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REPUBLICAN AND AUTONOMOUS STATES

> *The Republic is not merely the name of a political institution, but the instrument of moral and social progress . . . of reducing the inequality and increasing the solidarity between men.*—Léon Bourgeois (cited in Hayward 1961: 35)[1]

Few today dwell on the significance of republican institutions. In the nineteenth century, however, republicanism was a revolutionary ideology proclaiming the right of all people as citizens to control their lives. While associated with universal suffrage, republicanism was not yet confined to a narrow political sphere, and many still sought to extend its values to economic affairs. They questioned whether citizens empowered to decide political questions should not also make economic decisions that affected their lives, and they warned that governments resting on free citizenship were threatened by concentrations of wealth giving some a disproportionate voice in society's economic life. What sort of republic, one asked, could survive burdened with "this strange

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paradox of man split in two . . . subject in the workshop, king in the city"? (Diligent 1910: 5)

Republicanism separated political from economic power in the early Third Republic. The early Third Republic's political leaders were drawn from Léon Gambetta's "new levels," white-collar workers, professionals, journalists, and teachers whose experience and political ideology separated them from the nation's economic elite. Experience and republican values led these politicians from outside the working class to favor union development, even at the risk of encouraging the growth of radical unions. By sympathizing with organized labor, however, republicans encouraged workers to politicize their economic disputes; workers seized this political opening to form radical unions and to engage in more frequent and ever more militant strikes.

The French state could act independently of elite interests, because from the 1870s to the early 1900s divisions over political and cultural issues prevented capitalists from organizing to advance their class interests. Republican labor policy undermined this autonomy, however, leading both labor and capital to mobilize and making the French state a battleground between organized workers and employers. Acting in the name of a harmonious, classless republic of free citizens, republicans removed public and private restraints on labor militancy, allowing the growth of a radical labor movement. Employers responded by mobilizing politically, and pressure from the newly militant employer class, combined with fear of militant labor, led many republican politicians after 1900 to turn against organized labor. By then, however, the strength of entrenched socialist institutions and the persistence of a political tradition linking moderate republicans with organized labor prevented the state from crushing one of Europe's most militant labor movements.

FRENCH REPUBLICANISM AND LABOR

The Third Republic has a bad image. Its historical reputation suffers from comparison with the (somewhat tarnished) glitter of the empire before it, and from its association with opportunism, recurrent scandal, and eventual defeat. Even its long survival denies it the drama of France's first two republics. Yet there remains something impressive, and in need of explanation, about the long-

est surviving French regime since 1789, a republic that endured when Europe's only other republics were Switzerland, Andorra, and San Marino.

The historical literature emphasizes negative reasons for the Republic's durability: the monarchists lacked a credible pretender; a republic was the regime that divided the French the least (cf. Brogan 1940; Zeldin 1979). These explanations neglect the positive support the republic enjoyed, support rooted in the development after 1848 of a republican counterculture and ideology uniting workers and bourgeois behind a program of political and social reform. It was this coalition that preserved the Republic from the *seize mai,* through Boulanger, to Dreyfus and even 1936.

Republicans formed a "coalition of the third estate . . . [that] stretched from the upper middle class to the peasants" (Mayeur and Rebérioux 1984: 37–39). While the landed aristocracy and France's wealthiest capitalists supported the Empire or the various monarchist pretenders, small property owners, professionals, and workers rallied around the republican program of political reform (Bouvier 1953: 300–301).[2] In Lyon, for example, the campaign for secular public schools in the 1860s and early 1870s was organized by the Société pour les Ecoles Libres et Laïques, led by a schoolteacher, Désiré Barodet, and a metal trades union leader, André Loenger. A police report characterized the society as "a republican alliance of free masons and workers who resist their bosses" (Auspitz 1982: 134).

The republican movement spanned class divisions in theory as well as in practice. Republicans emphasized political over economic issues because they felt that the fundamental social division was between idle aristocrats and productive citizens. Since both bourgeois and workers opposed monopolists and aristocratic privilege, republicans denied that there was any inherent conflict between workers and employers. In its 1907 program, for example, the Radical party denied that there was a division between bourgeois and workers any longer: "The Revolution and universal suffrage have made all citizens and electors. . . . Our doctrine aims at the fusion of the classes, not at class conflict. . . . It is the doctrine of fraternity and social solidarity" (cited in Berstein 1980: 59).

Finding only harmony among productive citizens, republicans saw no danger in a program fostering solidarity and participation

and promoting labor unions. Mindful of 1789, 1830, and 1848, they attributed the failure of these earlier republics to the lack of French civic spirit and to the deep divisions within French society over political and cultural issues. The solution they saw to these divisions was to encourage participation in communal associations. Republicans would give new dynamism to French civic life, restoring fraternity and national solidarity by promoting autonomous community action.

This aspiration to civic participation and solidarity was central to French republicans; it "marked [them] no less than secularism" (Auspitz 1982: 59). While rejecting class struggle, the 1907 Radical party program, for example, opposed restrictions on collective action and recommended that workers organize "trade unions and cooperatives" to "defend their rights and interests, to improve their moral and material situation" (Berstein 1980: 62). Seeing, as many businessmen and workers did not, fundamental harmony between labor and capital, republicans believed that labor unions posed no threat to the bourgeoisie's legitimate interests. In her study of the radical bourgeoisie, Katherine Auspitz (1982: 18) recognizes the almost paradoxical link between republicanism's revolutionary values and its attempt to span class divisions: "Republican mores were revolutionary in their insistence upon civic participation and fraternal in their determination to embrace workers and peasants. Unabashedly bourgeois, their ethic proclaimed the greater utility and virtue of the productive classes."

Forged in the Third Estate's struggle against aristocratic privilege, the worker-bourgeois republican alliance might have shattered quickly on its internal contradictions except that the Republic was repeatedly challenged from the right. Monarchism did not disappear with the establishment of the Republic but retained support from a powerful coalition of clerics, businessmen, landowners, and aristocrats. Antirepublicans used their social prestige, their dominance of the church, business, and Parisian salons to discredit the Republic and its egalitarian values. In addition to its considerable popular support, especially in the North and the West, the antirepublican right also financed challenges to the regime from Boulanger through the Action Française (Zeldin 1979: 279; Rémond 1982: 152–53; Osgood 1970: 46–49).

In the context of this upper-class challenge to the Repub-

lic, labor relations were politicized in strikes pitting republican workers against royalist employers. Paul Brousse (cited in Chamber of Deputies 1884: 659), for example, characterized the Anzin strike as "the struggle of financial and royalist feudalism organized against the democratic party"; it was, he said, a conflict "brought by the big corporations [against] modest workers with a simple faith in the Republic." This was more than rhetoric, since the Anzin Company sustained the monarchist right throughout the Nord, discharging republican workers and refusing to deal with republican businessmen. In an official report on the strike, Clemenceau (cited in Chamber of Deputies 1885, 2: 899) described it as a crusade by "an Orleanist company against the Republic" not to maintain profits but "to prove to all the miners of the Nord that the Republic is powerless to protect them. In this the company no longer struggles for some miserable *écus;* she struggles to maintain her economic and political domination over all of the coal and industrial region of the Nord."

Prominent republicans encouraged the identification of the Republic with social reform. A group of "left-wing Radicals" identified by Leo Loubère (1962) as openly sympathetic to union organization includes some of the Third Republic's leading figures: Clemenceau, Camille Pelletan, Désiré Barodet, Edouard Lockroy, and Gustave Mesureur. Clemenceau, in his program for the 1876 elections, contrasted "conservative republicans" who "demand only the Republic" with "us, the radical republicans, who want the Republic for its consequences" (Milhaud 1951: 83). One consequence, Clemenceau proclaimed to the Catholic social leader Albert de Mun in 1883, would be to "replace your hierarchy with equality through *la solidarité*" (ibid.: 91).

Republicans insisted that solidarité did not threaten employers, since they used the term differently from socialists and revolutionary syndicalists. Socialist solidarity was the union of wage earners against other classes to bring down the existing social order. Republican solidarité, by contrast, was an alternative to revolutionary action, a means to reintegrate workers into French society without jeopardizing private property and bourgeois liberties. Reaching out to both employers and workers, republicans praised unions not as instruments of class conflict but as vehicles to channel workers away from revolutionary class violence. While they advanced workers and republican values by giving workers

a voice and a stake in the existing republican order, unions and collective bargaining would also help employers by limiting social strife.

Republicans expected unions to make better republicans and better citizens by raising wages and improving the material and moral condition of the working class. Unions and collective bargaining would elevate workers morally by involving them in business decisions, engendering among them better feelings towards the employer and a desire to increase productivity (Diligent 1910: 22, 60; Bureau 1902: 190–94; Bouglé 1908: 169–75). Jean Barberet, a Paris baker, union activist, and labor advisor to leading republicans, promised that unions would peacefully organize work and avoid strikes, feelings echoed by republicans who asserted confidently that "the more you give life and liberty to the unions, the more you will facilitate the accord and entente between capital and labor, who will learn to appreciate each other better" (Barberet 1873: 119; Brialou cited in Chamber of Deputies 1883: 1335).[3] While young unions might be disruptive, causing strikes and supporting radical politics, republicans expected "mature" unions to concentrate on mutual aid services and collective bargaining. Over time, even the most radical French unions would learn to emulate their English counterparts, who "do not go towards collectivism. . . . They do not concern themselves with politics; their great concern is to assure the well-being of their members, and they go on strike only when they have to" (Garriguet 1904: 44–45; cf. Bureau 1902: 47, 212–17; Diligent 1910: 23, 26, 43).

In power, republicans sought to promote "constructive" collective action by workers by removing legal impediments to union organization. Upon assuming control over the Republic in the mid-1870s, they sharply reduced state harassment of strikers and, in 1884, repealed the revolutionary Loi Le Chapelier, which had banned unions (Perrot 1974: 183).[4] Repeal, Minister of the Interior René Waldeck-Rousseau informed the prefects, reflected the Republic's desire to "favor the spirit of association"; state officials, he emphasized, were to "give active assistance in the organization of syndicates and syndical institutions" (Pelloutier and Pelloutier 1902: 270–71).[5]

Others went farther. To stem employer resistance to unions,

Bovier-Lapierre proposed legislation punishing with a month's imprisonment and a fine of 100 to 2,000 francs "anyone who by promises or threats of violence or loss of employment infringes on the rights to organize recognized by the law of 21 March 1884" (cited in Finance 1911: 2). While this bill's defeat in the senate left employers free to harass workers for union activity, republicans took other action to protect collective action by workers, by resisting the use of the army in strikes, for example, and voting amnesties for workers arrested. Sensing that the political tide was turning, prosecutors and magistrates hesitated to apply the penal code against strikers. "If I take upon myself the responsibility of prosecutions," one told a conservative deputy in 1891, "nothing but unpleasantness can be the outcome of it for me. I meet with no support. I am attacked in the newspapers and in Parliament. If I obtain a sentence, it is upset by an amnesty" (Guyot 1894: 215).

Republicans also subsidized union organization. Some union activists received patronage jobs, including not only moderates like Barberet, Isidore Finance, and Edouard Treich but also the revolutionary syndicalist leader Fernand Pelloutier. Legislation on worker safety was used to force employers to subsidize unions. Under legislation enacted in 1890, for example, mining companies had to pay the salaries of full-time, professional union leaders elected by the miners to serve as mine safety delegates (Reid 1981). Legislation enacted in 1892 established a close association between industrial safety and health inspectors and local union activists. Activists supplied information on workplace hazards and reports of possible infractions of state labor laws and were sometimes rewarded with positions as deputy inspectors (Reid 1986).

First in Paris in 1887 and in 95 other large cities by 1910, republicans subsidized union organization by establishing municipal labor exchanges or *bourses du travail* (BDT). Proposing them as a means to reduce unemployment by improving the functioning of labor markets, republicans also hoped to use BDTs to promote union moderation and to bind labor to the regime (Schottler 1985). Once established, however, many BDTs came under the control of revolutionary syndicalists who added syndicalist propaganda, antimilitarism, and support for a revolutionary general strike to the BDTs' original program of mutual aid and support for collec-

tive bargaining. Subsidized by grants totalling 400,000 francs in 1910 alone, the BDTs were "a state of anarchy established with the connivance of the Government" (Guyot 1894: 221).

In contrast to the subsidies given revolutionary unions, republican officials shunned the conservative "yellow unions" backed by some of France's wealthiest capitalists. Yellow unions faced "the systematic hostility of the public powers. . . . This was, in their contest with the [revolutionary Confédération Générale du Travail] CGT, a disadvantage that it would be impossible to surmount" (Sternhell 1978: 255). While Paris's red BDT received subsidies of up to 100,000 francs a year, the minister of the interior in 1902, for example, prevented the city's nationalist-dominated council from granting 38,500 francs to establish a yellow counterpart (ibid.: 250). Employers in the Isère were similarly prevented from hiring outside organizers to form a yellow union to defeat a prolonged textile strike in 1906. The prefect informed these employers that the organizers "presented a social danger and could lead to trouble." Following the prefect's suggestion, the organizers were invited to leave and the employers made concessions to settle the strike (Prefect of the Isère 1906).

Republican strike policy also unintentionally strengthened revolutionary unions. In order to give workers a voice in industrial management through collective bargaining, the Chamber of Deputies enacted legislation in 1892 facilitating state mediation of labor disputes. Rather than help one side to crush the other, mediators promoted conciliatory settlements, with compromises from both parties intervening in 20% of labor disputes between 1893 and 1914. In practice, this intervention helped labor, since strikers could "compromise" by reducing their demands in exchange for their employers' granting others (Friedman 1988a; Shorter and Tilly 1974). Mediation could have been used to discourage labor militancy if officials had mediated only small strikes conducted by conservative unions. Instead, state officials rewarded radicalism by mediating the large strikes favored by revolutionary syndicalists with their inclusive unions.

There were, of course, limits to bourgeois republican support for labor organization. When violence was threatened, property endangered, or the Republic challenged, republicans were quick to use force, as at Fourmies in 1892 or Villeneuve–St. Georges in 1908 (Calhoun 1973). While these episodes were dramatic,

their frequency should not be exaggerated. Most strikes before 1905 were conducted without any repressive state intervention; in 95% of the strikes from 1895 to 1899, no workers were arrested. Arrests, furthermore, were rarely used to break strikes; in only a handful of cases was more than one striker arrested, and strikers gained at least some of their demands in nearly 40% of the strikes with arrests.[6]

REACTING TO LABOR MILITANCY

Republican labor policy antagonized employers without satisfying labor. By intervening in labor relations but accommodating the divergent interests of labor and capital unsuccessfully, the republicans invited both sides to politicize their demands. Rather than dampen class conflict by integrating labor into a harmonious republican order, state policy prompted workers and capitalists to form new institutions for economic and political struggle.

Both the promise of social reform embodied in the Republic and republican legislation relaxing state repression of organized labor sparked a surge in strike activity and labor union membership. Starting from a few trades in the largest cities, unions spread to workers throughout France; their membership increased by nearly 9.5% a year from 1884 to 1913 (Table 1). Contrary to republican hopes, unionization did not restrain other forms of labor militancy. Instead, the number of strikers increased by nearly 7% a year from 1884 to 1913; this trend was punctuated by strike waves involving over 10% of nonagricultural wage earners. Socialist political movements also grew rapidly, from less than 1% of the popular vote in national elections in the late-1880s to nearly 17% in 1914 (see Table 1). The enlarged labor movement, furthermore, was increasingly radical. Organized in 1895, France's leading national union federation, the CGT, was by 1902 dominated by revolutionary syndicalists committed to overthrowing capitalism and the bourgeois Republic through united strike action.

The rising tide of labor militancy discredited republican claims for the pacific effects of social reform and labor organization. Indeed, its failure to control revolutionary labor diminished the Republic's credibility. Speaking for the Paris business community, *Le Temps,* on 11 October 1910, condemned as "scandalous"

Table 1 Union membership, strike involvement, and membership in employer associations

Year	Labor union membership	Strikers[a]	Employer association membership[b]	Share of 191 cities over 4,000 with socialist officials (%)	Socialist share of Chamber of Deputies vote[c] (%)
1884	72,300	39,500	9,128	1.6	>0
1890	232,000	82,960	93,411	6.8	<1
1900	588,800	159,500	158,300	15.8	11.3
1913	1,026,300	241,767	421,566	31.6	13.3

Sources: Union membership and the number of strikers are from Shorter and Tilly 1974: 371–72, 361–62. Employer association membership is from Friedman 1988b. Share of cities is from coding of department federation reports in Compère-Morel 1914. Socialist vote share before 1893 is from Willard 1965; after 1893, Campbell 1965.

[a] Average number of strikers for five years centered on year given for 1884, 1890, and 1900. The 1913 figure is a three-year average of 1911–13.

[b] Membership in associations of employers (*patrons*) registered according to 1884 law on professional associations.

[c] Approximate share of vote in first round of most recent election.

the government's "weakness in dealing with socialism and syndicalism. . . . Encouraged by this cowardly indulgence, the CGT believes that all is permitted . . . and does not even hide preparations for attacks against the nation." Disgruntled employers saw a weak government unable to restrain its working-class allies as nothing but an electoral machine. They complained bitterly that France was governed by a small clique of doctors, professors, and lawyers hostile to business and ignorant of economic realities (Union Industrielle de l'Industrie Française 1900: 1). Fearing radical labor's growing strength, they demanded protection, a "government of order, a government of authority which alone can stop the internal and external decline of France" (Gauthier, cited in Chamber of Deputies 1907: 913).

Whether unable or unwilling to protect the Republic from its enemies on the left, the governing republicans' failed labor policy gave new life to right-wing and antidemocratic movements (Faguet 1914; Scott 1951: 105–15). When united, as they were on tariff issues in the 1890s, employers and landowners could domi-

nate national policy (Lebovics 1987). The association of labor policy with republican principles, however, hindered effective class action even in the late 1890s by dividing employers.

The organization in 1899 of the Waldeck-Rousseau "Government of Republican Defense," with a socialist minister, shocked employers, however. Activists warned employers that they could no longer afford their traditional divisions and their preferred individualism and needed to unite in defense of their common interests as owners of property and employers of wage labor. France, one business convention delegate declared in 1901, needed a party of business "to counter the Parti Ouvrier of M. Guesde" (Nord 1981: 46). "Neither wool, nor cotton, nor linen can be in disagreement," a textile capitalist said in 1899. "They all have the same interests to defend against the workers" (Peiter 1976: 513).

Such calls found a growing audience. Between 1890 and 1913, membership in employers' associations grew by over 6% a year. The formation of the Waldeck-Rousseau government led employers to rush into associations, and membership growth accelerated by nearly 50% after 1900, rising by nearly 8% a year from 1900 to 1913. Growth was fastest among employers directly threatened by rising labor militancy and those in large establishments, and in big cities with strong unions and socialist parties (Friedman 1988b). While some associations provided assistance to struck employers, most were political institutions devoted to stemming "the growing intervention of the state in the area of labor relations" (Laroque 1938; cf. Friedman 1988b). Fearful of socialist involvement in government, even traditionally leftist employer associations shifted to the right after 1899. In Paris, for example, the Comité de l'Alimentation abandoned its longstanding alliance with the Radical party and moved so far to the right in the 1900 municipal elections that it was accused of serving as "an agency of nationalist propaganda." The committee helped to elect a nationalist majority to the city council, ending a century of leftist domination of Parisian politics (Nord 1981: 44).

By 1910, employer associations were a crucial component of a revived political right. They contributed to a growing polarization of French politics towards extremist movements representing economic classes. While the share of the national vote going to parties of the moderate republican center declined sharply after the early 1880s, radicals, socialists, and, later, nationalists at the

Table 2 First round of elections to the French Chamber of Deputies, April 1910[a]

	Socialist (SFIO)		Rightist	
Variable	coefficient	T ratio	coefficient	T ratio
Intercept	−2.27	−4.25	−0.61	−1.99
Share of department's employers in associations	−7.68	−3.01	3.36	1.99
Share of department's wage earners in labor unions	3.68	3.16	−1.98	−2.52
Share of department's wage earners striking	−1.79	−1.80	1.26	2.21
% arrondissement labor force				
In manufacturing	1.10	1.85	−0.28	−0.77
In mining	4.05	4.91	−2.30	−2.80
Industrial wage laborers[b]	1.14	1.25	−0.20	−0.42
Agricultural wage laborers	0.06	0.07	0.43	0.82
Log (population of largest city in department, in 1,000s)	−0.03	−0.49	0.05	1.36
% Land in viticulture	1.21	1.48	0.71	1.05
% Land in viticulture × southern department	0.61	2.46	−0.53	−2.40
% vote for political right, in 1876	−0.00	−0.00	0.54	2.21
Cases	341		431	
Mean of dependent variable	−0.97		−0.18	
F value	6.70		3.66	
R^2	.18		.09	

Source: Coding of 1910 election returns in LaChapelle and LaChesnais 1910, matched with census data on arrondissement and department characteristics.

[a]This table reports the results of regressions for the log-odds ratio, the logarithm of $(P/1 - P)$, where P is the share of votes cast for a side. The coefficients are equivalent to those estimated by logit regressions. Districts without SFIO or rightist candidates are not included in the respective regressions. The weights

left and right extremes enjoyed gains (Campbell 1965: 73–84). Under a banner of bourgeois defense and opposition to socialism and revolutionary syndicalism, right-wing politicians won election from republican strongholds, including Paris and the eastern departments.

Also by 1910, many elections were fought along class lines, and voting reflected not only regional traditions and economic circumstances but the mobilization of the members of latent classes into associations and unions. The effect of class mobilization is illustrated by the regressions in Table 2, which show the determinants of support for socialist (SFIO) and right-wing candidates in the first round of the 1910 Chamber of Deputies elections. These regressions include measures of economic conditions of the *arrondissement,* or election district, to test the impact of latent structure on voting; the share of workers and employers belonging to unions and associations and that of workers striking, to test the impact of class mobilization; and the department's antirepublican vote share in the crucial *seize mai* election of 1876, to control for local political traditions.[7]

While the socialist vote share is almost completely independent of past republican voting, the far right in 1910 was significantly stronger in departments where the antirepublicans did well in 1876. Latent structural characteristics also influenced voting. Midi winegrowers, manufacturing workers, and miners, for example, were all more likely than others to vote socialist and less likely to support candidates of the far right. Even after controlling for regional economic circumstances and political traditions, however, the mobilization of groups into class associations influenced voting for the political extremes. Labor union members were significantly more likely to vote for socialists and less likely to vote for the right. By contrast, every percentage point increase in the share of employers belonging to associations is associated

Table 2 Notes continued
used are VOTERS$\times(\%X)\times(1-\%X)$, where VOTERS is the number of votes cast and $\%X$ the percentage of votes cast for SFIO or for rightist candidates.
[b]Only data for the total labor force in each industry are available on the arrondissement level. The number of wage laborers in an arrondissement has been estimated by multiplying the share of wage laborers of the total labor force for the department in each industry by the labor force in the industry within the arrondissement.

with a 1.8% increase in electoral support for rightist candidates and a 5.5% reduction in the socialist (SFIO) share of the vote (see Table 2). While labor unions increased support for the political left, the polarizing effects of strikes on non-working-class voters may have exceeded their mobilizing effect on the working class, because support for the political right grew with increases in strike activity, while the SFIO vote declined.

Employer associations helped to transform the French right from a backward-looking and declining coalition of aristocrats and orthodox Catholics into a socially progressive, procapitalist alliance against socialism. They lured voters to the right with literature, rallies, and public meetings addressed by prominent right-wing politicians and activists. Preparing for the 1910 Chamber of Deputies elections, for example, an alliance of leading employer associations prepared a widely disseminated "economic charter" summarizing its determination "to preserve the sacred character of private property, oppose state intervention, and resist social reforms," including an income tax, worker pensions, and state interference in labor relations (Nord 1981: 53).

SOCIALISTS AND REPUBLICANS

Republican disappointment with growing labor militancy combined with pressure from mobilized employers to prevent further concessions to organized labor. By the general strike of May 1906, "the Confédération Générale du Travail loomed before all Radicals as a new menace to parliamentary democracy" (Loubère 1963–64: 102). Moderates groped towards an antisocialist coalition with the right, and even the radical-dominated administrations of Clemenceau and Aristide Briand met labor militancy with new levels of state repression. While legislation enacting an income tax and other reforms was stalled, government plans to crush rail and mining strikes proceeded apace, as did the harassment of CGT activists (Stone 1985; Calhoun 1973). Clemenceau himself earned the title of "strike breaker" by placing Paris under a state of siege and arresting over 1,200 union activists during the CGT's May Day 1906 general strike, and by using the army to break strikes at Villeneuve–St. Georges and elsewhere (Goldberg 1962: 368).

Clemenceau accelerated labor's drift to the left. Even in the

late 1880s, frustration with the republicans' hesitant support for labor led many to socialism. In 1884, 3 of 191 French cities with a population over 4,000 elected socialist municipal officials; 22 of these cities had a socialist official by 1896. By 1914, the socialists were the largest single party in the Chamber of Deputies, and there were 5,530 elected socialist municipal officials in 282 cities, including the mayors of 21 of France's largest cities.[8] Electoral socialism was a movement of the industrial working class, especially union members employed in large, urban establishments. With proletarians in transportation and commodity industries composing only a third of France's labor force, however, the movement's base was narrow.[9] France had not yet achieved the level of capitalist development where Marxian socialists could realistically hope to achieve political power with the votes of industrial proletarians alone.

The growth of the Socialist party did not lead to a pro-union state policy; indeed, by antagonizing republican politicians and forcing them to depend on non-working-class votes, socialist growth reduced political support for unions. To achieve political influence socialists depended on alliances; but by antagonizing groups outside the working class, labor militancy made it difficult for socialists to form alliances with political groups on their right. Aware of the limits of their national influence, socialists sought to begin the social revolution by establishing socialist municipal governments in their urban, industrial strongholds. Socialists won municipal office on platforms promising local tax reform, the expansion of welfare and public services in poor neighborhoods, and support for labor organization—in short, promising to redistribute wealth and power to the local working class (McQuillen 1973: 102–5; Merriman 1985: 185–86; Scott 1980: 145–54). While the election of socialist municipalities on such platforms spread fear among the local bourgeoisie, workers celebrated with parades, dressing in red and marching behind red flags and union banners while singing "The Internationale" and "The Carmagnole." These demonstrations often ended in front of the houses of prominent businessmen and bourgeois politicians with crowds shouting, "A bas les bourgeoises!" until dispersed by the police (Scott 1974: 131).

Most of the socialists' hopes were to be disappointed. Socialist municipalities did raise their constituents' standard of living by

expanding and reforming services and welfare programs (McQuillen 1973: 66, 114). Few, however, were able to aid labor organizations or to shield unions and strikers from police harassment. It was not for lack of trying. Socialist officials would reveal the names of police spies and even interfere directly with police officers harassing strikers and labor militants. In August 1893, for example, Jean Dormoy, the socialist mayor of Montlucon, wore his tricolor sash of office while blocking the path of the police commissioner, who was attempting to arrest a worker for shouting an insult. Dormoy instructed the policeman to leave and, to general hilarity, accused *him* of disturbing the peace (Scott 1980: 149). Dormoy was convicted of assisting a prisoner's escape and interfering with a police officer making an arrest.

Few others were more successful in providing lasting protection to organized labor. The effect of socialist politics on state labor policy has been estimated by regressions for the determinants of strike outcomes and state strike policy; these regressions include variables representing the strength of the local socialist movement at the time of the strike (Table 3). Despite their efforts to aid strikers, strong local socialist movements increased the probability that strikers would be arrested, reduced their chances of having state officials mediate their strike, and reduced the chances that strikers would win strikes. Strikes in localities with socialist mayors and strong local socialist parties (where socialist parliamentary candidates received 30% of the vote) were 47% more likely to involve an arrest but only 37% as likely to receive state mediation.[10] Having a socialist mayor and a strong local socialist party reduced strikers' chances of winning concessions by nearly 45% (see Table 3).[11]

Why was municipal socialism so ineffective? The presence of strong socialist parties may have hurt strikers by encouraging unrealistic labor militancy even while provoking employer and police repression. Believing themselves safe from arrest under a socialist local government, workers pushed beyond the limits of the law while police and central government officials were aggressively reestablishing their authority (Calhoun 1973). While these strikers misinterpreted local political power as a sign of influence on the state, only leverage in the political center mattered. French municipal socialism was limited by a highly centralized political system where municipalities could neither tax nor spend without

Table 3 Impact of socialist municipal politics on strikes in the 191 French cities over 4,000, 1895–1914[a]

Variable	Strike success	State mediation	At least one arrest[b]
Intercept	−5.30**	−5.80**	−6.91*
Labor union strike	0.44**	0.53**	0.09
Employer association involved	−0.17#	−0.66**	0.69#
Log of city population	0.43**	0.19**	0.05
Log (establishment size)	−0.20**	−0.23**	—
Log (number of strikers)	0.34**	0.48**	0.42**
Socialist candidate in last municipal election	−0.08	−0.95	−1.25
Socialist candidate elected in last municipal election	0.08	0.67**	1.64
Socialist mayor at time of strike	−0.76**	−1.41**	−0.89
% voting socialist in department	−0.07	−0.81*	3.00#
Log (strike duration)	—	0.64**	0.51**
BDT in locality	—	0.17	—
Dummy variables			
Industries	4	4	0
Years	9	9	4
Issues	4	4	0
Number of cases	3,610	3,610	737
Mean of dependent variable	0.3861	0.1219	0.0597
Chi-square	1,430.0	829.9	50.6

Sources: Shorter-Tilly strike data file described in Shorter and Tilly 1974; Friedman 1988a.

[a]This table reports the results of logit regressions for the results of individual strikes. In the success regressions, the dependent variable equals 0 or 1 for strikes where the strikers gained none or some of their demands. In the mediation regressions, the dependent variable equals 1 where there was state mediation, 0 otherwise; in the arrest regressions, 1 where at least one striker was arrested, 0 otherwise.

[b]Arrest regressions estimated only for strikes during 1895–99.

#Significant at 90% level. *Significant at 95% level. **Significant at 99% level.

the approval of officials appointed by the minister of the interior in Paris. Department prefects oversaw all municipal actions, preventing any that would infringe on the central government's policy or prerogatives. This left little room for the socialists to build enclaves within the bourgeois state.

Centralization, however, is not an exogenous condition. A political movement with a national majority could have given local governments more autonomy. Whether to change national policies or to restore local autonomy, local movements depended on allies in the political center. Municipal socialism did not obviate the socialists' need for allies; it only transferred the burden of finding them from the locality to the Palais-Bourbon.

THE BREAKUP OF THE REPUBLICAN COALITION

> *Vous êtes ralliés à la République, ce n'est rien. Acceptez-vous la Révolution?*—Léon Bourgeois, addressing the Right in the Chamber of Deputies

Socialist members of the Chamber of Deputies gave their working-class constituents voice. They challenged repressive government officials and raised issues neglected by other parties. But they were a minority. Only in an alliance with other republicans could they enact legislation. Locked in an electoral ghetto too small to command a national majority, the socialists depended more on the availability of allies than on their own numbers for influence. Since their growth led moderate republicans to abandon any alliance with the far left, the socialists' influence declined even as their numbers rose.

An increasing share of the vote added socialists to the Chamber of Deputies, although never, before the 1930s, enough to dominate it. In other ways, however, the growing socialist vote undermined labor's political position. For one, the loss of working-class votes forced republicans to look for votes on their right just when growing employer militancy made it harder for prolabor republicans to find such votes. Regressions have been estimated for the determinants of nonsocialist deputies' voting on labor issues.[12] While most of the variables included in these regressions are not statistically significant, the regressions indicate that increases in the socialist vote did not lead nonsocialist deputies to support the

Table 4 Impact of socialist politics on nonsocialist voting on labor issues: Chamber of Deputies, 1910–11 [a]

Variable	Mean	Coefficient	*T* ratio
Intercept	1.00	−1.62	−14.14
Radical or independent socialist	0.36	1.05	15.20
Centrist	0.28	0.67	9.11
In deputy's arrondissement			
Log of population of largest city	3.84	0.03	0.76
% labor force in manufacturing	0.25	0.26	0.83
% labor force in mining	0.01	−0.81	−0.98
% workers union members, 1910	0.07	0.17	0.23
% employers belonging to association, 1910	0.03	−0.09	−0.06
% socialist in first-round vote	0.08	−0.21	−0.71
In second round	0.38	0.08	0.96
Radical or independent socialist with socialist withdrawal after first round	0.22	0.10	1.10
Number of cases		503	
Mean of dependent variable		−0.85	
F ratio		27.44	
R^2		0.36	

Source: Coding of parliamentary voting in LeChartier 1911, matched with election data in LaChapelle and LaChesnais 1910, and census data on arrondissement and department characteristics.

[a]This table reports the results of weighted regressions for the log-odds ratio, the logarithm of $(P/1-P)$, where P is the share of prolabor votes cast out of votes cast on 20 issues; missed votes are dropped. The coefficients from these regressions are equivalent to those estimated by logit regressions. The weight used is VOTES$\times(P)\times(1-P)$, where VOTES is the number of votes cast by a deputy.

prolabor position. Indeed, except where the socialist vote was large enough to force a second-round election, increases in the socialist vote reduced a deputy's support for labor (see Table 4).

Republican sympathy for organized labor did not completely disappear. Some moderate republicans supported labor when they needed socialist support for reelection, especially when socialists had provided their margin of victory in close second-round elections. Deputies most concerned with basic republican values

continued to be relatively prolabor; deputies belonging to the Radical party, for example, were nearly twice as likely as conservatives to support the prolabor in the Chamber of Deputies (see Table 4). Compared with the 1880s and 1890s, however, even the Radicals had moved to the right. While some, like Camille Pelletan, spoke out vigorously against repressive labor policies, they were drowned out by other republicans drifting to the right. Compared with an average of 48 nonsocialist deputies who voted with labor at least 75% of the time from 1877 to 1898, only 4 did so in 1910–11 (Loubère 1962). Paradoxically, the stronger the socialists grew, the less influence they had; they lost allies faster than they gained votes.

CLASS CONFLICT IN AUTONOMOUS STATES

The polarization of the French electorate along class lines undermined the governing French republicans' autonomy. The political basis of republican labor policy was an electorate divided on issues other than labor relations and, therefore, tolerant of a state labor policy premised on the absence of fundamental class divisions. By fostering the growth of a radical labor movement, however, the republicans' labor policy undermined their own base. Labor militancy brought class issues to the fore, polarizing the French electorate between a working-class left supported by trade unions and a capitalist-class right supported by employer associations. And within a capitalist society, once the employers were mobilized, it was perhaps inevitable that government policy would turn against labor.

Socialists were bitter at what they saw as their former allies' betrayal of basic values and feared the worst. Outraged, Jaurès wrote:

> Now the truth appears . . . by the cooperation of the *progressistes* and the mass of radicals frightened by socialist pressure, a great party of social conservatives . . . no longer obsessed by religious preoccupations and which, free of the church, will be able to defend with more agility the privileges of the bourgeoisie. . . . The social conservative block for bourgeois defense, which I have never ceased predicting, has finally organized itself to the sound of the flute played by

the past advocate of the general strike. [*L'Humanité* 16 Jun. 1910: 1]

Jaurès's fears were not realized until after 1914. Despite the growing polarization along class lines, republican values survived, and the tradition of republican unity prevented state repression of organized labor like that soon to be seen in Germany or Italy. Despite growing pressure from the right, the Republic continued to subsidize BDTs and, even under Clemenceau, intervened in strikes on labor's behalf. And, though regularly defeated on proposals to redistribute wealth and power, socialists still mustered parliamentary majorities on issues more closely associated with republican values, such as proposals to ban the CGT because of its revolutionary politics. However divided on economic issues, republicans united to defend political freedoms, including the workers' right to voice opinions and to form unions.

Even in decline, radicals and other republicans were pulled left by a tradition of left-center coalition. Republicanism continued to shelter France's radical labor movement under a banner proclaiming "no enemies on the left." As long as the right was associated with hostility to the Republic, "the logic of French politics" forced "the democratic center and left continuously to reach out to each other"; to many republicans, "monarchists, the Bonapartists, and the Church were the only real source of harm" (Auspitz 1982: 11). However misguided, socialists were republicans, entitled to support for their stance in a cultural and ideological divide dating back to the French revolution. "Before the enemy the nuances disappear. Radical, Socialist—these are first names, republican: this is the name of the family. Defend the Republic and the liberties conquered, essential factors for social justice. . . . For the Republic against Reaction" (Mesnard 1902).

NOTES

1 All translations from the French are my own.

2 By its end, many businessmen had also abandoned the Empire in opposition to its policy of free trade and growing tolerance of strikes and labor militancy (Priouret 1963: 172–88).

3 Republicans even blamed slow economic growth on the weakness of unions. René Waldeck-Rousseau, for example, claimed that "certain nations, less favored by nature than France . . . owe much of their . . . prosperity to the

vitality of these institutions [their unions]. Under pain of national decline, France must hasten to follow this example" (Pelloutier and Pelloutier 1902: 270–71).

4 Enacted in 1791, the Loi Le Chapelier was inconsistently enforced throughout the nineteenth century but had been repealed, briefly, during the short-lived Second Republic.

5 Son of a conservative delegate to the National Assembly of 1848, Waldeck-Rousseau was a leading corporate lawyer and labor advisor to Gambetta.

6 However, an arrest is associated with a 15% reduction in the probability of strike success.

7 This election pitted republicans against antirepublicans. The republican victory effectively ended the possibility that the monarchy would be restored. For analyses stressing the role of structural circumstances on voting, see Brustein 1988 and Siegfried 1913.

8 These later numbers include only SFIO candidates. The earlier reports include candidates from all of the multitude of socialist parties.

9 Employers and the self-employed, groups structurally opposed to working-class socialism, made up half of the French labor force. Not all industrial proletarians were socialist voters; most were not union members and many worked in small, nonurban shops. Przeworski and Sprague (1986: 92) estimate that the "carrying capacity" of the French left, based on the class composition of the electorate and the relationship between worker and nonworker support for leftist parties, peaked at 38% in the 1920s.

10 The regressions include other independent variables, such as union involvement, that are meant to control for state policy in the absence of socialist municipal politics. Since these controls are, at best, only proxies for the unmeasured attitudes of state officials, it is possible that state policy in localities with strong socialist movements was even more hostile to strikers than it seems to have been.

11 Nor were socialist municipal officials required for the establishment of BDTs. While 17 BDTs were established in municipalities with socialist elected officials, the other 79 of the 96 BDTs in the 191 French cities with a population over 4,000 in 1910 had been established in cities that did not have a single socialist officeholder.

12 Twenty votes were selected with the SFIO position, supported by the SFIO deputies as a block, taken as the prolabor position.

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