in this regard, was defined as the unilingual position taken up by other nationalist groups.
- b) The report was an attempt to delineate the working class movement from other structures in the wider society. This was done principally by emphasizing the differences between political democracy and union democracy. As well, the document confronted the *intellectuals* outside the union movement who were attempting to influence the movement in one of varying directions. The themes of union democracy and the bold assertions that *workers would not accept pre-fabricated blueprints* attests to the political struggles which were evident in the C.S.N. at the time. This was a period which

equally saw structural alliances between independent organizations within the C.S.N. and Parti Québécois. (31)

The F.T.Q./C.T.C. Relationship

The following appraisal of the development of the national question in the F.T.Q. will be based principally upon an examination of the 1967 and 1969 conventions. Various contexts surrounding the conventions will be brought forward. Primarily, the F.T.Q./C.T.C. relationship will be examined briefly. This will be pursued to further advance our previous discussion of the structural (organizational) component of the national question for the F.T.Q. As I have mentioned, the F.T.Q. process of autonomy from the parent organization had begun during the early sixties. A further context within which the congresses took place was one of the emerging leadership role being assumed by the C.S.N. in the larger working class movement.

Relations between the F.T.Q. and the C.T.C. were certainly fraught with difficulty during these years. While in fact the F.T.Q. was seriously questioning its position within the parent organization, the C.T.C. was itself going through a process of re-centralization. Needless to say, perspectives were often in conflict. As Bernard has pointed out, the relationship was aggravated by many instances. One of these occurrences was the C.T.C. submission of a paper to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, without having consulted the F.T.Q. The C.T.C. furthermore never bothered to send a copy to the Quebec organization.³³ This, no doubt, strained the F.T.Q. vision of an equal partnership of the two founding nations within the syndical

was a crucial period in the re-definition of syndical goals for both centrals. It was during this time frame that we see a significant change in the outlook within the C.S.N./F.T.Q. towards the entire question of nationalism. The period of 1970-76 was marked by a more official movement by the two centrals towards the Parti Québécois.

According to Roback and Tremblay, the principal documents of the time by the two centrals converged upon several points. Our authors' observations offer a good introduction to the ideological changes which occurred in this crucial period.

- a) Le contrôle étranger spécialement par le capital américain sur l'économie est la principale cause de développement anarchique de celle-ci et des déficiences de la structure industrielle.
- b) Remplacer la domination économique étrangère par celle d'une bourgeoisie Canadienne-Française n'est pas une solution de rechange possible ni souhaitable. Seul l'Etat en utilisant l'épargne collective des masses possède les moyens de racheter une part suffisante de l'économie pour s'en assurer le contrôle.
- c) Les gouvernements fédéral et provincial ont démissionné face à l'ampleur du problème de la colonisation économique du Québec. Selon la C.S.N., le gouvernement Bourassa 'a décidé . . . d'accepter . . . le fait que le Québec est une colonie économique des Etats-Unis et une colonie politique d'Ottawa'. La F.T.Q. est encore plus virulente en disant que par leur politique à-platventriste de soutien et d'appui à l'entreprise privée, les gouvernements font «du raccollage étatique auprès du capitalisme».
- d) Il est illusoire de penser qu'un Québec indépendant capitaliste pourra civiliser le capital étranger en imposant des limites à son action et créer un capitalisme d'état pour concurrence les grandes entreprises multi-nationales ou anglo-Canadienne. C'est l'histoire de l'agneau face au loup où le gouvernement provincial fait, figure de nain, devant les géants-étrangers.

against the intellectualizations of the *separatiste* faction often coming from within the central itself. Within the C.T.C. the definition was significantly less complex. Allusions to bilingualism and biculturalism were often seen by various member centrals as succumbing to the separatist inclinations within the Quebec organization.

An Attempt to Delineate Bourgeois Nationalism

The General Council Report in 1967 outlined the official position of the F.T.Q. regarding the emerging constitutional question. The Report refers to the Brief submitted by the C.S.N./F.T.Q. and the Union des Cultivateurs Catholique (U.C.C.) to the constitution committee of the Quebec Legislative Assembly. In that Brief, the F.T.Q. rejected a series of options directed towards the constitutional crisis. These objections were,

- a) an independent Quebec
- b) associate states
- c) the status quo
- d) greater centralization under the federal government.

In lieu of the above, the centrals proposed a federal system adapted to present-day realities which entailed a greater state role for Quebec.

It should be noted that the General Council's Report occurred during a year wherein the national question was quite prolific within the central. It is not surprising that given the differences amongst various factions within the F.T.Q., that the central's official proposal should remain so vague. The F.T.Q., however, did not come out strongly against separatism. In a repeat of Laberge's monologue of

1965, nationalism *cum* separatism was described as a bourgeois ideology that would ultimately reduce the standard of living of workers. However, at the same convention a resolution was passed which acknowledged the right of autodetermination of the French Canadian homeland including, if necessary, the right of secession.³⁷ This indicated the enduring strength of the F.U.I.Q. tradition, as well as the divided opinion within the central itself. Regardless of the divisions, the official position called for a revised federalism through the growth of provincial state power.

We would, without any inconvenience reduce the preponderant place of the federal government in certain fields. Certain material that jurisprudence has declared to be under federal jurisdiction should come under joint control such as radio and television. (38)

Surely, the F.T.Q. was reacting to a complex series of events. Given the various ideological stances within the central, the F.T.Q. sought a middle ground. In this regard, while having adopted a *left* inspired analysis of Quebec society, it equally articulated what was seen by many militant nationalists, as a *right* oriented approach towards federalism. The central's position taken in the report to the Quebec assembly satisfied for the moment both tendencies, as it contained a strong affirmation of a greater role for the provincial state in the language issue.

The substance of political action was once again assessed at the 1967 congress. Suggestions were put forward to organize with other progressive groups in Quebec, an exploratory conference towards unification of left-wing political forces in a provincial party.³⁹ The irony

of the suggestion must have lingered heavily amongst militants, given the earlier failure of the P.S.Q. The report stressed the need for local union affiliation with the N.D.P. Resolution six, in this regard, stated,

. . . that the F.T.Q. reiterate its intention to give its moral and material support to a provincial political party when it is required in the interest of workers, and when it is sure that there is in a provincial party whose program and structures offer both in terms of ideology and integrity the same guarantees as the N.D.P. - Q. presently offers in federal politics. (40)

The interim between the 10th and 11th congress (1967-1969) were eventful years for the province. This was the period of Trudeau's ascendancy to power, the creation of the Parti Québécois, and the F.L.Q. insurgent action. These occurrences of varying importance, no doubt, took place in a general plateauing of growth in the economy with a significant decline in the construction sector, which was mostly syndicated by the F.T.Q. (see Figure 2).

Laberge's opening speech at the 1969 convention encapsulated a sense of ambiguity as well as having been a turning point for the central. It was obvious by now that the great project of 1967, i.e. to rally progressive forces in Quebec to create a new party, had not materialized. Laberge's opening statement reads like an indictment of the F.T.Q. at having been taken over by events. Laberge's monologue addressed the seeming inability of the F.T.Q. to implicate itself in progressive struggles outside of the union movement. Clearly, this speech was directed at the increasing impatience of militants within the central to clarify a political approach. The essence of the

FIGURE 2

INDICATION OF EMPLOYMENT BY
INDUSTRIAL GROUP IN QUEBEC,
1961 - 1969

SOURCE: D. Ethier, Les Travailleurs Contre L'Etat Bourgeois.

convention, as the title of the president's speech indicated, Operation Collective Searching, was more than a reformulation of the inadequacies of political representation of the working class in Quebec. Rather, it was an affirmation that a new approach was needed. This was evident, given the realization of the difficulty of sustaining an N.D.P.-Q. presence in the province as well as the taking-up of the mantle of social democracy by the Parti Québécois. In this context, the 1969 address had no mention of the creation of a new party, but rather urged the F.T.Q. to re-examine its response to the larger issues of the day.

The 1969 address was a harbinger of the type of appropriation which was going to occur in a political sense by the early seventies. In effect, the P.Q. had, in a very broad sense, acquired at least the appearance - through its hegemonic regrouping of nationalist forces - of the social democratic party which the F.T.Q. had hoped for, for so long.⁴¹

Radicalization and Reform

The decade of the seventies was brought in by the return of the provincial Liberal party. The privileged relationship that the C.S.N. had maintained with the party during the sixties had been dramatically altered, given the departure of its progressive wing to the P.Q. The U.N., during the preceding four years, had enlarged the role of the state in industrial relations which was addressed to restrict union gains made during the first half of the decade.⁴² The Liberal party had in mind, no doubt, a further expansion of this aspect of the state, given their incoming platform of industrial peace. The first half of the seventies

was a crucial period in the re-definition of syndical goals for both centrals. It was during this time frame that we see a significant change in the outlook within the C.S.N./F.T.Q. towards the entire question of nationalism. The period of 1970-76 was marked by a more official movement by the two centrals towards the Parti Québécois.

According to Roback and Tremblay, the principal documents of the time by the two centrals converged upon several points. Our authors' observations offer a good introduction to the ideological changes which occurred in this crucial period.

- a) Le contrôle étranger spécialement par le capital américain sur l'économie est la principale cause de développement anarchique de celle-ci et des déficiences de la structure industrielle.
- b) Remplacer la domination économique étrangère par celle d'une bourgeoisie Canadienne-Française n'est pas une solution de rechange possible ni souhaitable. Seul l'Etat en utilisant l'épargne collective des masses possède les moyens de racheter une part suffisante de l'économie pour s'en assurer le contrôle.
- c) Les gouvernements fédéral et provincial ont démissionné face à l'ampleur du problème de la colonisation économique du Québec. Selon la C.S.N., le gouvernement Bourassa 'a décidé . . . d'accepter . . . le fait que le Québec est une colonie économique des Etats-Unis et une colonie politique d'Ottawa'. La F.T.Q. est encore plus virulente en disant que par leur politique à-platventriste de soutien et d'appui à l'entreprise privée, les gouvernements font «du raccolage étatique auprès du capitalisme».
- d) Il est illusoire de penser qu'un Québec indépendant capitaliste pourra civiliser le capital étranger en imposant des limites à son action et créer un capitalisme d'état pour concurrencer les grandes entreprises multi-nationales ou anglo-Canadienne. C'est l'histoire de l'agneau face au loup où le gouvernement provincial fait, figure de nain, devant les géants-étrangers.

- e) Le seul agent capable de contrer l'emprise étranger sur l'économie québécoise et de redonner au Québec un bien collectif est l'Etat pourvu qu'il incarne le pouvoir politique des masses laborieuses. (43)

Roback and Tremblay's appraisal of the documents during the early seventies point to recurrent themes within the two centrals. These were: the economic consequences of the national question; the class component of national movements; and the role of the state as a truly collective enterprise of the working classes.

The 44th congress of the C.S.N. in 1970 stressed the need to eliminate the political vacuum which existed in the province.⁴⁴ The atmosphere surrounding the convention was ripe for manifestation of solidarity amongst the varying centrals and diverse political groupings. This was the period of the War Measures Act. As a display of unity against the acquiescence of the Bourassa regime in the face of severe federal actions, the C.S.N., F.T.Q. and C.E.Q. formed the first united front against the military occupation of the province. The natural political party - which, in fact, was the only political expression on an ongoing political basis - to counteract the repressive military action, was the P.Q. However, the urgency of the political moment was not the only aspect binding various class forces of the period. The 44th congress was also the occasion wherein the C.S.N. called for an affirmation of the *unilingual* nature of Quebec, however, curiously rejecting the notion within the central itself.⁴⁵

The 1971 document by the F.T.Q., Political Action Crossroads, summed up the magnitude of conflicting influences which the F.T.Q. was subject to.⁴⁶ The beginning of the assessment by the committee

examines the reason why the political orientation of the central, adopted at the 1967 convention, never rallied support amongst workers. Their conclusion was that support for the N.D.P.-Q. was premature. Workers were not educated sufficiently to accept this type of labour militancy. The problem lay with the fact that the political education of the working class had been given to them by the traditional parties. In this regard, the idea of politics for the working classes was one which was identified as a «dirty but essential thing which calls for our vote every four years.»⁴⁷ The above assessment of the political action committee was quite remarkable and perhaps attests more to the ideological disarray within the central than to the actual political education of the workers, posed in those terms. Certainly, the F.T.Q. by 1971 had already given its *implicit* support to the Parti Québécois. Within the rank and file, the party had done amazingly well in securing a large base over a very short period of time. The question was clearly not to educate the worker away from the crass political attitudes of the traditional parties, but rather to offer an alternative to a party which was ideologically and, in a very complex manner, capable of winning the working class. The committee did suggest the interpretation of working class representatives in various extraneous organizations, most importantly municipal and school board elections. They also advocated a greater syndical support role for those workers who did engage in independent political action.

Up to now those organized workers who have been elected at the municipal and school board level were left to their own means. We should not be surprised if after some time those individuals hold views closer to those of the middle classes and the financial elites than the working classes. (48)

The confusion which permeated the political action report was indicative of the disorganization of political thought within the central in the face of the nationalist project. It would appear that the committee vindicated its own ineptitude by arguing that, on the one hand, workers were not sufficiently educated to act in their own interests, while on the other hand, they too quickly forgot what those interests were.

The well-known 1971 manifestos Ne Comptons Que sur Nos Propres Moyens by the C.S.N. and L'Etat Rouage de Notre Exploitation by the F.T.Q., were major articulations of the socialism/nationalism dialectic gaining ground in the centrals. Working class nationalism, at this juncture, underwent a significant ideological transformation in terms of the presentation of its interests from that of the *formal nationalist* dialogue. The two documents offered a radical appraisal of the state in the Marxist sense of the word. However, as we shall see later, on a more pragmatic level, everyday political action indicated in the documents, which contained significant working class nationalist overtones, were entirely out of reach, even in their most nascent form.

Prior to a brief assessment of the two papers, it would be useful to locate, in a political context, the events surrounding the publications.

The Centrals and the Parti Québécois

J. Saywell offers us a poignant view of the period in an appraisal of the P.Q. strategy towards the radicalization of the two centrals. For the Parti Québécois, dealing with the centrals was, to a great extent, an internal debate with its own left wing faction which supported various struggles of the central. It was these alliances between the left wing of the P.Q. and the labour movement which caused the turmoil

in the party during the La Presse strike. In that internal debate, Levesque managed to talk the executive out of giving its official support to the centrals. His motion carried by a six to five margin.⁴⁹ Levesque's argumentation rested upon the premise that the strike would be potentially violent and cause undue damage to the party's image. This prompted P.Q. member Robert Burns - well known for his working class support - to add that the P.Q., it seemed, was but an advanced wing of the Liberal party. Given the dissension caused by the decision not to participate in the strike, Levesque deplored in Le Devoir the radical elements in the party, as well as the union chiefs who were in the process of alienating the workers from any true political awareness.

The Parti Québécois was no doubt aware of the dual-edged condition facing the centrals. The first aspect was the increasing militancy. This represented, as Levesque had plainly made clear, a danger for the party. In this regard, he encouraged a safe distance in a structural sense. The more prevalent aspect, however, was the absence of any other choice in political terms for the centrals, but to remain active in the P.Q.'s social project. Levesque himself perhaps gives the best example of the political dimension of the *formal nationalist* problematic in his speech to the 150-man P.Q. national counsel in 1971.

Of course, there are groups in the population who should stand as our interlocutors and be a sort of privileged clientele. First of those are the least equipped - those lacking a voice or having too little to make themselves heard, and lacking the means to protect themselves. As one day the government we want to be, so now the party we are, we should make a point of honour to serve first the forgotten. Next are the workers of Quebec, a great number of them in unions but a greater number unorganized. To them we owe our support if we are to deserve theirs in return.

With the unionized worker and their organizations we share a basic objective, that of changing and humanizing the social and economic situation. Whenever there is a question of actions clearly linked to this objective, we should try and carry them out as-cooperatively as we can. We must never nor must the unions lose sight of the fact that our deadlines are no more identical than our means; that their approach remains one of protest while ours is essentially one of persuasion, and above all that union activity is most often limited and sectional while ours must of necessity be as broad in its reference as possible. (50)

The Manifestos

The two manifestos by the C.S.N. and the F.T.Q. have been analyzed by various writers - Drache 1972; Bennett 1972; Le'borgne 1976; Cyr and Roy 1981. I do not intend to enter into a protracted examination of the two documents, but rather assess their contributions to the development of working class nationalism *within* the centrals. It is within these two documents that the notion of political action takes on the understanding of radicalization in a Marxist context. The manifestos precipitated various reactions from within the workers' movement as well as from without. We will look at some of these reactions and their implications particularly *within the working classes* in a later chapter.

The C.S.N. document, Ne Comptons Que sur Nos Propres Moyens offered the final blow to the *maîtres chez nous* theme of the early sixties.

Unless the Quebec state can solve the problem of the collectivity, all it can do is to ease the agony of a few capitalists. It cannot solve these problems until it changes its very nature. *Maîtres chez nous* will be realized only when it is true for everybody instead of a slogan to hide the left-over privileges for the owning class in Quebec. (51)

The document was essentially a critique - in the spirit of colonial domination - of social forces within the province. The crux of the analysis is perhaps best seen in the manifestos' understanding of the relationship between American imperialism and the Quebec working class (see Figure 3).

FIGURE 3

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND NATIONAL CAPITALISM

SOURCE: D. Drache, Québec - Only the Beginning, 1972.

The document was, as Pepin argued on several occasions, offered in the spirit of assessing working class strategies within the socialist option. No doubt the paper showed a great willingness to question the ideological underpinnings of the state as well as the regime. It was this type of articulation which exposed the nature of working class nationalism, i.e. contrary to its major interlocutor - formal nationalism - it must address the essence of the exploitive state.

The F.T.Q. document l'Etat Rouage de Notre Exploitation, was equally a critique of the Liberal Democratic State. The document, however, concentrated more upon the underdevelopment of the province. Attacked were policies which perpetuated regional disparity and which supported the centralization of economic development.⁵² The Regional Development Incentives Act, administered by the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion (D.R.E.E.), came under particular scrutiny.

Both manifestos were illustrative of several facets of the national question within the two centrals. Primarily, the documents clearly separated the economic and social contexts from the dominant cultural context of the period. Relationships were not posed in Québécois and Anglo Canadian terms, but as the exploitative effect of capital upon the labouring classes.

The point, is not to engage in leftist activism of a particular tendency but to begin an authentic return to the trade union movement's grass roots, that is to forget the verbal battles especially the purely nationalist ones and to plunge into the very heart of a struggle against the exploitation of workers by capitalists. (53)

The attempt to keep the two issues separate subjected the centrals to much criticism from various left nationalist coalitions. It was clear that the centrals had taken a distinct stand regarding working class priorities outside the realm of culturally concerned production. Over and above this intent, the hegemonic effect of formal nationalism was evident in the collective nature of the state expressed in the two documents, but in particular the determining role of state agencies. The C.S.N., while proposing a socialist

definition of society, was particularly restrained as to the role of state agencies. This was quite remarkable, given the popularity of state expansion in many sectors of the economy. The C.S.N. approach was encapsulated in the nationalization of sectors controlled by American capital. The F.T.Q. proposal was qualitatively different. It saw the extension of state agencies as a solution to various indicators of class struggle, most notably unemployment.

Our first collective tool is the economic power of the state of Quebec. The state should be the only agency able to direct the use of everyone's savings, competence, and initiative towards the creation of a real instrument of collective economic liberation.

The first task facing trade unionism and the people of Quebec is that of involving the state in economic activity and specifying the modalities of this action:

- a) participation in the economy through the strengthening of government agencies;
- b) the use of peoples' savings for collective purposes. (54)

Both of the documents stressed the territorial prerequisite of Quebec as inextricable from the condition of the working class. However, the vagueness of their social project during some very crucial political moments created much room for the appropriation of consent, within the labour movement. In effect, as the two organizations were radicalizing workers in terms of their objective class position, they were not offering the necessary political dimension needed to express those interests. This was most evident during the debate within the centrals concerning the implications of the manifestos. While the movement was debating the consequences of determined class action of a progressive nature, it was similarly aligning itself with a reformist approach reminiscent of the early sixties.

Nationalism and the Socialist Project

1972 was a compelling year for the labour movement in Quebec. It saw the formation of the Common Front and the consequent general strike. Both of these factors presented the first major confrontation with the state since the late fifties. This is not the place to discuss the complex organization of the Common Front.⁵⁵ Generally, the period was one of sustained working class solidarity as well as a massive disorganization of the class in broad terms. The year equally saw a major split in the C.S.N. with the departure of a significant portion of the textile unions and the concomitant formation of the Centrale des Syndicats Démocratique (C.S.D.), who represented a return to bread and butter unionism.⁵⁶

The 1972 congress of the C.S.N. was confronted in no uncertain terms with the necessity of addressing the national question. The catalysts, from within, which in part provoked this situation were:

- a) the implications of nationalism which many unions found in the manifesto of the previous year. A clarification was needed on this issue given the surrounding controversy;
- b) the departure of reactionary forces which were later to form the C.S.D. This opened the door to a stronger left-nationalist (with strong petite bourgeois ties) presence in the central. It was at this convention that the necessary link which distinguished working class nationalism, at least in hypothetical terms, for the central, was established.

'Parmi les conditions déterminants d'un socialisme québécois, la question nationale est certainement l'une des plus importantes.' (57)

The Confederal report of 1972 recalled that the national question was, in an explicit sense, silent in the 1970 document Il n'y a Plus d'Avenir pour le Québec dans le Système Economique Actuel and the 1971

manifesto Ne Comptons : However, in the spirit of debate that the documents generated, an implicit theme was evident to many readers, particularly given the resolution for independence coming from the Conseil Central de Montréal.⁵⁸ This necessitated the urgency of coming to grips with the question, and as the report stresses, outside the realm of political partisanship. This was of utmost importance, the authors argue, due to the evident alignments that any particular position on the issue would have in common with the P.Q. The national question, they continue, «remains a direct concern of the working classes as it holds important ramifications for the political, social, economic and cultural issues which we are pursuing.»⁵⁹

The reports stated that convention was not the place to explore all the implications of the issue, but rather to begin the process. Curiously, however, we can already see the influences occurring within that process. Primarily, the national question in the C.S.N. was acquiring a cultural dimension. As well, while the confederal report reiterated the general assessment of the state found in the previous manifesto, that power center now had a more defined name.

La regime fédéral actuel rend d'avance impossible toute tentative de changement radical du système économique dont les Québécois pourraient prendre l'initiative. Même les réformes de structures modestes, les tentatives d'appliquer des politiques sociales et culturelles cohérentes se heurtent à une division des pouvoirs qui nous laisse minoritaires et impuissants et nous condamne à demeurer indéfiniment aux prises avec les séquelles du colonialisme que nous subissons principalement sous sa forme économique mais aussi par l'inégalité sociale, politique et culturelle. (60)

An Absence of Options

The perspective of the F.T.Q., although similar to the C.S.N. in that it offered no clear alternative to the political morass of the times, went somewhat further. This may have been due to the tradition of commitment to a party sympathetic to the working class, as well as the repressive state mechanisms during the Bourassa regime. The 1975 convention of the F.T.Q. - a year before the provincial election - saw an unprecedented shift by a central in Quebec towards a major party. The move, in strategic terms, was meant to plant workers in the party. This similar rationale was used by F. Daoust of former P.S.Q. fame as well as the Conseil Centrale de Montréal of the C.S.N., in the early seventies. The opening speech of the president of the F.T.Q. on the eve of a new political arrangement within the province was particularly illuminating. The tone of the address was not couched in the type of petit bourgeois idioms then currently in use by the C.S.N. The official line of the F.T.Q., particularly when it came to Laberge, was to relegate any nationalist rhetoric to the sideline. However, in no uncertain terms, the address was a capitulation to the various pressures within the central for a greater implication in the P.Q.'s social project. Laberge situated the F.T.Q. in terms of the Party, stressing that the P.Q. was not a workers' coalition but could still constitute a channel of change. It was, Laberge argued, a challenge workers should accept.⁶¹

The C.S.N. in 1974 as well as during the special congress in 1975 echoed the same type of movement towards the social platform of the P.Q., but with considerably less official aplomb than the

F.T.Q. Both centrals, while coming from different inclinations and strategies were similarly implicating themselves in the *formal nationalism* of the crucial year prior to the P.Q. victory in 1976. Both used essentially the same rationale in the appropriation of their consent. In terms of the developing hegemony, the securing of a stable social base seemed at hand.

Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, I have chosen selective documents to show the progression of the national question within the two centrals from 1966 to the period just preceding the P.Q. election victory. What I have hoped to display is the nature of working class nationalism, and its dialectic yet often osmotic relationship with *formal nationalism*.

The political dimension, as has become clear, plays a crucial determining role in transforming strategies of the working class into the social bases needed for the nationalist project of a rising petite bourgeoisie. I have concentrated to some extent upon the perspective held within the central concerning the state. This has served to distinguish the interests of the labouring classes from the concerns of other forces which have similarly been preoccupied with their more favourable relationship with the state. In the following chapter, I will show some of the difficulties encountered in the alliances forged prior to the P.Q. victory. It is these fissures, which have appeared in more recent years, that offer an understanding of the present nature of the social bloc in Quebec.

NOTES

- 1) Leo Roback and Louis Marie Tremblay, «Nationalisme au sein des Syndicats Québécois» in Revue Canadienne des études sur le nationalisme, Vol. 5, No. 2, automne 1978, p. 247.
- 2) Jacques Mascotto and Pierre-Yves Soucy, Sociologie Politique de la Question Nationale, Éditions coopératives Albert St. Martin, Montréal, 1979, p. 107.
- 3) Ibid, p. 107.
- 4) Ibid, p. 109.
- 5) Bill 25 was enacted to force striking teachers back to work in 1967. Bill 1 forced 600 public transport workers in Montreal back to work without a contract settlement.
- 6) Dale Posgate and Kenneth McRoberts, Québec Social Change and Political Crisis, McClelland and Steward, Toronto, 1976, p. 167.
- 7) Vincent Lemieux, «Québec: Heaven is Blue and Hell is Red», in Martin Robin (ed.) Canadian Provincial Politics: The Party System of the Ten Provinces, Prentice-Hall, Scarborough.
- 8) Daniel Latouche's study is quoted in Posgate and McRoberts, op. cit., p. 167.
- 9) Procès Verbal de la quarantième session du congrès de la C.S.N., 1966.
- 10) A Society Built for Man, Moral Report of the National President of the C.S.N., M. Pepin, 1966.
- 11) Ibid, p. 6.
- 12) This was particularly clear given the report's approval of such state agencies as the General Investment Corporation.
- 13) A Society Built for Man, op. cit., p. 33.
- 14) A Society Built for Man, op. cit., p. 37.
- 15) A Society Built for Man, op. cit., p. 47.
- 16) Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier au Québec (1825-1976), à C.S.N./C.E.Q. publication 1976, p. 173.

- 17) The Second Front, the Report of the National President of the C.S.N., October 13, 1968.
- 18) Louis Leborgne, La C.S.N. et la Question Nationale depuis 1960, Editions Albert St.-Martin, 1976, p. 32.
- 19) Positions, C.S.N. Publication, 1968.
- 20) Ibid, p. 56.
- 21) Ibid, p. 125.
- 22) Ibid, p. 130.
- 23) L. Leborgne, op. cit., p. 53.
- 24) Celine St. Pierre, «De l'analyse Marxiste des classes sociales dans le mode de production capitaliste,» in Socialisme Québécois, #24, 1974, p. 9-33.
- 25) The Fédération Nationale des Enseignants du Québec numbered 9,500 members and composed 5.9% of the total membership of the C.S.N. in 1976. Aspects de la réalité syndicale Québécois, 1976, Francois Delorme Gaspar Lassonde, Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de Travail et Main-d'oeuvre, Etude et Recherche.
- 26) L. Leborgne, op. cit., p. 61-62. (Author's emphasis)
- 27) Positions, a C.S.N. publication, op. cit., p. 78.
- 28) L. Roback, L.M. Tremblay, op. cit., p. 249.
- 29) L. Roback, L.M. Tremblay, op. cit., p. 248.
- 30) Moral Report of the President of the C.S.N., 1970, A Camp for Liberty.
- 31) Ibid, p. 9.
- 32) Ibid, p. 12.
- 33) Paul Bernard, Structures et Pouvoirs de la F.T.Q., équipe spécialisée en relations de travail, Etude No. 3, Bureau du Conseil Privé, Ottawa, p. 50.
- 34) Ibid, p. 100.
- 35) Memoire de la F.T.Q. à la Commission du C.T.C. sur la Constitution et les Structures, Montréal, le 25 janvier, 1967, p. 5.
- 36) Officers Report Submitted to the 10th Convention of the F.T.Q., 1967.

- 37) Officers Report Submitted to the 10th Convention of the F.T.Q., Resolution No. 125.
- 38) Rapport du Conseil Général, F.T.Q., 1967, p. 9.
- 39) Ibid, p. 81.
- 40) Ibid, p. 81.
- 41) In the 1970 provincial election the F.T.Q. did not give its official recognition to the N.D.P.-Q. This was particularly significant as it was the election which saw the first effect of the N.D.P.-Q. to mount candidates provincially. They received less than 1% of the popular vote. The P.Q. received 24% of the popular vote. They equally elected seven deputies from predominantly working class districts in Montreal.
- 42) Lipsig-Mummé, op. cit., p. 136.
- 43) L. Roback and L.M. Tremblay, op. cit., p. 252.
- 44) Procès Verbal de la Quarantième-quatre Session de Congrès de la C.S.N., 1970.
- 45) L. borgne, op. cit., p. 24.
- 46) Political Action Crossroads, 1971, by the Political Action Committee.
- 47) Ibid, p. 136.
- 48) Ibid, p. 139.
- 49) John Saywell, The Rise of the Parti Québécois 1967-1976, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1977, p. 61.
- 50) Ibid, p. 65-66.
- 51) «Ne Comptons Que Sur Nos Propres Moyens» in Quebec Labour, Black Rose Books, Montreal, 1972, p. 159.
- 52) «The State is Our Exploiter,» in Daniel Drache Québec: Only the Beginning, p. 183. . . To an extent, the document was an elaboration of the Un Seul Front paper published a year earlier by the F.T.Q.
- 53) «Ne Comptons Que Sur Nos Propres Moyens,» op. cit., p. 209.
- 54) L'Etat Rouage de Notre Exploitation, op. cit., p. 265-266.
- 55) The best assessment of this period can be found in Les Travailleurs Contre L'Etat Bourgeois by D. Ethier, J.M. Piote and J. Reynolds, L'Aurore, Montreal, 1975.

- 56) I will be discussing the significance of this split in a later chapter.
- 57) Procès Verbal du Conseil Confédéral de la C.S.N., 4-5-6, October 1972, p. 90.
- 58) Ibid, p. 90.
- 59) Ibid, p. 93.
- 60) Ibid, p. 93.
- 61) Opening Speech of the President, Target and Spearhead, F.T.Q. 14th Congress, 1975, p. 12.

CHAPTER VI

MOBILIZATION FOR THE REFERENDUM

This chapter will be principally concerned with the dynamic of working class nationalism and *formal nationalism* within a specific conjuncture of political mobilization. The period within which I will attempt to coalesce these different manifestations is the time frame surrounding the referendum on sovereignty-association.

The referendum debate presents an ideal period of analysis, due to its inherent articulation of class interests. In this regard, it would be erroneous to suggest, as many writers have done, that the referendum presented a struggle between two distinct bourgeoisies. This conflict has often been depicted as one of a centralizing pan-Canadian capitalist character best expressed by the federalist option as opposed to a growing regional bourgeoisie, with pan-Canadian interests, whose economic strategy is to be found in sovereignty-association. This type of analysis excludes the essence of complex class relations behind the actual political moment.

What I have attempted to reconstruct in the previous chapters was a series of instances in the broader consolidation of a new social alliance. The referendum was, perhaps, most explicit in terms of the struggle between, essentially, two social blocs. This is certainly not the place to explain in detailed form the composition of these two alliances. This is particularly so as there seems to be no hard and

fast rule as to the format of either project in the steadfast appropriation of varied class interests. The *Pequiste* attempt to establish this alliance amongst diverse factions of the Quebec bourgeoisie is relatively weak and divided amongst various and often contradictory interests; i.e. the state sector, the para-public sector, finance capital, the cooperative movement, and large as well as medium industrial enterprises.¹ The regional bourgeoisie in the private sector is often allied to Canadian or American capital interests and has an uneasy ideological relationship with factions closely allied to the state sector, i.e. those who see a constitutional expansion of the Quebec state as being directly in their long-term interests. Unity for the bourgeoisie in Quebec has, in effect, become the P.Q. project. This is being achieved principally through a rationalization of the economy; that is, by securing conditions favourable to private and public enterprises, as well as ensuring social peace in contradistinction to the confrontational episodes which occurred throughout the early seventies.²

Further elements in the realization of this new social alliance are the incorporation of various factions of the traditional petite bourgeoisie in small and medium enterprises. These groups have traditionally been the supporters of the Union Nationale, and continue to maintain important positions in the rural as well as urban community. The new petite bourgeoisie, needless to say, benefits directly from the *Pequiste* project and has contributed significantly with the popular classes - workers and farmers - to the party's initial victory in 1976.

The working classes represent a special strategy for the P.Q. and their elaboration of formal nationalism. Principally, while previous regimes have initiated various attempts at state integration through consent as well as coercion, the P.Q. have followed a format of hegemonic appropriation of the cultural, social, economic and political concerns of the working classes. This has been done by a political *delegitimation* of the centrals, i.e. their exclusion from the role of spokesperson in addressing the consequences of regional underdevelopment in all of the above aspects.

It would appear that the *modus operandi* behind the sovereignty-association option proffered by the referendum sought to provide - as did the entire P.Q. platform - the rationale of a humanizing Capital/Labour relationship. To a certain extent, the struggle for the hearts and minds of the working classes, I believe, was at least partially successful. It was the nature and certainly the limits of that appropriation which we will consider in this chapter.

The Period Preceding the Referendum

The election of the Parti Québécois in 1976 was a welcome relief for the labour movement in Quebec. Over and above the particular vision of a sympathetic party which many workers saw in the P.Q., the direction of the working class vote was clearly anti-Bourassa. Interestingly, the researcher investigating this period, intent upon finding material within the centrals related to the national question, comes up against a wall of relative silence. The absence of dialogue is broken earlier by the C.S.N. (1978) and followed hesitatingly by the F.T.Q. in 1979 - but more forcefully a month prior to the referendum

in 1980. The lack of position papers, resolutions, etc., given the earlier recalcitrant tone of the '71 manifestos implying a socialist vision of Quebec society, had certainly entered a dormant period. The paucity of analysis within the centrals was indicative of a sceptical wait and see attitude exercised by the C.S.N. and the F.T.Q., as well as the effect of the hegemonic control which the P.Q. had maintained since the early seventies, as concerned the national question.

Certainly, it is the nature of various class ideologies to overlap at many points, particularly as concerns an issue such as nationalism. The absence of an official line by the centrals, it can thus be assumed, was not fully indicative of the substance of debate amongst the militants. At the 1977 congress of the F.T.Q., we do see a developing opposition to the F.T.Q. acquiescent relationship with the P.Q. This opposition called for syndical unity and the creation of a true workers' party to offset the influence of the Parti Québécois amongst the working classes. However, quite apart from these distancing attempts - which were consistently stronger in the C.S.N. - it was the mobilization of the new formal nationalist strategy of the referendum which motivated the enlivening of debate in both centrals. To an extent, it was again the political which became a factor in class relations. Whereas the political moment had appropriated class elements earlier in the Parti Québécois' formation and later victory, it was now through the referendum testing, so to speak, the parameters of the existing hegemony. The response of the centrals was complex. Before we enter into these debates surrounding the referendum, it would be useful to locate the first major dysjuncture between

the centrals and the Parti Québécois, which no doubt equally contributed to the unease within the social bloc identified during this period.

Bill 45 and the Limits of Reform

Bill 45 was to finally concretize the *favourable disposition* of the P.Q. to the working classes. The reform of the labour code, an earlier Péquiste platform, engendered much support from Labour. The bill, colloquially known as the anti-scab law, was, however, eventually brought out in quite a different format than originally proposed. The version was unacceptable to the Conseil de Patronat. When it was tabled for a second time it was stripped of much of the progressive qualities initially lobbied for by the centrals.³ In its final presentation, the bill contained significant repressive elements.

In a sense, the bill offered at first an integrative reformist approach to union/state relations, while improving upon several anti-syndical aspects of the 1964 Labour Code. Upon its second reading, it contained 70 new amendments. The C.S.N. and the C.E.Q. both withdrew their support of the bill.⁴ The F.T.Q., for its part, offered little opposition, arguing that the bill contained favourable elements for the syndicated as well as non-syndicated. Bill 45 was adopted in its revised form despite a demonstration of 100,000 workers in Quebec city. This was the first syndical confrontation with the P.Q. regime.

Bill 45, adopted in 1977, offered various amendments to Bill 89 and Bill 24 of the previous Liberal government. All three bills were elaborations of the 1964 Labour Code. Bill 45, however, introduced

extricate itself from P.Q. hegemonic presence in the realm of the national question. This, as has become evident, also presented a process of removing itself from the political ramifications of this acknowledgment. As the document shows, the C.S.N., at least in its ideological commitment to socialism, had achieved the former. The latter consideration was far from resolved. The report argued that the struggle against national oppression was a major component in the struggle for socialism. In an attempt to analyse the role of the P.Q. in this conjuncture, the document had several major weaknesses. Principally, this stemmed from a failure to recognize the internal contradictions within the party, i.e. the influence of various class factions. This lack of analysis which lay behind the C.S.N.'s concept of a social democratic party wherein workers' interests could be implanted, was now being negatively projected upon the P.Q. The problem facing workers, in political and national terms, as this document seems to suggest, was that the P.Q. was not a social democratic party. The report of the council hovered within this major contradiction.

- a) On the one hand, the national question presented itself as a facet of class oppression. The right of autodetermination was, in this sense, a major component in the struggle for socialism.
- b) However, the C.S.N. could not elaborate exactly where (in political terms) to situate the specific struggle against national oppression in the larger struggle for socialism.

It was really this absence of the latter consideration found in the document which accounted for the relative silence of several important issues. The lack of such topics as strategies, methods, alliance of the working class movement were indicative of the particular type of

The regressive points, however, were:

- a) State interference in the functioning of the syndicates.
- b) Anti-scab legislation (which was only effective during legal strikes) and return to work laws.
- c) The inertia of the state (as witnessed through the bill) to address major questions such as syndicalization, essential services, and injunctions. (8)

The bill, according to Belanger,⁹ offered nothing new to justify the centrals' hopes of implanting working class interests in the party.

He argues that:

- a) it merely entrenched (as Laperrière also contests) points already acquired by workers through their collective agreements.
- b) it created above all a new climate on a broad scale which avoided confrontational situations reminiscent of the Bourassa regime.

The C.S.N.: Workers and Nationalism

The 49th congress of the C.S.N., held in 1978,¹⁰ had much to resolve. The preceding two years of P.Q. government had shown significantly less promise than the workers' movement had hoped for. The rapport du comité d'orientation¹¹ was reflective of the need to extrapolate the significance of the national question for the central. The report, published a full two years prior to the referendum, had no mention of the approaching plebiscite. To an extent, the document represented a clarification of the socialist project enunciated in the 1971 manifesto. The document was, however, more clearly directed at the preceding two years of P.Q. rule. The working paper was indicative of an ending to a very distinct two years of consensual integration. The terms of consent were based upon a disorganization of the working classes, as Bill 45 no doubt had illustrated. The bill, in this regard,

offered a mixed bag of reform and repression which tended to polarize factions within the working classes themselves. It would seem that this *should* be the nature of a term such as consensual integration, which incorporates a dialectic, but is concretized in terms of the de-mobilization - in this case of a political type - of class interests. The Rapport du Comité d'Orientation was an attempt to address this type of hegemonic process by squarely situating workers' interests on the ideological battleground of the P.Q., i.e. the national question.

The conditions of the debate, as the document states, was to be found in the effort of political parties and associations to claim workers for their particular view of the nation.¹² Working people, the paper argued, of all sectors in Quebec were threatened by Bill 45, as well as federal legislation dealing with the current economic crisis. It becomes essential, in this regard, for workers to analyse the national question within the context of capitalist exploitation.¹³

The national question, like the state, the paper continued, could not be seen in neutral terms, i.e. it takes on the form of the dominant class.

Les partis politiques ont des représentations différentes de la réalité Canadienne et Québécoise, et cela en fonction des intérêts qu'ils défendent; ils ont pourtant en commun d'utiliser le concept de nation (Canadienne ou Québécoise) pour masquer les rapports d'exploitation qui sont le fondement même de la société capitaliste. (14)

The relationship between the P.Q. and the C.S.N. was examined in some detail by the report. The document recalls the support of the C.S.N.

in the 1976 election. Its own studies indicated that 60% of all workers voted for the Péquistes with 15% going to the Liberal party. In the anglophone sector, it was the working classes which voted for the P.Q. 33.3% of anglophone workers under the age of 35 voted for the P.Q. as opposed to 22% who voted Liberal.¹⁵

In 1977 the C.S.N. and the C.E.Q. submitted a list of grievances to the P.Q.¹⁶ The list pointed to regressive federal legislation and encouraged provincial intervention against Bill 64 and C-73 of the anti-inflation board. As well, the document detailed the type of *new deal* which could be formulated between a social democratic party and working class organizations. The 1978 report concludes, however, that nothing had fundamentally changed in favour of the working classes since the election or the submission of later documents. There is an indication in the 1978 report that consensus amongst contradictory interests were not possible - this was an obvious reference to the P.Q. tripartisan summit at La Malbaie. Yet there was equally - against this rather large assertion and its logical implications - a sense, as we have seen earlier, that the P.Q. had failed to deliver on its promises. - In this sense, the document questions the C.S.N.'s role in the proposed new social contract. The report, within this context brings forward the P.Q. strategies of sovereignty-association. However, the issue is not brought forward in a critical, or for that matter, favourable examination. The topic is presented rather as a vague concept to the working classes, as they have been excluded from its formulation.

The 1978 document was indicative of an attempt of the C.S.N. to

extricate itself from P.Q. hegemonic presence in the realm of the national question. This, as has become evident, also presented a process of removing itself from the political ramifications of this acknowledgment. As the document shows, the C.S.N., at least in its ideological commitment to socialism, had achieved the former. The latter consideration was far from resolved. The report argued that the struggle against national oppression was a major component in the struggle for socialism. In an attempt to analyse the role of the P.Q. in this conjuncture, the document had several major weaknesses. Principally, this stemmed from a failure to recognize the internal contradictions within the party, i.e. the influence of various class factions. This lack of analysis which lay behind the C.S.N.'s concept of a social democratic party wherein workers' interests could be implanted, was now being negatively projected upon the P.Q. The problem facing workers, in political and national terms, as this document seems to suggest, was that the P.Q. was not a social democratic party. The report of the council hovered within this major contradiction.

- a) On the one hand, the national question presented itself as a facet of class oppression. The right of autodetermination was, in this sense, a major component in the struggle for socialism.
- b) However, the C.S.N. could not elaborate exactly where (in political terms) to situate the specific struggle against national oppression in the larger struggle for socialism.

It was really this absence of the latter consideration found in the document which accounted for the relative silence of several important issues. The lack of such topics as strategies, methods, alliance of the working class movement were indicative of the particular type of

hegemony exercised by the class forces evident in the P.Q. Thus, while the central articulated a socialist ideal in 1978, it achieved nothing less than its own strategic paralysis.¹⁶

The interim between the 1978 congress and the special congress on the national question in 1979 saw two position papers by the C.S.N. The first of these, Proposition de la C.S.N. pour la discussion sur la question nationale¹⁷ approached the large question of stimulating debate within the popular classes. The working paper, as many before it, had clearly defined its intervention as that of a union composed of workers who hold many differing ideas, opinions and ideologies.

What binds us together are our common interests as workers and the resultant desire to formulate together and have implemented the changes needed to defend and transform our working and living conditions. (18)

The mode of intervention, the document argues, must address cultural, economic, social and political consequences of oppression. This is to be done while maintaining its autonomy from any particular umbrella organization within each camp which may bring together business and political groupings whose interests are diametrically opposed to those of the workers.¹⁹ In a sense, the C.S.N., lacking its own political mechanism, was outlining the many pitfalls ahead for itself. It would seem that the central had underestimated the pervasiveness of the P.Q. and federalist dominance in the debate. The central proposed equal time for labour groups and popular organizations in the various forms of the media. Little of this occurred. It was small wonder that the side to which the C.S.N. had so hoped to avoid affiliating with had already

been chosen. The paper argues that the election of the Parti Québécois - over and above the disappointments - was essentially a positive development for the working classes, as it opened up the debate for the real issue of national oppression, which must be posed by the popular classes. It would seem from Resolution 21 and 22 of the 1979 working paper, the central was again ready to afford the party its strategic accord.

It is proposed that the C.S.N. resolutely engage in the debate to determine if it should decide in favour of the people of Quebec exercising their right to self-determination, that is the right of the people of Quebec to freely choose its political status including independence and to ensure freely its political, social and cultural development.

It is proposed that the C.S.N. recognize that this struggle against national oppression may necessitate the independence of Quebec. (20)

The 1979 brochure La C.S.N. et la question nationale was a strategic working paper focussing upon the exact nature of entry into the political debate. The paper contains an interesting view of political parties held by the central.

It is the common interests of workers beyond the working environment which makes union intervention in the national question a necessity. (21)

However, the union's goals regarding its entry into the political debate was seen to be significantly different from that of political parties. In this sense,

... a political party's basic goal is to get into or stay in power and whose members join on the basis of a common platform and ideology. (22)

It was obvious from the C.S.N.'s perspective of the party, that it had not yet sharpened its understanding of the class dynamic of political and social relations within the province.

The special congress of the C.S.N. in 1979 outlined in the most detailed form yet the various manifestations of national oppression.²³ These ramifications were, however, put in quite a different context than had been done previously. In an effort to distance itself from the Parti Québécois, the document outlined various legislative maneuvers by the party in power, to the detriment of the working classes. National oppression for the working classes, in this regard, was evidently alive and well, over and above the strategies of a nationalist regime. Furthermore, the role of the state was clarified in a brief section. The state, under a socialist program formulated by the C.S.N. would no longer intervene in the economy to aid the growth of Quebec capital, but rather to re-orient sectors of activity. This re-orientation would consist of a larger strategy of planned development in the interests of the Quebec worker.²⁴

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the congress was the incipient call for a political organization of the working classes. This was clearly a new strategy, however undeveloped (See Appendix A).

The call for a political party emerging a year prior to the referendum was indicative of the nature of political relations between classes prior to the referendum. Most importantly, it pointed to the realization that the political momentum needed to organize the working classes to a Labour viewpoint on the national question was non-existent for all effects and purposes.

The congress faced the contradictions inherent in the 1978 report, which posed the problem of inserting a socialist program into the ongoing debate. Certainly this was not resolved, but perhaps as importantly - within the historical progress of the central - the parameters of the then current dilemma were sharpened somewhat. This situation was brought to the foreground in the C.S.N. official endorsement of the YES option a month before the plebiscite (see appendix B). In that endorsement, it was maintained that neither of the parties and/or organizations in the mainstream of the debate were offering options in the interests of working people. To a large extent, the C.S.N.'s insistent strategy of tactical support of political parties to increase the bargaining power of the workers' movement, had left it with little else to do in the midst of a heightened political moment.

The F.T.Q.: The Politics of Nationalism

The F.T.Q. entered the referendum debate at a relatively later date. The parameters of its discourse were evident during its 16th annual convention in 1979.²⁵ At that convention the Parti Québécois was singled out as being a *hesitant harbinger of change*. Yet it was this party which had «proposed a political project which would have a determinant effect upon the collective future of the working class.»²⁶ The tone of the congress suggested caution. The President's Inaugural speech asserted that the F.T.Q. would have to examine its response to the national question very carefully, particularly given the *hasty resolutions* occurring over this matter in the C.S.N. as well as in the C.E.Q.

As the various C.S.N. documents before it, the 16th R.T.Q.

convention enumerated the drawbacks of the P.Q. performance, given their previous election promises. As well, the C.S.N. position taken at its 1978 congress regarding the national question was roundly criticized. In this context, Laberge argued that the C.S.N. had avoided an analysis of the national question from a distinct labour viewpoint. In reference to the C.S.N. interpretation, Laberge argued:

It is indeed, starting from a renewed vision that we will be able to tackle the difficult national issue from a true labour perspective. There is no question of a sort of a *flight forward*, of skipping the national issue debate behind a *project for a society*. Quite the contrary, we must conduct two rather separate debates: one of the national issue and the other on our project for a society. Whatever approach we may follow on this national issue and whatever future Quebecers will decide for themselves at the constitutional level, the F.T.Q. must continue the fight for the implementation of its project for a society. (27)

Having determined the distinction between the two issues, the President's speech outlined the F.T.Q.'s 'project for Quebec society.' This project of democratic socialism stressed increased control of the community over its natural resources, key industries and management of the economy. The President's enunciation of the social and economic policy of the F.T.Q., although not dissimilar from earlier statements, shed a particular light upon a then prevalent perception of the national question. In previous F.T.Q. documents, the same type of analysis had been put forward, but suggesting a distinct relationship between the national issue and class struggle. Often this relationship was posed within the context of the centralizing/decentralizing debate. This was still in marked distinction to the C.S.N. documents of the early seventies, which many readers had interpreted as an implicit nationalist

stance. Given the approaching referendum, the F.T.Q., as was obvious through the 1979 convention, had little choice but to address the linkages.

The success of maintaining the issues as separate entities within the convention as well as in the crucial following year, became increasingly difficult. But, in the 1979 Presidential address, the line had been drawn, if uneasily.

As I said at the beginning of this speech, the coming months and years will have the utmost importance for all Quebecers. Be it on the social and economic orientation of Quebec, be it on the national issue, we will have to make truly essential choices. (28)

Aside from the new strategy of separating the two issues, there seems to have been furthermore an evident dysjuncture between the President's speech and the larger organization of the national question debate on the convention floor. There were several reasons for this turn of events. Primarily, Laberge's speech may have been deliberately oriented towards defining the F.T.Q. approach from that of the C.S.N. which had merged the two issues. F.T.Q. and C.S.N. relations since the P.Q. victory had been steadily declining. The period prior to the referendum was perhaps its lowest point. 1978 as well as 1979 were characterized by intense raiding practices, particularly by the C.S.N. As well, and probably more importantly, there existed a dysjuncture of opinion within the F.T.Q. concerning the national question, as we have already seen, reaching back to the early sixties. This polarization of opinion became evident by the President's speech, and the actual organization of the debate on the floor. It must be noted, however,

that the central maintained a united front throughout the discourse, regardless of varying opinions.

It was at the 15th convention (1977) of the F.T.Q. that a resolution requesting the central's participation in the referendum debate was carried unanimously. The 1979 convention, echoing the President's concerns, outlined the organization of the debate.

The F.T.Q. Bureau and General Council express therefore three wishes or precisions with regard to the way the debate will be carried out within our ranks. Firstly we believe it is absolutely necessary that the discussion take place in the midst of our union traditions. Among these, we point out in particular the unity and internal solidarity we have always been able to maintain; the national debate must not give rise to disagreements and divisions; in this respect, the danger will be warded off if we place it in the line of our union history and identity, elements which group us in our diversities. (29)

The 1979 document did not see as its goal the commitment of the central to any particular stance on the referendum. Rather, its purpose was to stimulate debate. The 1977 convention had already resolved that a special congress would be called during the months preceding the referendum to determine the F.T.Q.'s exact position. The 1979 working paper, in this respect, occupied a useful intermediate role, tabling the type of outlooks within the central to their socialist commitment and the national question.

The 1979 document outlined in some detail the F.T.Q.'s historic defence of workers' rights within the province as well as its own long constitutional debate with the C.T.C. The separation, however, of the issue of the F.T.Q.'s socialist orientation and its endemic link

to the national question, as witnessed in the President's speech, was less evident in the working paper. The paper offered a *threaded* description of the two concurrent phenomena. This was done principally by a general denunciation of federal economic policies which favoured Ontario's economy to that of Quebec's, as well as a call for the increased socialization of productive forces within the province. The document asserted that the fuller elaboration of its *project for society* was contained in the President's speech, The Workers' Quebec. The elaborations of those socialist principles, they argued, constituted the supportive base for the central's stance on the national debate. While, however, the working paper drew greater implications for the national issue within the F.T.Q.'s social and political policy than Laberge's speech conveyed, it too presented a note of caution.

Looking at our preceding stands it is evident that neither today in 1979 nor in 1961 can we accept Confederation as it functions. The close existing ties between our 'society project' and our constitutional stand cannot therefore be reduced to our socio-political stands nor the reverse: they furnish one another with concrete problems that Quebec workers encounter; the F.T.Q. is commissioned to respond to them. These two claims should not however be confused when the time will come to specify our stand in the referendum debate. (30)

Evidently, there existed a significant amount of hesitation towards a more thorough alignment of issues - as had taken place in the C.S.N. - even amongst those who wished to intertwine the two themes. The working paper had not positioned itself fully on many topics. The least of these was the P.Q. policy paper on sovereignty-association, Quebec Canada: a New Deal. The F.T.Q. document reviewed the policy

paper in a highly uncritical manner, relative to the more substantial C.S.N. critique.

The 2nd Extraordinary Convention of the F.T.Q. took place April 19, 1980, approximately one month before the referendum.³¹ The opening speech by Laberge was presented in a different light than the inaugural address two years earlier.³² The distinctions between the struggle for a new society, and the national question had dissipated. The issues had merged, but in a somewhat different manner than had already occurred in the C.S.N. The C.S.N. identified the national question as a facet of class oppression. The right of autodetermination was, in this sense, a major component in the struggle for socialism. The F.T.Q. did not identify those linkages which would present the problematic as a combined struggle, but rather as the culmination of a process. The distinction is important, as the C.S.N. approach suggests a political initiative by a worker organization, whereas the F.T.Q. represented a continuance of tactical support for parties outside the working class *per se*. However important the distinction may have been, the centrals eventually met on common ground, as they both faced similar contradictions of how to insert their socialist ideals into the ongoing debate generated by the national question. Laberge's speech, however, was more concerned with clearly delineating the central's affirmative response to the referendum from that of the P.Q. (see Appendix C). This was no doubt of great momentary importance, as the P.Q. maintained a hegemonic presence in most factions which identified themselves as anti-federalist.

The merging of the two aforementioned concerns within the central

3 3
OF / DE

found a further expression in the Policy Statement of the F.T.Q.
General Council on the National Debate.

The inscribing of our historical acquirements (claims and struggles) has led us to realize that the F.T.Q. has been discussing the national debate for a long time. It was not known under that name, but in our various analyses and claims, we always brought out the mechanics of exploitation by which Quebec workers are penalized individually and collectively. (33)

No doubt, as the referendum drew closer, the central was not only forced to take a particular position, but rather clarify that position in view of the larger forces involved in the debate. This clarification necessitated an articulation of working class nationalism which found at its base, at this conjuncture, an interplay of socialist ideals as well as undetermined constitutional question. As the recommendations of the General Council indicated, the F.T.Q. clothed its YES option in the centralizing/decentralizing tradition. In many ways, these adopted resolutions were politically not too dissimilar from the P.Q.'s own constitutional package.

The C.S.N. and the F.T.Q.: Variations in response and summary

The affirmative responses of the C.S.N. and the F.T.Q. to the referendum, as we have seen, were differentiated. The C.S.N. position has been referred to within the labour movement largely as the *ui critique*. The F.T.Q. response has been, on the other hand, colloquially called the *ui inconditionnel*.³⁴ The disparity between the two centrals can be attributed to various factors. Primarily, the F.T.Q. tradition of support for parties sympathetic to working class interests brought it

relatively closer to a form of political integration by the dominant nationalist forces within the seventies. As well, the F.T.Q., by 1980, had given up hope on the N.D.P.-Q. and continued their tumultuous relationship with the Parti Québécois. Their (F.T.Q.) articulation of nationalism, in this regard, concentrated mostly upon distancing themselves from the P.Q. platform throughout the debate. Principally, this was done by attempting to approach the question from a *detached* labour standpoint, and isolate the national issue as a tactical maneuver. This type of strategy failed, given:

- a) the overwhelming desire of the membership to see their central act as a podium for enunciating workers' interests within the debate.
- b) the general effect of the formal nationalist debate, and its overlapping characteristic vis-à-vis working class nationalism.

The C.S.N. had no such ideological attachment towards supporting a party sympathetic to working class interests - the C.S.N. relationship with the Lesage Liberals could hardly be seen in this light. This situation may well have been the reason for its more critical stance in the face of the P.Q. The C.S.N. and the F.T.Q. equally displayed different backgrounds endemic to a constitutional outlook. The F.T.Q. was well entrenched in the federal/provincial debate, its own relationship with the C.T.C. in many ways mimicing the larger Ottawa/Quebec conflict. The C.S.N. had no such tradition, outside of once considering itself, in theory, a pan-Canadian central, and the yearly submission of briefs to the federal cabinet. In a sense, as we have already discussed, the C.S.N. was more implicated and perhaps more prepared historically to interlock the national question with its struggle

for a socialist project.

The period of the referendum held various implications for our discussion of working class nationalism. Some of these concerns will be elaborated further in the following section. However, it is important to point out, as the form of disorganization of the working classes during this crucial period has shown; the link which the hegemony of *formal nationalism* maintained with its dialectic, working class nationalism, was sustained by the paucity of intra-class unity.

NOTES

- 1) Le Referendum, un enjeu politique pour le mouvement ouvrier:
Centre de Formation Populaire, Montreal, 1979.
- 2) Ibid, p. 7.
- 3) La Question Nationale un défi a relever pour le mouvement ouvrier:
Montreal, 1978, p. 25, Centre de Formation Populaire.
- 4) Les Lois du Travail reflet d'un rapport de forces: Centre de
Formation Populaire, 1981, p. 15
- 5) Ibid, p. 17
- 6) Rene Laperriere, Les Amendements Johnson au projet de loi 45:
un pas en avant, deux en arriere, Montreal, 1977, p. 17
- 7) La Question Nationale, un defi a relever pour le mouvement
ouvrier, op. cit., p. 26
- 8) Les Amendements Johnson au projet de loi 45: op. cit., p. 17
- 9) «Alliance de Classe et Nature de Classe du P.Q.: Etude de
quelques legislations» de P.Q., Yves Belanger, Document de
Travail, Centre de Formation Populaire, 1980, p. 18
- 10) Procès verbal de la 49e congress de la C.S.N., Montreal, juin
1978
- 11) Pour les Droits et Libertés des Travailleurs et de leur organi-
sations etre presents dans la lutte contre l'oppression nationale:
Rapport du comité d'orientation, 49e congrès de la C.S.N., Montreal
juin, 1978
- 12) Ibid, p. 5
- 13) Ibid, p. 5
- 14) Ibid, p. 5
- 15) Ibid, p. 26
These figures should, of course, be examined much more closely to
determine the exact nature of the working class anglophone vote for
the P.Q. in the 1976 elections.
- 16) La question nationale, op. cit., p. 53

- 17) Proposition de la C.S.N. pour la discussion sur la question nationale, C.S.N., January, 1979
- 18) Ibid, p. 6
- 19) Ibid, p. 42
- 20) Ibid, Resolution 21, 22, p. 40
- 21) La C.S.N. et la question nationale, C.S.N., Montreal, 1979, p. 10
- 22) Ibid, p. 11
- 23) Pour la defence des interets des travailleurs et travailleuses dans la lutte contre l'oppression nationale du peuple quebecois, Congres special de la C.S.N., Quebec, 1, 2, et 3 juin, 1979
- 24) Ibid, p. 73
- 25) Workers Quebec, 16th Convention of the F.T.Q., Quebec city, November 26th to 30th, 1979
- 26) Ibid, p. 2
- 27) Ibid, p. 22-23
- 28) Ibid, p. 52
- 29) The F.T.Q. and the National Question, 16th Convention of the F.T.Q., Quebec city, November 26th to 30th, 1979, p. 2
- 30) The F.T.Q. and the National Question, op. cit., p. 25-26
- 31) The procedure of convening an Extraordinary Convention had only been used once before in the F.T.Q. history. That occasion was in 1964 over the Lesage governments' Bill 54 (Labour Code).
- 32) National Issue Labour Response, 2nd Special Convention F.T.Q. Quebec city, Saturday, April 19, 1980
- 33) Policy Statement of the F.T.Q. General Council on the National Question, 2nd Extraordinary Convention, Quebec, Saturday, April 19, 1980
- 34) «D'Octobre 1970 a D'Octobre 1980», Yvon Charboneau in L'Impasse: enjeux et perspectives de l'apres referendum, Ed. Nicole Laurin Frennette and Jean François Leonard, Nouvelle Optique, Montreal 1980

CHAPTER VII

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter will act as a summation of the study as a whole, as well as a clarification of certain concepts and adopted theoretical positions. In an attempt to supplement the present analysis, I will also be looking at the relationship between the material surveyed and its applicability as reliable working class expressions. This part of the chapter will be posed in two distinct manners. Primarily, I will address the often cited critique - particularly of the 1971 manifesto - which has claimed that the rank and file did not exhibit the same type of radical appraisal of Quebec society as did the union leaders. The frequently given evidence of this had been the departure of 55,000 workers in 1972 from the C.S.N. Once this question has been resolved with reference to empirical evidence, I will re-pose the relationship between the working classes and their leadership in more substantive theoretical terms.

A Theoretical Summation

Our previous theoretical discussion, however, put forward the question of class and nationalism within the seminal works of Marx. The core position adopted in this study has not, in my mind, strayed significantly from the broad parameters Marx originally afforded the question of the nation. While the notion of nationalism has been a relatively undeveloped

concept in Marx's work, his insistence upon the causal effects of classes has left the door open for much supplementary analyses. Haupt et al. have perhaps best illustrated the condition of the national question in Marx's work. Again, the primacy of class over and above any other historical category is confirmed. This premise has been of the utmost importance in the present study. This is precisely due to the current understanding of nationalism, which remains an ideology with various class bases, however prevalent it has been in the background of countless bourgeois revolutions. It is this aspect of Marxism which Haupt et al. stress in an analysis of nationalism which provides the linkages from the study of an ideological form towards maintaining the integrity of historical materialism.

The question of nationalism has often emerged historically in the midst, or, more often in the forefront of various political moments. These moments are the strategic maneuverings of class struggle within the changing nature of periodic social blocs. This thesis has focussed considerably upon the political nature of expression of these varying and conflicting class interests. Within Marx's early work, we see what little mention he did make of nationalism - particularly in reference to the Irish question - clothed in terms of political possibilities. Nationalism as an ideology, in this regard, summons a political consideration and/or solution.

Lenin posed the question of nationalism and class precisely by referring to the political realm. Nationalism, in this sense, was relegated to the political, to which he attributed a relative autonomy. Lenin's error, however, was to strip the question of nationalism of

its class base and potential mobilizing force. Nationalism, in this regard became a question solely for political democracy, i.e. the existence of the right to secede. The political format that the present study takes is quite different. The *political*, in this respect, is an indicator for the condition of the hegemony of interests surrounding the economic and social vision of a distinct society. Although the term relative autonomy is useful in an understanding of classes and political institutions, it does not maintain a central focus in this thesis. Rather, my concern has been to investigate the relationship between classes in the political sphere.

I have inserted the Nairn/Hobsbawm debate to situate the implications these considerations hold for the strengths and weaknesses of inserting the nationalist dialogue in the general area of Marxist theorizing. This thesis is, in one sense, a reply to the parameters of that debate. While both writers have shown substantial evidence to argue the validity of whether to insert - or not - a nationalist dialogue within a larger theoretical framework, neither has been wholly convincing. In this respect, neither writer has addressed how nationalism has progressed in its multi-dimensional format through the history of the working class, outside of soliciting its populist appeal.

Antonio Gramsci has provided the necessary theoretical premise to explain the complexity of association amongst and between classes in their progression to political realization. Utilizing Gramsci's construct of hegemony, I have formulated various premises which I have referred to as *formal nationalism*. Formal nationalism is most allied to the concept of hegemony in its appropriative qualities. I

have concretized the extent of this appropriation in political terms. Hence, *formal nationalism* has, admittedly taken on a rather restrictive characteristic of political expression through existing political alliances and/or parties. What all of these expressions have had in common, however, was the need to incorporate the popular classes in its particular discourse. Therefore, while theoretically *formal nationalism* would broadly assimilate working class interests, it does not articulate working class nationalism, but rather seeks to incorporate it.

Working Class Nationalism - A Reformulation

I have chosen three time periods under which to examine the format of working class nationalism. These conjunctures have been used by various writers - Lipsig-Mummé, Belanger and St. Pierre, Mascotto and Soucy, Roback and Tremblay - to determine the changed relationship the centrals have maintained with the state. With little variation, these authors have explained this relationship in terms of consensual integration, to forced integration, etc. I have not done differently in this one respect. However, I have used these occurrences to focus upon the nature of working class nationalism for the time period. Therefore, while 1960-1965 may have been characterized by a developing hegemony with reformist participation and appropriation of class interests by the state, these factors provided the background for the incorporation of working class nationalism. Nationalism for the working classes from 1960-1965, as our case analyses have shown, was primarily - but not solely - of a structural nature. For the F.T.Q., this translated itself primarily as a process to integrate its expression of

class interests towards a more defined territorial perspective. The format of nationalism in the F.T.Q. during this period was significantly removed from the cultural claims of the Quiet Revolution.¹ This was less the case in the C.S.N. The structural problem faced by the C.S.N. was also quite different from that experienced by the F.T.Q. The C.S.N. was well implicated as a working class spokesperson. However, their structural problem presented itself as the absence of a defined political approach as opposed to the F.T.Q. The nationalisms of both of these centrals were, of course, more varied and interwoven within the emerging petit bourgeois political and social agenda. These aspects which I have pointed to, have been the uniquely working class elements. Nationalism for both centrals during the period of the Quiet Revolution, it should be pointed out, was of a nascent quality. Both working class organizations entered the political project of the sixties after years of shouldering the full weight of concerted state repression. Nairn has argued that nationalism in 19th century Europe achieved its social base when the masses were invited into history. Within Quebec, at the end of the 1950's, it would seem that the working class struck themselves into a new decade of change, which saw an invigorated state as the prime agent of change, and its accompanying ideology of inspired territoriality.

While the early sixties was a period wherein the working classes were adjusting to their own structural incapacities as far as addressing the national question, the period of 1966 to 1976 presented a more complex configuration.

The ten-year period saw a resolution of the type of structural

problems experienced by both centrals in the early sixties.² These structural weaknesses were, however, replaced by further structural considerations with an accompanying and conflicting ideological outgrowth, consisting of how to insert the political ramifications of working class nationalism into the ongoing debate. In this respect, while the F.T.Q. finally did emerge as a truly representative central, and as the C.S.N. formulated various modes of political action, both were subject to the ideological demands and alliances that their new confrontational positions entailed, particularly during a time of intense petit bourgeois mobilization. It was during this period that the centrals formulated a socialist program for Quebec society. While this project was enunciated during a time of general appropriation of working class interests by the larger dominant nationalist forces, the socialist dictum was, by the early seventies, an integral facet of nationalism for the working class organizations.

As we have seen, the enunciation of this socialist perspective was, to a great extent, formulated in the midst of general repression under the Bourassa regime. Several problems arose here. Primarily, the appeal of the Parti Québécois to many labour militants as well as the general working population was a prime factor in lessening the implications of a socialist approach, while adhering to a new electoralist strategy. As well, the centrals' articulation of socialism was severely undeveloped. Curiously, for working class organizations, neither central elaborated the type of democratic socialism they sought.³ Working class nationalism in this ten-year conjuncture was then typified by an intense interaction with the formal nationalist discourse. Throughout this

period we see a growth in cultural questions within the central. As well, the area wherein the centrals were historically strong - in their critique of uneven development - was equally being appropriated by the newly institutionalized nationalist discourse pursued by the P.Q. Therefore, while the early sixties represented structural exigencies for the working classes in the face of a modernizing state, the period of 1966 to 1976 curtailed the political outgrowth of working class interests. This was done primarily on an ideological level, as the structural base for this type of emanation was already in place. This base was the mobilization of the new petite bourgeoisie seeking an alliance with the working classes to redress the features of uneven development.

The period of the referendum, as a third conjuncture, represented an important development in the annals of working class nationalism. Primarily, it should be pointed out that it was the mobilization of new petit bourgeois forces under the sovereignty-association banner which sparked the debate within the centrals. This fact alone is indicative of the hegemonic relationship these two class discourses maintained with each other. However, once the debate had begun - particularly through the instruments of the special congresses composed of a multitude of workshops - distinct working class positions acquired form. These positions in both centrals - although replete with variations - distinguished working class interests within the national question to that of other concerns. The referendum debate prompted a reformulation in the centrals of their socialist vision for Quebec society within the parameters of addressing the national question. Working class nationalism

was, at this point, in its most defined form *vis à vis* and *formal nationalist* debate. The lack, however, of a political vehicle, as well as dissension within the centrals as to the best manner of express working class interests, left the C.S.N. and the F.T.Q. in a familiar historical position.

Certainly, the referendum debate, as the earlier episodes of the modernizing state, as well as the later and concurrent repression under Bourassa and social democratic appeal of the Parti Québécois, was initiated by the dominant social forces of the period. This, perhaps, is most indicative of the position of the working classes in the process of the restructuring social bloc. However, it would seem that the referendum debate, although having solicited an affirmative response from the centrals, also saw a clarification of their position regarding various tenets of the nationalist discourse. The premises adopted by both centrals regarding the national question were imbued within a socialist framework. Given that this framework will expand and become more comprehensive within the ongoing crisis of petit bourgeois nationalism, the problematic for the working class organizations may very well revert to a previous yet different structural position, that is, the necessity to formulating a political entry, with the necessary progressive alliances into the larger debate.

The Relationship of Workers and Union Spokespersons

The question of distance between the rank and file and the official views of the two centrals have been posed by M. Smith.⁴ Briefly, Smith's argument is that the gap between the two was indeed significant. Smith's contentions, which must be addressed, suffer from two significant

weaknesses. These insufficiencies have an empirical as well as a theoretical base. Primarily, his approach neglects the reaction to various stands taken by the rank and file in response to the centrals' documents, and rests his case mostly upon the massive departure of workers from the C.S.N. in 1972.⁵ This split is, in Smith's analysis, taken completely out of its historical context. Secondly, Smith lacks a theoretical base, even according to his own lights, which would allow him to better understand the relationship between leaders and the rank and file in a *workers' bureaucracy*.

In 1971 documents have been cited in this study as an example of the politicization - in the radical sense - of the central. The documents were tabled by the two presidents to stimulate debate upon the general crisis of the Quebec economy. The debates were varied, particularly given the implicit nationalist stance in the C.S.N. document. To an extent, the documents served not only to stimulate a discourse on economic development, but also delineated the divergencies between progressive tendencies and those adhering to a bread-and-butter orientation.

Within the C.S.N., the manifestos and many other position papers brought to the foreground the contradictions which had typified the political and economic view points of various factions within the executive council as well as on the level of the local union. A. Bennet has examined these debates within the C.S.N. and has shown that a considerable amount of reflection occurred as to the perceived usefulness of the model proposed in Ne Comptons . . .⁶ This discourse took place prior to the schism in the C.S.N. and was no doubt influenced by the factions which would leave later that year. Regardless of

the influence of the conservative syndicalists who used red-baiting techniques and argued above all that the issues raised in the documents were incendiary, or the counter-accusations by Pepin of *Duplessism* amongst those union leaders who refused to examine the documents, the reaction from the grass roots was one of studied consideration. In the Montreal area, fifty union groups formed to study the document soon after it was published. On January 22nd the secretary of the Quebec Central Council, Thérèse Montpas, declared that the council was in favour of socialism for the Quebec collectivity. Interestingly, the national question arose here, pointing to a contradiction we have already examined. In this respect, Roland Tapin, president of the Québec Council, argued that the paper presented an inconsistency in Pepin's thought, as the document had strong nationalist indications while Pepin himself was at this time admittedly anti-separatist. The Fédération Nationale des Services recommended the study of the document which conformed to the Quebec reality and proposed solutions corresponding with the deep aspirations of all workers.⁷

The departure of 55,000 workers in 1972 was initiated by a conservative coalition within the executive council, which saw the role of the union central as strictly apolitical.

We do not believe in political absoluteness. It does not exist. A plurality of politics is endemic to our ideology. (8)

This coalition, colloquially known as the 3-D's, was instrumental through their majority position in council in acquiescing to state pressure - enacted through Bill 19 - to end the Common Front strike, against the wishes of the majority of workers who later expressed

their militancy in the general strike. As Bennet argues, their split with the C.S.N. was deliberately timed to occur before the next general assembly, where they would have to face the wrath of their membership.⁹ The 1972 congress of the C.S.N., once this faction had left, endorsed the broad principles in the manifestos which called for further study and clarification of the socialist approach. This is not to suggest that the central now contained a homogeneous outlook upon economic and social issues or, for that matter, a consistent opinion, as we have also seen, on the national question. Rather, I mean to suggest that the occurrences of radical appraisals, which had many ideological variations, were not the isolated utterances, as Smith suggests, of the central leadership. Quite the contrary, it was the reactionary elements of the central leadership which expressed their political bias by bolting from the C.S.N. in the heightened moment of 1972.

Within the F.T.Q., the reaction of the rank and file was generally supportive of l'Etat Rouage de Notre Exploitation, although it equally stirred debate. This was aptly shown within the 1971 Convention.¹⁰ During this meeting, various unions presented their assessments of the economic question. *The Syndicats des Ouvriers Unis de l'Electricité, Radio et de Machinerie d'Amérique* urged the F.T.Q. to adopt a resolution stressing that «workers should not vote for parties which supported capitalism, a system which exploits the labouring classes.»¹¹ The *Conseil du Travail de Montréal* argued for the creation of a true workers' party which would speak for the labouring class (see Appendix D). From an appraisal of the 1971 F.T.Q. congress - which in a relative sense, one might rightly argue was more representative of workers' opinions

than working papers drafted by council executives - the debate took a different turn than that of the C.S.N. Within the F.T.Q., the question was not the radical tone of the manifesto, but the political adjustments which had to be taken in view of the central's adopted socialist stance. In this respect, contrary to Smith's assertions, the rank and file, i.e. - as directly represented by their local unions - were *more demanding than the central itself*. This was evident when the F.T.Q.'s executive rejected the motion of creating a distinct working class party in the province, without ties in the N.D.P.-Q. The question within the F.T.Q. was overshadowed by attempts to link the social project of the labour movement with the progressive left of the P.Q. In this regard, as we have already seen, those attempts were successful.

The question of intellectual leadership and the working classes has been raised in many contexts. The problematic, as posed by Smith is, of course perfectly suited to draw these assumptions of infiltration by isolated intellectuals who draw up political agendas for the working class. While the parameters of Smith's problematic may not allow him to reconsider the fallacy of intellectuals as a social category independent of class, at the very least I have tried to show that empirically his claims were unsubstantiated.

The question of the central leadership and the working class should be addressed as a final note in this thesis. A study, which through the examination of speeches and resolutions taken at congresses, walks the often-unsteady line of whether or not it is in fact working class opinions which are being scrutinized. This question must be asked in view of two considerations. Primarily, while the working papers, it

may be argued, represented individual analyses of any given condition, the congresses wherein these papers were offered for debate gives the researchers the boundaries of any given reflection, be it agreement or dissent. The above is an empirical consideration facilitated by the intense democratic structure of both centrals. A further consideration implies a more theoretical explanation. If one is prepared to accept, as this present paper has undoubtedly done, that the centrals represent a leading edge of the working class in Quebec, that class' relationship to its own intellectual leadership must equally be considered within the vanguard framework. In this regard, Gramsci has argued,

Every social group, coming into existence on the original terrain of an essential function in the world of economic production creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields. (12)

The centrals' leadership, from the mid-sixties onwards has, I believe, provided this condition, and their literature should be considered in this light, regardless of the ongoing contradictions.

It is significant to note the importance which Gramsci attributes to the relationship between intellectuals and the *Modern party*. This, in his view, secures the momentum of political and philosophical advances of groups developing towards dominance. As we have already mentioned, the centrals often fulfilled this function of the surrogate party, given the absence of any left-oriented political movement in the province. However, the surrogate role, as we have equally seen

remains by definition outside of the active political sphere. It is this transformation through the historic as well as contemporary associations initiated *within* the labour movement which will determine the alliances needed for this advancement. In this regard, a resolution of the national question is but one of many steps.

NOTES

- 1) It should be pointed out, however, that both centrals addressed the question of French Language rights in the workplace during this period.
- 2) The F.T.Q. did not achieve its full autonomy from the C.T.C. until 1974.
- 3) For a good discussion of the nature of socialism elaborated by the centrals, see Quebec Labour, Black Rose Books, p. 34.
- 4) Michael Smith, The Transformation of Labour Relations in Quebec: an Analysis, McGill University, Canada Department of Labour Working Paper, 1980.
- 5) M. Smith, Ibid, p. 14.
Smith's argument reads ...

It should be immediately clear that the much cited manifestos do not necessarily indicate a radical rank and file. The recruitment of «intellectuals» into Québec Labour centrals has been rooted in a number of places. The C.S.N. manifesto has all the hallmarks of the work of somebody trained within one of the more dogmatic branches of the social science disciplines. It is quite likely that it has been more avidly consumed by university professors than by the C.S.N.'s rank and file. The rank and file could be largely indifferent to the publication of documents of this sort, except insofar as the larger political preoccupation of the union leadership expressed in these documents led to a neglect, or inadequate treatment, or bread and butter issues. There is, as a matter of fact, some evidence that this is precisely what happened. The aftermath of the C.S.N.'s manifesto Ne Comptons Que Sur Nos Propres Moyens and all that it seems to suggest about the sentiments of the C.S.N.'s leadership was a very real haemorrhage of members from the C.S.N., starting with the breakaway of the Confédération des Syndicats Démocratiques (C.S.D.) after the Common Front strike.

- 6) Québec Labour, edited by a Black Rose Editorial Collective, Black Rose, Montreal, p. 54.
- 7) Ibid, p. 49.
- 8) Centrale des Syndicats Démocratiques Québec, 8-9-10 juin 1972, Procès Verbal, p. 14.
- 9) Québec Labour, op. cit., p. 54.

- 10) Procès Verbal 12 congrès de la F.T.Q., 1971, p. 15.
- 11) Ibid, p. 15.
- 12) Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, Ed.
Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, 1971, London, p. 5.

REFERENCES

VOLUMES

- Amin, Samir. Class and Nation, Historically and in the Current Crisis, London, Monthly Review Press, 1980.
- Arghiri, Emmanuel. Unequal Exchange, NLB, London, 1971.
- Bélanger, J. André. L'apolitisme des Idéologies Québécois: le grand tourant de 1934-36, Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1974.
- Bernard, Paul. Structures et Pouvoir de la fédération des Travailleurs du Québec, Etude No. 13, Equipe spécialisée en relations de travail, Ottawa Bureau du Conseil Privé, 1969.
- Black Rose Collective. Quebec Labour, Black Rose Books, Montreal, 1972.
- Bloom, S.F. The World of Nations: A Study of the National Implications in the World of Karl Marx, New York, Columbia University Press, 1941.
- Bourque, Gilles. «Comment faire avaler la couleuvre ou La trahison des clercs revisitée» in Au Delà du Parti Québécois, Centre de Formation Populaire, Nouvelle Optique, Montreal, 1982.
- Bourque, Gilles and Doštaler, Gilles. Socialisme et Indépendance, Boreal Express, Montreal, 1980.
- Cardin, Jean Réal. Influence du Syndicalisme national catholique sur les droits syndicaux québécois, Institute Sociale Populaire, Montréal, 1957.
- Centre de Formation Populaire. «Le Mouvement Ouvrier Québécois et ses revendications à propos de la question nationale,» Document de Travail, avril 1979.
- Centre de Formation Populaire. Le Referendum, un enjeu politique pour le mouvement ouvrier, Montreal, 1979.
- Centre de Formation Populaire. La Question Nationale, un défi à relever pour le mouvement ouvrier, Montréal, 1978.

- Centre de Formation Populaire. Les Lois du Travail, reflet d'un rapport de forces, 1981.
- Centre de Formation Populaire. «Alliance de Classe et Nature de Classe du P.Q.: Etude de Quelques législations de P.Q.», Yves Belanger, Document de Travail, 1980.
- Cummins, Ian. Marx, Engels and National Movements, Croon Helm Ltd., London, 1980.
- Cyr, François and Roy Remi. Elements d'Histoire de la F.T.Q., Editions Coopératives Albert St.-Martin, Montreal, 1981.
- Davis, B. Horace. Nationalism and Socialism, Monthly Review Press, New York and London, 1967.
- Delorme, François. Aspects de la réalité syndicale Québécois, 1976, Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de Travail et Main-d'oeuvre, Etude et Recherche.
- Denis, Roch. Luttes des Classes et Question Nationale au Québec, 1979, Presse Socialiste Internationale, Montreal.
- Dofny, Jacques and Bernard, Paul. Le Syndicalisme au Québec, Etude No. 9, Equipe Spécialisée en relation de travail, Bureau du Conseil Privé, Ottawa, Imprimeur de la Reine, 1968.
- Drache, Daniel. Québec - Only the Beginning, Manifestos of the Common Front, Toronto, 1972.
- Ethier, Dianne et al. Les Travailleurs Contre l'Etat Bourgeois by D. Ethier, L'Aurore, Montreal, 1975.
- Frennette-Laurin, Nicole and Leonard, François-Jean. L'Impasse: enjeux et perspectives de l'après referendum. Nouvelle Optique, Montreal.
- Gramsci, Antonio. The Prison Notebooks, eds. Quinton Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith, Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1971.
- Harvey, Fernand. «Les Chevaliers du Travail, les Etats-Unis et la Société québécoise 1882-1902» in Le Mouvement Ouvrier au Québec, Montreal, Boreal Express, 1980.
- Haupt, Georges; Lowy, Michel; Weill, Claudie. Les Marxistes et la Question Nationale 1848-1914, éditions d'étincelle Montréal, 1974.
- Laperrière, René. Les Amendements Johnson au projet de loi 45: un pas en avant, deux en arrière, Montreal, 1977.

- Laborgne, Louis. La C.S.N. et la Question Nationale depuis 1960, Editions Albert St. Martin, 1976.
- Lemieux, Vincent. «Québec: Heaven is Blue and Hell is Red,» in Martin Robin (Ed.) Canadian Provincial Politics: The Party System of the Ten Provinces, Prentice-Hall, Scarborough.
- Lenin, V.I. «The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination,» Collected Works, Vol. 22.
- Lenin, V.I. «Question of National Policy and Proletarian Internationalism,» Collected Works.
- Lenin, V.I. «Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism,» Collected Works, 1916.
- Levesque, René. Option Québec, Les Editions de l'Homme, Montreal, 1968.
- Lewis, Gregg. Unionism and Relative Wages in the United States, University of Chicago Press, 1963.
- Lipton, Charles. Histoire du Syndicalisme au Canada et au Québec (1827-1959), Montréal, Parti-Pris, 1976.
- Marx, Karl. The Communist Manifesto, Washington Square Press Inc., New York, 1964.
- Marx, Karl. Ireland and the Irish Question, New World Paperbacks, New York, 1964.
- Mascotto, Jacques and Soucy, Pierre-Yves. Sociologie Politique de la Question Nationale, Editions Coopératives Albert St.-Martin, 1979.
- Mascotto Jacques. Class Contre Nation, Le Combat Perdu de Lenin, Les Editions Coopératives Albert St. Martin, Collection 'thèses', 1979.
- Monière, Denis. Ideologies in Québec, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1981.
- Nairn, Tom. The Break-up of Britain, London, Verso, 1981.
- Pentland, Harry. Labour and Capital in Canada, 1650-1860, Lorimer, Toronto, 1981.
- Posgate, Dale and McRoberts, Kenneth. Québec, Social Change and Political Crisis, McClelland and Stewart, 1976.
- Poulantzas, Nicos. State, Power and Socialism, Verso, London, 1978.

- Roback, Leo. «L'idéologie de la F.T.Q. Evolution Historique,» in Histoire des Travailleurs Québécois, Bulletin du RfC.H.T.Q., Vol. 4, No. 3.
- Roback, Leo. «Les Formes Historiques de Politisation du Syndicalisme au Québec,» in G. Dion, ed., La Politisation des Relations du Travail Québec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1973, p. 17.
- Rouillard, Jacques. Histoire de la C.S.N. 1921-1981, Boreal Express, Montreal, 1981.
- Rouillard, Jacques. «Les Syndicats Nationaux au Québec de 1900 à 1930,» Les Cahiers d'Histoire de l'Université Laval, 1979.
- Rumilly, Robert. M. Duplessis et Son Temps, Québec Presses, Montreal.
- Rumilly, Robert. Histoire de la Province de Québec, Les Ecoles du Nord-Ouest, Montreal.
- Saywell, John. The Rise of the Parti Québécois 1967-1976. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1977.
- Smith, Michael. The Transformation of Labour Relations in Québec: an Analysis, McGill University, Canada Department of Labour Working Paper, 1980.
- Tremblay, Louis-Marie. Le Syndicalisme au Québec: l'idéologies de la C.S.N. et la F.T.Q., 1940-1970, Presses de l'Université de Montréal, Montréal, 1972.
- Vaillancourt, Yves. «La Position Constitutionnelle du M.S.A.-P.Q. de 1967 à 1979. Mai 1979, Centre de Formation Populaire, Document de Travail.

JOURNALS

- Ehrenreich, John. «Socialism, Nationalism and Capitalist Development» in Review of Radical Political Economics, Vol. XV, No. 1, Spring 1983.
- Gagnon, Alain and Montcalm, Mary-Beth. «Economic Peripheralization and Québec Unrest» in Journal of Canadian Studies, Summer 1982, Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 32-42.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. «Some Reflections on the Break-Up of Britain» in New Left Review, No. 105, September 1977.
- Lowy, Michael. «Marxists and the National Question,» New Left Review, 1976.

Mummé-Lipsig, Carla. «Québec Unions and the State: Conflict and Dependence» in Studies in Political Economy.

Murray, Vera. «Le Parti Québécois: Les tensions au sein de l'alliance indépendantiste,» in Politique Aujourd'hui, numéro 7-8, 1978.

Pinard, Maurice. «Working Class Politics: An Interpretation of the Quebec Case,» Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, VII, 2(1970).

Roback, Leó and Tremblay, Louis Marie. «Nationalisme au sein des Syndicats Québécois» in Revue Canadienne des études sur le nationalisme, Vol. 5, No. 2, automne 1978.

Sainte Pierre, Celine. «De l'analyse Marxiste des classes sociales dans le mode de production capitaliste,» in Socialisme Québécois, #24, 1974.

Tétu, Michel. «Les Congrès qui décidèrent de la fondation de la C.T.C.C. (Québec 1918, Trois Rivières 1919, Chicoutimi 1920), Relations Industrielles, Vol. 18, No. 2, 1963.

Tremblay, Louis Marie. «L'Influence Extragère en matière de direction syndicale au Canada» in Relation Industrielle I, 1964.

THESES

Brossard, Michel. L'Idéologie économique de la Fédération des travailleurs du Québec, M.A. thesis (Industrial Relations), l'Université de Montréal, 1969.

Grant, Michel. La F.U.I.Q. et l'action politique syndicale, M.A. thesis (Industrial Relations), l'Université de Montréal, 1968.

PARTI QUEBECOIS DOCUMENTATION

La Solution, Le Programme du Parti Québécois présenté par René Levesque, avril, 1970.

D'égal à égal, publication directed by Pierre Vadeboncoeur, février, 1979.

UNION DOCUMENTATION - C.S.N.

Memorandum of the C.N.T.U. to the Federal Cabinet, 1960.

Memorandum of the C.N.T.U. to the Federal Cabinet, 1961.

Memorandum of the C.N.T.U. to the Federal Cabinet, 1964.

Moral Report of the National President of the C.N.T.U., 1962 Convention.

Procès Verbal de la Quarantième Session de Congrès de la C.S.N.,
Montreal, 1962.

Procès Verbal de la Quarante-et-une Session du Congrès de la C.S.N.,
Montreal, 1964.

Procès Verbal de la Quarantième Session du Congrès de la C.S.N.,
1966.

A Society Built for Man, Moral Report of the National President of the
C.S.N., M. Pepin, 1966.

The Second Front, the Report of the National President of the C.S.N.,
October 13, 1968.

Positions, C.S.N. Publication, 1968.

Moral Report of the President of the C.S.N., 1970, A Camp for Liberty.

Procès Verbal de la Quarantième-quatre Session de Congrès de la C.S.N.,
1970.

Procès Verbal du Conseil Confédéral de la C.S.N., 4-5-6, October,
1972.

Political Action Crossroads, 1971, by the Political Action Committee.

Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier au Québec (1825-1976), à C.S.N./C.E.Q.
publication 1976, p. 173.

Procès verbal de la 49e congrès de la C.S.N., Montréal, juin, 1978.

Pour les Droits et Libertés des Travailleurs et de leur organisations
être présents dans la lutte contre l'oppression nationale:
Rapport du comité d'orientation, 49e congrès de la C.S.N., Montréal,
juin, 1978.

Proposition de la C.S.N. pour la discussion sur la question nationale,
C.S.N., January, 1979.

Pour la defence des intérêts des travailleurs et travailleuses dans la
lutte contre l'oppression nationale du peuple québécois, Congrès
spécial de la C.S.N., Québec, 1, 2, et 3 juin, 1979.

Memoire Commun de Revendications présenté par la C.S.N. et la C.E.Q.,
1977.

General Resolution for the defence of the working Men and Women
interests in the struggle against national oppression of the
Québécois people, 1977.

Position de la C.S.N. face au referendum, 11 avril, 1980.

F.T.Q.

Officer's Report Submitted to the Fifth Convention of the F.T.Q.,
November 17, 18, 19, 1960.

Declaration de la Fédération du Québec sur la Confédération et les
Droits Provinciaux, F.T.Q., Montreal, le 12 juin, 1961.

Officer's Report Submitted to the Sixth Convention of the F.T.Q.,
November 23, 24, 25, 1961, p. 15.

Officer's Report Submitted to the Seventh Convention of the F.T.Q.,
1962, p. 1.

Officer's Report to the Eighth Convention of the F.T.Q., November 22
23, 24, 1963.

Inaugural Speech of the President, Ninth Congress, 1965, p. 12.

Officer's Report Submitted to the 10th Convention of the F.T.Q., 1967.

Memoire de la F.T.Q. à la Commission du C.T.C. sur la Constitution et
les Structures, Montreal, le 25 janvier, 1967, p. 5.

Procès Verbal 12 congrès de la F.T.Q., 1971.

Opening Speech of the President, Target and Spearhead, F.T.Q., 14th
Congress, 1975, p. 12.

The F.T.Q. and the National Question, 16th Convention of the F.T.Q.;
Québec City, November 26th to 30th, 1979, p. 2.

National Issue Labour Response, 2nd Special Convention F.T.Q., Québec
City, Saturday, April 19, 1980.

Policy Statement of the F.T.Q. General Council on the National Question,
2nd Extraordinary Convention, Québec, Saturday, April 19, 1980.

C.S.D.

Centrale des Syndicats Démocratiques Québec, 8-9-10 juin 1972,
Procès Verbal.

expectations and needs of working man and woman and the masses as a whole, what we call a socialist and democratic society.

We want to build this new society while respecting the interest of other people and in harmony with them, against all forms of imperialist domination.

The way the CSN can ensure its representativity of the people's interests to achieve its goals is to undertake a study and debates on the struggles to be waged in order to foster the control and democratization of the political institutions and power bases needed to solve the national question in light of the society we wish to achieve.

For the Quebec people to gain control over the political; economic and cultural institutions and power bases needed to solve the national question, and with the process of extending democracy by increasing the popular classes's hold on these institutions and power bases, the need for their own independent political organization becomes clearer as our work as a union organization helps raise political consciousness.

While reaffirming our independent nature as a union organization, which means that the CSN as such could not take part in a union organization, we believe that Quebec workers must create their own political organization in order to better co-ordinate workers' struggles and those of citizen groups and to ensure a real transformation of the political, economic and cultural institutions and power bases.

National Oppression

This nation is the victim of national oppression. National oppression means that one nation is dominated by another, with it understood that each of these nations is dominated by a class which generally makes use of national feeling to secure the popular support it needs in order to see that the society's development benefits it.

Thus, national oppression defines a situation in which a society, divided by conflicts of interest about its outlook and development is dominated by another society also having conflicting interests.

National Oppression reinforces the effects of capitalist exploitation

National oppression is a particular form taken by capitalist exploitation, which also entails uneven development and dependency between countries and a country's own regions. It is a specific form of oppression which intensifies exploitation's effects.

All of the Canadian provinces show signs of uneven development and economic dependency. But in Quebec, these two phenomena are combined with national oppression. The people's struggles against this specific form of oppression to gain control over the political, economic and cultural institutions and powers that be, in order to see that the society's development is in its interest, have helped define the Quebec nation.

The CSN

The CSN itself is a product of the resistance to national oppression in that its origine lies in Quebec workers desire to control their own organizations. It evolved as a forum in which the Quebec working class, which also had to deal with the additional problem of national oppression, could make its voice heard.

The effects of this special oppression hit the popular classes harder. Thus, the Quebec workers' movement has constant-

ly come up against the national question. As for the CSN, it is a labour union organization and deals with it as such. It has sought to correct the problems caused by the popular classes by this and continues to do so.

National Oppression
as experienced by
the popular classes

Being unemployed longer and more often, working at lower-paying jobs and in another language, having trouble using one's own, less access to an education, being more subject to the dominant models for behaviour, living in poorer health in worse quarters, dying younger: these are some of the ways in which the popular classes are affected by the national oppression of the Quebec people.

Resistance to this oppression, fed by the public's desire for a better life, has always been a part of Quebec's history. However, the struggles to gain control over the power bases needed to solve the national question have always been led by political elites, who served class interests not those of workers.

The repression of
the public's hopes

In order to take hold of political power, these elites have always used the feelings of national oppression and the great force for change this means. But, they have always governed by expressing the public hopes inherent in the national question, in this way consolidating the ruling classes's position in exchange for maintaining their own privileges.

- This danger is greater still in the context of the present economic crisis. Throughout the capitalist world, the ruling classes act together to make the workers bear the brunt. This means a drastic fall in the number of jobs, greater job insecurity, cutbacks in social services and public expenses, lessened buying power. It also means offensives against acquired rights, cost-of-living adjustments, limitation of.

freedoms, an increase in the authoritarian nature of the state and its ever-increasing interference with people's lives and the functioning of union organizations, the degeneration of the media, infiltration, and political, police and judicial repression.

In this context, the national question is more likely to be used to repress the public's hopes by our political leaders. This is exactly what happens when the government and the bosses ask us to tighten our belts to make the developing Quebec business competitive.

Another solution to
national oppression

So, the CSN reaffirms the absolute necessity for the popular classes to come to an independent and united position on how the national question is to be resolved for their own interests. It intends to act as a union organization in its contribution to this process; that is, to draw the elements making up its position from the struggles against the various forms taken by national oppression in our daily lives, of the analysis it draws from these, and the ever-increasing public support it seeks to win.

Already, this method shows us that to struggle against national oppression and the various forms taken by it, far-reaching measures for economic recovery which cannot be undertaken without an ever-increasing control by the people over political institutions and powers, in other words making them more democratic by greater rights for working men and women and their organizations, through developing the popular classes's ability to express themselves in all areas where they struggle.

However, an economic analysis of the plans now put forth by the political parties now dominating the constitutional debate

lead us to state that neither federalism nor sovereignty-association, as the two options proposed are known, really meet the real needs of the popular classes and cannot solve the problem of national oppression as they experience it.

Federalism

The spokespersons for the federalist option, who represent the interests of the Canadian capitalist class, refuse to recognize that the Quebec people is nationally oppressed, by defending the uneven Pan-Canadian development policy supported by the Federal State ever since Confederation. This policy, which helped make southern Ontario the industrial centre of Canada, let Quebec and certain other regions such as the Maritimes fall behind into unemployment and underdevelopment. It also allowed the Canadian economy to be continentalized, meaning the economic integration of Canada and the United States. As for the New Federalism, put forth by the Pélissier - Robarts Commission on National Unity, it would mean greater economic power for Ottawa, and does not solve Canada's economic dependency with regards to the United States. Finally, it should be mentioned that the actions taken by the Federal State in favour of Canadian capitalism have been more obviously directed against the workers, as shown by the laws to set up wage controls and reduce unemployment insurance payments, actions whose effects are felt by the entire working class in Canada.

Sovereignty-Association

As for sovereignty-association, it intends to "settle" the national question by carrying out some redistribution of capital in the tertiary sector, which means nothing for the workers. Rather than being English-Canadian interests, whether private capitalists or public corporations controlled by Ottawa, this capital would be taken over by Quebec capitalists or public corporations. Foreign, especially United

States, capital's control over the most strategic sectors of Quebec industry is not questioned by the sovereignty-association option. On the contrary, the party supporting this option, and the Quebec government plan for an increase in the importance of foreign capital, if their recent actions mean anything. They favour the same continentalization process as the federalists and which has had an important effect on unemployment in Quebec. Other actions by the pro-sovereignty government (freeze of the minimum wage, cutbacks in public services, refusal to fight plant closings) show us that we can't account on this option to solve such problems as unemployment and inadequate incomes, which are real effects of national oppression of Quebec workers.

Maintain our autonomous action as a union organization

Within the present context of a government using the public's hopes in order to advance a plan for the nation that does not meet the workers' needs and at the same time attacking our acquired rights, having its police spy on us, our approach to the national question must be careful indeed.

The CSN does not take part in this struggle in a partisan political manner, but as a labour union organization, by regularly providing elements for analysis and criticism based on its platform of demands needed by the workers so that they can see that their interests are protected throughout the entire process of gaining control over institutions. In this way, it also can influence the debate and political choices to be suggested to the people by the political parties.

Drawing up a blueprint for a new society

It is in this sense that for the CSN, the struggle against national oppression is part of that to build a different society, built by the great majority of people, based on the

expectations and needs of working man and woman and the masses as a whole, what we call a socialist and democratic society.

We want to build this new society while respecting the interest of other people and in harmony with them, against all forms of imperialist domination.

The way the CSN can ensure its representativity of the people's interests to achieve its goals is to undertake a study and debates on the struggles to be waged in order to foster the control and democratization of the political institutions and power bases needed to solve the national question in light of the society we wish to achieve.

For the Quebec people to gain control over the political, economic and cultural institutions and power bases needed to solve the national question, and with the process of extending democracy by increasing the popular classes' hold on these institutions and power bases, the need for their own independent political organization becomes clearer as our work as a union organization helps raise political consciousness.

While reaffirming our independent nature as a union organization, which means that the CSN as such could not take part in a union organization, we believe that Quebec workers must create their own political organization in order to better co-ordinate workers' struggles and those of citizen groups and to ensure a real transformation of the political, economic and cultural institutions and power bases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) To wage an effective struggle against national oppression and the various forms taken by it, the CSN sees this in the context of the Quebec people gaining control over the political, economic and cultural institutions and power bases; this process requires making these institutions and power bases more democratic.
- 2) In this process, the CSN's action consists in struggling for making institutions and power bases more democratic
 - by extending the rights and freedoms of working men and women and their organizations;
 - by developing the popular classes' ability to intervene everywhere they wage struggles.
- 3) In the present situation the CSN will principally base its participation on its platform of demands. This platform is the concrete expression of our independent path as a union organization. This is how the CSN takes on its responsibility to defend the interests of working men and women and the people at large.
- 4) The CSN does not approach this question as a partisan political body, but as a union organization by regularly providing the rudiments of an analysis and criticism based on the platform of demands needed by the workers to enable them to safeguard their interests throughout this process, and to influence the debate and the political choices to be proposed to the Quebec people by the political parties.

- 5) It is essentially in this way that for the CSN, the struggle against national oppression is part of the process of building a new society, built by the great majority of people, and based on the needs and expectations of the popular classes, what we call a socialist and democratic society.
- 6) The CSN reaffirms the platform of demands voted by its 49th convention to struggle against the concrete forms taken by national oppression and, in a short term basis, on the present conditions of the debate on the national question as we see it, and considers as priorities the struggles
- to defend acquired rights in the social, economic, and cultural fields
 - to struggle against underemployment and economic dependency
 - for women's right to work in the labour force
 - to defend working men's and women's right to physical, mental and moral completeness
 - to win full rights for unions
 - to extend the popular classes' capacity to intervene democratically
 - to regain control of the instruments for cultural development
- 7) The CSN supports the Amerindians and the Inuit in their struggle to demand respect for their most basic rights, particularly their right to cultural, political and territorial autonomy.

8) TO CONTINUE OUR APPROACH
TO THE QUESTION
THE CONVENTION HAS DECIDED

- that the CSN contact other unions and labour centrals in the rest of Canada in order to ask them to defend the Quebec people's inalienable right to determine their own future, hence to oppose any Pan-Canadian referendum and all other coercion such as an armed intervention which would in fact serve to deny the Quebec people's legitimate rights
- that the CSN and the orientation committee continue the process of studying the national question, in particular, by making clear the stakes the workers have in this struggle for political independence and the consequences for them, within the framework of our plan for society
- that the CSN institute an information and education programme to follow up the decisions made by the special CSN convention on the national question.

APPENDIX B
General Statement: published by
the C.S.N. Translation Department.
Originally appeared in Le Travail,
Position de la C.S.N. face au
referendum, 11 avril, 1980

GENERAL STATEMENT

We reaffirm that the Quebec nation is subject to a national oppression which is a particular form of capitalist exploitation. National oppression means the domination of one nation by another, given that each of these nations is dominated by a class which calls upon national feeling to gain the popular support it needs to channel development on the basis of its own interests.

This is especially true in the present referendum debate within the framework of law 92, which limits workers' right to take part on an independent basis, in which political parties dominate the debate around the national question and don't take the various expressions of national oppression as undergone primarily by the workers into account.

We reaffirm that workers don't have the same interests to defend as the ruling class and that the solutions proposed by the latter are not intended to make recede the expressions of national oppression as they are experienced by the common people.

An economic analysis of the proposals presently put forth by the political organizations playing a leading role

... 2/

in the constitutional debate allows us to state that neither federalism, non sovereignty-association, as the two options proposed are called, meet the real needs of the common people and neither can put an end to national oppression.

The New Federalism

The spokespersons for the federalist option or the "no" in the referendum, representing the interests of the Canadian capitalist class, refuse to recognize the existence of the national oppression of the Quebec people and defend the policy of Pan-Canadian capitalist development supported by the Federal State. The New Federalist option, put forth in the Liberal Party's Beige Paper, attacks the people's acquired rights, especially with regard to language. This option implies a greater concentration of economic power in Ottawa, doesn't question Canada's economic dependence with respect to the United States, and constitutes a step backwards as to the Quebec people's traditional demands about communications, culture, etc...

Moreover, this option sanctions our minority status in Canada.

Furthermore, the Beige Paper's approach to the process of constitutional negotiations, in addition as the contents of this Paper itself, favours the constitutional status quo and constitutes a serious setback for the struggle against national oppression, whether this be on the political, economic, social or cultural level.

By maintaining the central government's powers, we must conclude that rather than lessening the economic effects of the national oppression experienced by the Quebec people, the Beige Paper would reinforce all the attacks we have been subjected to by Ottawa over the last few years.

Sovereignty-Association

The spokespersons for sovereignty-association or the "yes" to the referendum, represent the interests of the Quebec capitalist class, recognize that a national oppression exists but let it be believed that national oppression is experienced in the same way by all, and defend the policy of development of Quebec capital supported by the Quebec state. The option of sovereignty-association implies a greater concentration of economic power in Quebec City, doesn't question Quebec's economic dependency with respect to the United States and is not essentially intended to cause the effects of national oppression as experienced by the Quebec people to recede.

Nevertheless, the question posed by the "yes" supporters in the referendum does pose the problem of national oppression but does not intend to find a solution to this oppression which will benefit the common people.

Why the CSN must take a stand

The CSN has always taken the stand that we must struggle so that possible political changes are not made at the expense of the economic and social gains made by workers' struggles, of our individual and collective rights. If we are taking part in the debate, it is to establish better

conditions for the development of new forms of democracy, in order to increase the hold of workers and ordinary people over powers and institutions, over the various aspects of everyday life on the basis of a blueprint for society conforming to their interests and hopes.

At this time, to not take part in the referendum debate would leave the definition of the meaning and the stakes of the struggle against national oppression to political parties who don't defend our interests. This would go counter to the entire process we have undertaken and which consists of always seeing that the defence of workers' and peoples' interest's is part of the debate.

Consequently, the orientation committee recommends that the CSN take a stand on the referendum issue.

An autonomous position

In conformity to the recommendations of its special convention on the national question which affirmed that "to struggle effectively against national oppression, the CSN takes a stand for a process of appropriation of political, economic and cultural powers-that-be and institutions, by the Quebec people", the CSN considers that the plan for a new agreement demonstrates a willingness to increase the Quebec people's hold over its political institutions through the establishment of a sovereign parliament with full powers to make laws, to levy taxes and to conduct foreign relations.

However, this willingness remains very limited to the extent that it does not allow for a real reappropriation of the control over our own development, since all the institutions proposed feature the maintenance of the economic forces dominating the Quebec people, in this way continuing the present balance of power.

Furthermore, for the CSN, "the appropriation of institutions requires that these powers and institutions be made more democratic". But in no way does the character of the proposed institutions improve the democratic control exercised by the Quebec people over the institutions of sovereignty. Secondly, the wide field of intervention for the association and the restrictive nature of the political institutions which administer it totally limit, for the practical purposes the people's hold over them in view of a real control over its economic life.

Despite this, the proposal for sovereignty-association submitted for referendum is intended to establish the sounds of the area, the political structure and the state intended to solve the national question, it tends to bring the arena of power closer.

However, for the CSN, the struggle for greater democracy has been always linked to the wider struggle of the Quebec people to appropriate for themselves the powers and institutions necessary for the autonomous orientation of its development.

In this way, a yes to the referendum would establish better conditions for the democratic struggle aimed at

increasing the workers' and ordinary peoples' hold over all aspects of their lives. "

In the same way, a yes to the referendum is at this time a logical part of the CSN's orientation in favour of a radical transformation of society to enable the needs and aspirations of ordinary people to be met, what we refer to as a socialist and democratic society.

Consequently,

Whereas the CSN is not in agreement with the proposal for sovereignty-association in its entirety, but on the other hand,

Because the Quebec people must appropriate the powers and institutions necessary to resolve the national question,

Because this appropriation establishes better conditions for the workers' struggle for greater democracy,

Because solving the national question would establish better conditions for the construction of a new society meeting the ordinary people's needs.

Because solving the national question would allow the Quebec people to establish relations of solidarity with other peoples, on an equality basis,

Because the referendum is a step in the settlement of the national question,

The CSN, which respecting the opinion of each of its members, and retaining its autonomy, considers that it is in the interest of workers and ordinary people to vote yes in the referendum.

wishes to show us the way, was one of the most anti-union governments in Quebec and that he brought us on the brink of chaos.

There is truly no change, so little as it may be, to expect from that side, the more so since Trudeau, Chrétien and the others have reappeared on the federal stage.

On the other hand, it is increasingly clear that the vibrant forces of Quebec, which we could call the forces for change, are found on the side of the "YES". We are not naive enough to believe that all those forces want the same change, we may say "YES" for many reasons, which can be varied. But it seems essential, as far as we are concerned, in the current social and political situation, that the labour movement bring all its weight to bear towards change.

In such a debate, we cannot remain on the fence; we cannot remain silent or even advocate abstention. To adopt such an attitude would be to play into the hands of the reactionaries, as groups are doing which pretend to be of the left, such as En Lutte, PCO and PCCML. If the labour movement is not there to push towards change and to try and orient that change in the interest of the workers, who will be able to do it?

THIS IS NOT SUPPORTING THE P.Q.

If this convention expresses an option favourable to the "YES", it will be "YES" for negotiating a major political change and a redefinition of the ties between Quebec and Canada. It will not amount to a "YES" to the Parti Québécois.

Even though the PQ and the Lévesque government are presently the political vehicles of the constitutional change option, the challenge

of the referendum and beyond it, of the national issue, go way beyond the political parties in presence. The national expression of the people of Quebec does not interest only the political parties; it is the business of all Quebecers. The referendum is not a PQ referendum, it is a referendum for all Quebecers.

We are therefore called upon to adopt a clear position for or against constitutional change for Quebec and not to judge a government or support a political party. The position we will adopt will not prevent us from criticizing the Péquiste government when it deserves to be criticized, the same as we have done when they adopted special legislation suspending or eliminating the right to strike of the public sector employees, the Quebec-Hydro employees and more recently the blue collar workers in Montreal.

We will soon have an opportunity to examine the balance sheet of the Lévesque government and determine our position for the next election campaign. But for the time being, the debate is different and we must not subordinate our position on the national issue to an evaluation of a government.

BEYOND THE REFERENDUM

If the current debate can be qualified as historic, let us not be hoodwinked by the referendum. The referendum is not the end of the world. On the morrow of the referendum, the struggles will continue and the workers will still need a strong and united labour movement.

We must indeed remain aware that the referendum will not be the final word on the national issue; it will certainly in one way or another represent a decisive step, but it shall not be the

definitive answer. Quite the contrary, should the "YES" win, we will experience an acceleration of events and we will have to be there present during the whole debate. If on the other hand, the "NO" should have it, this will inevitably provoke a dangerous demobilization of the people of Quebec, but it will certainly not silence our desire for change.

On the other hand, regardless of the result of the referendum, the struggle of the workers for a more democratic and just society shall go on. We can evaluate our chances to achieve our project for a society as being better under a given constitutional system as compared to another; but our progress towards the realization of democratic socialism depends above all on our capacity to mobilize. This will remain the same under any constitutional system.

This is why we must at all cost conduct this debate in a spirit of solidarity and unity. Up to now we have always shown considerable maturity in all the debates which could have divided our movement; the best example of such maturity was undoubtedly the debate we conducted on the issue of French as the language of work. By the same token, I want to clearly reaffirm that regardless of the position we will adopt and regardless of the constitutional changes which may occur, we will continue to maintain our ties of solidarity with the organized workers of English-speaking Canada, the United States and the rest of the world. The QFL will always defend the sacred principle under which the workers themselves select their own union structures and their own affiliations.

CONCLUSION

In this opening speech I wanted to underline the major challenges faced by the QFL and its affiliates today. To succeed in facing those challenges, we must draw strength from our history and come back to,

fundamentals, in other words our role which is to represent as adequately as possible the workers who elect us and give us mandates.

It is obvious that the General Council recommendation will not be passed unanimously, because of the wide diversity of the workers and the communities we represent. We are not indeed looking for unanimity. We would rather wish for a clear trade union position which will be debated and adopted in a climate of calm and unity. It is in solidarity that I ask you to make this historic step which we have to make.

On the basis of what I have told you so far, I simply call this convention to order and I strongly urge you to support the recommendation submitted by the General Council and to vote "YES".

LOUIS LABERGE
PRESIDENT - QFL

ATTENDU que de nombreux chefs syndicaux ont répété en de nombreuses occasions que les travailleurs devraient voter contre les partis politiques qui supportent le capitalisme, système qui exploite les travailleurs, quelle que soit leur nationalité;

ATTENDU que les travailleurs et leurs représentants se doivent d'étudier la possibilité de former un parti politique conçu par et pour les travailleurs;

QU'IL SOIT RESOLU QUE CE CONGRES DE LA FEDERATION DES TRAVAILLEURS DU QUEBEC DONNE LE POUVOIR AU PROCHAIN BUREAU DE DIRECTION DE LA FTQ DE TENIR UNE CONFERENCE PROVINCIALE DES REPRESENTANTS DES SYNDICATS, D'ORGANISATIONS NATIONALES, PROGRESSIVES, POLITIQUES, DE CITOYENS, DE L'UNION DES PRODUCTEURS AGRICOLES, ETC., DANS LE PLUS BREF DELAI POSSIBLE, AFIN DE DISCUTER DE LA POSSIBILITE DE FORMER UN PARTI POLITIQUE FEDERE DE LA MASSE DES TRAVAILLEURS, LEQUEL DEVIENDRAIT LE VEHICULE DES OUVRIERS QUEBECOIS POUR L'ADOPTION DES LOIS ECONOMIQUES ET LEGISLATIVES FAVORABLES AUX QUEBECOIS.

Ensemble par le syndicat des Ouvriers unis de l'électronique, radio/et de machinerie d'Amérique, local 556, Montréal.

21.

ATTENDU que plus de 90% des 3 millions 3/4 des électeurs du Québec sont de la classe des travailleurs;

ATTENDU qu'au moins 26 sièges de l'Assemblée Nationale du Québec seront occupés par des députés du gouvernement Bourassa, qui ont obtenu moins de votes que le total des votes obtenus par l'opposition;

ATTENDU qu'il existe une nécessité de tenter de trouver une base de coopération afin d'unifier les travailleurs qui sont en opposition aux vieux partis traditionnels, anti-ouvriers, c'est-à-dire, libéral, conservateur, union nationale, créditiste;

ATTENDU que la réflexion du gouvernement Bourassa démontre qu'il existe un manque d'éducation politique parmi la masse des travailleurs;

ATTENDU que de cette masse de travailleurs, 1 million est organisé dans les syndicats, organisations agricoles, organisations d'étudiants, organisations nationales, dans des partis politiques autres que les partis

NOTES

APPENDIX B
1971 - 12th
Congress
F.T.Q.

traditionnels, tels, le Nouveau Parti Démocratique, le Parti Communiste du Québec, etc. etc., et qu'un très petit nombre comprend qu'il existe deux classes dans notre société québécoise;

NOTES

ATTENDU que la classe gouvernante (infiniment minoritaire) contrôle la classe des travailleurs (très majoritaire) grâce à son contrôle des agences de nouvelles et d'informations, de la corruption, etc.;

ATTENDU que le mouvement syndical doit intensifier son travail d'éducation politique parmi ses propres membres affiliés et la masse des travailleurs du Québec en général;

ATTENDU que le Parti Québécois a déclaré qu'il ne désirait pas de contribution financière des syndicats automatiquement éliminant la possibilité de participation active des syndicats qui voudraient s'affilier;

QU'IL SOIT RESOLU QUE LE CONSEIL DU TRAVAIL DE MONTREAL, REPRESENTANT PLUS DE 100,000 MEMBRES DE SYNDICATS AFFILIES A LA FEDERATION DES TRAVAILLEURS DU QUEBEC, PROPOSE QUE LE CONGRES DE LA FTQ AUTORISE LE PROCHAIN EXECUTIF DE LA FTQ D'ORGANISER UNE CONFERENCE, AUSITOT QUE POSSIBLE, DE REPRESENTANTS DE TOUTES ORGANISATIONS INTERESSEES A ETUDIER LA POSSIBILITE DE FORMER UN PARTI POLITIQUE FEDERE DES TRAVAILLEURS DU QUEBEC, CONTROLE PAR ET POUR LES QUEBECOIS;

QU'IL SOIT DE PLUS RESOLU QUE CE CONGRES DE LA FTQ PERMETTE LA PARTICIPATION DE REPRESENTANTS DE PARTIS POLITIQUES, AUTRES QUE LES VIEUX PARTIS TRADITIONNELS ET DE REPRESENTANTS DE TOUTES ORGANISATIONS OEUVRANT POUR L'AMELIORATION DU NIVEAU DE VIE DES TRAVAILLEURS DU QUEBEC ET POUR L'ADOPTION DE LOIS FAVORABLES AUX BESOINS DE LA MAJORITE DES QUEBECOIS, LORS DE CETTE CONFERENCE.

*Présentée par le Conseil du travail de
Montréal.*

*Présentée par le Conseil du travail de Québec
et du district.*

23.

ATTENDU que les travailleurs québécois sont
fortement influencés par les politiques des
gouvernements de même que par les différen-
tes législations de ces gouvernements;

ATTENDU que les travailleurs ont le pouvoir
et le devoir d'exercer un contrôle sur ces
politiques;

ATTENDU que la FTQ a déjà pris position en
faveur du socialisme démocratique;

ATTENDU que les travailleurs s'interrogent
sur le contenu et le mode d'application de
ce socialisme démocratique;

QU'IL SOIT RESOLU QUE LA FTQ ELABORE UN
PROGRAMME CONTENANT LES REVENDICATIONS DU
MONDE OUVRIER;

QU'IL SOIT RESOLU ÉGALEMENT QUE LA FTQ MET-
TE SUR PIED UNE STRATÉGIE PERMETTANT LA REA-
LISATION DE CE PROGRAMME;

QU'IL SOIT RESOLU DE PLUS QUE LA PLUS LARGE
PUBLICITE POSSIBLE SOIT DONNEE A CE PROGRAM-
ME TANT A L'INTERIEUR DE NOS SYNDICATS QUE
DANS LE PUBLIC EN GÉNÉRAL.

*Présentée par le Conseil du travail de Qué-
bec et du district.*

24.

ATTENDU que l'expérience démontre que la
classe ouvrière de tous les pays bénéficie
des relations fraternelles étroites fondées
sur l'intérêt commun des travailleurs;

ATTENDU que des liens d'amitié fermes et
compréhensifs ne peuvent que se développer
par les échanges de visites entre des mili-
tants syndicaux de pays socialistes et ca-
pitalistes;

ATTENDU que des actions de solidarité de
grande importance peuvent découler de rela-
tions plus étroites entre les ouvriers et
les syndicats de tous les pays, conduisant
éventuellement à l'unification du mouvement
syndical mondial;

QU'IL SOIT RESOLU QUE CE CONGRES DE LA FEDERATION DES TRAVAILLEURS DU QUEBEC ENCOURE SES SYNDICATS AFFILIES A ORGANISER DES VISITES A L'ETRANGER, Y COMPRIS LES PAYS SOCIALISTES, ET QUE LA FTQ EXAMINE LA POSSIBILITE DE PARRAINER UNE DELEGATION REPRESENTATIVE POUR VISITER LA FRANCE, L'ITALIE, L'ALLEMAGNE, LA TCHECOSLOVAQUIE, L'URSS, ET D'AUTRES PAYS SEMBLABLES DANS UN AVENIR RAPPROCHE.

NOTES

Présentée par le syndicat des Ouvriers unis de l'électricité, radio et de machinerie d'Amérique, local 582, Montréal.

25.

ATTENDU que le gouvernement Allende du Chili fut élu par le vote populaire, appuyé par la majorité de la classe ouvrière chilienne;

ATTENDU qu'il est reconnu que les grandes corporations américaines telles Kennecott, Anaconda et I.T.T., avec l'appui de la CIA américaine, ont comploté pour empêcher l'élection d'Allende et ont maintenant réussi à fomenter un coup d'état qui a renversé ce gouvernement élu par les ouvriers;

ATTENDU que le soutien du mouvement ouvrier international peut être extrêmement important pour aider la classe ouvrière internationale à résister aux fascistes qui ont imposé une dictature de droite dans ce pays;

QU'IL SOIT RESOLU QUE CE CONGRES DE LA FEDERATION DES TRAVAILLEURS DU QUEBEC FASSE TOUT EN SON POUVOIR POUR SOUTENIR LA LUTTE DE LA CLASSE OUVRIERE CHILIENNE CONTRE LA JUNTE MILITAIRE;

QU'IL SOIT DE PLUS RESOLU QUE CE CONGRES DE LA FTQ COOPERE AVEC LES ORGANISATIONS QUI ONT LE MEME BUT; FOURNISSE L'INFORMATION NECESSAIRE A SES AFFILIES ET LES SOLLICITE POUR QU'ILS APPUIENT CES TRAVAILLEURS.

Présentée par le syndicat des Ouvriers unis de l'électricité, radio et de machinerie d'Amérique, local 582, Montréal.

END

09.06.86

FIN