'Solidarity' and the Reformist Sociology of Alfred Fouillée, II

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IV

The End of Laisser Faire

FOUILLÉE FOUND orthodox Liberalism inadequate because there was no wholly or even mainly political solution of the social problem. The people's political power was incongruously matched by their economic servitude. With Charles Gide and Léon Walras, who recognized the fallacy underlying the fatalism of the orthodox "liberal" economists, Fouillée placed the latter before the dilemma of either confessing their incompetence as "pure" economic scientists to prescribe an economic policy or explicitly taking into consideration the moral and social factors which were preconditions of a just application of economic principles.[48]

Like Comte, Fouillée pointed out that because of their neglect of sociology the jurists and economists had forgotten two fundamental facts. On the one hand, capital was social as well as individual in its origins, its conditions of development and through its multitudinous effects. On the other hand, the associations of employees were based upon an indestructible interdependence which would survive all attempts to reduce them to isolated individuals separately pursuing their self-interest. The result was that whereas competitive Liberalism had originally implied constructive laissez-*faire* and expansive laissez-*passer,* it had by the early twentieth century degenerated into monopolistic restriction (*laissez*-faire) and extortion (*laissez*-passer).

To correct the disastrous effects of the rampant egoism of "homo economicus," Fouillée adopted, as part of the solution, the solidarist (especially cooperative) associationism championed in the Eighteen Sixties by Walras and from the Eighteen Eighties by Gide, and was not averse to importing an element of juridically imposed professional solidarity to strengthen the trade unions vis à vis the private business corporations, as advocated by Joseph Paul-Boncour and Léon Duguit.[49] The other, comple-

[48] *Sociologie Réformiste,* pp. 5–6, 9, 33–8.

[49] *Ibid.*, pp. 40–1. Joseph Paul-Boncour was the author in 1900 of an epoch-making doctoral thesis, *Le Fédéralisme Economique,* in which he championed a reformist syndicalism inspired by Proudhon, Durkheim and Waldeck-Rousseau. He was for many years a Socialist Deputy and Senator and Prime Minister for forty days in 1932–33. See his autobiography, *Entre Deux Guerres,* 1945, II, pp. 272 et seq., for his plans on taking office. See my article, "Solidarist Syndicalism: Durkheim and Duguit," Part II, in *Sociological Review* (December, 1960), pp. 197–98.

mentary part of the solution to the pressing social problem of economic injustice was the appeal to State intervention. With Louis Blanc, Dupont-White, Walras and Léon Bourgeois, he declared: "The day is coming when the State will no longer be able to apply the maxim of laissez-faire to the large associations, and will itself be forced to control and even participate in certain operations; sometimes to nationalize large companies in the public interest; lastly, to replace them in the provision of certain services which have become so general that they concern all citizens in the same way as the postal services."[50]

Like Walras in his *Etudes d'Economie Sociale,* Fouillée's starting point was the recognition that individualism and collectivism were equally inadequate doctrines, half-truths that required synthesis. Like Walras, he also applied this principle to the institution of property (the touchstone of so much social and political theory through the centuries) which the doctrinaire individualists regarded as exclusively private, while the dogmatic collectivists regarded it as wholly social. For Fouillée all property was the product partly of individual and partly of social effort. However, the social part, amassed by past generations, had been appropriated by individuals, so that newcomers were denied their rightful share in the collective material and cultural heritage. Economists such as Bastiat forgot, despite their appeal to the fact of solidarity, that (in a phrase oft quoted subsequently without acknowledgment) "society is not a juxtaposition of egoisms separated from each other by empty space; it is not an archipelago composed of a multitude of islands each occupied by a Robinson Crusoe."[51] Consequently, the social factors that created the scarcity value of land in particular could not be attributed solely or mainly to the individual efforts of the spoiled child of the economists, the entrepreneur.

J. S. Mill had already shown, in relation to the appropriation of that inelastic or "fixed" quantity, land ("the original inheritance of all mankind"), that an unearned, socially determined surplus value accrued to the owner; and Henry George had revealed the extraordinary speculative profiteering from "social values" created by "collective activity" in and around urban property. While rejecting as economically unfeasible the nationalization of all land—tentatively considered by Gide and ardently

[50] "Le progrès social en France," in *Revue des Deux Mondes,* 15.6.1899, p. 822. That the principle enunciated by Fouillée is easily applicable to the modern developments in the social services is brought out by the following quotation from the report on "Social Insurance and the Allied Services" in which Sir William Beveridge (as he then was) declared that "social insurance should be comprehensive, in respect both of the persons covered and of their needs. It should not leave either to national assistance or to voluntary insurance any risk so general or so uniform that social insurance can be justified." (1942, p. 122.)

[51] *La Propriété Sociale,* p. 24; *cf.* pp. v-vi, ix, 11 et seq.

advocated by Walras—Fouillée favored Mill's suggestion that the State and local authorities should acquire as much land as their resources permitted.[52] He also advocated town and country planning legislation whereby the State and the municipalities acquired the development rights and the surplus value accruing in the form of rent and rates. This would provide a permanent source of revenue to be used to supplement or replace taxation and finance social welfare services.

However, the phenomenon of "rent" or surplus was not limited to land, both capital and labor enjoying its privileges when they were in control of a scarce commodity or service. To meet this factor in social injustice, Fouillée proposed, as a rough corrective to unearned increments which could not be measured, progressive taxation on income and death duties on property, coupled with cheap credit to give the "disinherited" a material stake in the social heritage. Fouillée, however, was a champion of what, under dubious auspices, has come to be called in Britain the "property-owning democracy." In the words that follow he was also speaking for the liberal-socialist Solidarism of which Léon Bourgeois was to be the great exponent.

A day will come when the workers themselves will enjoy an increasing share in the ownership of capital in proportion to their work. The ideal solution to the economic antinomy is the widest possible distribution of property and capital among the workers. Universalized ownership of property is the corollary of universal suffrage, for the person who owns a sufficient amount of property is self-possessed and generally is the sole master of his vote. . . . Economic liberalism might be summed up in this formula: free individual ownership within free public ownership.[53]

V

The Emergence of Industrial Democracy

IN INDUSTRY, Fouillée stressed the need to extend State regulation of hours and conditions of work, while the creation of conciliation and arbitration machinery to smooth the process of collective bargaining and avoid strikes would constitutionalize industrial relations and prepare the way for the establishment of producer cooperatives. On the basis of experiments with works and consultative councils in which employees were taking a share, however modest, in management, Fouillée optimistically looked forward with Proudhon to the emergence of "le régime démocratique de l'industrie."[54] He conceived such an industrial democracy as essentially

[52] *Ibid.*, pp. 53–6; *cf.* pp. 40–5; *L'Idée Moderne du Droit*, pp. 180–2.

[53] *Propriété Sociale*, pp. 62, 66; *cf.* pp. ix, 45–6, 56 et seq.; *Droit*, p. 181 note; *Sociologie Réformiste*, pp. 212–5, 415.

[54] *Sociologie Réformiste*, p. 404; *cf.* pp. 160–1, 398 et seq.

pluralistic in character, based upon a mixed economy with State, private and cooperative enterprises all playing a part. However, he hoped that co-operative enterprise (which through the practice of solidarity educated the wage-earners to adopt higher standards of responsibility and mutual aid than those to which they had hitherto been accustomed) would ultimately dwarf private enterprise.

He rather precipitately predicted the coming of a Proudhonian republican regime in which the capital, the machinery and the management of the enterprise, as well as the normal profit which it yields, will belong to the associated workers and, consequently, will be distributed between them according to their merits. It therefore seems to us probable that the final result of current scientific discoveries and social transformations will be a series of associations and working communities that are increasingly interrelated and united, in which universal cooperation for life and progress will replace anarchical competition for profit and wealth. The main economic antagonisms having vanished, sharply demarcated class distinctions will also disappear. Perhaps the State itself, while being strengthened in certain essential matters, will be replaced, in other matters and some of its present functions, by the autonomy and union between the major professional groups."[55]

The eminent French sociologist Professor Gurvitch has significantly affirmed that "the coming of the school of juridical objectivism was foreshadowed in France by certain thinkers who, for the most part, without appealing directly to Proudhon, tended like him more or less consciously to conceive society as an anti-hierarchical, immanent and egalitarian totality, as moral and social integration, equally opposed both to subordination and to individualistic atomism. It was the term *solidarity,* with its multiplicity of meanings, that in France connoted this approach to the problem."[56] Of this group of "solidarist" thinkers, Fouillée was the one, apart from Comte and Durkheim, whose thought most clearly anticipated that of the leading juridical objectivist, Léon Duguit. Like Duguit, he rejected the French Revolution's attack upon the associations—"the network of biological and contractual ties of solidarity in which each person is involved." He prescribed State intervention in a variety of activities—notably education, the collection of statistics, roads, postal and telegraphic services—with a view to constituting them "services *publics*."[57] In these

[55] *Ibid.,* pp. 414–5.

[56] *L'Idée du Droit Social,* 1932, p. 567.

[57] *La Démocratie Politique et Sociale en France,* p. 15; *La Propriété Sociale et la Démocratie,* p. 39. See my article, "Solidarist Syndicalism: Durkheim and Duguit," Part II, in *Sociological Review,* VIII (1960), pp. 192–4.

matters, Fouillée foreshadowed aspects of Duguit's simultaneously anti-individualist and anti-Statist pluralism.[58]

Like Duguit, Fouillée maintained that "jurisprudence is, partly, applied sociology."[59] Duguit's remarkable application of the idea of solidarity to jurisprudence in *L'Etat,* published in 1901, was distinguished by a virulent attack on the notion of national sovereignty as antithetical both to social and international solidarity as well as being a Roman and regal, metaphysical and mystical fiction. In 1884, Fouillée had already asserted: "This word sovereignty, in its absolute sense, should be banished from modern science, which only accepts what is relative, especially in the matter of political power. . . . Neither nation nor individual are truly sovereign: there is no *God* on earth."[60] Because of the "organic solidarity between the members of a nation," the vote in a democracy was not merely a right (implied rationally by the social quasi-contract) but a "social function."[61] While, like Duguit, Fouillée was in favor of proportional representation, against Duguit he regarded plural and professional voting as too easily capable of degenerating into the arbitrary privileges of sectional and "sinister" interests; quite apart from the practical consideration that, not being able to weigh heads, one was forced to count them.[62] However, Fouillée affirmed: "There is a contradiction between our political system and our social organization"; and he shared Duguit's view that the Senate, as a corrective to the contractual-individualist Chamber of Deputies, should represent the functional organs of social solidarity, "the stability of collective life underlying the inconstancy of individual wills."[63]

Like Durkheim and Duguit, he appreciated that social and economic factors, based upon industrial specialization, were replacing geographical proximity in determining the politically relevant groups in the "social constitution." However, he cast his gaze much more widely with a view to securing the representation of the social elites in the educational, scientific, literary, military, diplomatic and judicial, as well as industrial,

[58] "The individual is free in proportion to the number of social circles in which he moves without being imprisoned in any of them. This applies to associations of all kinds: religious moral or economic; to the family, profession, State and humanity. To confine the individual increasingly to his professional group would be to impose upon him arbitrary political and social limitations within a neo-medieval framework." (*Démocratie Politique et Sociale,* p. 47.)

[59] *Humanitaires et Libertaires,* p. 20; *cf.* p. 21.

[60] *Propriété Sociale,* p. 176.

[61] *Ibid.,* p. 167; *cf.* pp. 165–70; *Démocratie Politique et Sociale,* p. 19.

[62] *Propriété Sociale,* pp. 174–5; *Démocratie Politique et Sociale,* pp. 41 et seq., 53.

[63] *Démocratie Politique et Sociale,* pp. 60; *cf.* pp. 59 et seq., 63–5.

agricultural, commercial and financial branches of social activity. Thus, in the event, the professional representation, upon which Durkheim and Duguit were to place such stress, was swamped by the representation of non-economic aspects of social life in Fouillée's scheme of representation in the Second Chamber.

Like Duguit, Fouillée, while championing trade unions as a force counterbalancing that of employers and because of the sense of solidarity they developed, attacked the revolutionary syndicalists of the type of Sorel, who stressed social and class conflict when the only hope for the future was through a reformist syndicalism based upon social solidarity. To enable the wage-earners progressively to acquire the ownership of their means of production, Fouillée regarded profit-sharing and co-partnership as useful stages. "All cooperators, co-sharers and co-owners, such is the future."[64] As early as 1884, before Charles Gide had launched his campaign on behalf of the cooperative movement, Fouillée praised the contribution of consumer and producer cooperation towards improving the lot of the wage-earner and advocated the provision of public subsidies to aid them. However, not until after Gide had advocated it did Fouillée appreciate the role the consumer cooperative could play in providing the indispensable capital for the creation of a producer cooperative; thereby progressively suppressing wages and profits in favor of a genuine association between labor and capital, and substituting solidarity for both competition and class struggle.

It was through the complementary development of voluntary cooperative associations and statutory State and municipal enterprise that Fouillée saw the prospect of a practical reconciliation between socialism and liberalism.[65] Where he parted company from the more ambitious voluntary associationists, such as Proudhon, who hoped to render the State superfluous, was in his recognition, with Louis Blanc, that the State needed to be increasingly strong to protect the individuals from the associations and the associations from each other, as well as supplementing their piecemeal efforts. Nevertheles, he could not resist the Proudhonian vision of the liberal-socialist State as a "federation of associations, or association of associations, freely centralized through their very decentralization,

[64] *Sociologie Réformiste*, p. 415; *cf.* pp. 10, 371 et seq., 392; *Démocratie Politique*, pp. 192–3; *Humanitaires et Libertaires*, p. 29.

[65] *Sociologie Réformiste*, pp. 388–91. "If capital is placed within the worker's reach, a fundamental change will occur in the status of labor. The associated workers would be able to become their own employers. Profit-sharing, which is so valuable, is only a transitional stage towards this, the only complete solution." (*Propriété Sociale*, p. 143 note; *Démocratie Politique*, p. 189; *Mouvement Positiviste*, pp. 254–5.)

where there will be harmony between the interests of all and each, between the freedom of all and each."[66]

VI

International Solidarity and World War

FOUILLÉE WAS VIGOROUSLY OPPOSED to those in France, such as Barrès, whose mystical nationalism owed so much to an error and an injustice. The error was the Romantic, Germanic preoccupation with the historical mission of the militarist State which sought to affirm national self-sufficiency to the neglect of inescapable international solidarity. Its corollary was injustice, because it provoked zenophobia and wars of conquest, putting the acquisition of power in the national struggle for survival above political and social democracy. "Doubtless hitherto, history has described how the smallest and weakest have been absorbed by the larger and powerful [nations]; but we cannot predict the future merely by extrapolation from the past, nor foresee whether France will be swallowed up by Germany rather than united with her in a peaceful federation." Fouillée added prophetically: "That these countries will unite one day to form the States of Europe is what we should desire and what will sooner or later come about."[67] Fouillée regarded such regional political federations, together with the many international links of an economic, cultural, scientific and technical nature, as steps towards the realization of the ideal of global human solidarity. This would not mean the disappearance of distinct nations but their closer association. The survival of nations was based—in words recalling those of Renan's *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*—on the stubborn fact of common "historical and legal links, through language, the expression of a particular way of thinking and feeling, by a common civilization and common traditions, by reciprocal services through the centuries and close daily cooperation; in brief, by a genuine solidarity of national rights and interests."[68]

Fouillée was, from 1899, a member of "Paix par le Droit," a society aimed at securing disarmament, the international arbitration of disputes and the effective rule of international law. He was also a supporter of the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907 at which Léon Bourgeois led the French delegation. However, he did not confuse their efforts at limiting

[66] *Science Sociale*, p. 180; *cf. Sociologie Réformiste*, pp. 360–1; *Démocratie Politique*, pp. 196–9.

[67] *Démocratie Politique*, pp. 85–6; *cf.* pp. 83 et seq.; *Droit*, pp. 311 et seq.; *Humanitaires et Libertaires*, pp. 201–9.

[68] *Démocratie Politique*, p. 53; *cf.* pp. 87–94. See Renan's brochure, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation*, 1882, p. 27.

the overweening pretensions of national sovereignty with effective control over them. Visualizing human society as a "contractual organism," he shrewdly foresaw its voluntary cooperation yielding a piecemeal extension and intensification of friendly international ties, while its involuntary interdependence would lead to preparations for and the making of war. He wrote in 1910: "We shall witness more and more imposing peaceful institutions, agreements and international contracts. We shall also witness the horrible sights of war, probably less frequently but more widespread."[69] Such has in fact been the world's experience in the twentieth century. On the one hand, the creation of the League of Nations and then the United Nations, each with a host of specialized international agencies, and flanked by numerous treaties and agreements; on the other, two world wars which have dwarfed all that went before them, and began with violations of international commitments. In the light of the painfully slow progress of attempts to avert a third world war, immeasurably more terrible than its predecessors, Fouillée's warning, "even during time of peace, the preparation for war, however unavoidable it may be . . . has disastrous and deleterious consequences," merits careful consideration; for, unless stopped, the armaments race may reach the point where we "perish by the sword even before we have drawn it."[70]

VII

Conclusion

FOUILLÉE'S UNORTHODOX THESIS, "La liberté et le determinisme," aroused substantial public interest in 1873 and even earned him an invitation from the Radical leader Gambetta to adopt, under his sponsorship, a Parliamentary career. The invitation was turned down. However, his social philosophy was to become from 1895 to 1914, in the hands of Léon Bourgeois, the ideological foundation for the doctrine of "solidarism." This doctrine represented the policy of left-wing Radicalism or Radical-socialism (opposed to Gambetta's "Opportunism" and to revolutionary Socialism) led by Louis Blanc in the first and Clemenceau in the second decade of the Third Republic's existence. However, while maintaining that Solidarism and its notion of "social debt" and "social quasi-contract" had been an-

[69] *Démocratie Politique*, p. 102. On the need for international arbitration, see *La France au point de vue Moral*, pp. 296–8. Fouillée was one of the principal signatories of a letter to the French Foreign Minister from the "Alliance des savants et des philanthropes," asking him to use his influence with the British Government to accept international arbitration of the differences leading to the Boer War, which so stirred the emotions of Liberals at the turn of the century. (*Paix par le Droit*, 1900, p. 211.)

[70] *Eléments Sociologiques*, p. 211 note.

ticipated by his theories of the "contractual organic" character of society and his theory of social property, he had from the start corrected the naturalistic interpretation of the fact of solidarity by an appeal to Reparative Justice. Léon Bourgeois' scientism had led him to neglect this aspect of the matter in the first edition of his epoch-making brochure, *Solidarité,* an omission which he subsequently rectified in his contribution to the series of lectures entitled "Essai d'une Philosophie de la Solidarité," delivered at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sociales in 1901–02 and included in later editions of *Solidarité.*[71]

At Fouillée's death in 1912, the idea of solidarity had acquired the status of the official social creed of the Third Republic. It became the catch-word which was invoked, not merely by the Radical-socialist champions of a measure of State intervention, but also by the advocates of a Cooperative Republic and a Syndicalist Industrial Democracy. It became the theme of a flood of impassioned eulogies by philosophers and moralists, sociologists and educationists, jurists and journalists, as well as by a fringe of novelists, poets and playwrights, occasionally in a refreshingly satirical view. It was discussed by the Académie de Sciences Morales et Politique in 1903— Fouillée, forced to stay at Menton because of his poor health, was unable to attend—being roundly attacked by the bien-pensant economists and publicists as the precursor of Socialism.[72] A more favorable reception awaited it at the 1909 and 1910 Congresses of the International Institute of Sociology, of which Fouillée had been chosen first French President in 1896, a post to which Léon Bourgeois was elected in 1916.[73]

However, despite the influence it had exercised in the two decades preceding the outbreak of the First World War, particularly in the passage of legislation introducing a substantial measure of the social security characteristic of the Welfare State of today, the notion of social solidarity operating as the focus of a generally accepted social philosophy did not survive the vicissitudes of total war, succumbing as much to its own internal

[71] Fouillée referred to the debt owed to him by Léon Bourgeois' solidarism on several occasions: *Sociologie Réformiste,* p. 1, 26; *Science Sociale Contemporaine,* 5th ed., 1910, Preface, p. vii and pp. 369–71; *Eléments Sociologiques de la Morale,* pp. xi, 307–7; *La Propriété Sociale,* pp. 79, 132–3; *Humanitaires et Libertaires,* p. 25. *Démocratie Politique et Sociale,* p. 84. On Léon Bourgeois' debt to Fouillée, see *Essai d'une Philosophie de la Solidarité,* 1902, pp. 5–7, 11, 23, 96–7.

[72] See the discussion of "La Solidarité Sociale et ses Nouvelles Formules" in *Séances et Travaux de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, Compte Rendu,* lx (1903).

[73] See *Annales de l'Institut International de Sociologie,* 1910 and 1911, the topic for 1909 being entitled "La Solidarité Sociale, ses formes, son principe, ses limites," and that of 1910 "La Solidarité Sociale dans le temps et dans l'espace."

weaknesses as to the onslaught of the forces of class conflict and nationalism. The inability of the solidarists to synthesize the diverse components of solidarism, led rapidly to the splitting of its eclectic seams. Nevertheless, though France has turned to other more plausible "isms," its period of hegemony has left an enduring imprint upon that country's social institutions.

Alfred Fouillée would probably feel that despite the chronic inability to pass from principle to practice, arising out of the contradictory pressures of a multiplicity of conflicting interests which have resulted in long periods of immobility periodically disturbed by spectacular upheavals, his social philosophy remains substantially that of France's middle-of-the-road parties, hemmed in by the Communists and doctrinaire Socialists on the Left and the Conservatives and Authoritarians on the Right.

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The Prospects for Peace

I DO NOT EXPECT a sure peace to dawn tomorrow. But I am not pessimistic about finding a safer and more rational way for us all to live on this planet. And I believe that we can, by our national conduct, bring influences to bear upon the Communist States that may, in time, modify their relentless hostility to the West and contribute to practical arrangements based upon a mutual interest in survival.

The community of independent nations is an open concept, rooted in the principles of the United Nations Charter. For a long time to come I believe there will be a fairly clear line between the world of communism and the world of free choice; but we should be prepared to work patiently—beginning now—toward the day when the community of independent nations and the United Nations itself become identical.

Our main lines of policy are open for all to judge and to debate. It looks to the spread throughout the world of the principles of independence and liberty on which this nation and this society have been erected.

DEAN RUSK