

Religion and the Development of the Dutch Trade Union Movement, 1872-1914

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In a recently published essay, "Segmented Pluralism: Ideological Cleavages and Political Cohesion in the Smaller European Democracies," Val Lorwin examines the process whereby separate and distinct ideological and religious groupings in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland have been able to accommodate each other and to evolve into stable, capitalist, parliamentary democracies in the post-World War II era.¹ As a point of departure, Lorwin draws a sharp distinction between *functional* groupings and those which are segmented. A trade union which bargains on behalf of Austrian metal workers is a functional association. However, a Roman Catholic metal workers union is segmented in that its Roman Catholic attribute carries with it something more than a purely socio-economic role. A segmented plural society is thus a grouping of ideological blocs, be they religious, liberal, or to one degree or another socialist. The blocs may be defined in terms of class and thus the labour or socialist groupings in Austria, Belgium, and the Netherlands with their respective liberal bourgeois counterparts, or they may be religious blocs such as the Roman Catholic communities in Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands or the Protestant churches in the Netherlands. A society in which these blocs maintain separate but parallel political parties, newspapers, various types of voluntary associations, e.g., women's leagues, youth clubs, athletic facilities and competition, trade unions and, in some instances, school systems, Lorwin terms segmented and pluralist. The plural segmentation flows from the injection of a particular ideological message and value system into numerous facets of life.² However different Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland may be in comparative terms, the four nations have been able to maintain viable capitalist democracies since the Second World War.

The Netherlands is particularly important in this regard in that the ideological cleavages differ dramatically from those in Belgium and Austria. Both Austria and Belgium were Roman Catholic and did not contain large religious minorities. The Netherlands, on the other hand, contained a large Roman Catholic minority and thus embodied a deep and profound split between Catholic and Protestant. While Austria and the Netherlands

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¹ Val LORWIN, "Segmented Pluralism: Ideological Cleavages and Political Cohesion in the Smaller European Democracies," *Comparative Politics*, III (January, 1971): 141-175.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 141-144.

were culturally homogeneous, Belgium encompassed potentially hostile Flemish and Walloon populations. Cleavages in Austrian politics entailed three elements; a social democratic working class, an agrarian, *petit-bourgeois*, clerical, Christian Democratic movement which between the two world wars assumed a highly authoritarian form, and a secular, bourgeois liberal movement which became increasingly nationalist in tone. On the eve of World War I the forces in Belgian politics strongly resembled those of the subsequent Austrian Republic. Socialist, Catholic and liberal all contended for political power. Two of the three, the socialists and liberals were secular, while both the socialist and Roman Catholic groupings contained working class constituencies and maintained their own rival trade unions. Unlike the Austrian Republic, the Flemish question was about to shatter the tripartite structure of Belgian politics. The gravity of this fracture, however, did not become apparent until after the First World War. The unique tone of Dutch political life followed from the fact that the Netherlands contained two major religious forces, Catholic and Protestant, and two major secular groupings, socialist and liberal. Three of the four, the socialists, the Protestants, and the Roman Catholics, contained a major working-class following. The liberals received some support from a relatively small grouping of urban craftsmen.

The contemporary interplay between the four has been examined by a number of scholars; among the more perceptive analysts one encounters Arend Lijphardt, Johan Goudsblom, Robert Bone, Hans Daalder, and Val Lorwin.³ This essay proposes to examine the concept of segmented pluralism from a somewhat different and more restricted angle. As the Dutch labour movement began to emerge and assume organizational form within the context of a late-nineteenth century surge in industrialization, it segmented along ideological lines. By 1914, the society embodied liberal, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and socialist trade unions. Although the latter structures quickly came to dominate the trade union movement, the presence of Protestant and Roman Catholic trade unions acted as a barrier to the total incorporation of labourers into the labour bloc. It also acted as a powerful check upon the growth of the socialist movement. Dutch trade unions were generally the result of initiatives taken by existing political parties and were usually closely tied to a political party and often functioned as an arm of the party. The trade unions thus reflected the ideological and policy sentiments of the major political groupings which, in turn, had their origins in the socio-cultural blocs which comprised the Dutch nation. The trade unions were not a causal factor, but instead can be viewed as a major manifestation of an industrializing, segmented, plural society. The fractures within the labour movement were sufficiently

³ Arend LIJPHARDT, *Verzuiling, pacificatie en kentering in de Nederlandse politiek* (Amsterdam: J.H. De Bussy, 1968); Johan GOUDSBLOM, *Dutch Society* (New York: Random House, 1967); Robert BONE, "The Dynamics of Dutch Politics," *Journal of Politics*, XXIV (February, 1962): 23-49; Hans DAALDER, "Parties and Politics in the Netherlands," *Political Studies*, III (January, 1955): 1-16; and Hans DAALDER, "The Netherlands: Opposition in a Segmented Society," in Robert DAHL, ed., *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966): pp. 188-236.

great to stem the emergence of a powerful, organized, revolutionary movement of self-conscious labourers. The labour bloc was just strong enough to have a certain impact upon policy, and yet could only realize influence and power through cooperation with other social groups. As a result, both the Dutch Social Democratic Workers Party and the socialist trade unions would be quick to establish a stance of accommodation and conciliation over and against the surrounding capitalist polity. As this situation developed on the eve of World War I, it laid the foundations for the coalition politics so characteristic of the Dutch parliamentary regimes in the twentieth century.

The process whereby the Dutch Social Democratic Workers Party and the social democratic trade unions moved toward accommodation with the capitalist polity occurred elsewhere in Europe. Ultimately, the Dutch labour movement proved to be no more or less accommodationist than their British, Belgian, German or Scandinavian counterparts. Accommodation in the Netherlands, however, was conditioned by unique circumstances. The social democratic labour movement was confronted with two powerful religious blocs which had their origins in the Reformation experience. Given the confessional thrust in Dutch society, the labour groupings of a social democratic bent sought to avoid anti-clerical associations and to present their demands along class lines in an obvious effort to under-cut the bourgeois leadership of both the Roman Catholic and Protestant parties and trade unions. From their nineteenth century origins until World War I, the left forces attempted to erode the vertical religious blocs by stressing the antithesis socialism-capitalism in lieu of the Protestant-Catholic or clerical-liberal antithesis. The attempt to establish a new antithesis did not succeed, nor did it succeed between the two world wars. The continued frustrations forced growing moderation upon the left in an attempt to attract new social groups and eventually created an atmosphere conducive to coalition politics and the generation of enduring plural structures.

Between 1870 and 1914 the Dutch economy began to experience an increase in the incidence of mechanization.⁴ The modernization of productive technique was accompanied by continued and sustained population growth, urbanization, and a dramatic shift in the occupational status of the population. For a number of reasons, the Netherlands did not experience the first phase of continental industrialization to the extent that the German territories, France, and Belgium did and as a natural consequence the Dutch economy lagged far behind the surrounding economies in north-western Europe in this regard. By 1850 almost half of the labour force was still engaged in agriculture and related activity, while only twenty four percent were involved in manufacturing.

⁴ For a detailed study of this process see J. A. DE JONGE, *De industrialisatie in Nederland tussen 1850 en 1914* (Amsterdam: Scheltema & Holkema N.V., 1968).

Table I: OCCUPATIONAL GROUPINGS BY TRADE AND SEX, 1849

	Men	Women	Total	As % of Total Labour Force
1. Agriculture, hunting and Fishing	383,867	157,996	551,863	44.15
2. Manufacturing	250,527	58,252	298,779	23.90
3. Trade	60,206	20,350	80,556	6.44
4. Banking and Insurance	529	88	617	—
5. Transportation	55,350	1,472	56,822	4.54
6. Government Service, Education	43,727	1,773	45,500	3.64
7. Household Servants	19,672	117,981	137,653	11.01
8. Other Services	28,417	14,212	42,629	3.41
9. Mining and all other Labourers	28,718	6,971	35,689	2.85
Total	881,013	369,095	1,250,108	100.00

Source: J. A. de JONGE, *De industrialisatie in Nederland tussen 1850 en 1914* (Amsterdam: Scheltema & Holkema, 1968), p. 19.

In 1889, over 41% of all workers in the Netherlands were employed in industry and manufacturing, while the share of the agrarian sector in the total labour force had declined to 31.7%.⁵ Over this same period of time the population of the Netherlands had grown from 3,056,879 to 4,511,415.⁶ The advancing urbanization of the population was mirrored in an increase of the population in the thirty-one largest cities and towns from 858,218 in 1849 to 1,550,187 in 1889.⁷ The impact of the modernization process was partially registered in the 1909 census which recorded only 27.3% of the population as being engaged in agriculture.⁸

The industrialization process took place within the context of a labour intensive agrarian infra-structure characterized by small plots and manual cultivation. During the last decades of the nineteenth century a declining percentage of those who tilled plots actually owned the plot they tilled. In 1882, 60.4% of all cultivators owned their plot; by 1900 the number of owners had declined to 56%.⁹ The increase in tenants reflected a growing demand for land and hence an increase in rent to levels which encouraged some owners to lease part of their holdings rather than cultivate their entire properties themselves. The ownership of land was by no means concentrated; in 1900 the Netherlands embodied 96,095 land owners of whom 45,931 owned 1-5 hectares and of whom only 94 owned plots ex-

⁵ The figures cited above are based on data in, CENTRAAL BUREAU VOOR DE STATISTIEK, *Jaarcijfers voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* ('s-Gravenhage: 1901), pp. 56-57.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁷ CENTRAAL BUREAU VOOR DE STATISTIEK, *Jaarcijfers voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* ('s-Gravenhage: 1915), p. 22.

⁸ This figure is derived from *ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

⁹ From CENTRALE COMMISSIE VOOR DE STATISTIEK, *Jaarcijfers. 1892. Binnenland* ('s-Gravenhage, 1893), pp. 102-103; and CENTRAAL BUREAU VOOR DE STATISTIEK, *Jaarcijfers voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* ('s-Gravenhage, 1902), pp. 128-129.

ceeding 100 hectares.¹⁰ In 1878 the agrarian sector was gripped by a decline of commodity prices which triggered an agricultural depression.¹¹ The crisis in Dutch agriculture lasted until 1895 and bore most heavily upon the northern provinces of Friesland and Groningen. It was in precisely these areas that some currents in a partially pre-industrial labour movement, including small town craftsmen and tradesmen, were first generated and began to assume form.

The seminal labour movement in the Netherlands was further conditioned by the size of productive units and the resource base of the nation. Manufacturing units in the Netherlands were generally quite small and the relative absence of mineral resources precluded the extensive iron and steel complexes found in Germany, Belgium, and Great Britain. Beyond this, broad sectors of the labour force were still involved in traditional craft trades and again, within the context of relatively small productive units. Given the traditional importance of trade and commerce in the pre-industrial economy and their continued growth as the nation industrialized, harbour, shipping and transport workers constituted the key element in the urban labour force. Apart from the Rotterdam and Amsterdam harbours, the Twente textile mill complex emerged as the only other major concentration of labourers who toiled within a framework of highly impersonal wage-labour relations. The productive institutions which surrounded most Dutchmen were generally small; small farms, a large *petit bourgeois* retail and craft sector, and factories of moderate size. Seen within the context of the north Atlantic world, *circa* 1914, the Netherlands was perhaps slightly under-industrialized.

Table II: THE INDUSTRIAL LABOUR FORCE AS A % OF THE NATIONAL LABOUR FORCE

	1900	1910
Belgium	43.9	50.1
Germany	47.3	52.0
France	42.0	40.1
United States	30.6	32.1
The Netherlands	32.2	33.4
Sweden	23.8	30.4

Source: Adapted from DE LONGE, *De industrialisatie in Nederland tussen 1850 en 1914*, p. 237.

The Reformation experience left deep religious divisions within the Dutch polity. In 1909, 44.18% of the population claimed membership in the Dutch Reformed church while 35.02% were Roman Catholics. The third largest religious grouping was embodied in the *Gereformeerde Ker-*

¹⁰ CENTRAAL BUREAU VOOR DE STATISTIEK, *Jaarcijfers voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* ('s-Gravenhage, 1901), pp. 128-129.

¹¹ For a thorough study of the impact of the agrarian crisis upon rural society in the province of Friesland, see Hille DE VRIES, *Landbouw en Bevolking in Friesland, 1878-1895* (Wageningen: H. Veenman and Zonen N.V., 1971). The political consequences of the crisis are developed by T. VAN DER WAL, *Op zoek naar een nieuwe vrijheid. Ben kwart eeuw arbeiders beweging in Friesland* (Leyden: 1972).

ken. The latter was formed in 1886 when fundamentalist ministers, led by Dr Abraham Kuyper withdrew from the Dutch Reformed Church in protest against a growing latitudinist thrust within the church. By 1909, 8.42% of the population were members of the new Calvinist church. The Dutch Jewish communities totaled 1.81% of the population and 4.97% of the population claimed no religion. The balance of the nation belonged to various Protestant sects. The Roman Catholic community was concentrated in the southern area of the nation, although sizable Roman Catholic minority concentrations were scattered across the central zone. The northern provinces were strongly Protestant. The Dutch Jewish communities were heavily concentrated in Amsterdam. The table below gives some indication of the diverse religious groupings in the Netherlands and their patterns of growth, 1869-1909.

Table III: RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN THE NETHERLANDS, 1869-1909

	1869	1879	1889	1899	1909
Dutch Reformed	1,956,852	2,186,869	2,194,649	2,471,021	2,588,261
Walloon Reformed	10,258	9,730	10,299	9,857	8,660
<i>Remonstrant</i>	5,486	9,678	14,889	20,807	27,450
Christian Reformed	107,123	139,903	189,251	54,629	55,720
Baptist	44,227	50,705	53,572	57,789	64,245
Evangelical Lutheran	57,545	61,825	63,703	70,246	81,833
Orthodox Lutheran	10,522	9,990	20,176	22,651	15,867
<i>Gereformeerde Kerken</i>	—	—	181,017	361,129	491,451
Roman Catholic	1,307,765	1,439,137	1,596,482	1,790,161	2,053,021
Old Catholic	5,287	6,251	7,687	8,754	10,082
Dutch Jewish	64,478	78,075	92,254	98,343	99,785
Portuguese Jewish	3,525	3,618	5,070	5,645	6,624
Other Sects		3,178	10,807	17,815	63,008
No Church Affiliation	6,461	12,253	66,085	115,179	290,960
Unknown		581	547	111	208
Total	3,579,529	4,012,693	4,511,415	5,104,137	5,858,175

Source: CENTRAL BUREAU VOOR DE STATISTIEK, *Jaarcijfers voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* ('s-Gravenhage: 1915), p. 10.

The major Dutch cities and towns, and particularly Amsterdam, also embodied a secular, free-thinking bourgeoisie. Although standing apart from the religious blocs, the liberal bourgeoisie constituted a coherent and ideologically cohesive bloc and by virtue of the post-1848 suffrage law was able to dominate the political life of the nation from 1848 until the turn of the century. The gradual erosion of the liberal bloc in parliament flowed from a series of relaxations in the property requirements which had to be met before an individual received the right to vote. As the enfranchised sector of the male population rose from 12% in 1870 to 67% in 1914, the liberal bourgeoisie was increasingly confronted with a growing *petit bourgeois* electorate which instinctively gravitated toward clerical candidates.¹² Given its highly urban orientation and rather narrow-

¹² CENTRAAL BUREAU VOOR DE STATISTIEK, *Jaarcijfers voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* ('s-Gravenhage: 1915), p. 315.

ly defined class base, Dutch liberalism could not respond to a rising clerical political tide without losing its internal unity. Two successive revisions of the suffrage requirements in 1887 and 1896 served to initiate the erosion of the liberal majority in parliament. As the socialist movement began to assume form and growing political dimensions, the liberals were faced with yet another problem. Between 1888 and 1913, the members of the one hundred-seat lower house of parliament (the *Tweede Kamer*) were elected in single member districts with a run-off should a candidate fail to obtain a majority on the first ballot. This procedure forced the liberals to compromise either their anti-clericism or their political economy.

In its origins, the Dutch liberal movement remained a community of sentiment; there was no liberal party *per se*. Individual candidates were elected to parliament as liberals; however, the elected deputies were responsible only to their constituencies and were not grouped within a party framework. Political liberalism articulated a demand for free, compulsory secular primary schools, a taxation policy favourable to the manufacturing, commercial and financial communities, an opening of Indonesian resources to private investors and capital, and a secular, libertarian state. The importance of maintaining a secular educational system and preventing clerical inroads into the ongoing operation of the state served as a type of political glue, holding the liberals together. Beneath the apparent unity, the liberal bloc began to fracture. As early as 1871, an element in the liberal parliamentary bloc began to demand a broadening of the suffrage base. When a liberal party was finally formed in 1885 in the form of the Liberal Union, it was held together by the school question and related anti-clerical issues.¹³ *Grand bourgeois* liberals, fearing a further extension of the suffrage stood aside, thus three liberal groupings would emerge at the turn of the century. In 1891, an Amsterdam based Radical League, demanding suffrage revision and a heightened concern with social policy and social issues, was created by the dissenting left wing of the Liberal Union.¹⁴ Ten years later, the remaining left wing of the Liberal Union withdrew when a motion at the January, 1901, congress of the Union calling for universal manhood suffrage was rejected. The dissenting liberals immediately went over to the formation of a new liberal party, the Free Thinkers League, which absorbed the Radical League.¹⁵ The homogenous liberal grouping of an earlier era was thus divided into Old Liberals, Union Liberals and Free Thinkers. This type of political fragmentation must not obscure the fact that the liberal bourgeoisie as a socio-cultural community remained intact.

The labour force, despite the religious divisions which cut across this social grouping, was in the process of crystalizing into an identifiable political and cultural bloc by 1914, although the process was not yet

¹³ P. J. OUD, *Het jonste verleden. Parlementaire geschiedenis van Nederland, 1918-1940* (6 vols.; Assen: Van Gorcum & Company N.V., 1948-1951), I, pp. 12-13.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16. A prominent figure in the Free Thinkers League, Oud was also the author of a useful survey, *Honderd jaren. Een eeuw van staatkundige vormgeving in Nederland, 1840-1940* (3rd ed.; Assen: Van Gorcum & Company N.V., 1961).

complete. Like the Liberals, the labour movement was secular and anti-clerical. Unlike the liberals, the first spokesmen for the labour movement demanded the creation of a socialist order. The first Dutch section of the Second International, the Social Democratic League was formed in 1881.¹⁶ Increasingly under the influence of Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, the League, never numbering more than a few thousand members, began to incline in an anarcho-syndicalist direction. In 1894 a faction of parliamentary socialists led by Pieter Jelles Troelstra and the marxist Frank van der Goes withdrew from the League and formed the *Sociaal Democratische Arbeiderspartij* (Social Democratic Workers Party, SDAP).¹⁷ The SDAP replaced the League as the Dutch representative in the Second International in 1897 and by 1914 was clearly the political voice of labour. The SDAP, while electing two deputies to the lower house of parliament in 1897, was not able to generate a mass following until the 1913 elections. The suffrage law, the relative weakness of the socialist union movement, the absence of large, purely blue-collar, industrial labour concentrations, the nature of the manufacturing infra-structure, all served to retard the political development of the SDAP. Conscious of their political weakness, SDAP leadership increasingly inclined in a reformist direction, an inclination which resulted in a major party crisis in 1909 and the formation of a rival, marxist labour party, the *Sociaal Democratische Partij* (Social Democratic Party, SDP).¹⁸ In 1918, the SDP became the Communist Party of Holland.

The political mobilization in the late nineteenth century of both the Protestant and Roman Catholic blocs was intertwined. Until 1878, the Protestant deputies elected to the lower house were, like the liberals, individual candidates representing a community of sentiment. In 1878 a section of the Protestant political leadership, led by the remarkable Dr. Abraham Kuyper, parliamentarian, minister, journalist, theologian, and later founder of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* and the Free University of Amsterdam, went over to the formation of the nation's first political party, the Anti-Revolutionary Party (AR).¹⁹ Under Kuyper's leadership, the Anti-Revolutionary Party immediately demanded subsidy to confessional primary schools on a parity with the state schools and an assertion of the Calvinist character of the Dutch nation. Kuyper's movement had a certain measure of social content and also had a potentially democratic orientation. While opposing universal manhood suffrage, Kuyper held

¹⁶ For a brief discussion of the origins of the Social Democratic League see L.G.J. VERBERNE, *De Nederlandsche arbeidersbeweging in de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: P.N. van Kampen & Zoon N.V., 1940), pp. 100-132.

¹⁷ The split within the League is handled in great detail by D.J. WANSINK, *Het socialisme op de tweesprong. De geboorte van de S.D.A.P.* (Haarlem: H.D. Tjeenk Willink & Zoon N.V., 1939).

¹⁸ Willem VAN RAVESTEIJN traces the origins of the *Sociaal Democratische Partij* through the first one hundred pages of his highly partisan, socio-autobiographical *De wording van het Communisme in Nederland* (Amsterdam: P. N. van Kampen & Zoon N.V., 1948).

¹⁹ Jan and Annie ROMAIN give a brief sketch of Kuyper's career in their volume, *Erfaters van onze beschaving. Nederlandse gestalten uit zes eeuwen* (9th ed.; Amsterdam: Em. Querido's Uitgeverij N.V., 1971, pp. 747-770).

out the prospect of a household ballot for each family head.²⁰ From its origins, the Anti-Revolutionary movement contained a powerful, aristocratic, and socially conservative faction. By the turn of the century a cleavage appeared within the Anti-Revolutionary Party. The aristocratic and conservative faction began to resist the more democratic tendencies of the Kuyper leadership. Although Roman Catholic emancipation and the re-establishment of the church hierarchy had been the partial product of the historical liberal current in Dutch public life, the position of the Anti-Revolutionary movement on the school issue and Kuyper's refusal to press for an official, orthodox, state church, arguing instead that the true believers must always constitute a social minority, facilitated a Roman Catholic-Calvinist coalition possibility.²¹ As the school problem became the major issue in late-nineteenth century Dutch politics, the division in parliament became a clerical-liberal dichotomy with a solitary and isolated socialist faction constituting the final element on the liberal-left. Led by the nobleman, De Savornin Lohman, this element withdrew from the AR's in 1894 and by 1897 Lohman headed a faction of six Protestant deputies in the lower house which evolved in 1908 into a second Calvinist party, the Christian Historical Union.²²

The mid-nineteenth century representatives of Roman Catholic electorates were either aristocratic or of a *grand bourgeois* character. As such, the political voices of the Roman Catholic community, despite their minority status, did not move rapidly toward the creation of a Roman Catholic party. The Roman Catholic deputies in the *Tweede Kamer* formed a community of sentiment, lacking a formal party structure. The movement toward a Roman Catholic party was gradual, the process spanning thirteen years. In 1880 the Mgr. H.A.J.M. Schaepman was elected to parliament.²³ A moderate democrat and an admirer of the Roman Catholic Centre party in Imperial Germany, Schaepman published an essay, *A Catholic Party: A Sample Programme* in 1883, which proposed the formation of an expressly Roman Catholic party. Facing strong opposition from conservatives within the socially prominent sectors of the Roman Catholic laity, Schaepman and his followers were not in a position to achieve this goal until 1896 when the Roman Catholic State Party was created. Throughout the late nineteenth century, the Roman Catholic bloc in the *Tweede Kamer* gravitated toward the Anti-Revolutionary delegation and on the basis of the school question a clerical concentration was formed.

²⁰ E. KOSSMANN, "De groei van de anti-revolutionaire partij," in J. A. VAN HOUTTE, et al. eds., *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* (12 vols.; Utrecht: W. de Haan N.V., 1949-1958), XI, p. 8.

²¹ Hans DAALDER, "The Netherlands: Opposition in a Segmented Society," in Robert DAHL, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 202-203.

²² Frits DE JONG EDZ., "Het politieke leven in Nederland tussen 1901 en 1914," in J. A. VAN HOUTTE, et al., eds., *op. cit.*, XI, p. 281.

²³ L.G.J. VERBERNE, *Nieuwste Geschiedenis*, Vol. VIII of *Geschiedenis van Nederland*, ed. by H. BRUGMANS (8 vols.; Amsterdam: Joost van den Vondel N.V., 1935-1938), pp. 249-250.

Table IV: PARTY AFFILIATION OF DEPUTIES ELECTED TO THE *TWEEDE KAMER*, 1888-1913

<i>Party of Grouping</i>	1888	1891	1894	1897	1901	1905	1909	1913
Liberal Concentration	46	53	57	52	35	45	33	39
Roman Catholic	25	25	25	22	25	25	25	25
Anti-Revolutionary	27	21	15	17	23	15	25	11
Christian Hist. Union	—	—	—	6	9	8	10	10
Socialist	—	—	—	3	7	7	7	15

Source: Adapted from Hans DAALDER, "The Netherlands: Opposition in a Segmented Society," in Robert DAHL, ed., *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 202 and 206. There were one hundred seats in the *Tweede Kamer*. Since and occasional delegate defied classification, the columns above will not always total 100.

I. — THE SECULAR TRADE UNIONS

The liberal component in Dutch society crystalized well before the emergence of an organized, self-conscious labour force and in a certain sense foreshadowed the development of the latter. The first national trade union formed in the Netherlands was liberal in ideological and programatic orientation. The failure of the liberal trade union movement served as a type of impetus for social democratic and syndicalist trade union growth in the decade just before the turn of the century. In all three cases, the liberal, the syndicalist, and the social democratic, the trade union federations grew out of existing political parties. The *Algemeen Nederlands Werklieden Verbond* (General Dutch Workers Federation, ANWV) was a partial product of progressive liberalism in Amsterdam. The *Nationaal Arbeids-Secretariaat* (National Labour Secretariat, NAS) was created by the revolutionary *Sociaal Democratische Bond* (Social Democratic League). The *Nederlands Verbond van Vakverenigingen* (Dutch Federation of Trade Unions, NVV), while not the direct creation of the SDAP, was linked to it by a powerful ideological affinity. The development of all three reflected the existence of a secular thrust within Dutch life which, in turn, flowed along class lines. Eventually the trade unions of the labour bloc were usually affiliated with the NVV and both the ANWV and NAS structures shrunk to minor status. Within the secular community as a whole, politicalization preceded unionization, thus party organization and program was more advanced in terms of content and orientation than were the trade unions.

A. *Algemeen Nederlands Werklieden Verbond*. — The decade of the 1860s was characterized by the formation of small and scattered trade unions and workingmen's associations, particularly in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. By the end of 1870, both cities contained a municipal federation of trade union administrators. On 30 August 1869, a group of Amsterdam radicals and some trade union men established a Dutch section of the First International. Although the section quickly disintegrated with the collapse of the First International, the appearance of the First International in Amsterdam triggered a debate within the city over the nature and goals of the trade union movement.²⁴ Sections of

²⁴ I. J. BRUGMANS, *De arbeidende klasse in Nederland in de 19^e eeuw, 1813-1870* (7th ed.; Utrecht: Aula Boeken, 1967), pp. 263-265.

the First International were subsequently established in The Hague and Utrecht and, fusing with the Amsterdam Section, proceeded to form the *Nederlandsch Werklieden Verbond*, the Dutch Workers Federation. The *Nederlandsch Werklieden Verbond* was to have been a mixed association, embracing both trade unions and political associations.²⁵ The *Verbond* attracted little support from the seminal trade unions, in fact only three Amsterdam unions affiliated. Parallel to this development, Thomas de Rot, a typographer and a member of the Rotterdam Federation of Trade Union Administrators, issued a call in December, 1870, to trade union administrators throughout the Netherlands to summon a national convention which would then proceed to establish a national federation of trade union administrators. Amsterdam unions were responsive to the proposal but drafted an alternative plan. The new organization would be composed of trade unions *per se* and would not be a federation of administrators. In October, 1871, a convention was held in Utrecht at which time the representatives of various trade unions approved the Amsterdam proposal and thus the *Algemeen Nederlands Werklieden Verbond* was formed.

The ANWV was a federation of various municipal trade unions.²⁶ Only one of its affiliates, the General Dutch Typographers Federation, constituted a national trade union federation and it eventually withdrew from the ANWV. The balance of the affiliates were independent local trade unions concentrated in the artisanal sector of the economy. Carpenters, furniture makers, tailors and associated trades which demanded stern training and a relatively high level of manual skill were among the first to organize and once organized formed the core of the ANWV. An annual congress provided a forum for discussion; however, given the diffuse interests of the local trade unions, the congresses rarely were able to establish a policy framework. The first chairman of the ANWV and for years its titular head, the Amsterdam furniture maker B. Heldt, was a left-liberal and bitterly anti-socialist. During the late nineteenth century, Dutch progressives frequently formed mixed associations, grouping trade unions, political parties, and interested citizens in general, into a common front on behalf of a very particular cause. It was within this format that the Committee for Universal Suffrage, the Committee to Review the Social Question, and various other committees bearing on child labour, state pensions, etc., were formed. The mixed social action committees were usually either dominated by left-liberals or at least reflected a left-liberal bent of mind. Heldt himself was closely associated with the left-liberal community in Amsterdam and, in fact, served in the *Tweede Kamer* as a liberal deputy. Active in the Committee to Review the Social Question as well, Heldt symbolized the liberal phase of the Dutch trade union movement.

²⁵ L.G.J. VERBERNE, *De Nederlandsche arbeidersbeweging in de negentiende eeuw* (Amsterdam: P. N. van Kampen & Zoon N.V., 1940), pp. 75-78.

²⁶ For two brief discussions of the formation of the ANWV see, Frits DE JONG EDZ., *Om de plaats van de arbeid* (Amsterdam, N.V. De Arbeiderspers, 1956), pp. 20-25; and L.G.J. VERBERNE, *De Nederlandse arbeidersbeweging in de negentiende eeuw*, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-92.

The ANWV served as a projection of left-liberal attitudes in Amsterdam into the realm of trade union activity. Shunning strike actions and seeking to establish lines of communication between worker and employer, the ANWV stressed efficiency, the condition and hours of labour, and low price levels in place of wage demands. Politically, the ANWV articulated the left-liberal demand for universal suffrage and a measure of state control over the length and conditions of labour. Although the ANWV lacked direct organizational ties with the Liberal Union when the latter was formed in 1885, ANWV members, if they had the right to vote, usually voted liberal and after 1890 in Amsterdam supported the Radicals. The ANWV was never a large organization. Within a year from its formation it claimed sixteen affiliated unions with a combined membership of 3,400. Reaching a peak in 1876 of fifty-six affiliates and 5,500 members, it declined to thirty-nine affiliates and 3,500 members by 1882.²⁷ The ANWV's failure to become a mass organization was rooted in two causes. First, the organization endorsed liberal school policy which rendered it quite unattractive to devout Protestant and Roman Catholic workers. Second, the accent upon social harmony and solidarity had little appeal to broad masses of unskilled labourers, factory workers and transport workers. These groups slowly began, religious sensibilities permitting, to gravitate toward either syndicalism or social democracy. The ANWV thus remained a grouping of skilled artisans, indeed a type of labour aristocracy, tied to the norms and values of the liberal movement.

B. *The Nationaal Arbeids-Secretariaat*. — In the course of the 1891 congress of the Second International a resolution was adopted calling on the member social democratic parties to establish a national labour secretariat if such did not already exist. The *Sociaal Democratische Bond* responded in 1892 by designating Christiaan Cornelissen national secretary of labour. A protégé of Domela Nieuwenhuis and an ultra-revolutionary, Cornelissen served as labour secretary for only one year and then resigned, leaving a recommendation that a national, social revolutionary, labour federation be formed.²⁸ In July, 1893 representatives of six trade unions and the *Bond* met in Amsterdam and in the course of the conference the broad contours of the proposed organization were discussed. Despite the revolutionary bent of the *Bond*, invitations were extended to the ANWV, Roman Catholic and Protestant workingmen's associations, as well as to social democratic trade unions, to attend a second conference in August. The ANWV and the confessional unions refused to participate. The August conference resulted in the creation of the *Nationaal Arbeids-Secretariaat*.²⁹

The *Nationaal Arbeids-Secretariaat* failed to develop into the organizational core of the labour bloc in the Netherlands. This failure is reflected in its pattern of membership growth and decline. In 1894, NAS

²⁷ A.J.C. RÜTER, *De spoorwegstakingen van 1903. Een spiegel der arbeidersbeweging in Nederland* (SUN reprint; Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1935), p. 9.

²⁸ *Het Nationaal Arbeids-Sekretariaat in Nederland. Zijn ontstaan en werking* (np., nd. [1895]), p. 5.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

affiliates combined for a total membership of 15,728. The membership level reached a peak in 1895 when it rose to 18,700 and then a general decline began.³⁰ NAS shrunk to only 3,250 members by 1906 and then began a decade of growth, reaching 9,103 by 1914. There are a number of reasons for NAS's failure. From Christiaan Cornelissen through G. van Erkel, Jan van Zomeren and finally H. Kolthek, the NAS leadership repudiated the principles of the parliamentary institution and working class participation therein. Although NAS leadership initially supported the Domela Nieuwenhuis wing of the *Bond* and its successor organization, the *Socialistenbond* (Socialist League), it was bitterly opposed to the SDAP when the latter was formed in 1894. So much so in fact, that it moved in 1896 to expel all political parties, including the *Socialistenbond* from its membership.³¹ The refusal to cooperate with the SDAP forced a number of trade unions to withdraw from NAS and precluded the addition of trade unions whose general direction was social democratic.

NAS leadership generally took the position that the mission of NAS was to fan class consciousness and to prepare the Dutch labour force for a proletarian revolution and the establishment of a syndicalist state. Legislated social reform and the construction of an internal, salaried, union bureaucracy received a low priority within this context. For twenty-two years, NAS discouraged the development of salaried union administrators funded by high compulsory dues and instead placed an accent on voluntary, free-time administration and low nominal dues. From its origins NAS assigned a high priority to strike actions.³² The affiliates remitted all funds to a central, national strike fund. Whenever a NAS strike action would begin strike support funds would then flow from the central treasury to the community in question. Affiliates were not encouraged to develop their own strike support funds. Given the weakness of the administrative apparatus, the low dues and the quickness of the NAS leadership to support varied and diverse strike actions, precious funds were continually drained away. Finally, the NAS leadership did not encourage the formation of strong, national, trade-or industry-wide federations. It much preferred small, municipal federations of the various NAS affiliates in a given community. The chiliastic revolutionary expectations, the refusal to support a mass labour party, constant and frequently ill-timed strike actions, financial weakness and often amateur administration were combined with a sincere desire for highly decentralized, autonomous groupings of self-governing productive enterprises.

If NAS was bitterly anti-social democratic, it was equally hostile to any form of organized religion. The men of NAS articulated a type of vague and highly romantic marxism; however, since the movement failed to generate a body of theoretical literature, a systematic discussion of NAS

³⁰ *Gedenkboek. Uitgegeven door het Nationaal Arbeids-Secretariaat ter Gelegenheid van zijn 25-jarig bestaan* (Amsterdam: NAS, 1918), pp. 34-35.

³¹ Jan OUDEGEEST, *De geschiedenis der zelfstandige vakbeweging in Nederland* (2 vols.; Amsterdam: uitgave van het NVV, 1926-1932), I, pp. 245-255.

³² Frits DE JONG EDZ., *Om de plaats van de arbeid, op. cit.*, pp. 42-44.

and the religious communities is not possible. Devout Protestant and Roman Catholic workers were repelled by the revolutionary rhetoric and apparent zeal of NAS and were assured by their ministers and priests as well that NAS stood for philosophic materialism, atheism, and, ultimately, damnation. On the other hand, tens of thousands of secular labourers began to turn toward social democratic principles which held out the prospect of a socialist future combined with immediate social reforms *en route* to the final goal. What little strength NAS had on the eve of the First World War was concentrated in the Amsterdam construction trades and in the harbour workers. In the latter case, it was less a question of actual membership in NAS than of sympathy with the NAS style and attitude.

C. *The Nederland Verbond van Vakverenigingen*. — In February 1905, representatives of a number of select social democratic trade unions met in Amsterdam to discuss the formation of a national, social democratic trade union federation. In July, the statutes were approved and the *Nederlands Verbond van Vakverenigingen* was formed.³³ The organizational principles of the NVV contrasted sharply with those of NAS. Unlike the NAS affiliates, the NVV trade unions agreed to maintain their own strike funds and to support a cadre of salaried administrators. The member federations were highly centralized and, so far as possible, were national in scope. The NAS practice of encouraging the creation of municipal centrals which grouped the trades in a given village or town found no counterpart in the NVV. Furthermore, funds permitting, NVV federations were to maintain their own trade union newspaper. In ideological terms the NVV was also quite different. Although NVV leaders were social democrats and regarded the establishment of a socialist state as their ultimate goal, immediate and short-term policy considerations bore only upon wage and salary advances, improvements in the terms and conditions of labour, and the establishment of institutionalized collective bargaining. In its origins, the NVV would not formally support the SDAP in its agitation for universal suffrage nor did it either seek, or consent to, formal ties with the SDAP. Initially, the structure, though social democratic in spirit, proposed to address itself to purely economic gains and to ignore all issues of a political or parliamentary nature. This extreme caution was rooted in a very real fear that political involvement with the SDAP would alienate Protestant and Roman Catholic workers who might otherwise be brought into the NVV fold. The revolutionary aspects, or implications, of the socialist movement were kept in the background.

From its origins in 1894 until 1905, the SDAP leadership frequently discussed the desirability of forming a social democratic union arm. Given the weakness of both the party and the union movement in the Netherlands, it was generally agreed that initiative would have to come from the social democratic trade unions and not from the SDAP. When the initiative was finally taken, it came from the *Algemene Nederlandse Dia-*

³³ Jan OUDEGEEST, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 454-455.

mantbewerkerbond (General Dutch Diamond Workers Federation, ANDB).³⁴ Led by the Amsterdam diamond cutter Henri Polak, the ANDB was the largest and most powerful of the social democratic trade unions. In many ways the ANDB was a religious and cultural community as well as a trade union. Virtually the entire membership was concentrated in the electoral district Amsterdam III and was largely Jewish. Minority group consciousness, physical and geographic proximity, and a sense of trade and class identification all combined to give the ANDB a powerful inner cohesion. The organizational framework of the ANDB embodied a highly centralized governing board, salaried administrators and office staff, high compulsory dues and a firm commitment to collective bargaining. In 1898, Henri Polak published a brochure which called for the formation of a national federation of social democratic trade unions. There was no significant response. Finally, late in 1904, Polak took the lead in extending invitations to trade unions which shared the political and organizational philosophy of the ANDB. The NVV thus bore both the personal stamp of Polak and the ANDB. Down to 1914, the ANDB served as a type of yardstick against which other NVV federations were measured.

Table V: GROWTH IN NVV MEMBERSHIP, 1905-1914

Year	Total Membership
1905	18,960
1906	26,227
1907	32,270
1908	36,671
1909	40,628
1910	44,120
1911	52,235
1912	61,535
1913	84,434
1914	87,611

Source: *Het NVV in 1914*, p. 7.

As the NVV grew, the distance between it and the SDAP began to narrow. In 1908 the NVV announced that it would support SDAP agitation for universal suffrage and would also participate in actions and demonstrations on behalf of legislated social reforms.³⁵ The relations between the party and the trade unions were constantly strained, however, by NVV strike policy. It would follow as a matter of course that the NVV would not support syndicalist strike actions and quite often refused to support actions involving unorganized workers. On occasion SDAP members, arguing that the party had a mission which reached far beyond trade union concerns, urged that support be given. This was especially true of the left wing of the SDAP. Only in the case of the 1911 harbour strike did the tension become severe.³⁶ In this instance, an NVV-SDAP commission

³⁴ *Ibid.*, I, pp. 452-454.

³⁵ Frits DE JONG EDZ., *Om de plaats van het arbeid*, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

³⁶ For a recent and detailed discussion of this issue see, J. M. WELCKER, "De verhouding tussen vakbeweging en socialistische partij in Nederland, 1903-1913," *Mededelingen blad van de Nederlandse Vereniging tot beoefening van de sociale geschiedenis* (1970), pp. 3-17.

was created to examine the possibility of closer ties between the two. By 1914, the commission had yet to issue a report.

The NVV attempted through its relative moderation and caution to avoid alienating religious workers. The concentration on immediate gains and the refusal to fuse the union structure with the SDAP made it possible for Roman Catholic and Protestant workers to join an NVV union and yet continue to vote for the Roman Catholic State Party or the Anti-Revolutionary Party. Nevertheless, devout labourers did not join the NVV. Most of its membership was secular and, to one degree or another, socialist. Some members of the latitudinous wing of the Dutch Reformed Church joined the NVV, although this was not true of strict Calvinists or members of the Dutch Reformed Church or the *Gereformeerde* Church. The NVV was able quickly to outstrip the NAS trade unions and to establish itself as the dominant force in the trade union movement; however, it was immediately challenged by the confessional trade union movement, thus its dominant position in the trade union movement was never absolute. Beyond this, the NVV unions concentrated on bread-and-butter issues at the expense of social democratic ideological indoctrination. This stance, in turn, had two results. One, it tended to defuse revolutionary thrusts within the rank-and-file and to assign a high priority to negotiated settlements. Two, the emerging labour bureaucracy, while generally social democratic in mentality, became increasingly acclimatized to negotiating with bourgeois employers and were correspondingly less inclined to propose dramatic alternatives to the capitalist political economy.

II. — THE PROTESTANT TRADE UNIONS

The creation of Protestant trade unions in the Netherlands reflected a double reaction against the liberal ANWV on the one hand, and the scattered and isolated socialist groups on the other. The formation of the first national Protestant workingmen's association, *Patrimonium*, was the direct result of this reaction. The establishment in 1909 of the *Christelijk National Vakverbond* (Christian National Trade Federation, CNV) flowed in turn from a growing dissatisfaction on the part of Protestant labour leaders with the social conservatism of *Patrimonium* and reflected a desire to place Protestant trade unions in an independent relationship vis-à-vis employers and management. Finally, developments within the confessional trade union movement, 1872-1914, rendered national, inter-confessional structures impossible. By 1914, Roman Catholic and Protestant trade union organizations were as distinct and separate as the two religious communities and their respective political arms.

A. *Patrimonium*. — On 3 January 1876, five employers and five Protestant workers met in Amsterdam to discuss the creation of a workingmen's association based upon Protestant principles.³⁷ The initiative came

³⁷ R. HAGOORT, *Patrimonium (Vaderlijk Erfdeel). Gedenkboek bij het gouden jubileum* (Kampen: Nederlandsch Werkliedenverbond, 1927), pp. 153-154. For two brief discussions of *Patrimonium* see L.G.J. VERBERNE, *De Nederlandsche arbeidersbeweging in de negentiende eeuw, op. cit.*, pp. 93-100; and R. HAGOORT, *De Christelijk Sociale Beweging* (Franeker: Christelijk Nationale Bibliotheek, n.d. [1956]), pp. 70-82.

from an Amsterdam bricklayer, Klaas Kater. A devout Calvinist and an admirer of Dr Abraham Kuyper, Kater had been an active member of the ANWV. Horrified by the ANWV endorsement of the liberal school policy, hostile toward Dutch liberalism in general, and highly suspicious of tendencies within the ANWV, Kater withdrew from the organization. Late in 1875 in concert with friends, he moved toward the formation of a new organization which would be based solely upon Christian principles. By the end of September, 1877, agreement was reached as to the structure, goals, and program of *Patrimonium*.³⁸

Article 1. There exists a Dutch Workers Federation by the name of *Patrimonium*..., which, in the conviction that God's word and the traditions of our people form the trustworthy basis of a Christian society, takes as its goal: to spread the knowledge of such in order to awaken love for such, and finally on this basis to promote the interests of society in their totality, and those of the worker in particular, through all lawful means. It [*Patrimonium*] is seated in Amsterdam.

Means

- Article 2. The federation seeks to realize its goal through means of:
- a. spreading the principle of the Federation by mouth and by writing;
 - b. conferences for popular lectures and mutual discussions of topics of a religious, moral, economic and social nature;
 - c. discussions of global history in general, of the history of the fatherland in particular, with young people, particularly the children of members;
 - d. a people's library to spread positive Christian, purely historical, and scientifically sound knowledge;
 - e. promotion of theoretical and practical trade education, especially for the benefit of member's children;
 - f. a Christian tea house or inn along with a conversation and reading room for workers;
 - g. consumers' co-operatives, a savings bank, and similar institutions that can be achieved through co-operation;
 - h. support of widows and sick or injured workers;
 - i. all that further can be used in the interest of the federation, with submission to God's word.

The remaining articles dealt with the newspaper organ, *De Werkmansvriend* (The Workingman's Friend), membership, dues, and the administration of *Patrimonium*. In terms of concrete policy particulars, *Patrimonium* articulated a doctrine of social solidarity, contending that class distinction reflected the will of God. *Patrimonium* proposed to bring the Christian employer and the Christian labourer together in an attempt to begin a dialogue bearing on the terms and conditions of labour. Formulations bearing on class struggle or revolutionary action were, of course, out of the question. Kater himself cared little for material demands, going so far as once to indicate that little good could be expected from wage increases. State subsidy to confessional schools, a ban on compulsory school attendance, anti-drinking campaigns, a measure of state control and inspection of the conditions of labour, a ban on Sunday labour, constituted the issues closest to *Patrimonium's* immediate policy goals. In broad terms, *Patrimonium* generally attracted craft workers who laboured in artisanal surroundings. Often on close personal terms with his employer and a member

³⁸ R. HAGOORT, *Patrimonium*, op. cit., pp. 176-178.

of the same church, the member of *Patrimonium* could also find in the organization some of the values of an earlier guild culture. Politically, *Patrimonium* stood behind the Anti-Revolutionary Party and was naturally quite willing to accept the varying pieces of social legislation which the Anti-Revolutionary Party leadership would occasionally propose. The organization also favored suffrage reform and generally inclined toward Kuyper's heads of household vote proposal. In the final analysis, *Patrimonium* remained a forum for discussion and did not serve as a vehicle for working-class social action.

From its origins until 1899, *Patrimonium* was led by Kater. From a handful of Amsterdam tradesmen in 1876, *Patrimonium* had grown to 13,000 members by 1899.³⁹

Table VI: PATRIMONIUM MEMBERSHIP GROWTH, 1885-1899

	Membership	Affiliated Sections
1885	3,865	34
1890	6,647	72
1895	12,980	165
1899	13,000	174

Source: R. Hagoort, *De Christelijk Sociale Beweging* (Franeker: Christelijk Nationale Bibliotheek, n.d. [1956]), pp. 74-75.

B. *The Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond (CNV)*. — In 1899 Kater was replaced by A. S. Talma as the titular leader of *Patrimonium*.⁴⁰ A minister by training, Talma was somewhat of a force within the left-wing of the Anti-Revolutionary Party, serving at a later date as a deputy in the *Tweede Kamer* and eventually as a cabinet minister. *Patrimonium* underwent a series of profound changes during the initial years of Talma's leadership. These changes unleashed forces which culminated in 1908 in the creation of the *Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond*. As a matter of principle, Talma and a new generation of *Patrimonium* leaders encouraged the formation of purely Protestant trade unions. The trade union would then affiliate with *Patrimonium* as a trade union *per se*. After the turn of the century, Talma attached great importance to the systematic organization of the Protestant labour force. Kater, by contrast, stressed the importance of mixed associations to a far greater degree than did Talma. Despite this difference, one must bear in mind that the first Protestant trade union was formed in Amsterdam in 1890 by a *Patrimonium* section embracing carpenters and by 1896 *Patrimonium* claimed twenty-four trade union affiliates. Talma also endorsed the right of Protestant workers to strike if, in a subjective sense, the cause was

³⁹ R. HAGOORT, *De Christelijk Sociale Beweging*, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-75. Hagoort was an activist in *Patrimonium* and was one of its leading publicists between the two world wars.

⁴⁰ R. HAGOORT, *Het beginsel behouden. Gedenkboek van het Nederlandsche Werkliedenverbond Patrimonium over de jaren 1891-1927* (Amsterdam: Nederlandsch Werkliedenverbond Patrimonium, 1934), pp. 259-299, surveys Talma's early career as the leader of *Patrimonium*. This volume supplements Hagoort's earlier volume on *Patrimonium*. The first volume ends in 1890; the second reaches 1927.

just and all other reasonable attempts at compromise had failed. Kater had consistently denounced strike actions as inherently evil and as acts of social revolution.⁴¹

In line with the new course, *Patrimonium* leadership created a national secretariat for Protestant trade unions in 1901.⁴² Known as the *Christelijk Arbeidssecretariaat* (Christian Workers Secretariat, CAS), the organization, while linked to *Patrimonium*, was open to Protestant trade unions who had refused to affiliate with *Patrimonium* on grounds that *Patrimonium* was a mixed association. CAS took the following principle as a point of departure.⁴³

The Christian Labour Secretariat in the Netherlands has as its goal the strengthening of the influence of the Christian labour movement through advice and organization.

The second article of the by-laws proposed to realize this end through the following six steps:

1. Promote the creation of Protestant Christian trade federations in trades where they do not yet exist;
2. Promote the fusion of local unions in the same trade into a single federation, resting on Christian principles;
3. Bring various Protestant Christian trade unions and combined trade organizations into contact with each other so as to facilitate common action in strikes, lock-outs, and in the struggle to improve trade conditions, etc.;
4. Collect statistical data and strengthen information concerning organization with regard to the various affiliated unions and federations;
5. Maintain correspondence with the *Nationaal Arbeids-Secretariaat* and with other secretariats;
6. Publish newsletter dealing with the interests of the trade federations as a supplement to the weekly *Patrimonium*.

Although few Protestant trade unions affiliated with CAS, labour leaders within the organization began to press for a greater degree of independence from *Patrimonium*. Formal ties between the two were severed in 1905. In 1908 Protestant trade unions, many of which belonged to CAS, formed the CNV.⁴⁴ The trade unions of Protestant character could now opt for affiliation with a national, Protestant, trade union federation which was an independent entity in itself. In theory, the CNV was interconfessional, in practice it quickly assumed a Protestant character.

As a result of negotiations between Protestant trade unions through the year 1908, the *Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond* was officially formed on 13 May 1909.⁴⁵ The organizational principles of the CNV closely

⁴¹ R. HAGOORT; *Het beginsel behouden*, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-276.

⁴² H. AMELINK, *Onder eigen banier* (2nd ed.; Utrecht: Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond, 1950), pp. 18-22. An official in the *Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond*, Amelink carries this volume down to 1914. A second volume by AMELINK, *Met ontplooiide banieren* (Utrecht: Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond, 1950) traces the CNV's development to 1940. For a concise discussion of the Protestant trade union movement from its origins to 1903 see A.J.C. RÛTER, *De spoorwegstakingen van 1903*, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-170.

⁴³ H. AMELINK, *Onder eigen banier*, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

⁴⁴ For two versions of this action see R. HAGOORT, *De Christelijk Sociale Beweging*, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-127; and H. AMELINK, *Onder eigen banier*, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-130.

⁴⁵ H. AMELINK, *Onder eigen banier*, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

resembled those of the NVV. Each trade union federation would maintain its own treasury and would be funded internally by a combination of compulsory dues and voluntary contributions. The union bureaucracy would be salaried if the federation could generate sufficient funds. Unlike the NVV, the CNV allowed local unions to affiliate if they could explain in writing why they did not, or could not, affiliate with an appropriate national federation. However, the major organizational difference between the two lay in the NVV stress on high compulsory dues as a means of building up strike support funds. The CNV, regarding strike actions as a last resort, did not press for high dues levels nor did it accent the importance of strong federation strike funds. However, the cautious attitude of the CNV towards strike actions was not reflected in its initial statement of policy concerning strike support.⁴⁶

Article 17

The leadership of wage movement, strike or lock-outs remains in the hands of the administration of the organization involved. However, the administration of the federation retains the right continually to investigate the state of affairs and in this connection to offer advice to the administration of the organization involved.

Article 18

If there is a chance that an organization will be involved in a strike or a lock-out and wishes to request financial and moral support from the federation for its striking or locked-out members, then the administration of this organization must inform the administration of the federation within a reasonable time.

The administration of the federation can, in case it judges such necessary, make an attempt with the two parties to reach a peaceful solution to the conflict, in consultation with the administration of the organization involved.

Should organizations for pressing reasons, which in each special case must be judged by the administration of the federation, be hindered in making known the circumstances within a reasonable period of time to the administration of the federation, then the strike or lock-out can still be supported by the federation on request from its administration.

Trade federations, who are involved in strikes or lock-outs, cannot request financial support from the federation for the first fourteen days.

The CNV did not establish institutionalized ties either with the Anti-Revolutionary Party or the Christian Historical Union. Standing apart from the two Protestant parties, the leadership of the CNV quite naturally inclined toward the Anti-Revolutionary Party and not toward the socially conservative Christian Historical Union.⁴⁷ Only a fraction of the CNV membership enjoyed the right to vote; thus the CNV had relatively little to offer the Anti-Revolutionaries in any case. By and large, CNV political activity revolved around lobbying and coaxing within Anti-Revolutionary Party circles on behalf of specific reform measures; for example, labour inspection, protection of female and child labour, old age pensions, illness and accident insurance and a relaxation of the suffrage law. Although the CNV did not formally endorse a party, its membership usually voted Anti-Revolutionary.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

⁴⁷ For a brief discussion of the interplay between the CNV and the AR party, see H. AMELINK, *Met ontplooiide banieren, op. cit.*, pp. 307-316.

On the eve of the First World War the CNV was still quite small, while between the two world wars it developed into a strong organization numbering 76,488 members by 1921 and grew to 120,344 by 1939.⁴⁸

Table VII

CNV MEMBERSHIP GROWTH, 1909-1914	
1909	6,452
1910	6,564
1911	7,849
1912	8,642
1913	11,147
1914	12,386

Source: H. AMELINK, *Met ontplooidde banieren* (Utrecht: Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond in Nederland, 1950), p. 8.

In terms of its internal configuration, the CNV federations were quite limited. Only three federations exceeded one thousand members by 1914 and of these the largest contained only thirteen hundred members. The internal composition of the CNV assumed the following contours by 1914. The limited scope and craft nature of the CNV membership are reflected in this data.

Table VIII

<i>Federation</i>	<i>Membership</i>
1. Christian Glass Workers Federation	72
2. Christian Typographers Federation	405
3. Dutch Christian Construction Workers Federation	1,279
4. Christian Federation of Painters' Helpers	174
5. Federation of Dutch Christian Furniture, Paper Hangers, Upholsterers and Related Trades	216
6. Christian Wood Workers Federation	267
7. Dutch Federation of Christian Workers in the Clothing Industry	97
8. General Federation of Christian Mine Workers	1,060
9. Christian Metal Workers Federation	677
10. Dutch Christian Textile Workers Federation "Unitas"	1,303
11. Christian Federation of Bakers' Helpers, Chocolate and Sugar Workers	505
12. Christian Protestant Federation of Workers in Alcohol and Related Trades	89
13. Christian Federation of Cigar Makers and Tobacco Workers	786
14. Protestant Christian Federation of Land, Garden and Field Workers in the Groningen province	519
15. Dutch Christian Butchers' Helpers Federation	34
16. Dutch Union of Christian Office and Trade Employees	710
17. Federation of Christian Harbour and Transport Unions	512
18. Dutch Federation of Christian Protestant Postal, Telegraph and Telephone Employees	288
19. Christian Federation of Municipal Workers	963
Local Trade Unions	
20. Bolsward: Dutch Federation of Christian Factory Workers	12
21. Dokkum: Protestant Christian Construction Trade Union	20
22. Enschede: Christian Textile Workers Union	565
23. Hilversum: Christian Carriage Workers Union	15
24. Leeuwarden: Christian Painters' Helpers Union	46
25. Leeuwarden: Christian Federation of Machinists, Stokers and Boat Personnel	22

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Table VIII (concluded)

<i>Federation</i>	<i>Membership</i>
26. Naaldijk: Christian Union of Land and Garden Workers	15
27. Schoonhoven: Protestant Christian Union of Gold and Silver Smiths	12
28. Tilburg: Textile Workers Union	303
29. Vlaardingen: Christian Coopers' Helpers Union	57
Total	<u>11,023</u>

Source: HAGOORT, *De Christelijk Sociale Beweging*, pp. 129-130.

C. *Unitas*. — In 1895 the Dutch Christian Textile Workers Federation was formed. Known as *Unitas*, the organization was a confessionally mixed trade federation, embracing local unions which were either Roman Catholic or Protestant.⁴⁹ The leadership of *Unitas* was mixed. In 1900 *Patrimonium* endorsed the principle of homogenous Protestant workingmen's associations. This endorsement was strengthened by the Christian Social conference in 1905, a conference organized by the Anti-Revolutionaries and *Patrimonium* and open to all interested Protestant groups. The conference rejected inter-confessional unions in principle.⁵⁰ When the negotiations began in 1908 which led to the creation of the CNV, there was some sentiment within both religious communities for an inter-confessional structure.⁵¹ However, the Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church had issued a statement in July 1906, which called upon Roman Catholic labourers to form their own trade unions.⁵²

It is and remains the sincere and expressed wish of the most Reverend Bishops that their Roman Catholic subordinates unite and remain united in Roman Catholic organizations. These must — it speaks for itself — not be just unions of Roman Catholics but Roman Catholic unions in which Roman Catholic principles come to the fore.

This statement was further reinforced in 1909 when the Roman Catholic Trade Bureau was established. In point of fact, the Roman Catholic hierarchy, the Anti-Revolutionary Party, the leadership of *Patrimonium*, and the bulk of the laity were all opposed to an inter-confessional union framework.⁵³ The only vital and effective thrust in this direction came from *Unitas* and a handful of union men. After 1909 Roman Catholic labour began to move in a different direction.

The Protestant trade unions grew out of the existing Protestant political groupings and were generally expressive of the norms and values

⁴⁹ L.G.J. VERBERNE, *De Nederlandsche arbeidersbeweging in de negentiende eeuw*, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

⁵⁰ R. HAGOORT, *Het beginsel behouden*, *op. cit.*, p. 398.

⁵¹ H. AMELINK, *Onder eigen banier*, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-67, 78-90, 147-156, contains a series of discussions bearing on the unsuccessful attempts to form an inter-confessional trade union structure.

⁵² The quotation is from the text reproduced in C. J. KUIPER, *Uit het rijk van den arbeid. Ontstaan, groei en werk van de Roomsche Katholieke vakbeweging in Nederland* (2 vols.; Utrecht: N.V. Boekdrukkerij en Uitgeversmaatschappij der R.K. Arbeidersbeweging, 1924-1927), I, p. 35.

⁵³ For a lucid, though brief, discussion of the inter-confessional issue by a Protestant partisan, see M. RUPPERT, *De Nederlandse vakbeweging* (2 vols.; Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn N.V., 1953), I, pp. 123-127.

of the Protestant political leadership. The Protestant trade unions allowed the Protestant bloc to begin a resolution of pressing social issues within a distinctive normative and cultural framework and thus served to reinforce the bloc. They also offered an alternative to the secular trade unions of the social democratic grouping and thus minimized the danger that the class orientation of the social democrats might erode the bloc at its lower socio-economic levels.

III. — THE ROMAN CATHOLIC LABOUR MOVEMENT

The re-establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and the return of the primate of the Church from a Roman exile imposed during the Reformation century entailed a concomitant emancipation of the Roman Catholic community in 1853. This, in turn, was followed by a quarter century of Roman Catholic cultural and psychological isolation.⁵⁴ At first, turning inwards onto itself, the community began to enter the national political and cultural life of the nation during the 1880s and 1890s. It did so within the context of expressedly Roman Catholic organizations, thus a Roman Catholic press, a Roman Catholic political party, Roman Catholic schools and a strong sense of dependency upon the hierarchy for political advice and direction. The growing concern in the papal court with social issues had an impact in the Netherlands as well as in the other Roman Catholic polities in Europe. This was especially true of the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, which, while it had scant impact upon the Roman Catholic population at large, influenced individual laymen and priests. Like *Patrimonium*, the initial labour and social impulse came from reforming bourgeois elements and ecclesiastics. The Roman Catholic Trade Bureau, like the CNV, grew out of an existing mixed association which was closely tied to a political party. The broad questions of social justice and social policy posed by the modernization process, received attention in *De Wachter*, the first Roman Catholic newspaper to stress social issues, as early as 1872.⁵⁵ Under the leadership of the priest and parliamentary delegate H.J.A.M. Schaepman, *De Wachter* played a role similar to that played by Dr. Abraham Kuyper's *Standaard* within the Protestant community. The similarities between the two men are quite striking. Both were clerics by training, both had university affiliations at one time or another in the course of their respective careers, both were prime movers in the creation of mass, confessional parties, both emerged as prominent figures in the struggle for confessional school subsidies, and both were journalists of national stature. Schaepman and Kuyper alike had to struggle against clerical conservatives within their respective movements, although the Roman Catholic State Party remained an entity while the Christian Historical Union grew out of dissent within the Anti-Revolutionary Party. Both men were bitterly anti-socialist, as were their respective movements.

⁵⁴ L. J. ROGIER and N. DE ROOY, *In vrijheid herboren: Katholiek Nederland, 1853-1953* ('s-Gravenhage: N.V. Uitgeversmij. Pax, 1953), pp. 311-316.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 335-337.

The first Roman Catholic workingmen's associations were, like their Protestant counterparts, essentially discussion clubs. Repudiating doctrines of class struggle and any suggestion of actions against a given employer, the associations were designed to provide a forum for dialogue between Roman Catholic labourers and management. The first of these, the Saint Joseph's journeymen's unions, appeared in Amsterdam and Bergen op Zoom in 1868.⁵⁶ Most of the Saint Joseph's unions were concentrated within the diocese Haarlem. The individual unions were usually under clerical direction and discharged an educational mission. Evening artisanal training, instruction in faith, doctrine and moral conduct constituted the core of the unions' program. The Saint Joseph's journeymen's unions were aimed primarily at young artisans although older men often joined. By the middle of the 1880s associations of this typology were scattered throughout the Roman Catholic communities.

The mobilization of the middle and lower socio-economic sectors of the Roman Catholic community began to assume new organizational dimensions in 1888. In the course of a textile strike in Twente during the winter and early spring of 1888, the priest Alphons Ariëns founded and organized an association of Roman Catholic textile workers.⁵⁷ Although the membership was purely working class, the organization was not a trade union. It was designed to combat the agitation and propaganda of the *Sociaal Democratische Bond* and disseminate health, hygiene and anti-alcohol information throughout working class homes in Twente. Simultaneous to Ariëns activity in Twente, the Amsterdam cigar merchant W.C.J. Passtoors founded the Dutch Roman Catholic Peoples Federation in Amsterdam.⁵⁸ Embodying both labourers and lower middle class elements, the federation was founded to protest the high admission fees charged at the Amsterdam celebrations of Leo XIII's tenth pontifical year. The federation articulated a social Catholic doctrine and although it was not a trade union, it served to awaken Roman Catholic labourers and to fan an interest in trade union organization. The immediate goal of the Roman Catholic People's Federation was "... to protect the workingman and the lower-middle class from the socialist errors of our era."⁵⁹ Roman Catholic lay organizations in the Netherlands were under the jurisdiction of the diocesan seat, thus the Roman Catholic People's Federation was directed by the Bishop of Haarlem. Throughout the 1890s Roman Catholic workingmen's associations continued to form. Sometimes the organizations were restricted to labourers, in other cases they were mixed associations. In all cases, they were under diocesan control. By 1900, the Archbishopric of Utrecht contained the Federation of Roman Catholic Workers' Unions, the Bishopric of Den Bosch, the Catholic Workers' Federation and the Roman Catholic People's Federation, while the three

⁵⁶ L.G.J. VERBERNE, *De Nederlandsche arbeidersbeweging in de negentiende eeuw*, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

⁵⁷ M. RUPPERT, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-162.

⁵⁸ L. J. ROGIER and N. DE ROOY, *op. cit.*, p. 345.

⁵⁹ Quotation is cited in *ibid.*, p. 460.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 460-461.

remaining Bishoprics Haarlem, Breda and Roermond, contained People's Federations.⁶⁰

Until 1916, the Roman Catholic labour movement and the hierarchy had to grapple with a number of major organizational questions. One school of thought, centering on the Limburg Priest Henri Poels, argued for *stand* organizations at the diocesan level.⁶¹ Such organizations would group members in sections delineated by class lines. The various sections would then be linked to a diocesan-wide federation encompassing labourers, agrarians, and bourgeois components. Workingmen's associations would thus be linked to other groupings in a People's Federation. On the opposing side stood the attorney and journalist, P.J.M. Aalberse, perhaps the key spokesman for what came to be known as the "Leiden school."⁶² Editor of the influential *Katholiek Sociaal Weekblad*, parliamentarian and later cabinet minister, Aalberse urged the creation of strong, highly centralized, national, Roman Catholic trade union federations. A national Roman Catholic trade union had already been established in Utrecht in 1901; however, the Bishops refused to approve its statutes, preferring instead to retain the principle of five separate sets of *stand* organizations.⁶³ Finally on 1-2 August 1908, a national, Roman Catholic, trade union congress was held. Shortly hereafter, the hierarchy consented to a national trade union structure for Roman Catholic workers. On 18 July 1909, the Bureau for Roman Catholic Trade Organization was formed.⁶⁴

The formation of the Bureau was inevitably intertwined with the questions posed by *Unitas* and the issue of inter-confessional unions. In 1896, Roman Catholic textile workers' associations under the direction of the ecclesiastic Alphons Ariëns entered into a federative relationship with Protestant counterparts. The resultant *Unitas* federation embodied a Christian, anti-socialist, labour bloc in Twente. As noted, Protestant leadership objected strongly to the inter-confessional framework, particularly at the 1905 Christian Social conference and in a parallel action the Roman Catholic Bishops ordered Roman Catholic associations to withdraw from *Unitas* in 1906. As in the case of Protestant union officials in Twente, the Bishop's order triggered sharp debate in Twente. Two of the Roman Catholic secretaries of *Unitas*, H.J. Stins, and T. Huysing, had emerged as spokesmen for the inter-confessional direction and enjoyed a large following in Twente.⁶⁵ When the Bishop's order was issued the majority of Roman Catholic workers in Enschede in the heart of Twente chose to remain in *Unitas*. When the CNV was formed in 1909, Stins went over

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 471-474.

⁶² Unlike many prominent nineteenth century Dutch political leaders, P.J.M. Aalberse has a scholarly biographer; see J. P. GRIBLING, *P.J.M. Aalberse, 1871-1948* (Utrecht: N.V. Uitgeverij De Lantaarn, 1961).

⁶³ L. J. ROGIER and N. DE ROOY, *op. cit.*, p. 474.

⁶⁴ For a brief and general discussion of the late nineteenth century Roman Catholic labour movement in the Netherlands see M. RUPPERT, *De Nederlandse vakbeweging, op. cit.*, pp. 150-171. The complexities of the movement are best handled by L. J. ROGIER and N. DE ROOY, *op. cit.*, pp. 460-476.

⁶⁵ H. AMELINK, *Onder eigen banier, op. cit.*, pp. 78-90.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 122-123.

to the Protestant organization and continued to press for an inter-confessional union framework.⁶⁵ With the creation of the Bureau for Roman Catholic Trade Organization in 1909, the Bishops began to press even more aggressively for the withdrawal of Catholic labourers from the CNV unions. In 1912 Roman Catholic workers were ordered to withdraw from *Unitas* and by the end of the First World War the Christian Mine Workers' Federation constituted the sole remaining inter-confessional union affiliated with the CNV.⁶⁷

Between 1909 and 1914, the membership of the Bureau for Roman Catholic Trade Organization more than tripled. Ten federations with a total membership of 9,000 labourers immediately adhered to the Bureau in 1909. By the end of 1914, the Bureau claimed twenty-two affiliated federations embracing 742 local unions and 37,498 total members.⁶⁸

The Roman Catholic trade unions, like their Protestant counterparts, served to reinforce an existing bloc within Dutch Society. The exclusive stance of the Catholic minority found expression in their formation, as did the rising social consciousness of European Catholicism in general. Their existence also prevented a dramatic erosion of the bloc.

IV. — CONCLUSIONS

The segmented pluralism stressed by Val Lorwin is clearly present in the Dutch labour movement by the eve of the First World War. Apart from discharging a socio-economic function, the Dutch trade union federations also articulated special, and often highly inclusive, ideological propositions. In broad terms, the Protestant, Roman Catholic, liberal and social democratic trade unions had their origins in prior political movements and generally reflected a desire to maintain the ideological contours of those movements at the trade union level. The movement from association to trade union further reflected a tension between the initially bourgeois leadership of the seminal Christian labour groupings and the need to discharge the functional and economic role of a classic trade union. As the transition was realized on the eve of the First World War, the fragmentation within the labour movement began to correspond to the broader fragmentations within Dutch society at large. In quantitative terms, the NVV emerged as the largest of the major trade union federations, numbering over 87,000 members by 1914. The secularization of sectors of the late nineteenth century labour force created fertile ground for NVV recruitment, given the latter's strong orientation toward bread-and-butter unionism and effective strike actions. By way of contrast, the Roman Catholic unions claimed over 37,000 members and the CNV 12,000 by that date. The secularization of the labour force was more advanced in the Protestant zones and thus the relative weakness of the CNV trade unions. Since the Roman Catholic community had a powerful sense of minority group identity, Roman Catholic labourers gravitated toward their own trade unions. Liberal ideology had, by its very nature, scant appeal

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁶⁸ CENTRAAL BUREAU VOOR DE STATISTIEK, *Jaarcijfers voor het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* ('s-Gravenhage: 1915), pp. 108-109.

to secular workingmen and thus the ANWV never became a major force within the trade union movement.

Since the three major labour groupings were linked with political parties which at the very least accepted the rules of the political game in the Netherlands on a temporary basis, the fragmentation did not result in either political or socio-economic instability. Although the social democratic groupings constituted a potential exception to the generalization, the reformism of the SDAP served to integrate the parliamentary arm of the party into the political structure. In fact, trade union leadership generally inclined toward the protection of its special rank-and-file in terms of its internal mission and the negotiation of compromises with other elements externally. Of the three trade union movements, two grew out of existing religious blocs which contained powerful, socially vertical dimensions. The emerging labour bloc, while attempting to build its power base along class lines, was immediately checked by the organizational response of the clerical blocs. The general social democratic counter-response was to appeal to the class instincts and interests of religious workers and to advance stronger reform demands than did their clerical rivals. While this strategy enjoyed some initial success, the social democratic movement soon reached perimeters of an ideological and religious nature which checked further growth. Between the two world wars the labour bloc stabilized at about 20-25% of the nation, while the other blocs, although somewhat eroded, remained intact.