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'Disarming hatred.': French Catholics and the legacy of the Great War; Marc Sangnier, 1914-33



William Gerard Gearóid Barry

Dissertation submitted to the Department of Modern History, Trinity College Dublin for the degree of Ph. D.

October 2004.



DECLARATION

This thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at any other university. Except where stated, the work described therein was carried out by me alone.

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¹ The illustration on the title page is the Congresses' pacifist insignia, which featured on correspondence, literature etc. Marcel Lagrue, designated press liaison for the Bierville Congress (1926) wrote to journalists (including Jean Guiraud of La Croix) to explain its origins. The circular medallion featuring an Angel of Peace putting a torch to the accoutrements of war was copied from a medal struck by a medieval pope having resolved peaceably conflict between two Italian states; Archives Nationales (Paris), 362 AP 149. Jean Guiraud papers. Corresp. Marcel Lagrue, Comité international démocratique pour la paix-Guiraud, 11.8.1926.

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'Níl ionam ach ball de chorp sin mo shinsir.'

SUMMARY

This study focuses on the cultural legacy of the First World War in France in the period 1914-1933. Specifically, it examines the processes of cultural mobilization and cultural demobilization, key concepts that have emerged in the new cultural history of that conflict. The term 'war culture' is now widely used to identify the system of representations and beliefs that helped to sustain societies at war. However, what happened to this 'war culture' and to the phenomenon of 'cultural mobilization' after the armistice of 1918? Clearly, any 'mobilized' mindset which cast France's enemy - Germany - as a barbaric and dehumanized foe would not disappear as soon as peace terms were concluded. This thesis examines the halting process of overcoming these hatreds in the 1920s from the perspective of French Catholics. Therefore, this is a study of 'cultural demobilization' and of the attempted 'disarmament of hatred,' to paraphrase my title. It was decided that the most fruitful methodological approach would be that of the biographical case-study. While not classic biography, such a case-study has the advantage of allowing the historian to humanize apparently amorphous and impersonal historical processes such as demobilizaton and measure their contemporary impact with reference to individuals and their ideological groups.

No figure seemed better suited for examining the relationship of French Catholics to demobilization than the Christian Democratic politician, journalist and social activist Marc Sangnier (1873-1950). As a pre-war Social Catholic activist through his Sillon movement (founded in 1899) and a committed Catholic Republican, Sangnier crossed many of the chasms that embittered politics in the French Third Republic. He therefore had a unique experience of the First World War as a soldier, war propagandist and unofficial French emissary to the Pope. Deeply affected by the loss of so many comrades and influenced by the proto-pacifism and liberal internationalism of the Sillon, Sangnier returned to civilian life in 1919 determined to avert a repetition of such carnage. He did so, however, without ever questioning the necessity of winning that 'just war' whose aim was the extirpation of German militarism and the inauguration of the millennium of peace through President Wilson's League of Nations.

Though he sat in the Chamber of Deputies from 1919 to 1924, Sangnier quickly lost confidence in the ability of conventional politics to secure the peace. Increasingly, he focussed his attention on 'disarming hatred' and advancing reconciliation between France and Germany through a series of International Democratic Peace Congress that gathered together those personally committed to overcoming war mentalities. Held annually at various locations in Europe, including in German cities, between 1921 and 1932, the Congresses were forums where, first and foremost, the former enemy was humanized through meeting, speaking and sharing the same meals with them. After this preliminary but indispensable step, delegates to the Congresses proceeded to sometimes heated political and ideological discussions on matters relating to peace such as disarmament, conscription and the application of the treaty of Versailles.

Beyond such deliberations, the Congresses were remarkable for their selfconscious and innovative elaboration of a 'liturgy of peace' to rival militaristic pageantry. This was particularly evident at the Sixth Congress held at Bierville, Marc Sangnier's country estate near Paris, in August 1926. Bierville fast became a symbol for pacifists, and Christian pacifists in particular, of the optimism that followed the conclusion of the Briand-Stresemann accords at Locarno in October 1925 and the consequent détente in Franco-German tensions. Sangnier, as orator and organizer, held centre-stage at the Congresses, supported by his political party the Jeune-République. Inevitably, he was also a focus for the hostility of those on the right and the far-left who rejected the demobilization project out of hand, albeit for contrasting reasons. The late 1920s saw further remarkable Congresses, including the Crusade of Peace throughout France in 1929. With the worsening international situation, however, the movement went into decline after 1930. Sangnier ended the experiment in 1932 before embarking on a new brand of pacifism suffused with strong anti-Fascism that pointed ahead to his role as an inspiration for Christian Democratic resistance during the Vichy period.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following is a list of the most commonly used abbreviated terms in the text and footnotes. It is divided into two parts; firstly, contemporary organizations and political entities and, secondly, abbreviated names of libraries and archival repositories consulted and cited in the thesis.

I Contemporary organizations.

AF Action Française

APD Association 'La Paix par le Droit'

BIT Bureau International du Travail (International Labour Organization

CFTC Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens

CGT Confédération Générale du Travail

La Démo. La Démocratie

DDP Deutsche Demokratische Partei

DRAC Droits des Réligieux Anciens Combattants

FDK Friedensbund Deutscher Katholiken

FNC Fédération Nationale Catholique

FRD Fédération des Républicains-Démocrates

IFOR International Fellowship of Reconciliation

IKA Internacio Katolica (Internationale Catholique)

ILO International Labour Organization (Bureau International du Travail)

JAC Jeunesse Agricole Chrétienne

JEC Jeunesse Étudiante Chrétienne

JOC Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne

JOCF Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne Féminine

JR Jeune-République

LDH Ligue des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen

LFAJ Ligue Française pour les Auberges de Jeunesse

LND Ligue National de la Démocratie

MRP Mouvement Républicain Populaire

PCF Parti Communiste Français

PDP Parti Démocrate Populaire

SDN Société des Nations (League of Nations)

SFIO Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière

SIPDIC Secrétariat International des Partis d'Inspiration Chrétienne

UCEI Union Catholique d'Études Internationales

UDC Union for Democratic Control

UF Union Fédérale des Associations Françaises

UFSF Union Française pour le Suffrage des Femmes

UFSDN Union Féminine pour la Société des Nations

UGAPE Union des Grandes Associations contre la Propagande Ennemie

UNC Union National des Combattants

II Archives and libraries

AN Archives Nationales

AHAP Archives Historiques de l'Archévêché de Paris

ASV Archivio Segreto Vaticano (Vatican Secret Archives)

BDIC Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine

BfZ Bibliothek für Zeitgeschichte

BS Bibliothèque du Saulchoir

DVP Département et Ville de Paris

ILS Archivio Storico Istituto Luigi Sturzo

IMS Institut Marc Sangnier

LSF Library of the Religious Society of Friends

MAE Ministère des Affaires Étrangères

MF Musée de Fourvière

PP Préfecture de Police de Paris

SHAT Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre

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'No wonder of it: sheer plod makes plough down sillion Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear, Fall, gall themselves, and gash gold-vermillion.'

from Gerard Manley Hopkins, The Windhover.

INTRODUCTION

'In order to unite, you must love one another. In order to love, you must know one another. In order to know, you must meet one another.' The triad of Cardinal Mercier, primate of Belgium and leader of patriotic resistance to German occupation during the Great War, sums up neatly the process engaged in by some French Catholics in the aftermath of that conflict. Christ's injunctions to forgiveness and the love of enemies were hard to live up to after the great bloodshed and national mobilizations of 1914-18. As the three stages of reconciliation with the adversary set out by Mercier suggest, this was not a linear journey but rather a halting and difficult process with the experience and memory of the Great War at its heart. If reconciliation is viewed as a cultural process, then other variables will have been involved in that process. This study is concerned with Catholicism and pacifism in France and their interaction in relation to the Great War and the interwar period up to 1933.

How to examine such an apparently amorphous subject though? A biographical approach, as distinct from classic biography, is a logical choice for, as Mayeur puts it, 'in the mirror of a life are reflected the problems of its times.' The utility of a biographical case study is that it allows the historian to illustrate a broad process from the point of a view of a participant, while keeping the usual demands of biography subordinate to the process. The 'case study' approach has already borne fruit in other studies of the legacy of the Great War. Fortunately, the life of Marc Sangnier (1873-1950) is rich in those contradictions historians love. Born into a wealthy Parisian bourgeois family of lawyers and scholars, he inherited a family tradition of natural and gifted oratory. Yet, from an early age, social consciousness and republicanism caused him to drift away from the received worldview of his class. Through parallel careers as journalist, politician and activist, Sangnier strove to reconcile French Catholics to the Republic and the working classes to the Church. For some Catholics, his later conversion from soldier to patriotic pacifist was but another in a long line of betrayals.

_

¹ S. G. Poyntz, Journey towards union (Dublin, 1976), p. 23.

² Jean-Marie Mayeur, Un prêtre démocrate. L'abbé Lemire, 1853-1928 (Paris, 1968), p. 9.

On memory of the war and German students, see Christian Ingrao, 'Étudiants allemands, mémoire de guerre et militarisme nazi: étude de cas,' *14-18 aujourd'hui*, 5, 2002, pp. 55-71.

⁴ Madeleine Barthélémy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, 1873-1950 (Paris, 1973), pp. 55-67.

Remarkably, such historical studies of Sangnier as exist have tended to focus almost exclusively on the activism of the younger man, as if his activities after the age of forty were of little relevance, a faint echo of his central role, before 1910, in Le Sillon, the popular Social Catholic movement of which he was the inspirational and charismatic leader. This relative neglect deserves to be redressed because Sangnier was the most prominent Christian Democrat and French Catholic republican of the Third Republic. His marked influence on a younger generation of Christian Democrat politicians, who came centre stage in the Fourth Republic through the Mouvement Républicain Populaire (MRP), is undeniable. Why else should the MRP have venerated the elderly Sangnier as a totemic 'patriarch' whose politics and memory it perpetuated?⁵ Moreover, Sangnier's career stands at the intersection of several of the most important political and philosophical currents of the Third Republic. Sangnier represents a first-class case study as his life is a nodal point for Christian democracy, republicanism, socialism, liberal internationalism and pacifism, amongst other major forces shaping French politics in the twentieth-century. The renewed study of his career, focusing, in this case, on the period 1914-33, helps refine our understanding of each of these ideologies and of their interplay in France. Therefore, Sangnier merits being written back into the history of interwar France where he is usually relegated to an obscure footnote, if even that.

What historical terms shall we use, though, to describe this cultural process that has 'reconciliation' as its omega point? Historians have recently used the concept of 'war culture' to explain how societies engaged with the Great War. Only a deep ideological commitment to victory could explain French tenacity in the national cause in 1914-18 at a cost of 1.4 million lives. Otherwise, military and economic mobilization would have been unsustainable. The French population consented to the sacrifices required of it, not merely out of fear of state coercion, but because most French actually believed in the war. For them, it was not just another war but an existential struggle for France's survival and for civilisation itself. With such high stakes, therefore, nothing less than a 'war culture' manifested itself in 1914-18, encompassing, in Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker's words, 'a corpus of representations

⁵ Adrien Dansette, *A Religious History of Modern France*, vol. 2, *Under the Third Republic* (1948-51; Eng. Trans., Edinburgh, 1961), p. 288.

of the conflict, crystallised into a veritable system that gave the war its deep meaning.' Deep hatred, even a desire to exterminate the enemy, was the norm. How, though, were individuals and social groups inducted into this national 'war culture'? The massive imaginative investment of disparate groups and individuals in the common cause required a process of 'cultural mobilization,' every bit as critical as military mobilization, though more difficult to chart. Sangnier in uniform acknowledged this in April 1918, saying: 'Today's war resembles in no way previous war. It's no longer only armies that are fighting, it is, in truth, entire nations. This totalising logic of 'total war' is captured in Hanna's phrase, the 'mobilization of intellect.' Defensive patriotism was sustained through to the end of the war much less by cynical 'propaganda' *de haut en bas* than by a decentralised process of self-mobilization for war. The series of the same than a sustained through to the end of the war much less by cynical 'propaganda' *de haut en bas* than by a decentralised process of self-mobilization for war.

However, did 'cultural mobilization' come to an end with the armistice of 1918? The argument of this thesis is that it did not. French society made uneasy progress towards dismantling wartime mindsets and prejudices in the 1920s. How could it be otherwise considering the Manichean mental categories of the 'war culture' that cast an idealised collective self against a demonised enemy? To describe this uneven process, Horne proposes the term 'cultural demobilization.' The critical elements of the 'war culture' have their potential equivalents in the demobilization process. Thus, the dehumanized enemy would have to be rehabilitated, in keeping with Mercier's comment on meeting and knowing. Marc Sangnier was a pioneer in this regard, engaging in a process of rehumanizing the enemy from 1919-20. In this, he was more adventurous than the conventional representatives of secular pacifism, the Association 'la Paix par le Droit' (APD). Marc Sangnier embodied one of the most striking features of 'cultural demobilization,' the intense focus it put on the

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⁶ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau & Annette Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre (Paris, 2000), p. 122.

⁸ IMS, M.S. 26, Typed transcript of speech by Marc Sangnier to troops in April 1918.

¹⁰ Leonard V. Smith, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, & Annette Becker, *France and the Great War, 1914-18* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 58.

⁷ John Horne, 'Introduction: mobilizing for "total war", 1914-1918', in Horne (ed.), State, society and mobilization in Europe during the First World War, p. 1.

⁹ Martha Hanna, *The mobilization of intellect: French scholars and writers during the Great War* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), p. 1.

John Horne, 'Introduction' in 'Démobilisations culturelles après la Grande Guerre,' 14-18 aujourd'hui, 5, 2002, pp. 45-53.

individual's retrospective relationship with the war.¹² From 1921, Sangnier's key theme was 'the disarmament of hatred.'¹³ This raised numerous difficulties, examined in this thesis, such as how to how to 'demobilize' without dishonouring the sacrifice of the fallen, how to reconstitute pre-war 'communities of truth,' such as the Catholic Church, and how to militate against a repeat of the catastrophe.¹⁴ Georges Hoog¹⁵, his trusted lieutenant, showed a great self-awareness about cultural demobilization in an article penned on the eve of the Bierville congress, Sangnier's great assembly of European pacifists in France in the summer of 1926: 'Nearly eight years after the cessation of hostilities we must, unfortunately, face facts: neither is the war truly over nor peace really made...There is a moral aspect to the problem of peace; we must disarm hatred and dissipate prejudice...we must accomplish the pacific education of international public opinion.'¹⁶ This thesis thus takes Sangnier's career from 1914 to 1933 as a case study in the twin processes of cultural mobilization and demobilization, in relation to the Great War.

Sangnier believed in international reconciliation through direct contact with other pacifists, other nationalities. To practise this belief, Sangnier and his collaborators came up with the mechanism of the International Democratic Peace Congresses (1921-32). The Peace Congresses described in the body of this thesis had

¹² Horne, 'Démobilisations culturelles,' p. 52.

¹³ Compte-rendu complet du Ier Congrès démocratique international de la paix, Paris, 4-11 décembre 1921, (Paris, La Démocratie, 1922), pp. 235, 361; Restated in motions adopted at Vienna (1922) Georges Hoog, Le IIe Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Vienne, 26 septembre-1 octobre 1922 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1922), p. 328.

¹⁴ Horne, 'Démobilisations culturelles,' pp. 50-51.

¹⁵ Georges Hoog (1885-1944). From an Alsatian family, he joined the Sillon in 1903, fast becoming Sangnier's most loyal and closest collaborator in the movement. Combined editorial and secretarial responsibilities for the Sillon periodical and the weekly L'Éveil démocratique in the years before the papal 'condemnation' of 1910. Held a similar position between 1910-1914 in the movement's new daily paper. Exempted on medical grounds from the war, he honed his propagandist skills in Mgr. Baudrillart's Comité catholique de propagande française à l'étranger whose publications he coordinated. La Démocratie was founded as a daily newspaper by the movement in 1910. When it resumed publication in 1919, no longer as a daily but as a twice monthly journal, Hoog became its chief editor as well as of the party's weekly newspaper Jeune-République. He was Secretary-General both of the Jeune-République party and of the Comité International d'Action Démocratique pour la Paix, the international committee behind Sangnier's International Democratic Peace Congresses that began in Paris in December 1921. He was, therefore, a key organizer of the Peace Congresses and of the Peace Cartels in various French cities in 1930-31. Beaten in contest for parliamentary seat in the Mayenne in 1936. Author of Histoire du catholicisme social en France (1942), he was awarded a Chair of Economics at the École supérieure d'organisation professionnelle in 1940. See M. Prevost, Roman d'Amat, H. Tribout de Morembert (eds.), Dictionnaire de biographie française (Paris, 1986), fasc. 97, col. 1291; René Rémond, Les catholiques dans la France des années 30 (1960; 2nd edn., Paris, 1979), p. 267.

¹⁶ Georges Hoog, 'Avant le Congres de Bierville,' La Vie catholique, 31.7.1926.

similar *modus operandi* to the pre-war peace movement. Both aimed at educating public opinion through press, schools, political parties, and other agencies of attitude and opinion formation, still harbouring the old liberal belief that enlightened public opinion would compel statesmen to strengthen international arbitration through the League of Nations. However, they occurred after the traumatic experience of the war and in response to it. These congresses, held under Sangnier's stewardship, became another nodal point, this time for various strands of the international pacifist movement, allowing us to put these meetings in their proper European context. Sangnier's new contacts abroad, with both German and Anglo-Saxon Christian pacifism and with both secular and faith-based pacifists, allow the historian to triangulate more accurately still Sangnier's own position.

Any discussion of Sangnier's particular brand of Catholic pacifism after the First World War needs to be situated in relation to the histories of both pacifism and French Catholicism more generally. In both cases, continuity and change can be observed from the pre-1914 career of Marc Sangnier. Late nineteenth-century liberal Europe, against the background of a long continental peace since 1871, felt itself, rather hubristically, to be uniquely advanced and progressive. Enamoured of their own civilisation, many liberals, in France and elsewhere, began to feel that any future recourse to war would be unthinkable and that governments should (and would) 'institute juridical interrelations like those that exist among civilised men,' in the words of the Catholic-inspired Gratry Society of France.¹⁷ The desire for a rational organization of world affairs went hand in hand with what Martin Ceadel calls a 'shift of norms,' a move away from the age-old fatalistic view of war as inevitable and a not particularly abnormal or immoral state of human affairs.¹⁸ Liberal opinion now came to see the use of the offensive and unprovoked war as morally repugnant while simultaneously giving a sacral justification to defensive war, resorted to only in so far as it would advance the new liberal order. To lobby for these liberal internationalist ideas, a nebulous 'peace movement' emerged, dedicated to the elaboration of a system of international law and morality. The turn of the twentieth century saw two serious attempts to sketch the outlines of a system of international arbitration, namely the

¹⁷ Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and a world without war: the peace movement and German society, 1892-1914* (Princeton, 1975), p.381.

¹⁸ Martin Ceadel, *Thinking about peace and war* (Oxford, 1987), p. 12.

Hague conferences of 1899 and 1907, relating to both prevention of war and the 'civilised' conduct of warfare, should war nevertheless occur.

Who, however, was pacifist? Émile Arnaud, a delegate at the Tenth Universal Peace Congress, Glasgow, 1901, coined the term 'pacifist.' Roger Chickering, in his monograph on German pacifism to 1914, offers an appealingly straightforward definition of a pacifist as one who, as a result of a personal conviction that war is wrong, becomes committed to pursuing its eradication from the world. ²⁰ This ignores the question of gradation of pacifism, however. It also obscures linguistic divergence because, since the 1930s at least, 'pacifism,' in the English-speaking world, is taken to mean an unconditional refusal to support war. In French however, it remains a generic term qualified, as appropriate, by adjectives like *intégral*.²¹ Ceadel's invention of the term 'pacific-ism' (from which 'pacific-ist') to describe conditional pacifists acknowledges the different shades of pacific opinion, albeit with a tongue twister. 22 Farrugia's refined terminology is preferable. In his comparative article on the Catholic and Protestant forms of pacifism in interwar France, he retrieves from the Greek the term eirenicism, in the sense of 'tending towards peace,' to describe those who oppose war conditionally, but not absolutely, especially those like Marc Sangnier and Henri Roser whose opposition is ethical or religious. Whereas eirenicists are generally men and women of the established order and patient evolutionists, pacifists are often depicted as subversives, to be kept under tabs.²³

In France, the peace movement that existed before 1914 was very largely moderate in complexion, a collection of liberal international organizations found on the secular left. The movement's eldest child was the Ligue Internationale et Permanente de la Paix under the leadership of Frédéric Passy which had its origins in the republican opposition to the Second Empire. Transmuted and renamed several times by the war, Passy's movement was ultimately peripheral. Well before 1914, a more youthful and dynamic group, the Association de la Paix par le Droit (APD), had superseded the tepid League as the leading light of the French peace movement.

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¹⁹ Peter Farrugia, 'French religious opposition to war, 1919-1939: the contribution of Henri Roser and Marc Sangnier,' *French History*, 6/3, 1992, p. 281.

²⁰ Chickering, *Imperial Germany*, p. 14.

²¹ Farrugia, 'French religious opposition to war,' p. 281.

²² Ceadel, Thinking about peace and war, p. 4.

²³ Farrugia, 'French religious opposition to war,' p. 282.

Founded by students of republican and largely Protestant lineage in Nîmes in 1877, its luminaries included men such as Léon Bourgeois, Théodore Ruyssen and Jules Prudhommeaux.²⁴ These names litter this thesis as the young men of 1887 had become the establishment academic and political heavyweights of the mainstream pacifist left by the 1920s, and constituted privileged collaborators of Marc Sangnier.

What all the above personalities - from Passy to Prudhommeaux - had in common with Sangnier was an internationalist sensibility nourished by the French revolutionary tradition. Key to understanding them is the Jacobin patriotism they professed. To them, the security of France and of the republic was synonymous with the survival of the Rights of Man. France's 'mission' was to bring the progress (and international organization) to the whole world.²⁵ Late nineteenth-century French Catholics, especially republican Catholics, were not immune to this type of thinking. The spiritual father of French Catholic pacifism was Alphonse Gratry (1805-1872).²⁶ This liberal Catholic priest left a lasting mark on the prestigious Catholic boys' school, the Collège Stanislas, where Sangnier founded the Sillon a generation later. In the realm of Catholic theology, the pessimistic view of war as expiation for sin gradually gave way to the view that Christians could and should regulate and abolish it.²⁷ By the time of the Hague conference of 1899, the papacy was a critic of armed peace and Leo XIII lamented the absence of international arbitration through a legal and moral 'Consortium of States.'28

Such gestures of papal approval, continued by Pius X, encouraged a band of Catholic pacifist illuminati, including Marc Sangnier, to revive the aptly named Gratry Society in 1906-07.29 However, men like Sangnier and the abbé Lemire (a

²⁵ Carlton J.H. Hayes, France: a nation of patriots (1930; New York, 1974), p. 322.

²⁷ Chickering, *Imperial Germany*, p. 379.

²⁴ Founded as Association des jeunes amis de la paix in 1877. Renamed APD in 1895; Chickering, Imperial Germany, p. 337.

²⁶ Alphonse Gratry (1805-1872). Principal of Collège Stanislas, Paris, 1840-1846. A brilliant apologist for his faith, Gratry was the author of an influential treatise on a just international order, La paix (1861). Unsurprisingly, his adherence to Passy's secular peace movement earned him the opprobrium of many Catholics. Subsequent to his teaching at Stan, he became chaplain to the École normale supérieure, rue d'Ulm, and, later still, professor of theology at the Sorbonne. Revived Paris Oratorian congregation in 1850s; G. Jacquemert (ed.), Catholicisme, vol. 18, (Paris, 1957), pp. 207-9.

²⁸ A.C.F.Beales, *The Catholic Church and international order* (London, 1941), p. 123.

²⁹ Founded in 1899, the Gratry Society was inactive until 1906, the year that Pope Pius X sent a message to the Universal Peace Congress in Milan removing all remaining theological objections to Catholic participation in the peace movement. Membership of 700 (200 clergy), the organization

deputy and an *abbé démocrate*) had as their primary aim not pacifism but the reconquest of France for Christ through popular Social Catholicism. To know Sangnier's views as a young man on war and peace is to begin to understand just how far he was to travel along the road of eirenicism. In spite of what Weber calls its 'Tolstoian overtones,' the Sillon was not an intrinsically pacifist movement but it contained a pacifist current that was tolerated by Sangnier.³⁰ However, neither he nor many rank-and-file Sillonistes belonged to this sect within a sect whose spokesman was Alfred Vanderpol.³¹ The police noted his impatience with Catholic attachment to the bellicose ideas of Joseph de Maistre.³² However, Sangnier and Lemire were sceptical about the immediate possibility of a world governed by international law, whereas Vanderpol wished to fast-forward to the millennium of peace where 'the principles of Christian morality apply as much to relations among peoples as to relations among individuals.'³³

Sangnier set out his own position in October 1905 in a series of lectures on 'Armée et Patrie.' These conferences represented a simultaneous rejection of both the integral nationalism of Charles Maurras and the Action Française on the one hand and the far-left antimilitarism of Gustave Hervé on the other.³⁴ Sangnier disavowed Maurras' doctrine that the nation represented a moral end in itself as chauvinistic and thus repugnant to belief in Christ as the redeemer of all.³⁵ He was even harsher on Hervé's militarised anti-capitalist pacifism, which he viewed as a shirkers' charter. Right, not backed up by force, was impotent. Moreover, Hervé repudiated a central tenet of Sillon and republican patriotism generally: the link between citizenship and military service. The 'volunteer spirit' impelling freeman to freely will obedience to

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changed its name in 1910 to the Ligue des catholiques français pour la paix; Chickering, *Imperial Germany*, p. 381.

³⁰ Eugen Weber, Action Française. Royalism and reaction in twentieth-century France (Stanford, 1962), p. 66.

³¹ Alfred Vanderpol (1854-1915), a Lyon engineer and lawyer. Founded an International Catholic Peace League, based in Brussels, in 1910. Chief activist of the revived Gratry Society from 1906. Instrumental in having a chair of international law established at the Catholic University of Louvain in 1914; Bernard Comte, 'Alfred Vanderpol,' in Xavier de Montclos (ed.), *Dictionnaire du monde religieux* (Paris, 1994), p. 407.

³² Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris, Paris [PP], BA 1 1540 'Démocrates chrétiens - Le Sillon,' Police report, 'Conférence sur le catholicimse et le pacifisme,' 10.1.1908.

³³ From the Gratry Society's Appeal to Catholics (1908); Chickering, Imperial Germany, p. 381

³⁴ Jeanne Caron, Le Sillon et la démocratie chrétienne, (Paris, 1966), p. 418.

³⁵ Nadine-Josette Chaline, 'Marc Sangnier, la Jeune-République et la paix', *14-18*, 1998, p. 87.

the army for the sake of the polity captivated Sangnier.³⁶ Moreover, he saw in the army a 'magnificent site of democratic training.'³⁷ Like republicans generally, the Sillon was also fiercely attached to the territorial integrity of the Republic and the tradition of the revolutionary *levée en masse* of 1793, as demonstrated by Sangnier's fiery speech, on Bastille Day 1908, at the historic site of the battle of Valmy of September 1792.³⁸ Their acknowledged master in this regard was the republican nationalist Paul Déroulède to whose Ligue des Patriotes Sangnier had briefly belonged in the late 1890s.³⁹ Like so many others, Sangnier was influenced by the so-called 'nationalist revival' in French politics after 1905. Sangnier was one of the most ferocious critics of Prime Minister Joseph Caillaux's conciliatory policy towards Germany at the time of the Agadir crisis in 1911.⁴⁰ The issue of 'lost provinces' also resonated with the good patriots in the Sillon as shown by the rapturous reception it gave to Hansi and Zislin, the Alsatian authors of anti-German caricature.⁴¹

Another important component of Sillon patriotism was devotion to Jeanne d'Arc. However, as Gildea points out, 'the problem of the cult of Joan of Arc...is that there is not one cult, but several...imagined in various ways by rival political cultures' all claiming national legitimacy. As seen in Henri Colas' prayer to 'the Maid,' the Sillon venerated the Republican and Catholic Joan. In public commemorations, the Sillon contested the Action Française's attempted appropriation of the symbols of nationality, especially the Maid, as an emblem of monarchism. The Sillon imbibed the spirit of Weber's 'nationalist revival' of the pre-war decade combining a genuine

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³⁷ Barthélemy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, 1873-1950, p. 226.

³⁹ Déroulède was exiled from France between 1899 and 1905 for an attempted coup d'état, see *Éveil démocratique*, 20.5.1906.

⁴¹ Institut Marc Sangnier, Marc Sangnier, la guerre, la paix, 1914-39. Actes de la journée d'études du 26 septembre 1997 (Paris, 1999), p. 213.

⁴³ Jeune-République, 12.5.1922.

³⁶ For further elucidation of the citizen-soldier ideal, see John Horne, 'War, Law and the Levée en masse from 1870 to 1945' in Daniel Moran & Arthur Waldron, (eds.), *The people in arms. Military myth and national mobilization since the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2003), p. 102.

³⁸ Jeanne Caron, *Le Sillon et la démocratie chrétienne*, (Paris, 1966), p. 426. On the mythology of the 'Soldiers of the Year II,' see Robert Gildea, *The past in French history* (New Haven & London, 1994), pp. 134-37.

⁴⁰ In return for German recognition of French interests in Morocco, Caillaux was willing to cede part of the Cameroons to Germany. See Jean-François Kesler, 'La Jeune-République de sa naissance au tripartisme, 1912-1947,' *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 25, 1978, p. 69.

⁴² Robert Gildea, *The past in French history* (New Haven & London, 1994), p. 154.

⁴⁴ Thus, during the Thalamas Affair of 1908, the Sillon defended, against *camelot* attacks, free historical enquiry into Joan, even if unflattering, while later staging a rival procession in her honour when the *fête de Jeanne d'Arc* became a national holiday in 1913. On the battle for Jeanne d'Arc, see Gildea, *The past in French history*, pp. 154-65.

liberal and humanitarian concern for the plight of subject nationalities and minorities - Irish, Polish or Jewish - with hard-line positions on colonial affairs and on the recurrent international crises of the period. Sangnier's support for the 1913 *loi de trois ans* on military service should be seen in this light as should Henry du Roure's belligerent reporting of the Moroccan crises of 1912-13 in *La Démocratie*. Secular pacific-ists like Ruyssen and Prudhommeaux, just like Sangnier, saw peace as inseparable from *droit* or justice. Therefore, they rallied without hesitation to the flag in 1914 in the face of what they saw as heinous German aggression that mocked the 'just war' tradition. Like Woodrow Wilson in 1917, they showed what a thin line there was between liberal internationalism and crusading, portraying the conflict as little short of a holy war to rid Europe of an autocratic and militaristic regime.⁴⁵

As a Republican and a lay activist, Marc Sangnier cut a distinctive figure in the broad spectrum of French Catholicism. After all, the conflict between the secular values of the Republic and the Catholic Church was at its peak at the turn of the century, culminating in the law on the Separation of Church and State in 1905. Although the nineteenth-century had seen several brave attempts to bridge the chasm between liberalism, socialism and Catholicism, this had left little but a stream of illustrious casualties, the greatest of whom was Félicité de Lamennais.⁴⁶ Buffeted by the secular republicanism of the Third Republic, especially by Jules Ferry and Ferdinand Buisson's educational reforms of the 1880s, many Catholics succumbed to the temptation to withdraw into a fortress mentality, wishing away the current regime in favour of monarchical restoration. The consolidation of the Republic and the growth of industrialisation meant this was a political and pastoral dead end, making the Church into the enemy of the state and alienating the working class. Catholicism, from the time of the First Vatican Council of 1870, was more than ever defined by ultramontanism, an ecclesiology that placed supreme emphasis on the role of the papacy in the life of the local church. Characteristically, then, the call to eventually leave the fortress came from Rome, not from the unyielding Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) but from his successor Leo XIII (1878-1903). The new pope 'sought an

⁴⁵ Ceadel, *Thinking about peace and war*, p. 57.

⁴⁶ On Lamennais see Jean-Marie Mayeur, *Des partis catholiques à la démocratie chrétienne XIXe-XXe siècle* (Paris, 1980), pp. 28-31.

accommodation of sorts with the modern world, but on Christian, Catholic and papal terms.'47

In two key areas, Leo brought about great changes, both of which unfolded in 1891, the year of Marc Sangnier's eighteenth birthday. Firstly, in that year, he inaugurated the Ralliement whereby he encouraged French Catholics to set aside their personal political preferences and give true allegiance to the Republic as the legitimate government. In return for this *de facto* recognition of the liberal democratic state, Leo hoped that Catholic interests could be better defended from inside the Republic. Secondly, Leo felt it was time for the Church to tackle the changes wrought by industrialisation and the emergence of socialism. True, his seminal encyclical *Rerum novarum* (1891) condemned Marxism but also began to propose Catholic solutions to social problems, no longer merely counselling obedience and patience to the working class in the face of the egregious abuses of human dignity wrought by liberal capitalism.⁴⁸ Dubbed the 'Magna Carta of Social Catholicism,' *Rerum novarum* did not emerge from a void. However, it was only with this formal endorsement that a readily identifiable school of Social Catholic thought emerged.

French Catholicism felt the reverberations in two waves. From the 1880s, Albert de Mun organised study circles or 'cercles d'études' that allowed for the mixing of the social classes in the name of an aristocratic and conservative brand of Social Catholicism. However, an increasingly assertive proletariat was unlikely to be overly attracted to a paternalist movement with patronising rhetoric. Le Sillon (meaning 'the Furrow'), the popular, lay-driven Catholic youth movement founded in 1898, placed Marc Sangnier, by contrast, in the avant-garde of Social Catholicism. This 'second wave' of activists inspired by *Rerum novarum* was more egalitarian than de Mun. Sangnier, for instance, even in his schooldays at the exclusive Collège Stanislas, had shocked with his social instincts. La Crypte, the young men's discussion group he had founded in 1894, opened its doors to working-class speakers

⁴⁷ Frank J. Coppa, *The modern Papacy since 1789* (London, 1998), p. 124.

⁴⁸ Coppa, The modern Papacy, p. 130.

⁴⁹ On the de Mun-Sangnier contrast, see R.E.M. Irving, *The Christian Democratic parties of Western Europe* (London, 1979), pp. 24-25.

and concerns, to the consternation of parents.⁵⁰ In 1899, La Crypte merged with a similarly small pre-existing group called Le Sillon, adopting the latter's name, to act as a meeting point for socially aware Catholic republicans like Sangnier, Paul Renaudin and Louis Rolland. At the core of the Sillon's beliefs was the conviction that neither democracy nor Catholicism were mutually exclusive and that the Republic was the poorer for not being susceptible to religious influence. In the social realm, the Sillon was anti-capitalist but not Marxist. Co-operativist in outlook, it emphasized democracy and worker dignity in the workplace. It wanted an end to monarchical system of management and to mechanical work as it destroyed human dignity.

Though not strictly its founder, then, Sangnier fast became the incarnation of the Sillon, dominating through his brilliant oratory and organizational skills. Audacious public meetings and debates, begun in 1902 against the backdrop of the fallout from the Dreyfus Affair, turned the movement into a popular triumph.⁵¹ Sangnier, the great moral educator, drew crowds and a large following especially amongst Catholic youth. A Sillon network spread throughout the land. Unknown to them, police spies paid the movement the compliment of infiltrating its meetings, including Sangnier's wedding reception.⁵² The attack of an anticlerical mob on his supporters at the Salle des Mille-Colonnes in May 1903 – 'le meeting sanglant' - was national news. In a debate with the socialist leader Guesde at Roubaix in 1905 Sangnier restated his belief in moral perfectibility through popular education: 'before transforming society, we must transform men...through the education of the proletariat.'53 The very occurrence of the debate demonstrates the seriousness with which contemporary political figures of the stature of Guesde took Sangnier.⁵⁴ Sangnier was a brilliant apostle for the social gospel but he was no saint. Having spoken with him at a Sillon congress in Belfort in 1903, Jean Guiraud, the Catholic historian, wrote privately of Sangnier's dangerous 'contempt...for all that is not

⁵⁰ Darricau, Marc Sangnier, pp. 8-9.

⁵² Archives de la Préfecture de Police (APP), BA 1 1540 'Démocrates chrétiens - Le Sillon,' Police report, Celebratory meeting of Le Sillon to mark Sangnier's engagement, 4.8.1902.

⁵⁴ Pierre Pierrard, L'Église et les ouvriers en France, 1840-1940 (Paris, 1940), p. 337.

⁵¹ The 1909 National Congress of the Sillon, held in an immense marquee in Paris, had 2,194 subscribing delegates. Some 11,000 attended the closing meeting; Ernest Pezet, Chrétiens au service de la cité. De Léon XIII au Sillon et au MRP, 1891-1965 (Paris, 1965), p. 38.

⁵³ Darricau, Marc Sangnier, p.12; The social profile of the Sillon at its height c.1907 was as follows; 33% factory workers, 13% agriculture, 27% employees, 12% liberal professions, 9% priests and 3% businessmen; Pezet, Chrétiens au service de la cité, p. 40.

Himself (sic).' Young fans surrounded him with a 'ridiculous idolatry' that had already gone to his head while his dislike for sober study horrified Guiraud.⁵⁵ Successive acolytes grew disillusioned, finding his liking for centralized control oppressive.⁵⁶ There were several splits and François Mauriac painted a severe caricature of 'Jérôme Servet' in his early novel *L'Enfant chargé de chaînes*. No theorist, Sangnier never elaborated a systematic Sillon doctrine, preferring to proceed on an *ad hoc* basis. He was therefore 'no rival for Marx.'⁵⁷ However, none of this stopped Mgr. Chapon, bishop of Nice, from retrospectively describing the Sillon as 'the most beautiful élan of faith and apostolate amongst our French youth since the Revolution.'⁵⁸

The American novelist Mary Flannery O'Connor once observed that the good Catholic often suffers as much from the Church, as for the Church. Initially, Sangnier was the hierarchy's favourite son, offering a popular audience previously unthinkable. Nevertheless, in the context of his times, Sangnier's radical brand of Christian democracy was going, sooner or later, to get him into trouble. Before 1914, the term 'Christian democrat' reflected a popular orientation rather than a political identification with the democratic system per se, a key difference from the later Christian Democratic political movements.⁵⁹ Those who crossed the markers laid down by Leo XIII in the encyclical Graves de communi (1901) on this distinction courted official censure. The excommunication of the proto-Christian Democratic Italian Fr. Romolo Murri in 1909 was a salutary example of this. 60 Having initially reflected the ambivalence of early 'Christian democracy' as a popular movement rather than a specifically democratic political one, the Sillon gradually strayed more and more into conventional 'democratic' politics. A charismatic movement, in the original sense, the Sillon postulated lay leadership and apostolate. This meant that lay and clerical members in the Sillon were equal, a situation that flew in the face of the divinely ordained hierarchical order of the Church. Worse still, it was a movement

⁵⁶ Pezet, Chrétiens au service de la cité, p. 54.

⁶⁰ Irving, Christian Democratic parties, p. 3.

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⁵⁵ Archives Nationales, Jean Guiraud Papers, 362 AP 145, dossier 2, Corresp. Guiraud-Pierre Petit de Julleville (brother-in-law), 18.6.1903

⁵⁷ Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, vol.2: *Intellect, Taste, and Anxiety* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 1019-20.
⁵⁸ Vatican Secret Archives (Rome), Segretaria di Stato, 1920, rubrica 14, fasc.4. Letter Bishop Chapon of Nice-Pope, n.d. but Jan.-Feb. 1920.

⁵⁹ Martin Conway, Catholic politics in Europe, 1918-45 (London, 1997), p. 24.

that genuinely accepted the principles of the French Revolution. Diocese after diocese forbade seminarians to participate in a youth movement that they, the bishops, did not control. In 1907, Sangnier embarked on an ecumenical endeavour called 'the greater Sillon.' The Sillon was to be broadened to include not just Catholics but all democrats, even Protestants and non-believers. Sangnier had no desire to be an ecclesiastical rebel and genuinely, if naively, felt 'the greater Sillon' was merely the exercise of civic independence in the temporal sphere rather than a religious act. Sangnier had not alone miscalculated doctrinally but he had also underestimated the theological politics of the Modernist crisis, then at its height. The theological debates over exegesis and immanence were beyond most Sillonistes and probably even Sangnier himself. However, in as much as the pursuit of doctrinal purity under Pius X had degenerated into a witch-hunt, Sangnier's Christian democracy with its openness to secular and liberal ideas made him a social modernist.

On 25 August 1910, the inevitable crisis broke. In a letter to the French bishops entitled *Notre Charge Apostolique*, Pius X acknowledged the nobility of the Sillon's efforts without flinching in pointing out its errors. In the words of Ernest Pezet, 'their civic independence was considered culpable indiscipline, their social audacity taken for revolutionary error, their republican fervour as fanaticism.' Pius, engaged in a bitter diplomatic rift with the French government, saw danger in linking Catholicism to 'a form of democracy whose doctrines are erroneous.' Pius reinforced a narrow definition of 'Christian democracy' as merely Catholic popular action - under the bishops' guidance - theoretically compatible with all regimes, pursuant to Leo XIII's encyclical *Graves de communi* (1901). Unlike Lamennais, however, Sangnier submitted to the papacy with a dignified reply stating his wish to remain 'Catholic before all.' His comrades followed in filial obedience, either ending their involvement completely like Sangnier or joining the depleted Sillon catholique established under direct episcopal supervision. However, they could not help but notice the glee of the Action Française at the smiting of the heretics. Christian

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⁶¹ Ralph Gibson, A social history of French Catholicism, 1789-1914 (London, 1989), p. 100.

⁶² Pezet, Chrétiens au service de la cité, p. 39.

⁶³ Weber, Action Française, p. 244.

⁶⁴ Jean-Claude Delbreil, 'Les formes politiques de la démocratie chrétienne en France au vingtième siècle' in Kay Chadwick (ed.), *Catholicism, politics and society in twentieth-century France* (Liverpool, 2000), p. 120.

Democrats were now the embittered enemies of Maurras and the royalists and, as Weber puts it, 'the friends of the Sillon would not rest until the shame of 1910 had been avenged.' Deeply hurt by this rebuff from the man he viewed as Vicar of Christ, Sangnier accepted the hard lesson and determined to pursue pure politics, away from the religious sphere where he was silenced. He founded the Ligue de la Jeune-République in 1912 as a non-confessional party, its very name a clarion call to the rejuvenation of the republic through democratic reforms. Soon however, the war would supersede the condemnation of 1910 and change utterly the relationship of Sangnier and Catholicism.

Even on the Sillon, the best-known part of Sangnier's career, secondary material is sketchy. Most general histories of nineteenth- and twentieth-century France make the obligatory references to Sangnier and his Sillon as a failed experiment in Christian democracy. This is the case with Theodore Zeldin who treats him with seriousness if only to put down the Sillon's failure to his narcissism.⁶⁷ Cobban, Magraw, Mc Millan and Tombs all genuflect in his direction.⁶⁸ Gildea's speculative reflections on the political relevance of history convey well the struggle for the soul of Catholicism at work in the condemnation of the Sillon.⁶⁹ However, none of these refer to his pacifist engagement in the 1920s. In as much as the second half of his life features at all, it is as a venerated relic of old times plucked out of inactive obscurity by the MRP in 1945. Equally, if one looks at Sangnier along the axis of what might be called Christian Democratic historiography, he is even more surprisingly neglected. The narrative of the Sillon, of course, is relatively well recounted by Dansette's Religious History of Modern France, though the key reference work here remains Jeanne Caron's superlative study of the Sillon and the origins of French Christian democracy. 70 Dansette's earlier article on the experiment

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65 Weber, Action Française, p. 67.

⁶⁶ La Démocratie, the daily newspaper set up in 1910, continued to occupy Sangnier. It superseded the older paper L'Éveil démocratique.

⁶⁷ Theodore Zeldin, France 1848-1945, vol.2: Intellect, Taste, and Anxiety (Oxford, 1977), pp.1019-20. ⁶⁸ Cobban, A history of modern France, vol.3, pp. 65-66; Roger Magraw, France 1815-1914. The bourgeois century (Oxford, 1983), pp. 278-80; James F.McMillan, Dreyfus to De Gaulle. Politics and Society in France 1898-1969 (1985; 2nd edn., London, 1992), pp. 36, 94; Robert Tombs, France 1814-1914 (London, 1996), p. 63.

⁶⁹ Gildea, The past in French history, pp. 242-3, 249.

⁷⁰ Adrien Dansette, *A Religious History of Modern France*, vol. 2, *Under the Third Republic* (1948-51; Eng. Trans., Edinburgh, 1961), pp. 265-88; Jeanne Caron, *Le Sillon et la démocratie chrétienne* (Paris, 1966), passim.

is valuable both as history and the account of a near participant, personally familiar with the principals.⁷¹ However, his account of French Catholicism from the 1920s to the 1950s lavishes attention on the new wave of Catholic Action, embodied by abbé Georges Guérin's Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne, founded in 1926-7, which he describes as the 'resuscitation' of the Sillon, while ignoring the Sillon founder's later work.⁷² Similarly, Fogarty's classic account of the Christian Democratic movement manages only two scant references to him.⁷³

Historians, therefore, have very largely missed the fact that it was the war itself that was the crucial starting point of Sangnier's new emphasis on pacifism. As an engineer, he was only too familiar with trench warfare and as a captain he was responsible for the frontline burials of men he had seen killed. Demobilized from active military service in April 1919, Sangnier struggled to make sense of the cataclysm he had witnessed. Thrown back on his Catholic and Republican faiths, Sangnier's response was an ideological one, conditioned by his religious faith and cast in religious and moral terms. The war, therefore, had served to bring pacifism and Social Catholicism together in Sangnier as, from 1920, he elaborated an applied theology of peace. For him, the need to remake the world was the war's fundamental moral lesson: 'From the blood and tears of the great slaughter, we had a magnificent dream; that this war would be the last and that the world...would renounce these bloody methods for resolving conflicts [but] ...alas! The new world, [follows] the path of the old.'74 How though was a man like Sangnier to act out this pacifist commitment? Initially the political and parliamentary route attracted him. His term as deputy from 1919-24, however, was a progressively isolating and unhappy experience as a pioneer preaching a message of reconciliation deeply unpopular in a polity scarred by war. For Sangnier's message went beyond politics. In the years 1919-20 his ideas on European peace evolved from a classical republican patriotism, tinged with liberal internationalism, to a radically new position – a full blooded embrace, heart and soul, of the moral imperative for reconciliation with the former

⁷² Adrien Dansette, *Destin du catholicisme français*, 1926-1956 (Paris, 1957), p.93.

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⁷¹ Dansette, 'The rejuvenation of French Catholicism: Marc Sangnier's Sillon,' *The Review of Politics*, 15 (1953), pp. 34-52.

⁷³ Michael P. Fogarty, *Christian Democracy in Western Europe*, 1820-1953 (London, 1957), pp. 195, 333

⁷⁴ Ier Congrès démocratique international – Paris 1921, pp. 354-5.

enemy through direct personal contact. War prevention had to go beyond mere intergovernmental accords and become a cultural and indeed spiritual process.

Thus, Sangnier moved away from conventional politics in favour of popular moral education for peace. Popular, in the sense of stressing meetings of 'ordinary' people over elite encounters, this movement, set in motion by Sangnier in collaboration with likeminded idealists such as Georges Hoog, attempted to inculcate ideas into the democratic masses conducive to that reconciliatory process. Paradoxically, though, given the voluntarist nature of the congresses, this could only be done through the formation of a new, albeit different, type of elite, a self-selecting 'dynamic majority' as it was called in Sillon days, which, if numerically in a minority, attempted to change mass attitudes through tireless propaganda. encounters with the former enemy were absolutely vital to reconciliation. necessitated on Sangnier's part a radical shift in his attitude to Germany. groundbreaking nature of his policy from 1919-21 deserves to be emphasised for not alone was he willing to rehabilitate Germany morally but he dared ask his fellow countrymen and women to do the same. In the beginning, at least, this did not mean he was willing to revise the moral judgement on Germany made at the Treaty of Versailles, a point he underscored in 1921 in the Germans' presence, while accepting them as honourable interlocutors. His originality lies in publicly expounding this analysis so early after the war. It was not until 1922 that the old-style liberal pacifists of the Association de la Paix par le Droit began to move away from bellicose anti-Germanism.⁷⁵

Initially, pragmatism and an acute sense of geopolitical realities - not least Germany's continuing demographic might - led him to counsel realism on the payment of the reparations under the Treaty of Versailles. Sangnier's 'realism' was not just a cloak for a policy of concessions to Germany but represented his intuition that an overly legalistic French approach would alienate Germans, retard positive political developments in that country and ultimately rebound against the French national interest. From the first instance, however, this realistic bent was underpinned with humanitarian idealism. Over time, and certainly by 1923, the appeal to fraternal

⁷⁵ Norman Ingram, *The politics of dissent. Pacifism in France, 1919-39* (Oxford, 1991), p. 47.

idealism replaced practicality as Sangnier's primary self-justification for his countercultural views. It was his sense that post-war problems can only be resolved on the European level that prompted Sangnier to resume his role as a moral political educator. The first International Democratic Peace Congress held in Paris in 1921 was the inauguration of a series of such face-to-face encounters.

Charles Gide⁷⁶. Protestant socialist economist and Sillon associate, called the Paris Congress of 1921 'the greatest act accomplished for peace since the armistice.'⁷⁷ Surprisingly, neither the pacifism of the pre-war Sillon nor the peace congresses themselves have received much attention from the historians of pacifism. While Chickering's excursus into pre-war French pacifism gives the Sillon due attention, Cooper's discussion of nineteenth-century patriotic pacifism fails to mention Sangnier at all. A.C.F Beales' classic, if dated, study of pacifism commits a similar error, despite his interest in Catholic apologetics.⁷⁹ In recent years, Norman Ingram's study of *The politics of dissent* has become the major reference point for French pacifism in the interwar period. 80 Ingram's excellent book focuses on a number of organizations; the APD, representing old fashioned, liberal pacifism, the Ligue Internationale des Combattants de la Paix representing the new, radical pacifism of the 1930s and feminist pacifism. Struck, as he himself puts it, by the essentially secular nature of French pacifism, he consciously overlooks, and downgrades the importance of its religious manifestations. The book's major flaw, however, is that it discusses 1920s pacifism with no particular emphasis on the pacifists' own experience and memory of the war itself. Fleeting references to Sangnier and Bierville are not integral to Ingram's argument but merely included to demonstrate the evolution of liberals like

⁷⁷ Georges Hoog (ed.), *Ile Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Vienne, septembre 1922* (Paris, La Démocratie, 1922), p. 121.

⁷⁸ Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and a world without war: The peace movement and German society, 1892-1914* (Princeton, 1975); Sandi E. Cooper, *Patriotic pacifism. Waging war on war on Europe, 1815-1914*, (Oxford, 1991). (She does, however, mention, albeit with no analysis, Vanderpol

and the Gratry Society; Cooper, *Patriotic pacifism*, pp. 65,187.)

Norman Ingram, The Politics of Dissent. Pacifism in France, 1919-1939 (Oxford, 1991).

⁷⁶ Charles Gide (1847-1932). Professor of Economics at the Sorbonne. Vice-president of the Protestant Association for the Study of Social Questions founded in 1888. Uncle of the writer André Gide. See M. Prevost, R. d'Amat, H. Tribout de Morembert (eds.), *Dictionnaire de biographie française* (Paris, 1982), vol. 15, cols. 1479-80; Gildea, *The past in French history*, p. 257.

⁷⁹ A.C.F. Beales, *The history of peace*. A short account of the organised movements for international peace (London, 1931). However, a later and overtly apologist book of Beales' does make an obscure reference to the Paris congress of 1921 which he misleadingly terms the 'First Catholic Peace Congress' and interprets as the successor of the international, Catholic wartime White Cross movement; Beales, *The Catholic Church and international order* (London, 1941), p. 126.

Théodore Ruyssen on the matter of conscientious objection. This study picks up the threads left hanging by Ingram by offering a systematic analysis of the relationship between liberal pacifism and Christian democracy and examining the impact of the war on Catholic pacifism.

Assessing Sangnier's position in relation to non-French pacifists is a key theme of this thesis. Hence, the emphasis on secondary works on German pacifism and youth movements such as Chickering, Stachura and Winifred Becker. 81 Measuring the distance between the radical 'peace testimony' of the British Quakers and the cautious eirenicism of Sangnier leads one to the historiography of British pacifism and the invaluable work of Martin Ceadel.⁸² His study of nineteenth- and twentieth-century pacifism evaluates the work of the Society of Friends without exploring their links with French Christian democracy, which this study documents through the proceedings of the Friends' Peace Committee and the personal papers of Miss Fry. This is an unfortunate lapse on Ceadel's part given the prominence of the 1924 congress held at Westminster and endorsed by Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. In terms of French historiography, the best recapitulation of interwar pacifist themes has come in a special issue of the journal of the Bibliothèque de Documenation Internationale Contemporaine (BDIC).⁸³ Varied strands of pacifism are present – feminist, radical and liberal - but yet again Sangnier is only tangentially referred to through critical references to his activism in the papers of the Jesuit priest, Yves de la Brière, a conservative Catholic eirenicist.⁸⁴

Over the course of the 1920s the public reception of Sangnier underwent a remarkable transformation. As an outspoken critic of French foreign policy in the early 1920s, especially during the Ruhr occupation, he was politically ostracised, vilified and even physically attacked. By the time of the famous Bierville congress of

Martin Ceadel, Semi-detached idealists: the British peace movement and international relations, 1854-1945 (Oxford, 2000); On general ideological background to the war and peace debate see Ceadel, Thinking about peace and war (Oxford, 1987).

⁸¹ Peter Stachura, *The German Youth Movement 1900-1945*. An Interpretative and Documentary History (London, 1981); Winfried Becker, 'Le pacifisme sous la République de Weimar et ses liens avec Marc Sangnier et Bierville,' Institut Marc Sangnier, *Marc Sangnier, la guerre, la paix, 1914-1939* (Paris, 1999), pp. 171-95.

⁸³ Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine, S'engager pour la paix dans la France de l'entre-deux-guerres. Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps, 30, (1993).

⁸⁴ Bruno Goyet & Emmanuelle Picard, 'Les mouvements catholiques de la paix à travers les papiers du Père Yves de la Brière SJ,' in BDIC(ed.), *S'engager pour la paix*, pp. 14-20.

1926, though, his politics had come to occupy a position in the foreground. Reconciliation was then to be celebrated liturgically with official approval. With the patronage of powerful figures such as the Foreign Minister Aristide Briand, Sangnier became the personification of a sunny optimism about the peace of Europe.

How do we account for such a change? The prosaic answer is that the altered international climate and spirit of the 'Locarno honeymoon' made him more mainstream. Yet the constant feature is that Sangnier was 'bearing witness' to his war experience, in his own terms. If we analyse this shift conceptually, we can point to Sangnier as an early example of cultural demobilization. Hence the venom of his non-demobilizing opponents in 1923 and the official imprimatur his efforts received three years later when the political establishment itself was engaged in a process of demobilization. After the highpoint of Bierville in August 1926, Sangnier's Congress movement occupied a prominent place in the liberal pacifist circuit that included Geneva, advancing original thinking on European construction and unique pacifist rallies such as the Croisade de la Paix of 1929. It also became a vital meeting point for emergent French and German youth cultures with the example of the Quickborn and Grossdeutschen inspiring Sangnier's efforts with the Volontaires de la Paix and the youth hostel movement.

In 1931, the annual congresses paid their last visit to Germany. The Freiburg congress marks a turning point in their history. Witnessing at close quarters the rising Nazi tide, and cognisant of the worsening international climate, Sangnier and the congressistes threw all their efforts into supporting the Geneva Disarmament Conference of February 1932, awakening a short-lived and fragile alliance of French pacifists with the nationwide tour of the Musée de la Paix in 1931. Bitterly disappointed at the conference's failure and ridding himself of all lingering attachment to conventional political methods, Sangnier sensed the fair weather for demobilization had passed and opted for grassroots activism aimed at youth through L'Eveil des peuples. For the Jeune-République, 1932 marked the parting of the ways for founder and party and formed an appropriate endpoint to our study as in the 1930s the pursuit of peace was inevitably entangled with resistance to fascism at home and abroad.

The justification for the biographical approach adopted here is reinforced by the fact that, as yet, no serious biographer of Sangnier has emerged. Of course, partisan accounts by contemporaries and sympathisers – of varying quality - are not lacking. 85 Pezet, a collaborator, offers particularly acute insights into his place in relation to the disparate Christian Democratic movement of the early 1920s.86 Madeleine Barthelémy-Madaule was the first to attempt a full biography with partial access to the Sangnier papers. Despite (or perhaps because of) her brimming enthusiasm – she worked for Sangnier in the 1930s - the book is a disappointment as biography, if not as hagiography. Besides, she devotes less than a tenth of the book to our period, 1919-33, dwelling mainly on the halcyon days of the Sillon.⁸⁷ Those that have written of Sangnier's later pacifist engagement have tended to be dismissive. Dansette refers to the whitening moustache of this 'old character preaching in the desert surrounded by a few young men who listen to the great misunderstood man.'88 It is as if the sum-total of Sangnier's contribution had been made by 1910. Mayeur, in his general work on the history of the Church, surprisingly minimises such lay Catholic efforts so much in tune with papal policy. 89 Conway merely mentions him as part of the inheritance of Francisque Gay90, L'Aube and the French Christian Democrats of the 1930s.⁹¹

McMillan, by contrast, acknowledges Sangnier's new internationalist orientation, including Bierville and the youth hostel movement. But his emphasis is on the negative consequences of Sangnier's reluctance to head a broad Catholic

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⁸⁵ The best of these is André Darricau, *Marc Sangnier* (Paris, 1958). Others include Helène & Simone Gaillot, *Marc Sangnier*, 1873-1950 (Le Mans, 1960).

⁸⁶ Ernest Pezet, Chrétiens au service de la cité. De Léon XIII au Sillon et au MRP, 1891-1965 (Paris, 1965).

⁸⁷ Madeleine Barthelémy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, 1873-1950 (Paris, 1973), pp. 238-60.

⁸⁸ Dansette, 'Marc Sangnier's Sillon,' p. 51.

⁸⁹ Jean-Marie Mayeur, 'L'Église dans les guerres mondiales et les relations internationales' in Jean-Marie Mayeur, (ed.), *Histoire du christianisme des origines à nos jours*, vol. 12, *Guerres mondiales et totalitarismes (1914-1958)*, (Paris, 1990), pp. 315-20.

⁹⁰ Francisque Gay (1885-1963). Journalist. Co-founder with Mgr. Baudrillart of the French Catholic Committee for Propaganda Abroad in 1915. Co-director of publishing house Bloud et Gay. Founds newspapers - La Vie catholique (1924) and L'Aube (1932) – both of which were important forums for Christain Democratic politics of which he acted as a kind of intellectual conscience. After 1945, served as French ambassador to Canada. At the end of his life, still active on the left-wing of the MRP. See René Rémond, *Les catholiques dans la France des années trente* (1960; 2nd edition, Paris, 1979), p. 266.

⁹¹ Conway, Catholic politics in Europe, p. 53.

political entity in 1919 which is also the primary concern of Mayeur. ⁹² Jean-Claude Delbreil is the historian who comes closest to giving a narrative account of the peace congress movement. This is necessarily brief though as his study covers a very broad canvas, that of Catholic attitudes to Franco-German relations in the 1920s generally. ⁹³ The Jeune-République's trajectory is but one of a raft of Catholic responses examined. Heavily reliant on the press and printed sources, Delbreil was unable to make use of the Sangnier papers. Neither does he engage at length with the published congress accounts. (Belatedly, proceedings of a conference on Sangnier's pacifism have given impetus to the examination of these sources. ⁹⁴) While Delbreil sketches Sangnier's pioneering position in relation to other, more cautious Catholic 'demobilizers,' this new assessment is intended to paint the full picture.

This is virtually the first study on Marc Sangnier's pacifism making full use of archives at the Institut Marc Sangnier (IMS), formally opened in 1993. However outstanding a resource, this study is careful not to be overly dependent on the IMS. A critical approach demanded cross-referencing with other primary sources, beginning with state archives. The process yielded many wonderful discoveries not least additional police surveillance material on the relationship of Sangnier to the Action Française and his stance on conscientious objection. This thesis also casts new light on Sangnier's war experience by means of the military archives at Vincennes. Unique access was also gained to the privately held and previously unknown papers of Georges Blanchot, a veteran of both the Sillon and the war, who gives an invaluable insight into the ideological battle for pacifism at Bierville. The papers of the Catholic journalist Jean Guiraud of La Croix help us understand how conservative Catholics viewed Sangnier. German voices, important in such a history, are represented through select translations of German manuscript material on the Congress experience and the congress accounts themselves. These contemporaneous published accounts are a uniquely valuable and little known source for interwar pacifism well deserving the extensive interrogation that follows. Material from the Istituto Don Luigi Sturzo in Rome features as a critical European Christian Democratic backdrop. This study is

⁹² James McMillan, 'France' in Tom Buchanan & Martin Conway (eds.), *Political Catholicism in Europe 1918-65* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 43-45; Mayeur, *Des partis catholiques*, p. 119.

⁹³ Jean-Claude Delbreil, Les catholiques français et les tentatives de rapprochement franco-allemand dans l'entre-deux-guerres, 1920-1933 (Metz, 1972).

⁹⁴ Institut Marc Sangnier, Marc Sangnier, la guerre, la paix, 1914-1939. Actes de la journée d'étudesdu 26 septembre 1997 (Paris, 1999).

also the first to use the Vatican archives - open up to 1922 - to tell the story of Sangnier's relationship with the papacy from 1916 to 1922, crucial to understanding the reactivation of his lay Catholic activism in 1920. Finally, and perhaps most precious of all, a series of interviews with M. Jean Sangnier, son of Marc Sangnier and himself a veteran of Christian Democratic resistance during the Second World War, provided the first-hand recollections and impressions of a participant in the peace congresses, one of a dwindling band who personally knew this milieu. ⁹⁵

The subordination of biography to historical process set out in this introduction should not be taken as a straightjacket for the sake of some grand theory. For 'we do not, alas, live our lives in themes, but day by day,' to quote Foster's timely reminder. However, unlike Foster's epic study of Yeats, this is not a work of biography. Rather, this thesis is taking a significant figure – Marc Sangnier – as a case-study allowing us to examine a larger process which we have defined as 'cultural demobilization.' The war brought together his relationship to Catholic activism, war and the Republic. His was a double incorporation into the war effort, fighting for the nation and Catholicism. During his time at the Ecole Polytechnique, where he trained as a military engineer between 1895-97, Sangnier had given a series of lectures for the men in his battalion on 'the Army and democracy.' Now, almost twenty years later, his response to the mobilization of August 1914 brought him back into the same army in a battle, as he saw it, for that very democracy's survival.

⁹⁵ This is supplemented by the personal testimonies recorded in Jean-Claude Delbreil (ed.), *Marc Sangnier: Témoignages* (Paris, 1997).

97 Darricau, Marc Sangnier, p. 10.

⁹⁶ R.F. Foster, W.B. Yeats: A Life, vol. 1, The Apprentice Mage, 1865-1914 (Oxford, 1998), p. xxvii.

CHAPTER ONE

Marc Sangnier's war, 1914-1919.

'It would appear as if Marc Sangnier has conducted himself admirably as a soldier. He has led his men in particularly perilous circumstances and has been named captain. It's an improvement on his pacifist bleating of yesteryear.' The characteristically blunt assessment of Alfred Baudrillart, Rector of the Institut Catholique de Paris, gives an insight into the paradox of Marc Sangnier's military participation in the First World War. Given this particular background, Sangnier's wartime experience allows us to examine 'cultural mobilisation' for war under three headings: firstly, Sangnier as soldier; secondly, the Catholic variant of the 'war culture' and his relationship to it and finally, his work as an Army propaganda lecturer in 1917-18 and his particular endorsement of the war.

(i) Marc Sangnier, combatant.

Until June 1916, Marc Sangnier served in the 8th Territorial Battalion of the First Regiment of Engineers.³ He was attached to the Company 4/53T. Under the pressure of an extended war, the idea that the Territorials would serve mainly in support roles broke down, allowing men like Sangnier to be active participants, witnessing industrialised warfare at close quarters. The system of rotation developed in the French army is part of the background to this change.⁴ Therefore, by January 1915 Sangnier was stationed in the area near Langres in the department of the Haute-Marne, providing logistical support in the construction of trenches.⁵

¹ Alfred Baudrillart, *Les Carnets du Cardinal Alfred Baudrillart, 1er août 1914–31 décembre 1918*, ed. Paul Christophe (Paris, 1994), p.185. Entry for 29 May 1915.

² Mgr. Alfred Baudrillart (1859-1942). An impeccably orthodox churchman, Baudrillart was Rector of the Institut Catholique de Paris (1907-42), appointed to eradicate dissenting, 'Modernist' doctrine from the 'Catho.,' such as that of the excommunicate Alfred Loisy. Paul Claudel, diplomat and writer, approached Baudrillart, doyen of the conservative Catholic intelligentsia, to head a French Catholic Committee for Propaganda Abroad in 1915. He toured abroad and edited pamphlets aimed at neutral Catholic opinion, extolling the justice of the French cause. A cardinal in 1935, he died in 1942, his memory tainted with the accusation of wartime collaborationism.

³ Guy Pedroncini (ed.), *Histoire militaire de la France*, vol.3, *De 1871 à 1940* (Paris, 1992), p. 180.
⁴ Rotation within the French army was in part a response to a long war where troop use was adapted to increasingly mechanised warfare. 'Le brassage' was also a means of maintaining discipline by changing men around and preventing any one region feeling it was bearing an unfair burden of military sacrifice. See Pedroncini (ed.), *Histoire militaire de la France*, vol.3, pp. 278-83.

⁵ Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre (Vincennes) [SHAT], 6Ye 30527, 'Marc Sangnier – État des Services'.

Promoted to captain in March 1915, a citation in the *Ordre du jour* of his regiment in June 1916 portrayed him as an 'officer of technical competence and proven courage who has led, with the greatest of zeal, during eighteen months, the organization of defences on the front lines at several points of the front.' Sangnier was also a recipient of the Croix de Guerre-Étoile de Bronze. However, Sangnier's real value lay in his ability to command the respect of the men in his company and to motivate them: 'Noted as a valuable officer since the beginning of the campaign. Very devoted, much loved by his men over whom he has a lot of ascendancy.' In addition to his training as a military engineer at 'X', the *Sillon* had accustomed him to be more than that; it had indeed bred in him the expectation of being a social engineer through the education of the young. At the front, he also took it upon himself to organise Masses sung by the men. The lay apostle was again to the fore, showing his keen liturgical sense. Devotion to the Eucharist nourished the spirituality of Sangnier and provided a theology of redemptive suffering that helped him cope with the omnipresence of death.

In his characteristic role as an unofficial lay chaplain, Sangnier had some interesting insights to offer on the question of the alleged 'religious revival' within the army and French society generally during the war. Historians, such as Fontana and Becker, are agreed that late 1914 saw an initial quantifiable surge of religious observance, the so-called 'return to the altars,' amongst many erstwhile lukewarm Catholics. In its publications aimed at foreign Catholics, the Baudrillart propaganda committee made great play of this revival in its bid to portray the conflict as a war of religion where the French army was a site of orthodox Christian sacrifice and prayer. This was an exaggerated claim. Becker maintains that after preliminary enthusiasm 'patriotic and religious fervour followed a parallel curve.' Instead of

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⁶ ibid

⁷ ibid.

⁸ ibid., Dossier Marc Sangnier, Report of Colonel Commanding Engineers at Langres, January 1915.

⁹ 'X' was the nickname for the Ecole polytechnique due to the distinctive braid of the uniforms.

¹⁰ Madeleine Barthélemy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier 1873-1950* (Paris, 1973), p. 230

¹¹ Annette Becker, *War and faith. The religious imagination in France, 1914-1930* (1994; Eng. trans., Oxford, 1998), p. 111; Jacques Fontana, *Les catholiques français pendant la grande guerre* (Paris, 1990), pp. 268-9.

¹² Fontana, Les catholiques, p. 336.

¹³ Becker, War and faith, p. 106.

mass conversions to the 'true faith,' there was a qualitative revival of religious sensibility - a 'new mysticism' - rather than of traditional practice.¹⁴ Thus, during a visit to the Vatican in January 1920, Sangnier sorrowfully reported to Mgr. Tedeschini that, from his observations, only about thirty out of every one thousand men in the French army were dutiful Mass-goers.¹⁵ The uncomfortable statistic mirrored the frontline chaplains' reports on Easter communions.¹⁶

While pessimistic on the institutional front, Sangnier undoubtedly approved of the qualitative revival of religious sentiments at the front. As a devout Catholic, Sangnier imbibed many elements of this 'war religion,' as well as attending to the sacraments.¹⁷ The mystique of sacrifice epitomised by the literary works of Ernest Psichari and Charles Péguy permeated that war religion.¹⁸ Many believers-in-arms saw themselves as crusaders in an eschatological struggle against evil, incarnated in the Boche. Dolorist Catholicism conditioned its practitoners to welcome suffering as a 'sign of election,' a privileged sharing in the Christ's Passion. However, the high rhetoric of the 'imitation of Christ' was humanly unsustainable without recourse to saintly (and, in particular, female) intercessors. Even amongst sceptics, the cults of the Virgin Mary, Jeanne d'Arc and Thérèse of Lisieux took on huge importance. For many combatants, the Carmelite nun was the easiest to relate to, given her short life filled with physical and spiritual torments. Her reassuring promise to spend her heaven sending down a 'shower of roses' on those who interceded through her made her the poilus' saint *par excellence*.¹⁹

Sangnier also knew something of internal struggle and, as well as knowing the philosophical works of Blaise Pascal virtually by heart, folk memory within the movement suggests he had long-standing devotion to Thérèse, the 'Little Flower,' whose Gospel simplicity had helped sustain him in his faith after the devastating blow of the papal condemnation in 1910. Nor should the previous caveats about objective

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¹⁴ ibid., p.111; Fontana, Les catholiques, pp. 268-9.

¹⁶ Becker, War and faith, p. 109.

¹⁵ Alfred Baudrillart, *Les Carnets du Cardinal Alfred Baudrillart. 1 janvier 1919-31 décembre 1921* ed. Paul Christophe (Paris, 2000), p. 372. (Entry for 19.1.1920.)

¹⁷ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau & Annette Becker, *14-18, Retrouver la guerre* (Paris, 2000), p. 135. ¹⁸ ibid., p. 147.

¹⁹ Annette Becker, 'Les dévotions des soldats catholiques pendant la Grande Guerre,' Nadine-Josette Chaline (ed.), *Chrétiens dans la première guerre mondiale* (Paris, 1993), p. 21.

religious observance obscure the fact that many previously indifferent men gained exposure to an unfamiliar Catholic liturgy at the front. Fontana writes of the palpable piety of ceremonies held under imminent danger on improvised altars, with men crying at the singing of the Stabat Mater. This communal piety was the continuation of the 'shoulder' camaraderie of trenches and camps.²⁰ A middle-aged family man with a long track record of quasi-religious apostolate amongst the young, Sangnier seemed almost made for such a spiritual and paternal existence. As Hubert Aubert, a young Silloniste conscript, wrote to him: 'you must be a model company commandant, a real leader and a very affectionate father to the men. I am certain they must be happy to serve under your orders.'21

From June 1916 to January 1917, Sangnier was spirited out of the war and sent on a top-level political mission at the instigation of the French government to visit Pope Benedict XV in the Vatican. Sangnier, therefore, did not go through Verdun.²² In the spring and early summer of 1917, Sangnier was back in the direct service of the army but not at the front. Instead he served a period as instructor to over 600 conscripts of the class of 1918, formed into the Company 22/28, at the depot of the 1er Génie at Versailles. This was another experience as social engineer, one which prompted him to publish his findings on their level of knowledge.²³ Reintegrated, at last, into the regular army, in May 1917 Sangnier was posted to the Seventh Regiment of Engineers as 'capitaine commandant' of the Company 15/3T. The company was attached, in 1917, to an infantry division, Division 10A, and 15/3T was cited favourably in the Ordre de l'Armée for continuing their defensive works under incessant enemy attack.²⁴ From May 1917 to January 1918, Company 15/3T was stationed at Montdidier in the department of the Somme, equidistant from Amiens (Somme) and Compiègne in the neighbouring Oise. This was about forty-five miles south of the front on the Somme. Sangnier, therefore, was near enough the frontline

²⁰ Fontana, Les catholiques, p. 273.

²² This was relatively unusual given the aforementioned 'rotation' system that operated in the French

²¹ Institut Marc Sangnier (Paris) [IMS], Correspondance Générale I, Corresp. Hubert Aubert - Sangnier, 14 April 1915. (A young 'Silloniste' from Aube-Ste. Savine, Marne. Serving in 1915 in the 156th Infantry Division. Died 1962. See L'Ame commune, December 1962.)

²³ Marc Sangnier, Ce que savent les Jeunes Français aujourd'hui. Simple contribution à une enquête sur l'instruction. Examen passé par 661 conscrits de la classe 18 au depot du 1er Génie à Versailles (Paris, La Démocratie, n.d.).

²⁴ SHAT, 26 N 1752, 'Historique anonyme' - 7ème Régiment du Génie : Histoire Sommaire du Régiment (Avignon, 1935), p. 29.

to have experienced shelling and actual physical danger but far enough to have been spared sustained combat experience during this period of his service.

During the Montdidier period, then, Marc Sangnier was working on the 'arrière du front,' the vast semi-industrialized zone that sprang up on both sides along the western front. In late 1917, Sangnier suffered from ennui with humdrum engineering work well behind the line. He felt he was not making as full a contribution to the national effort as he wished and actively sought recruitment as an army propaganda lecturer or conférencier de propagande morale. propaganda drive within the army complemented the concerted propaganda campaign aimed at 'remobilising' the civilian populations in France and Britain in 1917. In the face of war-weariness it was necessary to postulate once more the absolute necessity of total military victory, a consensus which, by 1917, was in danger of weakening.²⁵ This internal army initiative formed part of the official response to the French Army mutinies in the late spring of 1917. In this sense, legitimate parallels may be drawn with the contemporaneous Union des Grandes Associations contre la Propagande Ennemie (UGAPE) on the home front, both in terms of themes and of organisation. Leonard V. Smith has convincingly argued that the mutineers had allowed their 'political selves' to be remobilized after restrained but real protest, as, in French republican tradition, 'the identity of the citizen-soldier was captive to republican ideology.'²⁶ Surely then, this army propaganda drive had an importance comparable to its civilian counterpart in attempting to consolidate the Republican will to victory of the citizen-soldier.

Not alone had Marc Sangnier a way with words which recommended him for the post, he also made concerted use of Silloniste contacts to lobby for it. Captain Deuil, former Silloniste and official in the War Minister's *cabinet*, worked assiduously to free Sangnier from 'his thankless role.' I remain your debtor: I owe you so much,' Deuil wrote, adding his regret that he could not do more to combat the

²⁵ John Horne, 'Remobilizing for "total war": France and Britain, 1917-1918,' in John Horne (ed.), *State, society and mobilization during the First World War* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 195

²⁶ Leonard V. Smith, 'Remobilising the citizen-soldier through the French army mutinies of 1917,' in Horne (ed.), *State, society and mobilization*, p. 159.

²⁷ IMS, M.S.26 Marc Sangnier as Propagandist – Letter Captain Deuil, Cabinet of War Minister-Sangnier, 29.10.1917.

resistance of unspecified others to Sangnier.²⁸ These were overcome and in February 1918 Sangnier was nominated an Army propaganda lecturer. Sangnier's relationship with wartime cultural mobilisation, though, had begun way back in 1914.

(ii) Sangnier and the Catholic 'war culture.'

Returning then to the concepts of 'cultural mobilisation' and 'war culture,' discussed in the Introduction, it is worth recalling that any national 'war culture' was necessarily heterogeneous. While holding fast to some basic tenets – the defence of the land and hatred of the barbaric enemy – this culture had to allow for as many variants as there were strands in society. Put another way, pre-war internal tensions were sublimated into the 'war culture': 'The nature of national mobilisation so defined, both generically and in its particular manifestations, was naturally conditioned by the development of political and cultural life in pre-war society.' In the French case, this consensus took the name of 'union sacrée' or 'sacred union', defined by McMillan as 'the agreement to bury longstanding political and ideological animosities in response to President Poincaré's appeal to put national unity first.' In this context, then, we can legitimately speak of a Catholic variant of the 'war culture.'

This Catholic war culture was in turn nuanced by pre-war differences of emphasis within Catholicism. In the main, this was a conservative culture, motivated not so much by love of the Republic as by a 'national Catholic' patriotism which cast the Church's Eldest Daughter (France) as the hereditary enemy of Lutheran, barbarous Prussia. Yet, in 1915, Baudrillart brought together a comparatively broad spectrum of Catholics in the Catholic Committee for French Propaganda Abroad, a committee whose publications and composition epitomised both the 'war culture' and the 'union sacrée.' As Baudrillart put it, in 1914, 'at the first call, we Catholics fall in behind our worst adversaries.'

²⁸ ibid. Deuil does not specify if such resistance was anticlerical or conservative in origin.

³² Baudrillart, Les Carnets 1914-18, p.30. (Entry for 5 August 1914.).

²⁹ Horne, 'Introduction: mobilizing for "total war", 1914-1918' in Horne(ed.), *State*, *society and mobilization*, p. 1.

³⁰ James McMillan, 'French Catholics: *Rumeurs Infâmes* and the *Union Sacrée*, 1914-1918', in Frans Coetzee & Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee (eds), *Authority, Identity and the Social History of the Great War* (Oxford & Providence, 1995), p. 113.

On the politics and publications of this committee see Fontana, Les catholiques, pp. 329-38.

Church-State relations in light of the national crisis. In turn, the Comité catholique engaged in an extensive campaign, from Ireland to the U.S.A., against German behaviour during the invasion of Belgium and France, mounting a specifically Catholic defence of French values against those of the enemy.³³ While his close collaborator Georges Hoog worked assiduously for the Committee, Sangnier himself was beyond the pale, despite the brilliance of Le Sillon's propaganda methods, his oratory and personal charisma. There were limits it seemed to the intra-Catholic union sacrée.

So where, then, did Marc Sangnier stand, as a radical Social Catholic, in relation to the Catholic 'war culture' in 1914-18? Clearly, the left-wing social and economic radicalism and unequivocal Catholic Republicanism of Sangnier put him at odds with the mainstream conservative Catholic 'war culture.' Pope Pius X's letter to the French episcopate Notre Charge Apostolique (1910) had said, with reference to the Sillon, that 'there is error and danger in linking, on principle, Catholicism to a form of government', especially 'a form of democracy whose doctrines are erroneous.'34 In view of this, Pius requested Sangnier to abstain from all public Catholic activism or lectures indefinitely. It was more of a paternal command than a request but one to which Sangnier had sincerely submitted. This vow alone prevented Sangnier even entertaining such opportunities as the Committee for lay Catholic activism and would have made him unacceptable to conservative ultramontanes. Moreover, even in this time of national unity, instances of suspicion of the Sillon still abounded amongst anti-Republican Catholics: 'Some priests treat us as if we were outside the Church: I have met some on the front who thought I was excommunicated.'35 Equally, Baudrillart, conscious of the sympathies of one of his most gifted propagandists, Francisque Gay, for Sangnier and his movement, fretted that the 'accusation of Sillonisme' could be used to discredit the Committee's work in the eyes of conservative Catholics.³⁶ Even the cordial audience of Sangnier with the Pope in August 1916 was somewhat marred by the fact that Benedict referred to

³³ Examples of the *Comité catholique*'s propaganda publications include: Alfred Baudrillart (ed.), *La* Guerre allemande et le catholicisme (Paris, Bloud et Gay, 1915).

Idem, L'Allemagne et les alliés devant la conscience chrétienne (Paris, Bloud et Gay, 1915).

³⁴ Eugen Joseph Weber, Action Française: royalism and reaction in the twentieth century (Stanford, 1962), p.244.

³⁵ IMS, M.S.26, Letter Sangnier-Louis Meyer, Rome, 11.8.1916.

³⁶ Baudrillart, Les Carnets 1914-18, p. 398. (Entry for 20.7.1916.).

reports he had received of Sangnier flouting his vow of silence, prompting Sangnier to write exasperatedly: 'What is this new calumny?'³⁷ Put simply, Sangnier represented an important albeit minority strand within contemporary French Catholicism and, consequently, within the Catholic 'war culture.'

As we have seen, Marc Sangnier's departure for Rome in June 1916 represented an extraordinary hiatus in his military service. Sangnier's son, Jean, has written of the mission: 'In the summer of 1916, Marc Sangnier was sent on an official mission to the Italian Red Cross. In fact, this mission concerned contacts which the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Aristide Briand, wished to make with the Vatican. Marc Sangnier was received by the Holy Father, therefore, on 19 August 1916.'38 (Briand was in fact Premier as well as Foreign Minister at that time in 1916.) As a ruse, the Red Cross mission was an elaborate one. Notre Étoile, a wartime paper aimed at Sillonistes in arms, reported a reception by the King at the Quirinal in Rome. After a speech in Padua, Sangnier proceeded to visit field-medical installations at the mountainous front in the north.³⁹ The visit to the Vatican, meanwhile, was the product of the wartime 'union sacrée' in France with official, Republican France, represented by Briand, desirous of internal unity and the good opinion of neutral Catholics, holding out the hope of a healing of the diplomatic rift which had existed since 1904 between France and the Vatican. Briand, conciliator of the Catholics as far back as the Separation in 1905, had to take great care not to raise anticlerical hackles on the French left. Already, despite an alleged national truce, anticlericalism had reasserted itself by means of the so-called rumeurs infâmes that propagated the belief that the clergy were glad at the Republic's divine chastisement and would welcome its defeat in the name of reaction. 40 'No one believes he will only be talking about the Red Cross', wrote Mgr. Tiberghien, papal courtier, to Rome of Sangnier's unusual release from regular combatant duties. Tiberghien hoped that 'his [Sangnier's] reports can be an arm for those like Briand who, let us hope, already understand the Vatican's mindset.' 41 (Oddly, though dealing with various French-related and peace-oriented

³⁷ IMS, M.S. 26, Memo, Marc Sangnier, 'Audience du Pape le 19 août 1916.'

³⁹ 'La Mission de Marc Sangnier en Italie,' *Notre Étoile*, 24.9.1916.

³⁸ ibid., Memo. by Jean Sangnier (son of Marc Sangnier) of his father's wartime activities, n.d..

⁴⁰ McMillan, 'French Catholics: Rumeurs Infâmes and the Union Sacrée,' p. 114.

⁴¹ Vatican Secret Archives (Rome) [Vatican Archives], Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, Francia 1916, fasc. 658. Mgr. Tiberghien-Pacelli, 29.7.1916. (Paris-based, J.Tiberghien was a member of the Papal Chapel, Annuario Pontificio, 1917.)

diplomatic meetings at the Vatican in 1916, Fontana excludes this highly significant one, as he neglects the specificity of the French Christian Democratic experience of the war. ⁴²) At the Institut Catholique, though, Baudrillart thought it all very odd, mockingly commenting:

Briand had Marc Sangnier come to him and said to him: 'the place of a man like you is not in the trenches' and he sends him to Rome. His place is not in the trenches and he a former student of Polytéchnique and an artillery captain!⁴³

However, for the sake of the common cause, Baudrillart received Sangnier before the latter left for Rome. Stupefied by the decision, Baudrillart suspected that 'they are setting a trap for him in order to stab him in the back after the war', noting that 'he is to see the Pope whom he has previously met. His visit ...will raise eyebrows.' ⁴⁴

The relationship of Marc Sangnier to the Catholic 'war culture' is further revealed in his private account of his audience with Pope Benedict XV of 19 August 1916. Firstly, Sangnier, the devout Catholic, was eager to prove his obedience to the Holy See, defending himself against the charges of his Catholic detractors, in order to gain papal approval for his renewed role as a lay Catholic activist. Secondly, in the context of the 'union sacrée', Sangnier, acting as Briand's emissary, discussed prospects for better Church-State relations, extending even to the renewal of diplomatic ties between the Vatican and the Republic. Finally, Sangnier, as an exemplar of cultural mobilisation, pleaded his country's moral case before the Holy Father, thereby attempting to influence Vatican policy. In truth, this is almost too neat a distinction as at various points two out of the three strands, or, occasionally, all three, overlap.

Given Sangnier's position in relation to the broad thrust of French Catholicism, and the condemnation of Le Sillon in 1910, it is not surprising that he

⁴² On France-Vatican relations in 1916, see Fontana, Les catholiques, pp. 192-97.

⁴³ Baudrillart, *Les Carnets 1914-18*, p.388. (Entry for 6 July 1916.).

⁴⁴ ibid., p.389. Entry for 7 July 1916. Baudrillart (correctly) assumed the visit to be linked with the recent reconciliation of the 'democratic priest' and deputy Jules Lemire (1853-1928) with the papacy. Republican deputy for Hazebrouck (Flanders) from 1893-1928, he resisted the attempts of the bishop of Cambrai to prevent his candidature in 1914. For insubordination, the bishop imposed a Vatican-approved ban from saying Mass on the priest. The new pope restored this errant Christian Democrat to full ministry in March 1916 making an explicit link with the *causa Sangnier* in private remarks to Mgr. Mignot, Archbishop of Albi. (See Jean-Marie Mayeur, *Un prêtre démocrate. L'abbé Lemire*, 1853-1928 (Paris, 1968), pp.489, 535.)

⁴⁵ Sangnier's detailed account of the audience was kept secret until the publication of Madeleine Barthélemy-Madaule's official biography in 1973.

felt defensive in his dealings with the Holy See. First and foremost, there was the almost Jansenist scrupulosity that Sangnier felt about the manner wholeheartedness of his submission to the papacy. This deep hurt was very largely assuaged in the audience, according to Jean Sangnier. 46 Judging from his own account, though, the 'sense of closure' was not immediate and Marc Sangnier returned again and again to the question of his filial obedience to the Rome and the question of a renewed lay apostolate.⁴⁷ The continual goading of ultra-conservative Catholics implacably hostile to Catholic Republicanism further honed Sangnier's defensive instincts. Benedict, though, affirmed 'vigourously' the compatability of Republicanism and Catholicism. 48 Despite the domestic detractors, Sangnier left the audience with a renewed mandate for religious activism. Sangnier recounted to the Pope the suspicion he encountered in certain quarters. Benedict's reply was emphatic: "Your attitude was absolutely perfect...Yes!. Absolutely perfect!" Then we spoke about the condemnation of the Sillon. "Everyone makes mistakes. Even Saint Augustine did.'49 As Vicar of Christ, Benedict correctly pointed out that Pius' paternal if stern call to obedience of Sillon activists was not in the same doctrinal league as the encyclicals concerning Modernism. Benedict, ever the diplomat, would pursue the fight against internal heresy more sensitively than his sainted predecessor. 50

Sangnier was somewhat reassured that his submission was viewed as sincere. Bolstered by this knowledge, Sangnier cautiously broached with the head of the Church the question of his recommencement of the 'moral and religious formation of new generations,' as his contemporaneous memorandum to the Holy See had put it.⁵¹ In his audience with the Pope, Sangnier recalled his 'scrupulous' abstention from 'works of religious and social education,' nothing short of 'a cruel privation' for him personally.⁵² Here we reach the heart of the conundrum. In 1910, Pius X had not

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⁴⁶ IMS, M.S. 26, Memo., Jean Sangnier, n.d..

⁴⁷ IMS, M.S. 26, Memo. Marc Sangnier, 'Audience du Pape 1916.'

⁴⁸ ibid.

⁴⁹ ibid.

⁵⁰ Eamon Duffy, Saints and Sinners: a history of the Popes (1997; 2nd edition, London & New Haven, 2002), p.329.

⁵¹ Vatican Secret Archives (Rome), Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, Francia 1916, fasc. 658. Memorandum Sangnier-Holy See, 15.8.1916. Copy at IMS, M.S.26 Letter Sangnier-Louis Meyer, Rome, 11.8.1916. (Louis Meyer was Sangnier's personal secretary.)

⁵² IMS, M.S. 26 Memo. Marc Sangnier, 'Audience du Pape 1916'

presumed to silence Sangnier in the civil, political sphere. In the religious sphere, though, beyond Caesar's sway, Pius ended the experiment of 'le plus grand Sillon' which from 1906 had allegedly led Catholic youth astray with its fusion of lay Catholic activism, radical politics and suspect dialogue with heretics and atheists. In his Vatican memorandum, in whose drafting Sangnier was aided by Louis Meyer, his personal secretary, Sangnier regretted how he had been obliged to concentrate on pure politics and his party Jeune République (founded in 1912), rather than his true charism of popular education.⁵³ Electoral politics was a pale imitation of the more millenarian task of remaking a Christian youth for France. Benedict was not to disappoint his supplicant. Weeks before, Tiberghien had reassured the Vatican of the visitor's efforts at amendment of life: 'He would still wish to work for the good of souls but he no longer sticks to a particular form (or forms) of apostolate undertaken Now Benedict acknowledged the 'edifying' nature of Sangnier's until now'.54 abstinence but felt it was time for it to end and that he should involve himself in 'Catholic action,' even organising retreats and religious meetings. Scrupulous to a fault, Sangnier doggedly asked if he would be breaking the vow he had taken in 1910. Each of three times he was reassured not to fear his critics in this regard. 55

Benedict's privately stated intention to officially dispel the sulphurous whiff of heterodoxy around Sangnier undoubtedly reassured the latter. However, of greatest relevance to the mission instigated by Briand was Sangnier's contention that papal reprimand of the Catholic anti-Republican right would secure the 'union sacrée' and prepare a future resolution of France's religious quarrels, especially the Church-State one. As he concluded:

Now, while France, all pulling together, is seeking to accomplish a unanimous duty and realising the 'union sacrée' in an effort which binds us all together, the Pope's words would be more opportune than ever, without risk of regrettable polemics ...It would establish peace in hearts while at the same time would prepare the future.⁵⁶

Here was an intersection between Sangnier's desire for personal vindication and the cause of better Church-State relations Briand had sent him to serve. After all, as

⁵³ Vatican Archives, Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, Francia 1916, fasc. 658. Sangnier-Holy See, 15.8.1916.

55 IMS, M.S. 26 Memo. Marc Sangnier, 'Audience du Pape 1916'

⁵⁴ ibid, Mgr. Tiberghien-Pacelli, 29.7.1916.

Vatican Archives (Rome), Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, Francia 1916, fasc. 658. Memo. Sangnier-Holy See, 15.8.1916.

Sangnier reminded Benedict at the very outset, he was there also on behalf of Briand who felt that contact with the Holy See could be 'useful' for France. Benedict appeared touched by this and, indeed, what hopes the Pontiff expressed for a post-war Church-State reconciliation seem to have been bound up with the figure of Briand, the perceived conciliator. He recalled Briand's privately conceding to Belgium's Cardinal Mercier that it would be impossible to expel once more members of French religious orders who had served with such distinction on the front. The Pope seemed willing to leave a bitter legacy from anticlerical excesses and his predecessor's inflexibility pass into oblivion. If Alsace-Lorraine returned to France, the Pope announced himself to be 'extremely conciliatory' and anxious for an understanding on the question of the Napoleonic Concordat which had never been rescinded by the Germans.⁵⁷

While the desire to assuage his own conscience made Sangnier adopt the tone of a supplicant for most of the audience, this did not prevent there being polite disagreement on other topics. This was seen most forcibly when Sangnier, the exemplar of Catholic 'cultural mobilisation', attempted to plead France's moral case before the earthly head of the universal Catholic Church. With equal tenacity, though, Benedict XV desired to remain the common father of warring Catholics and was not going to let himself be used in a propaganda war by either Cain or Abel. To the French, prospective future diplomatic reconciliation between the Republic and the Holy See was all well and good. There were more pressing and immediate concerns though. As the Allies saw it, there was the overriding moral imperative, to take sides in the clash of civilisations. The Papacy had to unequivocally condemn 'German barbarism.' The use of such Manichean terms had crystallised, in 1914-15, around the issue of the German violation of Belgian neutrality and German military conduct in 1914. For the very mention of Mercier's name raised the benighted issue of Catholic Belgium and her fate at the hands of her brutal German aggressors. From 1914, the papacy adopted a policy of *imparzialità* towards the war in general and the atrocities issue in particular. The Cardinal Secretary of State, Pietro Gasparri, had written in October 1914 of the papacy's refusal to take sides 'in human contests and the bloody conflicts that stem from them,' or to compromise in any way the mission

⁵⁷ IMS, M.S. 26 Memo. Marc Sangnier, 'Audience du Pape 1916'

of the church 'to bring peace and charity to all the peoples of the earth.'⁵⁸ This made the policy more than just diplomatic neutrality but, as Horne and Kramer state, it effectively meant that the Vatican saw no moral distinction between either set of belligerents.⁵⁹

Unsurprisingly, such an apparently relativist position was 'at loggerheads with the cultural mobilisation of each side' and was greeted with dismay by Belgian and French Catholics.⁶⁰ Benedict further annoyed his French flock, and gave more fodder to the anticlericalists, by means of an interview with the French paper La Libérté in June 1915. In answer to a question from the journalist Louis Latapie on the sinking of the Lusitania the previous month, the Pope appears to relativize the atrocity by bemoaning both the ship's fate and the physical hunger caused in the Central Powers by the Allied naval blockade.⁶¹ Formidable ecclesiastics like Mercier and, indeed, Baudrillart were at the heart of ecclesiastical-political manoeuvres to get Benedict and the Cardinal Secretary of State morally to support the Allies. Even though the intra-Church war of words continued up to the beginning of 1916, it was to little or no avail for in as much as the papacy was willing to play an active role it was only willing to either engage in charitable relief of human distress in wartime or to make a series of initially discrete attempts to bring about a negotiated peace. The first of these was in 1915, a precursor to the more celebrated Papal Peace Note of August 1917 that would be greeted with a tone of respectful defiance by the French ecclesiastical establishment.⁶² The discussion between Benedict and Marc Sangnier of the moral issues at stake in the war fits perfectly into this schema.

Sangnier, therefore, fighting gallantly for the Christian-inspired civilisation of his Republican idyll, found himself obliged, as a patriot and a Catholic, to respectfully but resolutely point out German barbarism and, implicitly, solicit suitably thundering indignation from the righteous Pontiff. To this end, Sangnier met not just the latter

⁵⁹ Horne & Kramer, Atrocities, pp. 268-69.

⁶² Jean-Marie Mayeur, 'Les catholiques français et Benoît XV en 1917' in Chaline (ed.), *Chrétiens dans la première guerre mondiale*, p. 160.

⁵⁸ L'Osservatore romano, 8.10.1914 cited in John Horne & Alan Kramer, German Atrocites 1914. A history of denial (Yale, 2001), pp. 268-69

⁶⁰ ibid.

Annette Becker, 'The Churches and the war' in Jean-Jacques Becker, *The Great War and the French people* (1983; English edition, Leamington Spa, 1985), p. 184.
 Jean-Marie Mayeur, 'Les catholiques français et Benoît XV en 1917' in Chaline (ed.), *Chrétiens*

but also the Curia's rising star and future Pope Pius XII, Eugenio Pacelli (14 August) and Secretary of State Gasparri on 15 August.⁶³ At the audience with Benedict on 16 August, Sangnier insisted that France was fighting a defensive war, forcing Benedict onto the defensive over the Belgian issue:

The Pope affirmed that he loved France and had affirmed the injustice of the violation of Belgium. I remarked to him that ... as long as the occupation of Belgium continued, they (the Germans) persevered in injustice. The Pope replied that I, as a philosopher, ought to understand that the Pope was obliged to treat with the Germans, even in Belgium, as there existed there a *de facto* power.⁶⁴

To Sangnier, who was extremely exercised by the immorality of the war conducted in Germany's name, this papal pronouncement must have been disconcerting. It seemed to acquiesce in the notion that might was right. Sangnier's subsequent speeches protested incessantly about the perversion of German culture and its barbarous consequences in Belgium and France. He could not agree with the Pontiff's wish that 'one began to envisage a peace without fighting *jusqu'au bout*,' in other words, a negotiated peace, as suggested by the Papacy in 1915 and again in 1917. When asked by Sangnier what message he had for Briand, Benedict replied 'The Pope is offering himself as mediator.' Though Sangnier obligingly concurred that such a role was a singular prerogative of the Papacy, there could be no hiding the polite disagreement as national and cultural mobilisation came up against the transnational Catholicism attempting to uphold some semblance of unity in the face of war. As so often during the First World War, the 'Eldest Daughter,' intimately wedded to the French national cause at the altar of the 'sacred union', had to agree to disagree with her 'Holy Father.'

Sangnier's visit to the Vatican did not go unnoticed at home. Neither was it without ramifications within the contemporary Catholic 'war culture.' Baudrillart exemplified the suspicion of many when he noted crisply in the *Carnets*: 'The Pope has received Marc Sangnier...But the Pope shall not go back on what Pius X did.' Julien de Narfon, meanwhile, a liberal Catholic and religious affairs correspondent of

⁶³ IMS, M.S.26, Sangnier, diary, August 1916.

⁶⁴ ibid., Memo., Marc Sangnier, 'Audience du Pape 1916'

⁶³ ibid.

⁶⁶ Baudrillart, Les Carnets 1914-16, p. 414. (Entry for 22 August 1916.)

Le Figaro, extolled Sangnier's humanitarian mission, one he described as widely reported in Italy.⁶⁷ Indiscreetly, though, de Narfon effectively blew the cover of Sangnier's philanthropic mission, saying how Catholics would be grateful to Briand for sending 'one of their own,' for reasons that had nothing to do with the Red Cross. With the decorated Catholic officer as representative, de Narfon concluded, 'one can expect some results from this choice... where religious interests and the national interest coincide.'⁶⁸ Such a bald statement of Catholic interests being indulged in the context of the *union sacrée* was awkward, given the anticlerical disposition of many on the left. Certainly, it would appear to have compromised Marc Sangnier's position and prompted the 'brusque and definitive interruption of my mission.'⁶⁹ Mgr. Henry Chapon, bishop of Nice, an old friend of the Sillon, wrote to Sangnier of how aggrieved he was at the carelessness of 'that unbearable Narfon, master blunderer' which had sabotaged a mission that could have helped enormously in the task of rapprochement.⁷⁰

Mgr. Chapon, as one of the few members of the episcopate who had spoken up for the Sillon in 1909-10, was well placed to remind Sangnier how the Roman welcome given to him would 'reawaken the malevolence' of his enemies. Chapon informed Sangnier of at least one written protest from a bishop to Cardinal Gasparri. Bishop Tissier of Châlons had written to Rome for clarification of the audience's import, fearing an 'impertinent' exaggeration of the Pope's receptivity to Sangnier's democratic Social Catholicism. Union sacrée or not, Tissier was still using the language of the Modernist crisis when he stated forebodingly that 'the Sillon is a subtle doctrine which insinuates itself by the least of open doors'. In this case, Rome was not about to bolt the door. Pacelli, as head of the Second Section of the Secretariat of State, the so-called Affari Straordinari, refused to entertain such complaints in his response. 'The August Pontiff wished to encourage him in popular and social action, for the especial benefit of the working class' and in all particulars faithful to the Holy See and the bishops 'which M. Marc Sangnier accepted

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⁶⁷ Julien de Narfon, 'La Mission du capitaine Marc Sangnier,' *Le Figaro*, 26.9.1916.

⁶⁸ ibid.

⁶⁹ IMS M.S. 26 Letter Sangnier-War Ministry, 13.11.1916.

⁷⁰ ibid., Letter Chapon- Sangnier, 26.12.1916.

⁷¹ ibid.

⁷² Vatican Archives, Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, Francia 1916, fasc. 658, Letter Bishop Tissier of Châlons-Gasparri, 9.10.1916.

Some, like Tissier of Châlons, seemed to have overlooked the caveat of episcopal supervision, the Pope told Cardinal Amette, the Archbishop of Paris. In the same audience in December, Benedict spoke to Amette of his 'benevolent' attitude towards Sangnier while retaining Pius X's censure. But what he did not want was 'Sangnier and his friends to have their hands tied' in the matter of social action. ⁷⁴ That Christmas, Chapon, though encouraged, wrote to Sangnier to say that the private warmth of his audience with the Pope had to be followed up with a public gesture or statement on Benedict's part. Chapon would soon meet his old friend della Chiesa (as he knew him before he was elected as Pope Benedict) and would attempt to nudge him in that direction. This was no mere ecclesiastical-political favour sought by Chapon on the layman's behalf but a missionary imperative as the bishop implored God to 'deliver you back soon, victorious and in peace, to the great work He destines for you...in the regeneration of our Christian France.'75

A subordinate but very important point about Sangnier's relationship to the Catholic 'war culture' is the manner in which Le Sillon survived as a spirit and even a network within that 'culture'. Sangnier remained a father figure for his Silloniste comrades. The umpteen letters addressed from the front to 'notre Marc' confirm this. The newspaper premises at La Maison de la Démocratie were shut and another part of the adjacent residence on boulevard Raspail was given over by Sangnier's mother as an auxiliary hospital but Jean Sangnier recalls the gatherings of dispersed comrades on leave in the family apartment where 'one served, as well as one could, a wartime meal.'⁷⁶ The Silloniste spirit survived, certainly, but did it do so as a network? In the absence of a daily newspaper, a vibrant array of impromptu publications shot up. Georges Hoog founded Notre Étoile, the 'republican democrat' newsletter aimed at fostering a Silloniste fraternity of the trenches, in 1915, with Sangnier's blessing. Produced privately at the home of Emmanuel Rivière in Blois, it featured familiar themes of reforming republicanism.⁷⁷ Robert Cornilleau later recalled the joy with which it was received 'in the mud of the trenches' by anciens militants as a reminder

⁷³ Ibid, Pacelli-Tissier, 16 October 1916.

⁷⁴ Archives Historiques de l'Archévêché de Paris [AHAP], (Paris,) 1 D XI, 13, Papers of Cardinal Amette, Notes sur audiences ponitficales (1906-09), folio 32.

⁷⁵ IMS M.S. 26 Letter Chapon-Sangnier, 26 December 1916.

⁷⁶ ibid., Memo., Jean Sangnier, n.d..

⁷⁷ Notre Étoile, 15.2.1916.

of the past and a pointer to the future.⁷⁸ The paper certainly reflected a distinctive Sillon contribution to the 'war culture' but, through the collaboration of Hoog with representatives of different strands of Social Catholicism such as Ernest Pezet, the paper represented a miniature 'union sacrée' comprising of all Christian Democrats, not just the leftist orphans of the Sillon.⁷⁹

Notre Étoile's political slant annoyed many coreligionists prompting a friendly warning from Mgr. Chapon not to overdo 'their very legitimate and necessary defence of Republican and Democratic France' so as not to give the ecclesiastical censors something to use against them. Sangnier, alarmed at the thought of arousing clerical enemies or of being seen to undermine the 'sacred union,' made a 'brusque' request to Hoog to cease publication. Hoog complied, but Sangnier was powerless to stop other 'republican democrats' from continuing under a new masthead, l'Ame française, which ran from 1917-24. Comprising more than just Sangnier acolytes, l'Ame française was the matrix from which emerged interwar centrist Christian democracy through contributors such as Ernest Pezet, Étienne Besson and Raymond Laurent and Cornilleau himself. Such divisions showed the fragility of even the most miniature of 'sacred unions!'

Less complicated was the history of two further wartime journals that catered unambiguously for the ex-Sillon constituency. Both run by Georges Hoog, these were, firstly, *Lettres à un soldat* (1915-19), and, secondly, *Nos Annales de Guerre* (1918-19). Produced at Bloud et Gay, the Catholic publishers, in pamphlet style, *les Lettres* brought the fusion of Christian redemption theology and republican mystique to a new intensity. In his Easter message for 1915, for example, Hoog wrote of the 'Christian Passover, festival of the resurrection of the Christ who loves the Franks! Patriotic Passover, festival of French resurrection!'⁸⁴ Stressing the continuity of 'the

⁷⁹ Barthélemy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, p.231.

⁷⁸ Robert Cornilleau, 'Les Républicains-Démocrates (Histoire et Souvenirs) – XVIII. Les Républicains-Démocrates et la Guerre', *Le Petit Démocrate*, 11.10.1925.

⁸⁰ IMS, M.S. 26, Corresp. Chapon-Sangnier, 26 December 1916.

⁸¹ Cornilleau, 'Les Républicains-Démocrates', Le Petit Démocrate, 11.10.1925.

⁸² ibid.

⁸³ ibid.; The Jeune-République remained half-in, half-out of this putative Catholic democrat coalition before Sangnier finally announced he would not take part in such a formal political alliance at Pentecost 1919.

⁸⁴ Georges Hoog, 'Les Pâques de la patrie,' *Lettres à un soldat*, 4.4.1915.

cause,' Hoog portrayed their reluctant but resolute recourse to arms in 1914 as 'magnificently fulfilling your civic effort of yesterday,' the quintessential Republican citizen-in-arms. 85 Torn, like the Sillon itself, between Catholic internationalism and a latent nationalist sensibility, both Lettres à un soldat and Nos Annales de Guerre recalled their longstanding solidarity with their compatriots in Alsace-Lorraine and their fierce opposition to the aggressor. 86 (In a similar vein, Hoog wrote a pamphlet for Baudrillart's Comité catholique outlining to neutral Catholics why Alsace-Lorraine should be returned to France.⁸⁷) This defensive war was just because it was a 'war of liberation, yes, and not of conquest.'88 To promote cohesion amongst believers les Lettres also produced postcards.⁸⁹ One design featured Captain Sangnier in uniform above a suitably patriotic appeal to national unity. (See Appendix IV.) The second design was more akin to a memorial card with two photos. On top, a sombre Sangnier, head bowed in prayer, presided, priest-like, at the burial of one of the men under his command at the front. Beneath this, a photo of Henry du Roure, killed in 1914, and already the iconic Sillon martyr for the nation and the cause. (See Appendix IV, Figure 3.) Beside du Roure, a line from his last article in la Démocratie published on the eve of war looking beyond the war to peace and the return to 'the most noble struggle of all, the eternal struggle for integral and divine truth.'90

Nos Annales de Guerre had begun under the title Nouvelles de nos amis with Hubert Aubert as editor. With Hoog in charge from March 1918, the name changed but the same desire to preserve comradeship presided. This, however, was often a melancholy task and the paper frequently resembled an extended obituaries column. Poignant in their own right, these portraits of dead men in the *livre d'or* reminded the reader of the Sillon's distinctive ideological contribution to the 'war culture,' even when written in blood. The tribute to Captain Maurice Lestien, of the pre-war *Sillon* in the Nord, typifies this, stressing how this young father, whose wife was expecting their second child, offered his blood 'for the life of *la patrie*.' Imbued with dolorist Catholicism, the Sillon had never promised shortcuts to redemption. Lestien, the

85 ibid.

⁸⁶ Nos Annales de Guerre, 24.3.1918.

⁸⁷ Georges Hoog, *Pourquoi l'Alsace-Lorraine doit redevenir française* (Paris, Bloud et Gay, 1915)

⁸⁸ Hoog, 'Les Pâques de la patrie,' Lettres à un soldat, 4.4.1915.

⁸⁹ Lettres à un soldat, 3.10.1915.

⁹⁰ La Démocratie, 31.7.1914.

⁹¹ Nos Annales de Guerre, 24.3.1918.

devoted Mass-goer, knew this and displayed in his barracks quarters the Sillon's treasured symbol of a sheaf of wheat bound in a blood-red band. The *via Crucis* was unavoidable. Suffering, even the shedding of one's blood, might well have to precede growth and the harvest. But then again, affliction and salvation had to be central themes in any Catholic 'war culture.'

(iii) Sangnier, propagandist.

Marc Sangnier assumed a new official relationship to the process of wartime mobilization when in February 1918 he became a lecturer on propaganda charged with instilling in French citizen-soldiers a deeper understanding of the purpose of the war and their role in it. Sangnier had already shown his skill at the indoctrination of others during his period as commander and instructor of Company 22/28 at Versailles in the spring 1917. Once again, Sangnier revelled in the role of technical and moral instructor. The company, the class of '18 called to serve in the 1er Génie, was regionally and socially mixed including twenty-one complete illiterates. 92 Energetic as ever, he took it upon himself to organise an entrance exam on the basis of which the contingent was streamed. Having tested their general level of education functional, civic and moral – the new master taught a curriculum covering French, history, geography and mental arithmetic. But even exercises in dictation had a didactic purpose: 'France fights now not alone for her independence; she fights also for the liberty of the world.'93 Sangnier's pamphlet on his experience bemoaned the number of unintelligible scripts but he decided to see the funny side when it came to historical misinformation. The pen-pictures of great French historical figures since Charlemagne the pupils were given to write produced some 'comic' results. Revisionism was the vogue: 'Louis XIV, king of France and Gambetta his minister'. 94 Everyone, of course, remembered Gambetta's escape from Paris in a balloon in 1870, a trip that 'took, under the pens of the class of '18, gigantic proportions'!95 Geography allowed for less levity with 'even the most ignorant knowing exactly the invaded departments...there is knowledge that the German injury has engraved in the

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⁹² Sangnier, *Ce que savent les Jeunes Français aujourd'hui*, p.3, 6. (In a discussion of literacy rates amongst conscripts, Zeldin mistakenly dates this survey as 1920; Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*,vol.2: *Intellect, Taste, and Anxiety* (Oxford, 1977), p. 204.)

⁹³ Sangnier, Ce que savent les Jeunes Français aujourd'hui, p. 4

⁹⁴ ibid, pp. 9-10.

most uncultivated minds.'96 French composition though, by means of its earnest topics provided the best patriotic insight.

As with his later propaganda post, Sangnier used both 'classes' and individual chats as means of illumination, so the pupils were well primed on how to write on the duties of a French soldier. Here again, Sangnier's paternalism emerged and he was genuinely moved by the generous sentiments of 'my poor little *poilus*.' It was nothing short of a privilege to live with them, reading their essays ranging from stirring words on the citizen-in-arms as 'a soldier *par excellence* of the free and democratic people,' to the more practical prescription that a good soldier 'leaves others sleep, doesn't waste food and doesn't get drunk.' Though Sangnier as popular educator and tribune conceded that their educational deficiencies called for remedy, his primary feeling was one of compassion for these 'timid and anxious' youngsters who feigned bravura in the face of the same 'haunted' barracks that had daunted him twenty years before: 'from the first day, upon first contact, we understood and loved one another.' 98

Sangnier was charged initially with lectures in the departments of the Meuse and the Marne, and from May 1918, the Aisne and the Oise as well. 99 Jean Sangnier recalls:

In the last year of the war he was charged with a permanent mission in the armies, a psychological action one would say nowadays, in order to maintain the troop's morale. Lectures, slideshows, cinema. His brief allowed him to circulate along the whole of the front, bringing with him his propagandist material.¹⁰⁰

The modalities of the lectures were similar to those of the *instituteurs* on the home front on behalf of the UGAPE. ¹⁰¹ Large meetings were supplemented by *causeries intimes*, or small group sessions, suited to Sangnier's personal charm. Seven speaking tours between March 1918 and April 1919 gave some 106 lectures in all. ¹⁰² The lectures and *causeries* undertaken by Sangnier bore a great resemblance to the pre-

⁹⁶ ibid, p. 12

⁹⁷ ibid, p. 14,16.

⁹⁸ ibid, p.19.

⁹⁹ IMS, M.S.26, Gen. Conneau - General D.E. du GAN, 13 May 1918.

¹⁰⁰ ibid., Memo., Jean Sangnier, n.d..

Horne, 'Remobilizing for "total war": France and Britain, 1917-1918,' p.205

¹⁰² IMS M.S.26, Propaganda Conferences - Reports to War Ministry, 1918-19. (Sangnier submitted official reports to the War Ministry after each of these tours.)

1910 popular education lectures and study groups of 'the halcyon days of the *Sillon*.' Jean Sangnier rightly stresses a methodological continuity with the Sillon, adding: 'for him, it was more passionate moral action than rallying the morale of the troops. Already, new vocations were awakened around him.' Similarly, in his private diary, Sangnier wrote of a lecture from the first tour in March 1918; 'Improvised lecture – the best of all – Veritable study circle (*cercle d'études*).' Cannily aware of new propaganda techniques, he used cinema (such as films of German-inflicted destruction), the slide projector, pamphleteering and even a patriotic sing along! 105

What was the content of Sangnier's propaganda action? Were there any tensions between his interpretation and the official message? Marshal Foch had wanted these lectures to encourage 'hatred of the Germans,' an anathema to Sangnier. Sangnier distinguished clearly between the German people, particularly German republicans, Catholics and democrats, and the perceived institutional brutality of the Prussian military apparatus. That did not stop him, though, from taking a ferociously anti-German stance on the issue of German war ethics, atrocities in particular and the aberration of German 'Kultur' generally. Inviting his audience of poilus to draw their own conclusions, he normally launched into a scathing critique of 'this German theory of force...[its] doctrines culminating in the crime which covers the world in blood today.'107 The heroic martyrdom of Belgium was the first result of this war of German aggression: 'Even if the body of Belgium was to suffer the hardest of martyrdoms, was it not first of all necessary to save her soul?' Sangnier bemoaned Germany's contempt for the Hague and Geneva conventions on the conduct of war: 'What is become of all that under the odious effort of German brutality? The world has been brusquely brought back to the times when, wolf like, man preyed upon man.' Sangnier went on to catalogue German transgressions of the moral code of civilisation: 'Have I any need to recall the bombardment of open cities,

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¹⁰³ ibid., Memo., Jean Sangnier, n.d..

¹⁰⁴ ibid., diary, 25 March 1918.

¹⁰⁵ On the new propaganda techniques used by the UGAPE see Horne, 'Remobilizing for "total war": France and Britain, 1917-1918', p.206.

¹⁰⁶ IMS, M.S.26, Circular - Marshal Foch on conferences, n.d. but 1917.

ibid., Propaganda Conferences – Memo. of conference, first tour, March-April 1918, p.7.

¹⁰⁸ ibid, p.13.

the torpedoing of commercial shipping, even neutral... the arbitrary condemnations, the massacres of civilians?' 109

Warming to the theme, Sangnier explicitly invoked Christian martyrdom when he referred to the killing of Good Friday worshippers at the Church of St. Gervais in Paris as 'a sort of sacrilegious irony at the very moment when Christ was shedding his blood so that men might learn to love one another.' At the height of the Ludendorff offensive of the spring of 1918, the Germans had bombarded Paris with Big Bertha guns. Though now forgotten, the deaths of tens of women and children at St. Gervais on Good Friday 1918 'revived the indignant memory' of Reims four years before and put a renewed spotlight on German atrocities. 110 In light of dolorist Catholicism that viewed the war as one long Good Friday, Sangnier's rhetoric about the coincidence of the commemoration of the Passion and the atrocity takes on its full meaning.¹¹¹ Equally appalling, to Sangnier's mind, was the shelling of the maternity ward of the city's Hôpital Cochin, the spilling of blood on 'white and innocent cradles.'112 Such references gave these lectures a real contemporary impact. In the first half of 1918 the issue of German barbarity dominated pubic discourse with an intensity not experienced since the first months of the war, and in his treatment of these, Sangnier slotted perfectly into the classic denunciation of enemy inhumanity so typical of the mainstream 'war culture.'

Another article of the 'war culture' creed to which Sangnier wholeheartedly subscribed was that of the defensive war. France was merely defending herself (and, consequently, civilisation) in this conflict. Any Allied reprisals were consequently relativized. Neither France nor her allies, Sangnier insisted, could have even conceived of such a war. Even if the exigencies of defence – 'offensive' is not even mentioned – led to purely military reprisals, was it not still the instigator of this odious system who remained responsible? ¹¹³ It is fair to say that the later lectures of 1918 were predicated on the assumption of Allied victory and therefore looked forward very self-consciously to the shape of the peace to come. Throughout the

¹⁰⁹ ibid.

Audoin-Rouzeau & Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre, pp. 68, 129.

¹¹¹ Becker, War and faith, p. 26.

¹¹² IMS, M.S. 26 Propaganda Conferences – Memo. of conference, first tour, March-April 1918, p. 16. ibid., p.18.

lectures, though, Sangnier stressed the importance of fighting the war 'to the bitter end' in order to rid Germany of the Prussian militarist menace. His diary records a recurring theme, that of the necessity of 'two victories: military victory over the enemy and a moral victory, maintaining after military victory the love of peace, justice and the fraternity of all.' 114

If the war had a moral purpose then integral, absolutist pacifism was not acceptable. The love of peace was legitimate and Christian. To opt out of the war for idealistic reasons or out of self-interest, was little more than cowardice. In this light, Sangnier records his opinion of the Bolshevik armistice with Germany as a deeply cynical act. Germany was not intrinsically bad but just the victim of a militarist virus whose 'germs' were present in countries other than the Reich. This is the clear demarcation line between Sangnier's 'war culture' and hatemongering prescribed by Foch. He left open the possibility that Germany was not uniquely to blame for 1914, a view of the war responsibility far different from the moral statement made in the Treaty of Versailles. His thought, of course, was as yet far from mature, but it was consistent for someone who, from 1920, sought a minimalist application of that treaty's more egregious stipulations.

The internationalist heritage of the *Sillon* no doubt predisposed Sangnier to embrace the Wilsonian vision of a League of Nations and peaceful arbitration of disputes. In this sense, Sangnier saw the war in quasi-millenarian terms, the last best chance to establish the kingdom of God on earth. As Walter Lippmann, an important contemporary figure in the US war effort, put it:

The Wilsonian ideology is a crusading doctrine, generating great popular fervour from the feeling that war is an intolerable criminal interference with the nature of things...Therefore all wars are wars to end wars, all wars are crusades which can be concluded when all the peoples have submitted themselves to the only true political religion. There will be peace only when all the peoples hold and observe the same self-evident principles.¹¹⁵

He told the troops of his admiration for Woodrow Wilson, 'patient and true in his search for the truth.' However, such views, coupled with his rejection of a punitive

¹¹⁴ IMS, M.S. 26, Propaganda Conferences – Marc Sangnier's private diary – Entry for 23 September 1918

¹¹⁵ Walter Lippmann cited in Martin Ceadel, *Thinking about peace and war* (Oxford, 1987), p. 51. ¹¹⁶ IMS, M.S. 26, Propaganda Conferences – Memo. of conference, first tour of conferences, March-April 1918, pp. 36-7

peace, meant he was generally met with coolness from the officer corps. For instance, his diary records a dinner with General Gourand where they disagreed over the appropriateness of employing Wilson's strictures against 'the feeble language of hatred and vengeance.'117 After all, the General felt, 'it's necessary to develop hatred of the Germans amongst the poilus. 118 Could there have been a starker clash of 'war cultures' than this? Indeed, in the lectures, Sangnier made even bolder statements than his hero in the White House, putting the moral onus for change of heart back on the Allies. For example, just before the Armistice, he spoke of Ireland and 'the moral dangers of victory. I say we must sort out injustices which can be found on the Allied side before we have the right to demand the resolution of those that are found on the side of our enemies, 119 Jaurès had been right; France, the bearer of universal values, had a special duty in this regard.

The sense of urgency about the need to secure and win the peace is seen nowhere better than in the speech of Marc Sangnier at Épernay in January 1919. Épernay, located about thirty kilometres south of Reims, in the heart of the pivotal Marne département, had experienced fully the trauma of German invasion in the autumn of 1914. Stories of German military brutality towards civilians had been reported from the Épernay area, as from elsewhere in the Marne and its neighbouring départements. 120 Yet, in spite of the heightened sensitivities of such a local audience, Sangnier was prepared to state, merely two months after the armistice, his cautious, pragmatic hopes for the new Germany, still struggling to be born. Sangnier played on the emotions of his audience of local schoolchildren and parents by pleading for the Wilsonian settlement. The supreme lesson of the war was that no such conflict should ever happen again. Victory had to have domestic consequences too, he had mused elsewhere in January 1919, perpetuating the 'union sacrée' at home through 'endurance, discipline, fraternity – profound reform of society...in a spirit of justice and of love.'121 Hence, at Épernay, Sangnier showed an American-made film, given the French title of 'Joli rayon de soleil', denouncing the evils of alcoholism. 122 The

¹¹⁷ ibid., Propaganda Conferences – Notes, 1918.

¹¹⁸ ibid., Diary – Entry for 10 June 1918.

¹¹⁹ ibid., Entry for 6 November 1918.

¹²⁰ Horne & Kramer, Atrocities, p. 188.

¹²¹ ibid., Diary – Entry for 17 January 1919.

¹²² IMS M.S.26, René Maublanc, 'Épernay: Une Conférence de M. Sangnier,' Réveil de la Marne, n.d. but 31.1.1919.

depopulation of France was another favoured theme in the speeches. As for the broader picture, Marc Sangnier's prescription for post-war Europe was less well developed than it would become in the twenties. The *Réveil de la Marne* reported how, at this same meeting, the Commandant evoked 'the horror of war...and of this one in particular,' an experience from which he had drawn this moral:

Victory should give us a new world statute which will prevent a return to war ... [And he] affirmed that if more than a million and a half men had offered the sacrifice of their lives, they knew themselves to be not just fighting a war like any other but rather to be making war on war. 123

(iv) Evaluation

Marc Sangnier had experienced the war both as a participant and a witness. The engineering works at the front line in 1915 had made him a participant. The reflection on the national cause entailed in the mission to Rome in 1916 and the propaganda lectures of 1918-19 had given him the opportunity to evaluate his own combatant experience and speak as a thoughtful witness, who spoke 'en connaissance des choses.' He was the epitome of both military and cultural mobilisation. After the war, his extended mourning for lost comrades formed the backdrop to his attempts at re-humanising the enemy in the 1920s. As for the war's impact on Sangnier's relationship with the papacy, it had certainly made the paths of Pope and penitent cross but it was the peace that brought definitive absolution. The years 1919-22 saw the Bloc national government restore diplomatic ties with the Holy See. Sangnier, returning to the Vatican in January 1920 as a deputy, found himself in complete agreement with the Pope's desire for a new international order, inspired by Christian forgiveness rather than vindictiveness. Mgr. Chapon finally got a public endorsement of Sangnier from Rome on the occasion of the layman's coming to his diocese of Nice in February 1920 to re-launch its Catholic patronages (youth clubs), decimated by the war. 124 The circle was closing as Sangnier, representative of a particular variant of the Catholic war culture, moved literally centre-stage to 'bind up' the wounded hearts that war had left behind.

¹²³ ibid.

¹²⁴ Vatican Archives, Segretaria di Stato, 1920, rubrica 14, fasc.4, folio 51, Letter Gasparri-Chapon, 15.2.1920.

CHAPTER TWO

Demobilization and politics, 1919-1924.

(i) Grief

In April 1919, Marc Sangnier was demobilized from the army, in a drawn-out process of national military demobilization that lasted well into 1920. The years 1919-20, as Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker point out, were marked by the phenomenon of *retour* or the return home of hundreds of thousands of soldiers and their difficult transition to civilian life, particularly the restoration of pre-war 'social' networks.' In Marc Sangnier's case, this meant picking up the pieces of the Silloniste movement or, more accurately, family, decimated by the war. However, this brought him, and many others, face to face with grief, 'a state of mind...mediated by mourning, a set of acts and gestures through which survivors express grief and pass through stages of bereavement.' Sangnier, in 1919-21, can be seen as a haunted man. The entries relating to this period in his remarkable spiritual testament *Autrefois* have an air of almost unremitting melancholy:

What more marvellous occasion to die than in the war?...The war took from me, one after another, those that I loved most and, at its end, my mother too; the victim of her devotion to the wounded...God didn't want me. No doubt I was not yet ready to leave even to go there.³

Some historians dismiss the possibility of constructing 'narratives of mourning' as impossible and unhistorical. Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker argue, in contrast, that by adopting a micro-historical approach and by learning to be content with necessarily 'unrepresentative' fragments, given the intensely personal nature of the grieving process, partial narratives are possible and form a critical backdrop to cultural demobilization and, indeed, the refusal to demobilize.⁴

² Jay Winter, Sites of memory, sites of mourning. The Great War in European cultural history (Cambridge, 1995), p. 29.

⁴ Audoin-Rouzeau & Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre, p. 204.

¹ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau & Annette Becker, *14-18*, *Retrouver la guerre* (Paris, 2000), p.189; Bruno Cabanes, *La Victoire endeuillée. La sortie de guerre des soldats français* (1918-1920), (Paris, 2004).

³ Marc Sangnier, *Autrefois* (Paris, 1933), p.191; Madeleine Barthélemy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, 1873-1950 (Paris,1973), p.236; Sangnier's mother Mme. Félix Sangnier (née Thérèse Lachaud) had nursed infirm soldiers in part of the family home at 34 boulevard Raspail.

Linked with this was the language and forms used in the memorialization and commemoration of the Great War, which were elaborated, in the war's immediate aftermath and in response to the phenomenon of mass mourning. These gave it a collective dimension so that it might become bearable and not impede totally the business of living. There were not just public memorials but private ones too erected in churches, schools and places of work. In keeping with the explosion of private commemoration in 1919, a redecoration of the crypt under La Maison de la Démocratie dates from this period. Going right back to the adolescent idealism of La Crypte at Stanislas, the place of a crypt as a locus of prayer and reflection had a deep resonance for those like Sangnier and Georges Hoog who worked and lived at La Démo. Now, with the addition of commemorative plaques to the fallen, especially that dedicated to Henry du Roure, lost in 1914, the 'crypte' was reinvested with meaning, becoming a place of recollection and mourning for a lost generation.⁵ The inscription dedicated the crypt to old comrades who had died 'for the defence of the fatherland, the emancipation of peoples and the liberation of the world.' As the crypt was also a chapel, the plaque was like a church memorial for those who had lived, and died in imitatio Christi.⁷ The war remained, therefore, a critical backdrop to the man's thought and action in this period. In August 1920, Sangnier engaged in a fiveday 'pilgrimage,' accompanied by his secretary Paul Châtelat, to the places where he had served as officer and propagandist between 1914 and 1919.8 Acts of pietàs towards the dead abounded including the poignant visit to the tomb of René Pons, a young Silloniste, at Mosières.9

As a politician, Sangnier participated in the debates on the most fitting forms of commemoration for the war. The institutionalisation of 11 November as a ritual of mourning means it is easy to overlook the fact that it was not until 1922 that France formally made the eleventh day of the eleventh month a public holiday. 10 While it

⁶ Georges Hoog, 'Le rappochement moral' in Georges Hoog(ed.), France et Allemagne, (Paris, 1928),

Audoin-Rouzeau & Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre, p. 219.

⁵ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (See Appendix II.) (Jean Sangnier agreed with this observation and referred, moreover, to the subsequent addition of plaques to a number of print workers at La Démocratie who died while being transported to Germany during the Second World War.)

⁸ IMS, Paris, M.S. 26 Handwritten memo. Paul Chatelat, Secretary to MS 'Pélerinage aux cantonnements de Marc. Guerre 1914-18'. (Chatelat was Sangnier's future son-in-law) 9 ibid.

¹⁰ Audoin-Rouzeau & Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre, p. 214.

rapidly enjoyed near-unanimous acceptance, other dates were mooted in the immediate post-war period. In November 1920, Sangnier proposed an annual Fête des Morts to coincide with the Catholic feast of All Souls on 2 November explicitly commemorating the 'redemptive sacrifice' of the dead. 11 Though unlikely to succeed on account of its excessively Catholic resonance, the proposal shows the importance to Sangnier of the issue and his role in elaborating the rites of mourning.¹² The respect due to the fallen overrode any petty political squabbles, as Sangnier pointed out in the Chamber in November 1920, on the issue of the interment of the Unknown Soldier. The original proposal had been to entomb the soldier at the Panthéon, the Valhalla of French republicanism. Sangnier, though unquestionably Republican, felt that to bury the anonymous poilu with the heroes of one political family, along with the heart of Léon Gambetta, would be divisive. The plain facts were that the Panthéon was 'not universally recognised as the common home of all French glories.' The less politicised Arc de Triomphe, meanwhile, was where the anonymous hero should lie 'in supreme and solitary glory' undisturbed by 'painful polemics.' 13 This desire for a singular place of honour was shared by a great many veterans encouraging the Minister of Public Instruction charged with the ceremonials to preside over a compromise event including the Panthéon but concluding with burial at the Arc. In the end, the events of 11 November 1920 were a great show of national unity, with the casket being blessed by the Archbishop of Paris. 14

As is clear then, Sangnier's military demobilization left the question of his political and cultural demobilization entirely unresolved. The period 1919-21 was a period of gestation in keeping with the *modus operandi* of Sangnier's mind. In keeping with the metaphor of the crypt, it was almost as if he had to descend into the obscurity in order to renew his apostolate in the world. There were two contrasting paths to undertaking the demobilization process: the first was the utilization of politics (including electoral politics); the second was the reconstitution of a charismatic community of Christian reconciliation which the wartime meeting with Benedict XV had relegitimised. The revival of the monthly *La Démocratie* in June 1919 and of the

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¹¹ La Démocratie, 10.11.1920

¹² Audoin-Rouzeau & Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre, p. 214.

¹³ Georges Hoog, Marc Sangnier au Parlement, 1919-1924 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1924), pp. 13-14.

¹⁴ Audoin-Rouzeau & Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre, pp. 225-26.

¹⁵ Barthélemy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, p.237

weekly Jeune-République in January 1920 forced him to confront contemporary reality in his editorials. At this early stage, Sangnier was a pragmatic supporter of the Versailles treaty in as much as it seemed to realise Wilson's Fourteen Points and promoted ideas of international justice. He tacitly supported Article 231 on Germany's war guilt. That article did not, as is often supposed, ascribe unique responsibility to Germany for starting the war as clauses similar to Article 231 were inserted into the treaties of Trianon, with Hungary, and Saint-Germain, with Austria. Its main legal purpose was to legitimize the imposition of stiff financial reparations on Germany to compensate France and Belgium for war damages. 16 Nonetheless, the fateful article represented a significant apportioning of moral culpability. As such, its inclusion strengthens the evidence for Horne's view that the treaty was not so much a peace settlement as a moral reckoning imposed on Germany by the 'war culture' of the Allies.¹⁷ The first post-war leader article in La Démocratie coincided with the treaty's signature and this editorial is highly significant as it is reminiscent of the clarion call to post-war transformation in the propaganda speeches on the front. Referring to the heroic sacrifice of the trenches, Sangnier asked:

Will we accept the reconstruction of society according to the old ways? ... However, if we wish the Allied triumph to truly mark the destruction of tyrannical autocracy, militarism, secret diplomacy, of war itself, this is the providential hour... To let slip this moment would be to risk never again retrieving it. Cruel apathy, fatal lack of faith that would steal from the world the victory prize! Who would dare accept the criminal responsibility for such a miscarriage!¹⁸

(ii) Sangnier and the 1919 election.

The returned citizen-soldier had the new duty to choose the future, and the rapidly approaching elections of November 1919 focused minds. If this really were the 'providential hour', though, how was one to implement one's ideas? Was popular education and journalism enough? Alternatively, did it require a more direct role in the process of reconstruction? While parliament offered such possibilities, Sangnier knew that the 1919 electoral law was biased towards broad *cartels* or coalitions, to the great disadvantage of minority opinion and small parties like the Jeune-République. In the negative assessment of Georges Hoog, shared by Sangnier, the new system

¹⁶ Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (London, 2003), p. 65.

¹⁷ Horne, 'Introduction - Démobilizations culturelles,' *14-18 aujourd'hui*, 5, p.47. (Special issue on 'Démobilizations culturelles.')

¹⁸ La Démocratie, 22.6.1919.

gave 'a scandalous bonus to any list gaining an absolute majority of the ballots' and threatened to 'iniquitously deprive the minority' of representation.¹⁹ 'unjust' he believed it to be, though, and however much Sangnier subsequently attempted to amend it in parliament, the law remained, for the forthcoming elections of November 1919, an objective political reality and obstacle to be overcome. The more centrist Christian Democrats of the Fédération des Républicains-Démocrates (FRD) were faced with a similar conundrum. Grouped around their revived paper le Petit Démocrate, the Federation had, by September 1919, negotiated entry to the broad Republican list of the Bloc National Républicain increasing pressure on the Jeune-République to make up its mind. ²⁰ In October 1919, after much indecision, he adhered to the Liste républicain démocratique (in the 3ème secteur of Paris) at the last possible moment. This list was a constituent part of the nationwide Bloc National. Marc Sangnier was idealistic but not stupid and preferred a sporting chance of getting elected to purist obscurity. Rallying to the broad Republican family would also help to perpetuate the wartime union sacrée, he felt, showing the tenacious hold of the war culture on men's minds. The broker of Sangnier's entry into the mainstream was Ernest Pezet. A former Silloniste, Pezet brought Sangnier round from his initial dismissal of the Bloc's policy as reactionary, 'un programme vieillot.'21 The Bloc's willingness to make some genuflections in the direction of Jeune République policy softened his resistance. With party approval, he clambered into a taxi and headed for a meeting of the Bloc at the Salle Wagram on October 21, which the Jeune-République joined alongside, but separate from, its Christian Democratic cousins in the FRD.²²

In some ways, it was an incongruous decision. Sangnier, a left-wing Catholic, the quintessential outsider, was siding with the established order. However, Keiger challenges the received view of the 'blue horizon' Chamber of 1919-24 as an ultraconservative phenomenon, a throwback to 1871, insisting that the Bloc was a broad coalition of forces grouped around the centre extending to the Left and Right,

19 Hoog, MS au Parlement, p. 4.

²⁰ Robert Cornilleau, 'Les Républicains-Démocrates (Histoire et Souvenirs)-XVIII.Les Républicains-Démocrates et la Guerre,' Le Petit Démocrate, 11.10.1925.

Barthélemy-Madaule, Marc Sangnier, p. 241.

²² Le Temps, 22.10.1919 (List made up of: Alliance républicaine démocratique, Fédération républicaine, Union national républicaine, Fédération des républicains démocrates, Action libérale populaire, Parti socialiste national, Ligue civique, Ligue démocratique d'action morale et sociale.)

however the Radicals subsequently caricatured it.²³ Certainly, the list on which Sangnier stood in the 3ème secteur de Paris embraced the broad republican family, including two sitting Radical deputies.²⁴ However, it was an impulsive decision he would come relatively quickly to view as ill judged. Even during the campaign, Sangnier's 'manly frankness' on social issues unsettled several of his fellow candidates.²⁵ If he supported it as the continuation of the wartime 'union sacrée,' the corollary of this was the settlement of the old Church-State conflict. The programmes of all Bloc lists in the département of the Seine - including Sangnier's- included a judicious line composed by Jacques Piou and privately approved by Cardinal Amette himself, to the effect that 'the fact of the laïcité of the State should be reconciled with the rights and liberties of all citizens.'26 This formula reassured both Catholics and their new allies, anti-collectivist Radicals. Hopes for change were in the air and Sangnier perceived a general desire to end the religious quarrel. As he remarked in 1922: 'I was able, in Paris, in this rive gauche that is so dear to me, to conduct an entire election campaign without any opponent reproaching me for my religious faith.'²⁷ Many Catholics in the 1919 election had supported moderate Republicanism in the hopes of seeing the Vatican embassy restored. It was a strategic choice approved of by Sangnier's best friend in the hierarchy, Mgr. Chapon of Nice who wrote to Rome that 'if we had done as la Croix would have had us do, forming an exclusively Catholic party, with certain premature demands, we would have been crushed and would have given France over to the most terrible social revolution.²⁸

Anti-Bolshevism was also part of the Jeune République's motivation in joining the Bloc. Writing in 1924, Hoog was at pains to state that Sangnier had no time for those conservatives who would use the bogeyman of the 'man with knife between his teeth' as a substitute for, and refuge from, serious debate and political

²³ John F.V. Keiger, Raymond Poincaré (Cambridge, 1997), p.267.

²⁵ Hoog, MS au Parlement, p. 4.

Sangnier, Marc, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1921-23 (Paris,1925), p.107.

²⁴ Archives départementales et communales, Département et Ville de Paris, (Paris), [DVP], D3 M2/12 'Propagande électorale, 1919-28'. Georges Desplas, head of the list, and Charles Leboucq were sitting Radicals. The list also included Robert Delaunay-Belleville (liberal), Fernand Laudet and Louis Duval-Arnould (municipal councillor.) Like Sangnier, most were veterans;

²⁶ Gérard Cholvy & Yves-Marie Hilaire, Religion et société en France, 1914-45: Au péril des guerres (Toulouse, 2002), pp. 49-50.

²⁸ ASV, Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, Francia 1919 Elezioni, fasc.700, folio 40, Letter Mgr. Chapon of Nice- Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, 3.1.1920. (This letter should have come to the attention of the head of this 'second section' of the Secretariat of State, Eugenio Pacelli.).

courage.²⁹ However, neither was Sangnier a Marxist and his list's *profession de foi* declared itself against that 'coterie of revolutionaries...[who] would turn France into another Russia.'³⁰ The record shows a man who had imbibed a lot of the anti-Communist rhetoric of the immediate post-war period, to the point of vehemence. In uncharacteristically trenchant terms, before some five thousand Parisian voters in November, Sangnier excoriated the Bolsheviks and bloodthirsty 'French traitors,' those 'bad citizens who dare put before the electorate ... the deserter Sadoul.'³¹ An SFIO candidate in the 2ème circonscription in Paris in Oct 1919, Jacques Sadoul was a French socialist convert to the Russian Revolution. Absent in the Red Army, the Conseil de Guerre debarred him from the election by condemning him to death for desertion. Sangnier, like many French, including Clemenceau, was livid at Sadoul's 'treacherous' *Notes sur la révolution bolchévique* published in 1919.³² The violence of the language showed that Sangnier remained to a great extent mobilized, even if now he was primarily concerned with the internal enemy, subversive Bolshevik sympathisers.

The list contested the election in the the 3ème circonscription of the Département of the Seine, comprising the following arrondisements of Paris; Vè, VIè, VIIè, XIIIè, XIVè, XVè, and XVIè.³³ Sangnier had already fought three unsuccessful, if respectable, campaigns in the Paris region.³⁴ After polling on 16 and 30 November, his list won the top three out of fourteen seats with Evain, Sangnier and Duval-Arnould deemed elected in that order. Also returned for the constituency was Léon Daudet of Action française and Ferdinand Buisson, the old Radical and Sangnier's favourite infidel. The moment of triumph was bitter-sweet for Sangnier and the

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²⁹ Hoog, MS au Parlement, p.4.

³⁰ DVP, D3 M2/12 Propagande electorale 1919-28.

³¹ Le Temps, 11.11.1919.

³² Jacques Sadoul, *Notes sur la révolution bolchévique* (1919; Paris, 1971), pp.1-2. A socialist and associate of the wartime Munitions Minister Albert Thomas, who in 1917 sent him as an emissary to Russia, Sadoul was attached to the French military mission. He infuriated the French ambassador by contacting the Bolsheviks in November 1917. Condemned to death in France in 1919 for desertion, he was arrested upon his return home in 1924. Tried and acquitted in 1925, he remained an active Communist to his death in 1956.

³³ Patrick Chamouard & Georges Weill, *Députés et sénateurs de la région parisienne de 1848 à 1984* (Nanterre, 1985), p.169. The constituency had a bourgeois bias despite containing the Left Bank and strong working-class areas like the XIIIè. The VIIè included boulevard Raspail and Sangnier's own residence.

³⁴ 1909 by-election at Sceaux (canton de Vanves), 1910 general election – les Batignolles (XVIIe arrondisement of Paris) and 1914 election, again at Vanves; Darricau, *Marc Sangnier*, p.22; Caron, *Le Sillon*, pp.584-5.

language he used to describe it was still that of war: 'The breach is made, the rostrum of the Palais-Bourbon is taken in high struggle. I am a deputy for Paris.' On the verge of tears, he could not see those present, pressing round him to congratulate, but rather 'those whom the war took from me and who had laboured, suffered and prayed so much to see this moment shine forth.'35

(iii) Marc Sangnier, deputy.

Sangnier now had a parliamentary platform from which to attempt to implement reform of the Republic and work out the best means of saving the world from another war. Even at the moment of victory, the germs of Marc Sangnier's alienation from the Bloc national were present. The Bloc list won with the votes of the prosperous areas. Was Sangnier, so long despised as a traitor to his class, about to become the prisoner of the bourgeoisie? There was only one area where the Bloc could count on Sangnier's full support and that was on issues pertaining directly to the Catholic Church. After all, Deputy Sangnier had told L'Intransigeant that 'religious pacification' was one of his main priorities.³⁶ Religious congregations should be treated as equal citizens before the law. Throughout his five-year term, the Catholic deputy consistently defended the rights of the école libre (i.e. denominational schools).³⁷ In short, he wished *la laïcité* to be benign neutrality rather than a cover for anticlericalism.

From the perspective of the Sangnier case-study, were these the years of the 'Second Ralliement' that historians such as Delbreil, Cholvy and Hilaire write of? 38 Sangnier played a small, but not negligible, role in nudging on a compromise between Rome and Paris. Meeting the Pope and Cardinal Gasparri in January 1920 he urged rapid progress on the Vatican, made easier later that month by the departure of Clemenceau from office and the appointment of Alexandre Millerand as premier.³⁹

³⁵ Sangnier, Autrefois, p.193; Barthélemy-Madaule, Marc Sangnier, p.247.

³⁶ La Croix, 4.12.1919. (Report of interview of Marc Sangnier with L'Intransigeant.)

³⁷ Barthélemy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, p.244; Hoog, *MS au Parlement*, p.30. ³⁸ Jean-Claude Delbreil, 'Les formes poltiques de la démocratie chrétienne en France au vingtième siècle' in Kay Chadwick (ed.), Catholicism, politics and society in twentieth-century France

⁽Liverpool, 2000), p. 121; Cholvy & Hilaire, Religion et société, pp.47-56. ³⁹ Alfred Baudrillart, Les Carnets du Cardinal Alfred Baudrillart. 1 janvier 1919- 31 décembre 1921 ed. Paul Christophe (Paris, 2000), p.372. (Entry for 19.1.1920.)

The rapid negotiations between this new administration and Gasparri alarmed many French bishops who felt the Vatican was selling them out. Dubois told the Pope it was impossible to go back on Pius X's stand as that would mean that the moderate supporters of separation of Church and State like the abbé Lemire and Sangnier would be seen to have been right all along.⁴⁰ In November 1920, Sangnier joined the majority in rejecting the Avril amendment downgrading the status of the new nunciature in Paris. 41 On 30 November, the Chamber approved a new embassy to the Holy See. By mid-1921, Prime Minister Briand's nomination of a Republican, Charles Jonnart, as French ambassador overcame Senate doubts and allowed the Vatican to despatch Mgr. Ceretti as Nuncio to Paris. 42 (However, as McMillan rightly points out, the resurgence of Catholic defence in the form of the Fédération Nationale Catholique under de Castelnau shows that ideas of a 'second Ralliement' need to be nuanced, as atavistic sentiments persisted on both sides. 43) The following five years were ones of progressive drift from support of the Bloc on Sangnier's part, seen most starkly in the social and international spheres. Baudrillart felt from an early stage that he would be a disruptive influence within the Bloc: 'already Marc Sangnier will have made his offerings to Briand.'44

Initially, though, Sangnier was not without potential allies in the new Chamber. Cornilleau writes of roughly thirty deputies of Silloniste or 'democratic' tendencies, yet there was an abject failure to form a cohesive or lasting parliamentary group. A series of meetings held in 1920 culminated in the formation of a loose Christian Democratic group called the Ligue Nationale de la Démocratie, bringing together the Jeune République and the FRD in an attempt to perpetuate the wartime Christian Democrat *union sacrée* around the paper *l'Âme française* from 1917. Viewed by some as the beginnings of a broad Christian Democratic party, the

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⁴¹ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) *1921-23*, p.15. (20.11.1920)

⁴² Cholvy & Hilaire, Religion et société, p.52.

44 Baudrillart, *Les Carnets 1919-21*, p.300. (Entry for 1.12.1919.)

⁴⁰ Baudrillart, *Les Carnets 1919- 1921*, p.470. (Entry for 11.5.1920.) Cholvy & Hilaire testify to the bishops' resistance; Cholvy & Hilaire, *Religion et société*, p.51.

⁴³ James McMillan, , 'France' in Buchanan, Tom & Conway, Martin(eds.), *Political Catholicism in Europe 1918-65* (Oxford, 1996), p.41. (By 1924, however, France and the Vatican had resolved the issue of the cultuelles and the legal status of church property in France.)

⁴⁵ Cornilleau, 'Les Républicains-Démocrates', *Le Petit Démocrate*, 18.10.1925; Some of the most notable Christian Democrat victories in the elections had been: Dr. Georges Thibout, elected for Paris' 4th sector (suburbs), Paul Simon (Finistère), Victor Balanant (a worker from Brest) and Jean Jadé (a lawyer from Quimper). The self-assertion of Breton popular Catholicism is notable in these last results.

movement had, by November 1920, eighteen federations in place in 75 départements. The marriage was never consummated, though. The relationship failed as both parties wanted something different from it: 'The Republican Democrats conceived of it as a party, the Jeune-République wanted none of it'. Suspicious of the conservative tendencies of the mainstream Catholic social movement, Sangnier preferred to maintain the Jeune-République's ideological purity on the left and refused leadership of any alliance. By October 1921, Sangnier was totally isolated within the League on the matter of its common programme.

The catalyst for the final break in June 1922 was his speech in the Chamber the previous month when he had roundly criticised Poincaré's handling of policy towards Germany and the reparations issue. In his speech of May 1922, Sangnier accused the Prime Minister of taking an excessively punitive approach with Germany and of scuppering the possibility of political compromise at the recent Genoa international economic conference. Such frankness led Cornilleau to conclude that the great one (i.e. Sangnier) 'was not made for party action. He's a pioneer, a soldier of the avant-garde, made for commanding an infantry battalion and not an army, still less a group of armies. Reflecting retrospectively on the failed experiment of the Ligue national de la Démocratie (LND), Georges Hoog acknowledged a degree of naiveté on the Jeune-République's part in not seeing earlier that the LND compromised its ideals. With the Jeune République's withdrawal in June 1922, both strands continued their evolution, the Jeune République to the left, while the more centrist elements of the Ligue went on to form the Parti Démocrate Populaire in 1924, to which the prior lost many of its oldest adherents.

From 1921 in particular Sangnier used the Chamber to advance the language and politics of demobilization. However, his inspiration came increasingly from extra-parliamentary international pacifist encounters. That is not to say he did not try

⁴⁶ Ernest Pezet, *Chrétiens au service de la cité. De Léon XII au Sillon au MRP*, 1891-1965 (Paris, 1965), p. 94.

⁴⁷ Cornilleau, 'Les Républicains-Démocrates', Le Petit Démocrate, 18.10.1925.

⁴⁸ McMillan, 'France,' p. 43.

⁴⁹ see Chapter 2, pp. 86-88.

⁵⁰ McMillan, 'France,' p. 43.

⁵¹ Barthélemy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, p.243.

⁵² Cornilleau, 'Les Républicains-Démocrates', Le Petit Démocrate, 18.10.1925.

the parliamentary route. Speaking at the closing session of the Jeune-République's fourth national congress in October 1922, Sangnier defined its mission as nothing less than the true democratisation of France:

The Jeune-République shall work to realise in France, and through France in the world, this democratic ideal we have repeatedly defined... Democracy is an arrangement which permits everyone, according to his strengths, capacities and goodwill, to take an active and effective part in the direction of public affairs; democracy is, therefore, essentially, an effort at the education of all.⁵³

Sangnier was frustrated by the difficulties of implementing such a programme through parliament. In 1919, Sangnier stressed to reporters his independence in seeking allies in the new Chamber and his commitment to a left-wing economic policy through improved workers' conditions: 'I want to be ahead of the contemporary social movement.'54 Sangnier's reaction to the strike movement of the spring of 1920 provides a useful litmus test of where he stood in relation to the 'war culture' which the Bloc national epitomised and which persisted despite the near completion of military demobilization. Already, in 1919, La Croix had denounced German influence behind social agitation: 'Militarily defeated, it is clear that Germany leads this whole dance.'55 Though a critic of the methods of the independent syndicalist Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), Sangnier shared its belief that 'the means of production rightly belonged to the "producers," that is, to the working man, rather than to capitalists.'56 Albert Thomas, with whom Sangnier was to have so much contact, typified this type of reformist Socialism by proposing, before leaving for the International Labour Organization in Geneva in 1919, nationalization, class conciliation and industrial democracy in France, beginning with defunct war plants he wished to see coming under the management of state companies that would act like dynamic private firms.⁵⁷ The neo-liberal Bloc was not about to implement that, however.

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⁵³ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) *1921-23*, p.100-01.

⁵⁴ La Croix, 4.12.1919 (Report of interview of Marc Sangnier with L'Intransigeant.).

⁵⁵ La Croix, 12.7.1919 cited in Annette Backer, War and faith. The religious imagination in France, 1914-1930 (1994; Eng. trans., Oxford, 1998), p. 167.

⁵⁶ Richard F. Kuisel, Capitalism and the state in modern France. Renovation and economic management in the twentieth century (Cambridge, 1981), p. 78.

The strikes in 1920, meanwhile, were led by the railway workers seeking the nationalization of their industry, and they culminated in an unsuccessful general strike called by the CGT on 1 May 1920, to which a strong minority of strikers gave a strong revolutionary thrust. Dennis Showalter, indeed, writes of a continued 'mobilization' in France at the time of this general strike. 58 Opponents of the CGT saw resistance to the strike as 'a new battle of the Marne,' this time defending the fatherland against Communism.⁵⁹ Feeling the strikes to be Communist-inspired, subversive and vaguely foreign, Bloc speakers in the Chamber made thundering denunciations of the strikers a sine qua non of true patriotism whereas Sangnier used the language of national unity in a measured way. Warlike language was the norm and from the right to the Radicals on the left a firm link was made between national sentiment and the fight against revolution. 60 From the right, Pierre Taittinger spoke of war 'without pity' on the enemies of the nation who were out to 'sabotage our victory.'61 Sangnier, by contrast, had, as early as 2 March 1920, declared his support for the right to strike of the railwaymen, also calling for a 'programme of economic democracy' with worker management of the economy. 62

By May, when Millerand's government wished to dissolve the CGT, the situation prompted another passionate parliamentary debate where Sangnier made a conciliatory speech singled out by Becker and Berstein for its moderation. His median position did not entail approval of CGT strategy. Far from it. While sympathetic to the workers and warning against excessive repression, he was critical of CGT methods of 'direct action.' In addition, the speech appealed to a critical element of the 'war culture' - the overriding patriotic duty to maintain 'la solidarité française' or national unity 'in the face of fratricidal class hatreds.'64 However, he was well aware that there were reactionary elements that would use the sense of crisis

⁵⁸ On background to railway strike of 1920, see Annie Kriegel, La grève des cheminots, 1920 (Paris, 1988), pp. 17-36. Kriegel, Aux origines du communisme français, vol. 2 (Paris, 1964).

⁵⁹ Dennis Showalter, "Plus jamais" du moins pas comme cela: imaginer la guerre après 1918, 14-18 aujourd'hui, 5, p. 154.

⁶⁰ Jean-Jacques Becker & Serge Berstein, Histoire de l'anti-communisme en France (2 vols. Paris, 1987), vol.1, 1917-40, p.77; John Horne, 'The State and Challenge of Labour in France, 1917-1920,' in Chris Wrigley (ed.), Challenges of Labour: Central and Western Europe, 1917-1920 (London, 1992), pp. 239-61.

⁶¹ Becker & Berstein, *Histoire de l'anti-communisme*, vol.1, 1917-40, p.73. (Speech in Chamber, 19.5.1920)

⁶² Hoog, MS au Parlement, p.10.

⁶⁴ Becker & Berstein, *Histoire de l'anti-communisme*, vol.1, 1917-40, p. 76.

to convince government that social reform had already gone too far. The talismanic reform won by labour in April 1919 was the *loi des huit heures* and Sangnier resisted fiercely any moves to reverse it, prompting an impassioned oration as late as a Jeune République meeting of July 1922 on 'the eight-hour day as a moral good.' 65

With a keen eye for hypocrisy, Sangnier spoke up for freedom of speech even for political adversaries when the majority tried to give political judgements the force of law. The recurring case of the disgraced former minister Joseph Caillaux was interesting in that it raised the question of whether what many perceived as offences against patriotism were still current politics or belonged to the past. Condemned in 1919 by the Senate, acting as High Court, for defeatism in 1917, Caillaux was barred from public office for ten years. When, in March 1921, Caillaux had spoken publicly in Grenoble on the country's finances, some deputies wanted him permanently gagged. Sangnier courageously opposed such a move as it was partisan in motivation, leaving himself open to the accusation of being soft on treason. The Communist deputy Marcel Cachin was the subject of similar attempted censure in 1923 after his visit to the working class of the Ruhr, but again Sangnier backed scrupulous legality. 66 With such interventions, Sangnier was fast acquiring a left-wing reputation.

As already alluded to, a key element in the Jeune-République programme for rejuvenation of the Republic, from its foundation in 1912, was electoral reform. Proportional representation of the people would eliminate the last vestiges of the *ancien régime* and favour popular sovereignty over party politics, in the disparaging sense of the phrase. To this end, Sangnier proposed a bill to cure some of its worst anomalies of the crude majority bias in the 1919 electoral law. Sangnier was not skilful in gathering broad support for this bill that amounted in truth to little more than tinkering with the existing system, a compromise proposal that wound up pleasing no

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65 Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1921-23, p.79-89.

Marcel Cachin (1869-1958) Convert to socialism after Fourmies massacre of 1891. Sent by French Socialist party on an exploratory mission to Russia in 1920. Spoke for SFIO adhesion to the Third International or Comintern at Tours Congress in December 1920 where he was opposed by Léon Blum. Prominent in French Communist Party until the 1950s. See Robert Gildea, *The past in French history* (New Haven & London, 1994), pp. 49-50; Hoog, *MS au Parlement*, p.25; Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1921-23, p.171; Bonnefous, Edouard & Bonnefous, Georges, *Histoire politique de la troisième république*, 8 vols (Paris,1965-86); vol.3, *L'après guerre* (1919-1924), (Paris,1968), p.116-17.

one, according to Bonnefous.⁶⁷ This proposal can also be read in the light of the irrepressible war culture. After the haemorrhage of the war, many on the right, but not just the right, were concerned with the depopulation of France. prevaricated on 'this grave and anguished question of the family vote, that we cannot elude indefinitely.'68 Natalists within the 1919-24 legislature believed the electoral system should incorporate some sort of bonus for large families - exercised by fathers or some appropriate male figure. Here too the social morality of war was at play, with those who had sacrificed most expected to have a hallowed place in the post-war political order. This moral onus on the survivors of war towards the fallen was taken to its logical conclusion by the movement for 'souffrage des morts' or ghost votes where the family or widow of a dead soldier cast a ballot in his name. In the context of the continued denial of the vote to women, the campaign of figures on the right like Maurice Barrès for such a novel form of democracy shows once again the continuing relevance of the war culture. Equally, Sangnier's patent lack on interest in such a scheme, absent from his bill, shows his ambiguous relationship to that culture from 1920.

(iv) Origins of the Democratic International, 1920-21.

Alongside his work in parliament, Sangnier remained a newspaperman and propagandist *par excellence*. In this sphere both he and his able journalistic assistant Georges Hoog were driven by the same messianic zeal as in conventional politics. If the war of 1914-18 had been 'a war of liberation' from injustice, how could activists fully realize their commitment to international pacification?⁶⁹ The mechanism of nongovernmental Peace Congresses did not occur immediately to them. However, Hoog, in particular, had an acute sense that in an age of mass political participation, the role of popular opinion was critical: 'We must reach minds, enlighten them, move them. In our democratic century where opinion reigns, it is still the best means of influencing governments.'⁷⁰ More than just being a continuation of the pre-war round of international contacts, Hoog's idea for a propaganda campaign was a direct

⁷⁰ ibid.

⁶⁷ Bonnefous & Bonnefous, *Histoire politique de la troisième république*, vol.3, *L'après- guerre (1919-1924)*, p.412.

⁶⁸ Sangnier, Marc, *Discours* (Vol.8) 1923-25 (Paris,1925), p.11.

⁶⁹ Bibliothek für Zeitgeschichte [BfZ], Pamphlet 'Congrès National de la Ligue de la Jeune-République et de la Démocratie', Paris, 3.3.1920.

response to the war just experienced: 'we can do it now, more than ever, as minds are still haunted by the horror of the battlefields.'⁷¹

The monthly journal of the movement, *La Démocratie*, led the way with an 'enquête' or inquiry into what the Jeune-République and its European colleagues thought the most appropriate means of action would be. In 1920, the idea of an International, federating like-minded democrats, was very much part of the *zeitgeist*. There existed, after all, the template of the Socialist International, though it was now torn between reformism and Bolshevism. Nor were Catholic movements immune to the desire for international organisation. Carlton Hayes correctly noted the incipient internationalism of French Catholicism when he stated that 'the ordinary French religionist is influenced not only by compatriots but also, though perhaps less consciously, by co-religionists in foreign countries.' The cataclysm of the war seemed to precipitate a desire to restore pre-war links.

In June 1920 an International of Christian Trade Unions or 'Internationale syndicale chrétienne' was formed at the Hague. The previous year, French Catholic trade unionists had formed themselves into the Conféderation Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens (CFTC), with Jules Zirnheld as General Secretary. As early as 1908, a meeting of Catholic trade unionist at Zurich had led to the establishment of a central Catholic trade union bureau in Cologne. The legacy of bitterness from the war meant that for a while after 1918 two parallel international Christian trade union congresses existed, one in Paris (predominantly French and Belgian) and one in Lucerne representing Catholic workers of the former Central Powers. Thanks to Dutch mediation, a new and more inclusive International was created at The Hague in June 1920, an instance of Franco-German mutual toleration, if not amiability, which cannot fail to have impressed Sangnier and those like him who were moving tentatively towards meeting the former enemy. Within this International though, the French CFTC was cast in an intransigent light, isolated by its own insistence on the

⁷¹ ibid.

⁷²Carlton J.H. Hayes, France: a nation of patriots (1930; New York, 1974), p. 320.

⁷³ Jean-Claude Delbreil, *Les catholiques français et les tentatives de rapprochement franco- allemand*, 1920-1933 (Metz, 1972), p.62.

Christian morality of reparations.⁷⁴ Eventually the CFTC was obliged to compromise and to abstain from discussion of the treaties at international trade union gatherings altogether.

In August 1920, The Hague played host to the foundation of another International, the International catholique pour la paix or IKA, to give it its Esperanto acronym. The brainchild of Fr. Metzger, a charismatic Austrian cleric from Graz, it was composed of nineteen nations including Germany. However, it was a marginal movement and, as Delbreil points out, only French Catholics close to Sangnier or abbé Demulier, the most advanced of advanced French Catholic pacifists, were involved.⁷⁵ Sangnier and Metzger represented radical positions by the standards of the time. Nevertheless, the penchant for international bodies was also felt in steadier Catholic circles in France and abroad. The Union Catholique d'Études Internationales, was set up in Paris in 1920, purporting to be a revival of the old Union de Fribourg which in the late nineteenth century had gathered Catholic intellectuals to discuss social problems. Mgr. Beaupin, former chaplain to the Sillon, animated the UCEI. 76 However, the UCEI could not escape the war's legacy and despite seeing itself as a miniature Catholic League of Nations, a German commission was excluded until 1926. As Delbreil put it: 'French and German Catholics could not imagine entering, so soon after the war's end, into the same international groupings.⁷⁷

On the political left in Europe in 1919, there were two internationals, the Socialist International and the Communist International. In contrast with these burgeoning internationals, Hoog wondered where was the international for democrats inspired by Christianity. As he asked pointedly, in August 1920, where was common forum 'where they could meet and combine?' It was a question prompted by a letter

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⁷⁴ This was the tenor of the speech at the Paris Congress of 1921 by Gaston Tessier, then General Secretary of the CFTC; *Compte-rendu complet du Ier Congrès démocratique international, Paris, 4-11 décembre 1921,* (Paris, La Démocratie, 1922), p. 336.

⁷⁵A message of support from Sangnier to the IKA was greeted with enthusiasm at the IKA's next major gathering at Graz in 1921; Delbreil, *Les catholiques français*, p.58.

⁷⁶ La Démocratie, 10.2.1921.

⁷⁷ Delbreil, *Les catholiques français*, p.59.

⁷⁸ La Démocratie, 25.8.1920.

from an Italian correspondent and priest Don Vercesi. 79 The Popolari, the Italian Christian Democrats under Don Sturzo, strengthened by the elections of 1919, were mooting a political International, a rassemblement of European Christian Democrats, much to Don Vercesi's displeasure as politics was divisive especially if one attempted to include the French and the Germans.⁸⁰ The issue of Versailles was bound to arise. Vercesi, impressed by the recent foundation of the Christian Trade Unions International, called for an analogous international Christian body, which would consider social affairs only. Marc Sangnier was moved by Don Vercesi's letter to write to what seemed to him as like-minded opinion makers across Europe. His circular letter to organisations, individuals and newspapers soon produced replies. A newspaper that gave his appeal particular prominence was Ireland's Freeman's Journal which cited Sangnier's letter as a proposal for 'an International animated with an ardent Christian and democratic spirit in opposition to the Socialist International' with its alien 'materialist theories.'81 Of course, the turn of events within French socialism alarmed Christian Democrats like Sangnier. Writing on the scission between Socialists and Communists at the Tours Congress in December 1920, Tiersky describes how the Socialist Party, 'in a moment of millenarian fervour and disappointment with recent events, opted for bolshevism.'82 Even for moderates like Sangnier, not to mind the broad mass of Catholic opinion, the 'reds' really were at the gates, making it all the more imperative then for Catholics and democrats to organize Sangnier suggested a 'union of the friends of peace in the trans-nationally. democracies of the world.' Inviting replies to this investigation, he posed the following questions: should 'the Christian and democratic International' be exclusively confined to social questions? Would it be desirable or possible to avoid the discussion of great international problems?⁸³

Thus, between November 1920 and May 1921, a steady stream of correspondence was published in response to Marc Sangnier's letter to like-minded democrats seeking their opinion on Don Vercesi's modest, yet intriguing, proposal.

⁷⁹ Vercesi was editor of a Catholic paper *Osservatore Cattolico* based in Milan. From 1903, at least, he had been in correspondence with Sangnier whom he guided on matters relating to Italy and the Vatican. See Caron, *Le Sillon*, p. 266.

⁸⁰ Open letter from Don Vercesi, La Démocratie, 25.8.1920.

⁸¹ Freeman's Journal, 3.2.1921.

⁸² Ronald Tiersky, French Communism, 1920-72 (London, 1974), p.26.

⁸³ Freeman's Journal, 3.2.1921.

The correspondence, faithfully reproduced in the twice-monthly La Démocratie and commented on by editor Georges Hoog, represented the matrix of ideas from which the First Congress of Paris in December 1921 would emerge. Introducing replies, Hoog asked if it would be 'a peace campaign?'⁸⁴ His prescription for social peace was familiar: the reformed capitalism of the Sillon. As for world affairs, he called for a muscular League of Nations, capable of imposing its will on recalcitrant members, and general disarmament rather than armed peace. 85 The first series of responses, printed in November 1920, came from correspondents in such disparate countries as Belgium, Switzerland and Yugoslavia. Don Luigi Sturzo, founder of the PPI, Europe's most electorally successful Christian Democratic party was an early correspondent. To Sturzo's mind, Christian syndicalist unions were not enough. There needed to be some counterpart (or counterweight perhaps) to the Socialist International. Crucially, though, talk of a 'Catholic' international had to be guarded, as in no way could such a movement even appear to rival or parallel the hierarchy. 86 Sturzo, meanwhile, was the first to explicitly mention his hopes for an international meeting.

By late November 1920, Hoog was editorialising on 'the progress of the International idea.'⁸⁷ Emboldened, he declared: 'The Democratic International has a totally other goal: it wishes to be an unambiguously political organisation not hesitating, in the mould of the Socialist Internationals, to tackle the big political issues as well as the economic and social ones.'⁸⁸ Disillusioned by what he saw as myopic French foreign policy, Hoog wished that France would not take up the arms 'that she had broken in the hands of Germany.'⁸⁹ How did the Germans respond to this appeal? Fr. Magnus Jocham, Secretary of FDK or German Catholic Peace League, was, until his death in 1923, the key figure amongst mainstream German Catholic pacifists and supporters of the League of Nations. His response to the enquiry was effusive, stating that Marc Sangnier's letter had 'profoundly rejoiced' him.⁹⁰ If the French took the initiative in forming an International they could count on the German Catholic Peace

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⁸⁴ La Démocratie, 10.11.1920.

⁸⁵ ibid.

⁸⁶ ibid.

⁸⁷ La Démocratie, 25.11.1920.

⁸⁸ ibid.

⁸⁹ La Démocratie, 10.12.1920.

⁹⁰ La Démocratie, 25.11.1920.

Society. The people Jocham represented were no opportunists: 'It is not defeat that has made pacifists of us. Far from it!' They had spoken out even during the war, had seen their publications confiscated and even been arrested. Now only the French could unlock the treasure of Christian forgiveness and reconciliation. The Germans he spoke for, supporters of the League of Nations, 'wait upon the redeeming words of French Catholics,' before concluding with a crusading salvo: 'Guerre à la guerre!' The originality of Sangnier amongst French Catholics lay in taking these appeals at face value and responding generously. It proved more difficult for the Ligue des Catholiques Français pour la Justice Internationale which was purportedly dedicated to the pacifist ideas of Vanderpol and backed by the hierarchy. Led by men such as Yves de la Brière, the Jesuit theologian, it refused all contact with the German Catholic Peace League and its president, abbé Jocham. ⁹³

Unsurprisingly, the response from Austria, from Fr. Metzger, General Secretary of Internationale catholique, was positive. Another important Germanspeaking endorsement came at Christmas from Joseph Probst. Probst, as Hoog acknowledged, was an old friend of the Sillon. A Social Catholic from Bruchsal, a part of the Baden region near the Rhine, this Francophile had come and helped in some of Sangnier's pre-war election campaigns. In 1950, in the last weeks of his life, Sangnier received a letter from Probst recalling these pre-1914 contacts. Probst's awakening to idealism had come as a teenager, when he heard Sangnier speak at the famous Sillon congress of 1909, held under a large tent at the rue de Grenelle in Paris. Truly, pre-war friendships within a particular 'community of truth' – in this case, Social Catholicism- were being restored. As Horne points out, such restoration of contact was an important force for 'cultural demobilization.' Probst's letter was brimming with enthusiasm and evangelising zeal for immediate action: 'Courageously, let us set to labour in this part of the Lord's vineyard!' More controversially though, Probst insisted such an international would have to include in

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⁹¹ ibid.

⁹² ibid.

⁹³ Delbreil, Les catholiques français, p.62

⁹⁴ La Démocratie, 25.12.1920;

⁹⁵ Institut Marc Sangnier, Correspondance Générale X, Corresp. Probst-Sangnier, 24.5.1950.

⁽Surprisingly, Jeanne Caron's *Le Sillon et la démocratie chrétienne* is silent on Probst and this pre-war German link.)

⁹⁶ Horne, 'Introduction – Démoblisations culturelles,' 14-18 aujourd'hui, 5, p.51.

⁹⁷ La Démocratie, 25.12.1920

its programme the revision of Versailles: 'a pact that flies so much in the face of justice –that is self-evident- shall never receive the approbation of a Christian International.'98 Rebuilding the communities of truth would come at a price, then. Nonetheless, Hoog maintained the 'justice' of reparations. Hoog added however, that, before 1914, prophets of peace like Vanderpol had been told disparagingly to go make their speeches in Germany, but now that his successors were finding ideological kinsfolk in Germany, the right was still annoyed.⁹⁹

On the crucial issue of the peace settlement, Sangnier remained basically attached to the 1919 settlement but with subtle shifts of emphasis. Even as the enquête continued, the deputy spoke endlessly of the state of Europe, distinguishing himself ever more as we have seen form the policies of the Bloc national. In August 1920, he had addressed the doublethink about the treaties directly:

One says repeatedly that we must maintain the treaty of Versailles...and yet, the treaty continues not to be applied. More than that, every time the Allies meet at London, Spa or elsewhere, concessions are made and, without one ever daring to say it, a gradual and progressive revision of the inviolable treaty of Versailles is under way.¹⁰⁰

Thus, even as he worked assiduously in parliament, Sangnier was involved in attempts to reconstitute a charismatic Christian community committed to peace. Inspired by the response to the enquête, he returned, in a speech at the Salle Wagram in January 1921, to the Versailles treaty. With severity and even a hint of bitterness, Sangnier cast an accusing eye on the present state of the League of Nations, infinitely inferior to wartime hopes for it. In the field, many had felt the suffering worthwhile for the sake of a new international system, a faith which had sustained them 'during the long waiting in the trenches, rekindling very often our courage by lighting in our hearts the glow of this new world. In this crucial speech, Sangnier was seeking a way to move beyond the war – to 'demobilize,' in effect- without dishonouring the dead and their sacrifice. 'One cannot vote the end of tears,' he said, but those who had died had done so not just for France but 'so that the

102 ibid.

⁹⁸ ibid.

⁹⁹ibid

¹⁰⁰ Jeune République, 1.8.1920

¹⁰¹ Marc Sangnier, 'Pour le désarmement des haines', *La Démocratie*, 25.1.1921 (Speech delivered at the Salle Wagram, Paris, 17.1.1921)

world might be saved by the sacred effusion of their blood.' Such rhetoric prefigured, and predates by some four years, that of Aristide Briand in the Locarno period when he gave value to veterans' sacrifices in the name of a policy of reconciliation. 104

In January 1921, though, Sangnier addressed an audience still preoccupied with the reparations issue. He asked his listeners to imagine France getting all the financial and military guarantees she wanted from Germany. With a flourish, he spun around from the hypothetical to the interrogative: 'but, in truth, is that sufficient?' No, it was not enough: 'one disarms hatred also.' This is a crucial moment as it is the first formulation of this key phrase – the demobilization of hatred – that recognised that diplomacy was not enough and that popular involvement in the process of rapprochement was critical. He then proceeded to the pragmatic but powerful argument that epitomised his thinking in the early 1920s. It was the unanswerable demographic argument:

This idealism allies itself with the most instant practical sense for, in truth, do you believe that we can have any security as long as a people of sixty million men, at our very doors, even if disarmed or chained by treaty protocols, has, in its entirety, an aversion to the name of France and a mind for bloody vengeance?...No. ¹⁰⁶

Meanwhile, back in the pages of *La Démocratie*, the enquête continued. Mgr. Simon Deploige, rector of the Faculty of Theology, at the University of Louvain, a witness to events of 1914 in that great seat of Catholic learning, sent a negative response. Deploige, himself a theologian, has an interesting trajectory in relation to 'cultural demobilization.' Baudrillart, rector of the Institut catholique de Paris, shared a platform with both Sangnier and Deploige at the Catholic Writers' Week in Paris in May 1920. Whereas Sangnier made what the rector dismissively records as 'a vague speech on the Catholic International,' Deploige spoke out violently against the Germans, saying that 'entente is possible only between honest men and nations,' from

¹⁰³ ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Horne, 'Locarno et la politique de démobilisation culturelle: 1925-30,' *14-18 aujourd'hui*, 5, p. 78-

¹⁰⁵ Sangnier, 'Désarmement des haines', La Démocratie, 25.1.1921

¹⁰⁶ ihid

¹⁰⁷ La Démocratie, 25.11.1920; Mgr. Simon Deploige (1868-1927), professor at Louvain. President of the Intstitut supérieur de philosophie and of the Leo XIII Seminary at Catholic University of Louvain in 1906. Provincial senator of Limbourg.

which category the vandals of Louvain library had presumably excluded themselves. ¹⁰⁸ In this he was at one with his fellow Belgian, Cardinal Mercier. A classic example of 'non-demobilization,' Deploige persisted in his anti-German sentiments and found himself isolated within his own university in 1927 in his desire to inscribe the Cardinal's original anti-German inscription on the newly restored library. By contrast Ladeuze, rector of the university and fellow witness of the events of 1914, had come to accept the logic of cultural demobilization, counselling selective amnesia of certain unpleasant events if only to allow the functional reconciliation of the international academic community. ¹⁰⁹

At Christmas 1920, Georges Hoog wished that the International's relationship with the Catholic faith would be inspirational but not stultifying or exclusivist. Recapitulating a key-phrase of the Sillon, Hoog saw Christians as 'a dynamic, if not a numerical, majority' within the movement, a spiritual leaven within international It was the clearest indication yet of the International being a democracy. 110 resumption of the 'greater Sillon,' ploughing a new international, pacifist 'furrow.' However, if Sangnier was to resume his pre-1910 role as a lay Catholic activist, as distinct from that of politician, there remained the matter of his relationship with the papacy. In a striking memorandum to the Pope in May 1919, Mgr. Chapon of Nice felt that the good of the 1916 audience had been undone by bishops' protests and that Sangnier was 'no longer the apostle and it is a big loss.' Chapon was adamant that Sangnier be allowed to resume his 'magnificent apostolate' amongst Catholic youth and that his character be totally rehabilitated. Pope Benedict, by his gentler and more pastoral enforcement of orthodoxy, was, in Duffy's words, 'as conciliatory as his predecessor had been confrontational.'112 While generally sympathetic to Sangnier, he also had to be careful not to discredit his predecessor's disciplining of the Sillon in 1910. Recognising the changes wrought by the war and exhibiting a new papal openness to lay witness, Benedict was anxious to legitimise Sangnier's efforts for peace.

¹⁰⁸ Baudrillart, Les Carnets 1919-21, p.808. (Entry for 20.5.1920.)

¹¹⁰ La Démocratie, 25.12.1920

Eamon Duffy, Saints and Sinners: a history of the popes (1997; 2nd ed., London, 2001), p. 335.

¹⁰⁹ Horne, 'Locarno,' *14-18 aujourd'hui*, 5, p.84; John Horne & Alan Kramer, *German atrocities*, *1914*. *A History of Denial* (New Haven & London, 2001), pp. 40,388.

¹¹¹ Vatican Secret Archives [ASV], Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari, Francia 1919, fasc. 697. fos. 36-48, Memo. Mgr. Chapon of Nice-Pope, Rome May 1919.

When the Pope received the newly-elected Deputy Sangnier, accompanied by Hoog, in January 1920, it was clear that the peace movement was to be Sangnier's new field of 'Catholic action,' with Vatican endorsement. Benedict implicitly endorsed 'engaged' faith, 'understanding that the civilising action of Christianity should correspond to an effort to reform human institutions. The exclusion of the Holy See from Versailles and the perceived Anglo-Protestant nature of the League heightened Catholic (and Vatican) ambivalence about Wilson's new order. While not explicitly endorsing the League of Nations, Benedict encouraged the Catholic eirenicism of Sangnier. The Pope 'desired to count on us' just as Hoog and Sangnier wished to support his peace efforts. 114 This was at a time when his own humanitarian concerns, perfectly consistent with his wartime 'impartiality,' continued to annoy many Catholics in Allied countries. An incident from Simone de Beauvoir's middleclass Catholic childhood illustrates this: 'I was always getting bogged down in contradictions... France was the eldest daughter of the Roman Catholic Church; she owed obedience to her mother. Yet national values came before Catholic virtues; when a collection was being made at Saint-Sulpice for "the starving children of Central Europe," my mother was indignant and refused to give anything for "the Boche"...It was most disconcerting to find that Caesar always got the better of God.'115 In view of such hostility, Hoog poignantly records the Pope's weariness and suffering at being 'so misunderstood... [and from] the spectacle of Christians...so stubborn in their hatred as to refuse succour to hungry children.'116

The papacy's decision to bless Sangnier's role as guest speaker at the post-war re-inauguration of the Catholic youth movement in the diocese of Nice in February 1920 should be seen as an endorsement of him as a lay Catholic activist, with special reference to peace. ¹¹⁷ It was also part of ongoing Vatican attempts to conciliate the secular Republic as a means of normalising relations. Chapon wrote back to Rome expressing the general feeling that 'seeing Marc Sangnier *rehabilitated*' was nothing

¹¹³ La Démocratie, 10.2.1922.

¹¹⁴ ibid.

¹¹⁵ Simone De Beauvoir, *Memoirs of a dutiful daughter* (1958; English translation, London, 1984), p.132.

Hoog, 'Le rapprochement moral,' p.142;

ASV, Segretaria di Stato, 1920, rubrica 14, fasc.4, f. 51, Letter Gasparri-Chapon, 15.2.1920.

less than an 'an act of justice.' However, as with the 1916 audience, there were protests from certain sections of the hierarchy. Baudrillart, in his diary, marvels at the audacity of Mme de Barral (an aristocratic widow engaged in charitable work!) who chastised the pope in private audience for his benevolence to Sangnier. Sangnier was at last free to resume lay activism and pursue a pacifist Sillon without fear of official Church sanction, removing a large impediment to an international Catholic peace movement headed by Sangnier. The Secretary of Sate Gasparri told sceptical bishops that holy mother Church welcomed Sangnier back as 'a repentant son [...] putting to work the great influence he exerts on French youth.' The 1910 and 1916 chapters were now closed. This renewed mandate marked a further crucial stage along the apostle's road to 'demobilization,' helping pave the way for the peace congresses.

By the time of Sangnier's speech in January 1921 on the 'disarmament of hatred,' there was a broad consensus for a formalised International amongst the correspondents of *La Démocratie*. Inevitably, given the fear of the Russian bogey, old, exclusionary impulses manifested themselves. In a combative contribution, Giulio di Rossi, press secretary of Italian Popolari, stressed the urgency of International to fight against the 'Green and Red Internationals,' referring to the twin ills of communism and anarchism. ¹²² More sinister were the calls from Charles de Woelf of the Hungarian Christian League that the International endorse a common anti-Jewish, anti-Masonic agenda. Hoog reproved him firmly, stating it was 'neither just, nor possible to decree, *a priori*, war on a category of humanity.' ¹²³ Such sentiments confirm an unfortunate recrudescence of anti-Semitism in Europe in reaction to the Russian revolution, purportedly part of a vast Judeo-Masonic plot

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¹¹⁸ ibid, f.50, Letter Chapon-Tedeschini, 25.2.1920. (Mgr. Federico Tedeschini was head of another section of the Secretariat of State, the 'Office of the Substitute for Ordinary Affairs,' see *Annuario Pontificio*, 1917)

¹¹⁹ ibid, f. 137, Joint letter, Bishops of the ecclesiastical province of Tours-Pope, 6.4.1920. (The ordinaries concerned were Albert Nègre, Archbishop of Tours, and the bishops of Angers, Laval, Nantes, and Le Mans.).

¹²⁰ Mgr. Amette, archbishop of Paris, told the story to the rector. See Baudrillart, *Les carnets*, 1919-21, p. 492. (Entry for 30.5.1920)

p. 492. (Entry for 30.5.1920)

121 ASV, Segretaria di Stato, 1920, rubrica 14, fasc.4, folio 139, Gasparri-Archbishop Nègre of Tours, 30.4.1920.

¹²² La Démocratie, 10.1.1921

¹²³ ibid.

against western civilisation. 124 By now it was clear that there was a growing consensus that politics should be included in any International. Don Vercesi's original idea of a merely social International was rejected. Marie Stritt of Germany remarked: 'such limitation is neither possible nor desirable.' Hoog felt it was time to draw some tentative conclusions, writing in May 1921: 'a Democratic International is possible as and from now.'126 The primary aim of such an enterprise would be 'the formation of this international conscience without which there shall never be a true League of Nations.'127

By the summer of 1921, then, the enquête was effectively at an end. Typically, it was Georges Hoog, the man in perpetual motion, who wrote, that October, that 'the hour has come to go into action.' The action envisaged was an international gathering of the like-minded, as proposed originally by Don Sturzo. Such a congress would have both an educative and propagandist value showing that there were better ways of resolving conflict than 'this act of violence and barbarity which is war...behold the aim of the Democratic International.'129 Thus, in late 1921, invitations were issued to participants in the enquête to an International Democratic Congress at La Démocratie in Paris that December. The first of twelve such congresses, these gatherings of 'believers' in the politics of cultural demobilization, provided Sangnier with an alternative and increasingly more attractive forum from the Chamber and conventional politics.

Parliamentary critic of French foreign policy (v)

The international correspondence and the early Congresses had a marked effect on Sangnier the deputy. Obviously, this was best seen in his interventions on foreign affairs. In these years, Sangnier served on both the Foreign Affairs and Army Commissons of parliament and made relatively extensive foreign visits. He went to the new nation-states of the east such as Poland and Lithuania as well as Austria,

¹²⁴ Cholvy & Hilaire, Religion et société, pp. 43-44.

¹²⁵ La Démocratie, 10.2.1921.

¹²⁶ ibid, 25.5.1921.

¹²⁷ ibid.

¹²⁸ *Jeune République*, 16.10.1921 ¹²⁹ ibid.

Germany, Italy and Switzerland.¹³⁰ It was in his first three major interventions on the topic which between October 1921 and May 1922 that Sangnier struck a new note on foreign policy. Chronologically, these interventions straddle the First Peace Congress in Paris in December 1921. In the first of these contributions, dating from 25 October 1921, Sangnier made a robust defence of Aristide Briand's European policy. Having taken office for the seventh time in January 1921, Briand held the positions of Prime Minister and Foreign Minister simultaneously, as Poincaré would after him. Throughout 1921, Briand's attitude to Germany had oscillated between coercion and conciliation. When Germany dragged her heels on the disarmament and reparations clauses of Versailles, Briand acted in tandem with the British to militarily occupy three German towns – Duisburg, Ruhrort and Düsseldorf – on 8 March. By May, though, in spite of plenty tougher talking, Briand accepted a new Statute of Payments from the Reparations Commission, wherein France had made very considerable financial concessions.¹³¹

A new German Chancellor, Joesph Wirth, a Christian Democrat of the Centre party, and his foreign Minister Walther Rathenau promised a 'policy of execution' and gave the impression of serious intent to pay that had previously been absent on the German side. In October, under British pressure, Briand conceded more through the Wiesbaden agreement instituting payment in kind of Germany's reparations. Sangnier felt Briand had had the good sense to come round to his own way of thinking. Sangnier, then, congratulated the Premier for distinguishing between the two Germanies, the one bellicose, the other peaceful and desirous of fulfilling her moral and legal obligations. He would later observe, with irony, that it was only in the columns of the parliamentary record that Briand placed 'a firm hand on the scruff of Germany's neck. However, in the Chamber as a whole, there was growing impatience with Briand's turn towards a conciliatory policy.

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130 Hoog, MS au Parlement, p.20.

¹³¹ Jacques Nērē, *The Foreign Policy of France from 1914 to 1948* (1974; Eng. Trans., London, 1975), p. 37

p.37.

132 James Joll, *Europe since 1870. An International History* (London,1973, 4th ed,. 1990), p.283; On Wirth and Rathenau's policy of execution, see Gordon A. Craig, *Germany 1866-1945* (1978; 2nd edn., Oxford, 1981), pp. 442-45.

¹³³ Néré, Foreign policy of France, p.37.

¹³⁴ Barthelémy-Madaule, Marc Sangnier, p.244.

¹³⁵ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) *1922-23* (Paris,1925), p.17 (24.5.1922). (Briand had made the rhetorical threat in the Senate on 5 April 1921, to the delight of the right. See Keiger, *Poincaré*, p.272.)

In January 1922, Briand found himself politically outmanoeuvred and was obliged to resign the premiership. The 'Notes Jean,' Ministry of the Interior police notes which synthesised press and parliamentary observations of the political scene, noted Sangnier's dismay at these developments and his doubts about the 'isolation policy' of the new premier Poincaré. 136 Sangnier lost no time in questioning the 'new' premier on his foreign policy. On 19 January 1922, he pointedly reminded Poincaré that the treaty of Versailles was kept alive only by Allied cooperation. 137 While expressing doubts about Poincaré's ability to keep the peace, he welcomed the forthcoming Genoa Conference on the economic reconstruction of Europe, particularly for the presence of Europe's two black sheep, Germany and the Soviet Union. To the delight of the left in the Chamber, and the derision of the right, he proceeded to call for Germany's prompt admission to the League of Nations. 138 Poincaré persisted in a hard-line policy towards Germany and certainly did not share Sangnier's enthusiasm for Genoa. As Keiger points out, he kept the reparations issue firmly off the agenda and generally did his best to undermine the conference, declining even to attend but despatching his Justice Minister Louis Barthou with a mandate to stall proceedings. 139 The surprise signature of the Rapallo Treaty between Germany and Russia in April on the fringes of the conference further soured the Premier's attitude. When, on 24 May 1922, Sangnier cross-examined Poincaré again, this time on the disappointing outcome of the Genoa conference, he put the blame squarely on French policy. All governments since Versailles had hesitated between coercion and conciliation, switching from one to another at various intervals, often pursuing conciliatory policies under the cover of hard-line public rhetoric. These contradictions put France in the worst of all worlds. 140

While never denying France's right to compensation, Sangnier criticised Poincaré to his face for employing 'strong arm' rhetoric to little practical effect. Poincaré was misguided, continued Sangnier, though undoubtedly he thought he was pursuing the best war prevention policy possible. This prompted Poincaré to interject:

¹³⁶ Archives Nationales (Paris), [AN], F7 12951, 'Notes Jean', 13.1.1922. (The Notes Jean were compiled centrally rather than via the Prefects as part of the state's political surveillance apparatus.)

¹³⁷ Hoog, MS au Parlement, p.17. (19.1.1922)

¹³⁸ Barthelémy-Madaule, Marc Sangnier, p.244.

¹³⁹ Keiger, Poincaré, p.288.

¹⁴⁰ Sangnier, Marc, *Discours* (Vol.7) *1922-23* (Paris, 1925), p.18. (24.5.1922)

'I don't just think it; I'm convinced of it!' Amidst the parliamentary din, Sangnier replied that 'it [was] precisely this conviction that disturbed me somewhat.'141 Unperturbed, Sangnier referred to his new extra-parliamentary activism as his inspiration. The people of Paris, he said, had, already given the example when they extended a public hand of friendship to the German delegates to the First Congress in December 1921.¹⁴² Germany was no chauvinistic monolith and her better side had to be nurtured: 'France's victory should also be that of those Germans who were subject to, and reduced to slavery by, militarist Prussia.'143

Unsurprisingly, the response in the Chamber was visceral. Most of the cries of approval for the speech came from the left, the far left in particular, sparking barbs from the right such as 'You are a Bolshevik Christian!' (Deputy Charles Baron). 144 While Sangnier treated most of his detractor's jibes with a good-humoured, schoolmasterly indulgence, he himself became animated on particularly sensitive points. He rejected vehemently any hint of doubt cast on his patriotism. If he spoke unpopular truths it was prompted by a profound love of France. Moreover, he resented those like General de Castelnau, the prominent Catholic conservative and nationalist, who would see him as a traitor to his faith, remarking that these conservatives had no more right than he to speak in the name of French Catholics. 145 In a public meeting at the Manège du Panthéon a few weeks later on 17 June 1922, he publicly despaired at Catholic hostility to the idea of reconciliation: 'It's worse than the scourging of Christ.,146

The issue of atrocities was also aired in the debate. When goaded on the issue, Sangnier insisted that the Germans he had spoken to during his recent tour accepted that German behaviour during the war had been wrong. He was also defensive when he was accused of condoning revisionist opinion that saw no moral distinction between the French and German armies' behaviour in 1914.¹⁴⁷ While not condoning

141 ibid.

¹⁴² ibid, p.47-8.

¹⁴³ ibid, p. 49.

¹⁴⁴ ibid, p.29.

¹⁴⁵ibid, p. 40.

¹⁴⁶ ibid, p.65. 147 ibid, pp.51-2.

revisionism, the Germans Sangnier met were near unanimous in rejecting Allied charges of inhumanity. In general though, it was a bravura performance where, despite being told to 'go make your speech at Chemin-des-Dames or Verdun', Sangnier was convinced he was fulfilling his moral, humane and, hence, patriotic Here was the Jeune-République, through the oratory of its founder and leader, reclaiming its heritage of Christian pacifism. The supplication of Poincaré at the end of the session serves only to highlight this: 'Monsieur le président du Conseil, I implore you, you who represent France...I implore you to give her back her true face., 149

In Chapter 4, we shall see how the Chamber allowed Sangnier to vent his opposition to Poincaré's occupation of the Ruhr in 1923, a dramatic parliamentary confrontation which is best discussed in the context of the Freiburg congress of August 1923. However, even without examining the Ruhr crisis, it is clear that Sangnier was more and more disillusioned with Parliament, though his personal testimony may be retrospectively exaggerated. He wrote of the place as 'this palace of political phantasmagoria and parliamentary funfair.'150 Amidst the shifting alliances and allegiances of the Palais Bourbon, Sangnier felt an outsider: 'I feel ill at ease in these cluttered corridors. 151 Yet, Sangnier and the Jeune–République threw themselves with gusto into the coming electoral battle of 1924, believing that pacifist witness meant preaching to the unconvinced just as much as meeting like-minded foreigners.

(vi) The election of 1924.

In five years, how the tables had turned. The Bloc National list on which Sangnier won his seat in 1919 was still largely in existence, with some of the same candidates under slightly different nomenclature. Louis Rollin, one of the unsuccessful candidates of the 1919 list, now headed the Union républicaine

¹⁴⁸ ibid, p.53.

ibid, p.55.

149 ibid, p.55.
150 Sangnier, *Autrefois*, p.254.
151 ibid, p.258.

démocratique in the 3ème secteur. 152 One notable absentee from this list, made up of men that wished to keep the Bloc National in power, was the sitting deputy Sangnier, now beyond the pale for that same Bloc. In this particular electoral contest, labels did speak volumes. In a brilliant and revealing piece of plagiarism, Sangnier put forward a list called the Union républicaine pour la Paix. The distinction was crucial, primarily on the level of self-perception. Liberated from the constraints of being part of an electoral or parliamentary alliance, Sangnier and the Jeune-République reasserted themselves, both in their choice of candidates and the ideas espoused. The list of candidates reads like a roll-call of the leading lights of the Peace Congresses. As well as Sangnier, there was, of course, the indefatigable Georges Hoog. 153 The list claimed to offer 'new men' untainted by any 'base political compromises.' 154

For these men, republicanism and the pursuit of peace were indivisible. Peace abroad was illusory if not built alongside social and political progress at home. 155 The election leaflet calling voters to a public meeting at the Salle du Magi-Ciné on 28 April put the message in bold letters: 'NOUS VOULONS LA PAIX!' 156 It also stressed the need to 'disarm hatred and to develop the true League of Nations,' with its own popularly elected delegates and international police force in the context of general and simultaneous disarmament. 157 The Cartel des gauches, however, threatened to bring the old bogey of anticlericalism back from the dead, if it had ever really gone away. Once again, like the Sillon in the turmoil of the Combes era, Sangnier alienated the right by his social radicalism and the left on account by his unabashed Catholicism or worse, perceived clericalism. How ironic! The appeal for an end to sterile quarrels was similarly bound to failure, condemning the Jeune-République always to contest but rarely win. 158 Well beaten by the Rollin list, Sangnier's own personal vote shrunk

¹⁵² DVP, Paris, D3 M2/12, Propagande électorale 1919-28 (This *Union républicaine* – now minus Sangnier - ran a very anti-left, anti-German campaign, defending the occupation of the Ruhr and the Poincaré ministry generally. Their campaign newssheets show these strong biases with titles like 1914-1924:Leurs Erreurs Criminelles. Ils Recommencent.)

¹⁵³ ibid. The three 'worker' candidates were Lucien Bardonneau, Louis Grandin and Gustave Salmon. The other ten candidates were; Marc Sangnier, Joseph Betmale, Joannès Christophe, Olivier D'Etchegoyen, Georges Hoog, Jules Jezequel, Maurice Lacroix, René Moreux, Jacques Rödel and Louis Rolland.

¹⁵⁴ ibid.

¹⁵⁵ ibid.

¹⁵⁶ ibid. ¹⁵⁷ ibid.

¹⁵⁸ ibid.

from 76,653 in 1919 to 15,063. ¹⁵⁹ Despite two more attempts – at Vanves, in the Parisian suburbs, in 1928, and La Roche-sur-Yon (Vendée) in 1932 – Sangnier's parliamentary career was over for the interwar period. The 'pacifist Sillon' would have to find its fulfilment in the non-parliamentary sphere.

 $^{^{159}}$ DVP, Paris, D2 M2/52, Notices sur les députés, 'Procès-verbal – Election 1924 – 3ème circonscription de la Seine' (Hoog and Lacroix polled 7,694 and 7,596 respectively.)

CHAPTER THREE

Humanizing the enemy; Paris and Vienna, 1921-22.

The International Democratic Congress held between 4 and 11 December 1921 was 'the first time [since the war] that representatives of all nations, previously belligerent, had come to Paris to a large international Congress, not simply to have discreet discussions in the carefully sealed enclosure of some private meeting, but to affirm their desire for democracy and peace before the great public boldly summoned to come and hear them.' The palpable excitement of Georges Hoog's account of the first Congress reflects the audacity of the undertaking. A Congress, an occasion to meet, exchange views and form friendships was the logical conclusion and extension of the two-year *enquête* in the pages of *La Démocratie*. Now, in the run up to Christmas 1921, the offices of that newspaper at boulevard Raspail were playing host to delegates from twenty-one countries eager, like Sangnier, to usher in a new era based on international law and morality. At its heart lay a placid assertion that 'the more people are masters of their destiny...the better their desire for peace will be respected.'²

(i) The First Congress; Paris, December 1921.

That this betrayed a certain naïveté about the demagogic dangers inherent in democracy does not take away from the nobility of the effort. Above all, it was a real attempt at demobilizing the 'war culture,' humanizing the enemy by giving him (and her) a face and a name. For it was the open presence of delegates from the defeated Central powers, Germany and Austria, that was the boldest (or most scandalous) part of the exercise. There was a real sense both of renewing old links sundered by war and of forging new alliances for the sake of the future. For 'before even disarming soldiers, it's necessary to disarm hatred...An effort to educate the public mind is

¹ Compte-rendu complet du Ier Congrès démocratique international de la paix, Paris, 4-11 décembre 1921, (Paris, La Démocratie, 1922), p. 237.

² Ier Congrès, p. 297.

thrust upon us' but how to accomplish it if 'the fine workers for peace in all countries do not meet [and] establish between themselves close links of heart and mind?'³

The seven days of the Congress were divided up between smaller meetings of commissions and general plenary sessions open to all delegates. The commissions were charged with discussing and producing propositions on specific areas relevant to peace, such as domestic politics (including the pacifist movement itself), international organization (the League and the peace treaties) and social affairs. These sessions, internal to the Congress itself, though reported by the media, were held at the premises of *La Démocratie* itself. However, in order that the Congress' message might reach a broader audience, the closing meeting was thrown open to all interested Parisians and held away from the mother house at the Manège du Panthéon, a rented arena on rue Lhomond in the fifth arrondissement, well capable of holding the estimated 3,000 people who turned out on the afternoon of Sunday 11 December to hear Sangnier defend this act of daring.

Obviously, the commissions and plenary sessions were smaller affairs. In the absence of an official tally, attendance figures are approximate. Participants were largely French, either Jeune-République members or internationalist sympathisers, who participated on an *ad hoc* basis. However, from indications given by Georges Hoog, we can estimate that the plenary sessions drew crowds ranging from 400 to 1,000 listeners. The number of official foreign delegates recorded was forty-seven. Of these, nine were German, though this only accounts for those formally registered with the secretariat in Paris and attending the whole event. The Congress was a flexible device and other Germans attended different portions of the proceedings. The nine German pioneers, as seen in Appendix 1, were diverse in background and political bias. Politicians, generally of the Centre party persuasion, rubbed shoulders with a journalist and an academic, namely Hermann Platz of Bonn University, beginning a long association with the Congresses. Two prominent Catholic figures stand out, both representing the Friedensbund Deutscher Katholiken (FDK), the mainstream Catholic pacifist organization in Germany. These were Fr. Magnus

³ ibid., p. 235.

⁴ Ier Congrès, p. 238.

Jocham, its leader and an enthusiastic respondent to the *enquête* (see Chapter 2) and, secondly, the Dominican theologian Franziscus Strattmann.

It took some time for German delegates to shake off their sheepishness about being in France at all, even with such non-judgemental hosts. Jocham, as a priest, and given his halting French, decided to let liturgical action speak louder than words. In the margins of the Congress, he celebrated Mass in the Crypte of *La Démo*.. The Mass was an act of atonement and reconciliation, supplemented by this remarkable act of contrition from Jocham's lips:

We have entered France for the first time since the war, our hearts full of an unspeakable sorrow for all the bitterness inflicted on you for four years because of Germany. Only one thought can console us...that it is not so much the German people as the German government that is responsible. We would never have dared turn up here if we did not know that men infatuated with justice, such as Marc Sangnier and his friends, have recognised that there always were, and still are, two Germanies; a Prussianised Germany...and a reasonable Germany...devoted to good, old traditions...sincerely aspiring to reconciliation.⁵

At the drinks reception of the afternoon of Sunday 4 December, despite the palpable emotion, the French hosts did their best to give the gathering the informal air of a pre-Christmas family reunion. Marc Sangnier hailed abbé Jocham as the representative of 'this new Germany...throwing off the yoke of former militarism.' Belief in a new era was necessary for admission to this drinks party. In his remarks, Sangnier made clear that bloodshed *per se* was not redemptive but rather that those present had a duty to show that all the blood shed had not been in vain. In a more familiar and familial vein, he hailed the presence of Joseph Probst who was no stranger in these halls. Joseph Probst, a respondent to the *enquête* (see Chapter 2), had himself been in Paris before the war. There, Sangnier reminded his audience, he had sold *l'Eveil démocratique* as a member of the Jeune Garde of the Sillon. Across the political, religious and academic spheres, this was a moment for the restoration of pre-war contacts. Turning to Probst, Sangnier recalled their long association, Probst's 'spiritual affinity' with France and the pain of enforced separation due to the war,

⁵ Georges Hoog, 'Le rapprochement moral' in Georges Hoog(ed.), *France et Allemagne*, (Paris, 1928), pp. 139-40.

⁶ Ier Congrès, p. 245.

⁷ ibid., p. 245.

reassuring him that he had never forgotten him.⁸ Throughout the Congress, though, German speakers such as Jocham and Kessler were all at pains to publicly recognise Germany's 'duty of reparation' to the Allied nations. In the great public set pieces, barely a word went astray and Germans were made to feel accepted. Count Harry Kessler, the cosmopolitan diplomat and then German minister in Warsaw, spoke at the banquet given on the last Sunday night of his country's 'primary duty' to 'make reparations not alone materially but morally...creating a new, democratic and resolutely pacific Germany.'9

Kessler's diary conveys the excitement of the occasion: 'I sat on Sangnier's right and followed him as speaker. We Germans were treated with the utmost politeness and friendliness, not cold-shouldered at all. My speech was repeatedly interrupted by downright frantic applause.' The *enquête* had also borne fruit in the other former enemy nation, Austria. The irrepressible abbé Metzger, founder, in 1920, of the IKA or Catholic International, made the journey to Paris from Graz. For company, he had fellow countrymen from the Christian Social Party. Delegates of the Italian Popular Party (PPI) represented the broader Christian democratic family whose founder Don Luigi Sturzo sent a letter of support.

In the week that followed the Congress settled down to work through its various sections, commissions and complementary plenary sessions. Monday 5 December, for example, was dedicated to an 'International Section,' particularly concerned with the pacifist movement itself. Von Hildebrand, an academic from Munich University, and abbé Jocham spoke of the pacifist movement in Germany. Jocham gave an upbeat assessment of the strength of pacifist sentiment in the fatherland. The Centre party, in Joseph Wirth's time as Chancellor of the Reich, was evolving in a pacifist direction, though not without setbacks. Just when the universal disgust at the assassination of the Centre's Matthias Erzberger seemed to produce 'a complete and definitive victory' for democratic and pacific elements in the Zentrum, the League of Nations decision on Upper Silesia, awarding it to Poland, interrupted

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⁸ ibid., p. 246.

⁹ ibid., p. 378.

¹⁰ Count Harry Kessler, *The diaries of a cosmopolitan, 1918-37* (1961; English translation, London, 1971), p.144 (Entry for 11.12.1921.)

these 'promising' developments.¹¹ However, such large ideological 'mood swings' showed the tenacious hold of conservatism and nationalism on the Zentrum and the weakness of the democratic left within the party.¹² Joseph Probst agreed that this League decision had served to exacerbate nationalist suspicion and persecution of German Catholic pacifists.¹³ Metzger complained bitterly of the harshness of the Treaty of Saint-Germain and how it had resulted in a 'critical, miserable even, situation' for his native Austria that hindered greatly pacifists' work there.¹⁴

Later in the week, in the deliberations of the Moral Commission, Metzger complained that if only the world's three hundred million Catholics helped the Pope resolutely in his peace policy, they would form, along with pacifists of other beliefs and philosophies, an invincible phalanx for world peace. He asked: 'Is it not profoundly sad that...ideas of social justice and peace between nations have not penetrated deeply enough all Catholic consciences?' Yet Metzger, like most others at the Congress, could not always put the international interest above the national one, prompting his fellow Austrian Georges Walz to remark that the Congress was deficient as an instrument of pacifism in as much as 'the various delegates are overly conscious of their role as representatives, defenders even, of their country, and have difficulty, especially in front of a gallery, to admit to failings at home.' 16

Such tensions were particularly evident in the deliberations of the Political Section which sat in commission over two days, 9 and 10 December, and in two full plenary sessions. Its vague theme – 'the political organization of democracy' - translated in practice into a discussion of domestic political reforms, like proportional representation, and the functioning of the League of Nations and the peace treaties. ¹⁷ On the modalities of the League, there was general agreement that the stranglehold of the governments on the nomination of delegates to Geneva should be replaced with a more democratic form of nomination, possibly through direct election. Léon

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¹¹ Ier Congrès, p. 264.

¹² Karl-Egon Lönne in Lönne, 'Germany' in Buchanan & Conway (eds.), *Political Catholicism*, pp. 159-67.

¹³ Ier Congrès, pp. 249-50.

¹⁴ ibid., pp. 251-2.

¹⁵ ibid., pp. 291-92.

¹⁶ ibid., p. 290.

¹⁷ ibid., p. 296.

Bourgeois, a Freemason and representative of French liberal pacifism, said that League arbitration should be obligatory in the case of international disputes. Predictably, though, it was the matter of German admission to the League that caused most blood to boil. On Saturday 10^{th,} Geoffre de Lapradelle, lecturer in the Paris Law Faculty, claimed legal expertise in the matter of the League Covenant and stated that Germany had yet to satisfy the conditions stipulated in Article 1 of the pact. Under these circumstances then, 'admitting Germany to Geneva... without further guarantees would be like "introducing the wolf into the sheepfold".' Amidst the consternation that followed, a French delegate, Jacques Rodel, rose to his feet to remind de Lapradelle of the motion passed earlier that same day to the effect that in any 'new international order that obliged all nations to respect justice, it matters that all nations are part of it.' ²⁰

The previous day, 9 December, the 'burning question' of war responsibility raised its benighted head. The delegate Morane put it bluntly: 'Did the Germans present recognise German culpability for the war?' As Hoog later wrote: 'put in this absolute form, the question took on the characteristics of an ultimatum. There was a painful, anxious silence for a few seconds.' Professor Dietrich von Hildebrand of Munich rose to accept that the violation of Belgium had been an 'atrocious crime' and to state his readiness to recognise any other crime his country might have committed if it was demonstrated to him 'as he had never hesitated to put his Christian conscience well above his national one.'22

Now it was Sangnier's turn to intervene, stating that the Congress could not go in the direction chosen by M. Morane: 'The aim of the Congress was...to create a new, pacific spirit in the world, not to deliver an affirmative evaluation on certain facts belonging to history.' Already the war and its origins were being made into 'portions and parcels of the dreadful past,' as Tennyson had it. Personally, Marc Sangnier continued, he did not deny in any way the 'responsibility of the Prussianised

¹⁸ ibid., p. 299.

¹⁹ ibid., p. 300.

²⁰ ibid.

²¹ Hoog, 'Le rappochement moral' in Hoog (ed.), France et Allemagne, pp. 142-3.

²² ibid., p. 143.

²³ Ier Congrès, p. 300.

Germany of 1914' but that was part of 'the old, militarised pagan world.'²⁴ The relieved applause of the delegates showed that Sangnier's desire to draw a veil of amnesia over these more unpleasant facts was almost universally shared at the Congress. ²⁵ In his desire to relegate the question of blame to the realm of history, and to downplay the memory of wartime atrocity, Sangnier was attempting to resolve a major conundrum of 'cultural demobilization,' namely reconciling the moral judgements made in wartime with the exigencies of post-war reconciliation. ²⁶

Hildebrand's coyness on the matter of atrocities was unsurprising given the anger felt in Germany on the whole issue. 1921 was the year of radical nationalist mobilization against the ultimately abortive trial of German war criminals in Leipzig. To concede more than he had, von Hildebrand would have gone against the campaign of his own government and foreign ministry against the 'libels' of war guilt and war crimes. To borrow Horne and Kramer's phrase, the Congress was at the heart of the disputed 'politics of memory' of the 1920s. The Congresses were marked by disagreement between radical and old-world pacifists. The prior, the advocates of 'moral disarmament,' dismissed accounts of German atrocities in 1914 as Allied fabrication which blamed German inhumanity while exonerating war itself which this new generation of pacifists viewed as the real atrocity.²⁷ Sangnier, by contrast, was not of this radical disposition. Asserting a personal belief in the veracity of the charges, he preferred to look firmly ahead, not back. In this point of view, he identified himself with old-style pacifism that pinned its hopes on the League of Nations as a rational means of conflict resolution. Pacifists of this hue often continued to believe that the 1914-18 war had been justified in light of unprovoked German aggression. In consequence, then, they defended the 1919 settlement while earnestly and rather optimistically hoping that mechanisms of arbitration such as the League would obviate the need to go to war in the future. 28 French liberal pacifists present at the Congress were thus all active in the League of Nations movements. These included men such as Léon Bourgeois, Jules Prudhommeaux and Théodore Ruyssen (all of the APD) and Ferdinand Buisson of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme.

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²⁴ ibid.

²⁵ Ier Congrès, p. 301.

²⁶ Horne, 'Locarno,' pp. 78-80.

²⁷ John Horne and Alan Kramer, *German atrocities, 1914. A history of denial* (New Haven & London, 2001), p. 370.

²⁸ ibid.

The co-existence of these strands in the Congresses meant that different groups experienced the impetus towards cultural demobilization with varying degrees of intensity, depending on how far they were willing to revise their view of the war.

In the end, the resolutions of the Political Section were closer in spirit to this cautious pacifism, reaffirming, with some differences of emphasis, the 1919 settlement. The Congress called for all nations to be members of a democratised League. However, material disarmament should be tentative for the moment until a strengthened League of Nations could guarantee arbitration and police its application.²⁹ The final Declaration, drawn up by Hoog, and adopted at the Congress' close by the delegates, affirmed the just nature of the reparations France and Belgium expected to receive. It also repudiated the idea of unilateral disarmament.³⁰ However, despite their universal anti-Bolshevism, the Congress also condemned foreign (i.e. Allied) intervention in the Russian civil war as unworthy of democracy and harmful to peace.³¹

The sessions of the social section (6 December) were calm by comparison but did serve to sound a leitmotiv of the next decade of Congresses; international peace could never be achieved in the absence of social peace. Just as the League had to build a new diplomatic order, its sister body the International Labour Organization had to be supported in its mission of transcending sterile class warfare in favour of an economy at the service of workers rather than the slavery of liberal capitalism. Moderate Socialists and socially progressive Catholics should collaborate. Here again, though, an element of the 'war culture' persisted, especially in the insistence of Gaston Tessier, General Secretary of the CFTC, the French Catholic trade union, that 'just reparation of wilful damage' by the defeated power was a moral imperative.³² Tessier acknowledged that this had made the CFTC unpopular within the Internationale Syndicale Chrétienne but felt this was the price Germany had to pay for functional reconciliation.³³ A socially minded businessman and friend of the Jeune République, Jacques Rodel, spoke warmly of co-operativism fulfilling the 'great

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²⁹ Ier Congrès, p. 302.

³⁰ ibid., pp. 347-48.

³¹ ibid., p. 348.

³² ibid., p. 334. (6.12.1921).

³³ ibid., p. 336.

dream' of an economy organised so that 'labour will no longer be the slave of capital but will have finally become the master of production.' To be fair, the movement practised what it preached in terms of workers' conditions and their participation in management with the printing firm at *La Démocratie* run as a co-operative where workers were paid according to their needs. Before the war, the Sillon had also run a co-operative bakery Le Pain du Jour where onerous night-work was abolished and in the 1920s continued to run co-op restaurants such as that at boulevard Raspail itself. The same that the same transfer is the same transfer to the same transf

To perpetuate the work of the Congress, it was decided to form a committee called the 'Comité international d'action démocratique pour la paix,' with representatives of the main countries involved, and with Georges Hoog as General Secretary.³⁶ The Congress also sent greetings to the Pope who, through Cardinal Gasparri, replied with his apostolic blessing on their peace efforts.³⁷ On Saturday 10, Marc Sangnier led a number of Catholic and Protestant delegates in attending a reception at the residence of the newly arrived Apostolic Nuncio where both Sangnier and Mgr. Ceretti recalled how close such attempts at Christian reconciliation were to the heart of Pope Benedict.³⁸ A telegram was also dispatched to President Harding of the United States, congratulating him for his initiative in calling a disarmament conference in Washington for the following year.³⁹

On the afternoon of Sunday 11 December, three thousand Parisians attended the closing session at the Manège du Panthéon. Sangnier brought the Congress to an end with an electrifying speech. Treaties and protocols were inoperable without a change of heart, he told his audience. The 'moral conditions of peace' and the role of public opinion were what interested him. He rejoiced in the philosophical pluralism of the gathering, saying that 'we accept everyone as long as they have the same moral commitment' to peace and 'do not hold against

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³⁴ ibid., p. 338.

³⁸ Coppa, The modern Papacy, p.169; Ier Congrès, p. 352.

³⁵ Claudine Guerrier, 'La Jeune République de 1912 à 1945', Thèse de doctorat, Université de Paris II, 1979, p. 29.

³⁶ Ier Congrès, p. 344.

³⁷ ibid., p. 350.

³⁹ *Ier Congrès*, p. 351; The pope had recently sent a telegram to Harding in a similar vein, see Coppa, *The modern Papacy*, p. 169.

⁴⁰ Ier Congrès, p. 352.

⁴¹ ibid, p. 355.

us our Christian faith.'⁴² Sangnier did not hesitate to draw on his own intensely felt Catholicism. This is seen most forcibly in his public act of faith in the sacrament of the Eucharist as a link between Catholics who had previously fought one another. Referring to the Mass said by Magnus Jocham during the Congress, he spoke of how

the day before yesterday, in our crypt...we received Holy Communion, our God Himself, from the consecrated hands of a German priest. Yes, that was true human fraternity, superior to all, that not even the necessities of national defence are capable of breaking. For even though our evil and ill-built society can sometimes oppose brothers on the battlefield, they remain brothers because they remain part of the same human community redeemed by the blood of the same Christ.⁴³

The Eucharist therefore served to re-affirm the catholicity of the Church and as an immaterial means of reconciliation. At precisely this time, Catholics were anticipating the first post-war international Eucharistic Congress scheduled for Rome in 1922 as a means of bringing together the Catholic family too long rent apart by war.

Nations as a true 'society of peoples' and asserted France's right to reparations. His practical sense of the geopolitical and demographic situation led Sangnier to call for the immediate admission of Germany to the League: 'It is infinitely dangerous to keep seventy million Germans outside the League of Nations and the more you say to me that Germany still has within her the germs of militarism, the more I will insist on the necessity of Germany entering the League.' And Russia?' a voice called. Sangnier replied with the same pragmatism, saying Russia was just too big to treat as if it did not exist. However, peace had to be more than the absence of war. Sangnier humorously dealt with the charge that his German interlocutors were but a minority by asking back: 'Do you believe that I represent the absolute totality of France?' He concluded by repeating the impassioned plea for 'the disarmament of hatred' he had first made in a speech in January 1921.

⁴² ibid, p. 358.

⁴³ ibid., p. 358.

⁴⁴ ibid., p.361.

⁴⁵ ibid., p.359.

⁴⁶ ibid., p.360. ⁴⁷ ibid., p.361.

⁴⁸ see ch. 2 above.

declared cultural demobilization the leitmotiv of his thought: 'No, no, the French jingoists are wrong. When they say: "We shall only have security when there is not a gun or a cannon left in Germany", I say: "We shall only have security when there is no more hatred in either France or Germany".'49

At this closing meeting, while Sangnier was in full flight, a voice in the crowd shouted out that 'you should tell that to Poincaré.' 'We shall say it to all and it's not the first time that I have used such language even at the rostrum of the Chamber,' he replied. In the first half of 1922 Sangnier bore witness at home in France to the 'courage' of the Paris Congress. Through informal foreign diplomacy, he attempted to consolidate the auspicious beginning made there, ahead of the second Congress, scheduled for Vienna that September. The dynamism of Fr. Metzger and Sangnier's sympathy for his Catholic International undoubtedly influenced the choice of Vienna. Austrian Catholics, impoverished and deprived of leadership of Europe's last great Catholic dynastic state, were in receipt of much Vatican support – charitable and moral - at this time of dislocation, making them more susceptible to the Pope's rhetoric of reconciliation expressed in initiatives like Sangnier's.

(ii) Travels to Vienna, Berlin and Genoa, spring-summer 1922

In late spring 1922, Sangnier went on a mini-European tour, visiting Italy, Austria and Germany. The visit to Austria helped galvanise the organizers' efforts in advance of the September gathering. His contacts included Austrian delegates to the previous December's gathering. He also shared a box at the opera with the President and took lunch with the Chancellor Schober. In Italy, meanwhile, Sangnier made the obligatory visit to Rome to make an act of fealty to the new pope, Pius XI. His presence on the margins of the Genoa economic conference on European reconstruction allowed the deputy unrivalled access to policy-makers. Events, such as the shock Rapallo treaty between Germany and Russia, the two black sheep of Europe, on the margins of the conference, and the continuing reparations dispute, made such lobbying all the more pressing in Sangnier's eyes. The agreement at

⁴⁹ ibid., p. 361.

o ibid.

⁵¹ Jeune-République, 19.5.1922.

Rapallo struck right at the heart of France's sense of insecurity and vulnerability. Testifying to the strength of the war culture, Sangnier told Count Kessler at Genoa that 'when the Russo-German treaty became known in Paris ... young men got ready to march to the Front. What hysteria!' Even before leaving Paris, Sangnier had written of how 'painful' it was to be proven right by the Russo-German alliance on the counter-productive nature of hard-line French policy. France herself had to shoulder some of the blame for the alliance of Germany and Russia that 'should have been avoided at all costs.' 53

Exceptionally, Sangnier's time at the Genoa conference gave at least the appearance of his being taken seriously by the main political players. Over successive days, 1 and 2 May, he had two full interviews with the Chancellor of the Reich, Joseph Wirth. For the second of these, he was accompanied by Don Luigi Sturzo, leader of the Italian Popolari, the third man of this triumvirate of Christian democratic politicians. Sangnier also met the Soviet representative and the French Justice minister, and head of the Reparations Commission, Louis Barthou. However, as seen in Chapter 2, Barthou was hamstrung by Poincaré's obstinacy. All this informal diplomacy was aimed at cultivating a spirit of rapprochement best served by a practical resolution of financial matters for, as Sangnier confessed to Kessler, 'the mass of Frenchmen wants money, not laurels.'

During his visit to Berlin in May 1922, Sangnier inaugurated the German Committee of the Democratic International Congresses. Who exactly, though, were those Germans that Sangnier was attempting to form a 'community of reconciliation' with? At the Reichstag, the French deputy was guest of honour at a tea-party hosted by deputies Wilhelm Heile and Walther Schücking, the latter epitomising the liberal lawyers who had made up the pre-1914 German Peace Society. Some forty

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⁵² Kessler, *Diaries of a cosmopolitan*, p. 174. (Entry for 1.5.1922.)

⁵³ Jeune-République, 21.4.1922.

⁵⁴ ibid., 3.5.1922.

⁵⁵ Kessler, *Diaries of a cosmopolitan*, p. 174. (Entry for 1.5.1922.)

⁵⁶ Walther Schücking, a liberal pacifist professor of international law at Marburg, served in the Reichstag as a Deutsche Demokratische Partei (liberal) deputy. Between 1919 and 1928, he sat on the German parliamentary committee investigating the events of 1914 and determined to clear Germany's name. At the committee, which sat until 1930, Schücking persistently argued that the Empire's hostility to the German peace movement was a cause of the war, to the fury of the right. His pioneering scholarship in the field of international law had brought him academic and social ostracism. In 1928,

politicians attended the tea-party, drawn from the 'Weimar coalition' of Centre, Democrats and Socialists, as seen in the presence of Eduard Bernstein of the SPD.⁵⁷ Schücking reassured Sangnier that there was little or no hatred of France at popular level, just political resistance to rapprochement that had to be overcome.⁵⁸ He also took lunch with Wilhelm Marx, leader of the Zentrum, and lunched with the pacifist and educationalist F.W. Foerster.⁵⁹ Sangnier, advancing further along the road of demobilization, was making contact with the milieu of German pacifists that were to be his collaborators in demobilization over the next decade.

(iii) The German pacifists

In light of the traumas of war and revolution, German pacifism was undergoing change and diversification at this time. Holl describes how the 'centre of gravity' within the German Peace Society moved from left-wing liberalism to social democracy. The calibre and well-known nature of German pacifists, Catholic or otherwise, collaborating with Sangnier's movement is impressive. For a brief period, at the foundation of the Weimar Republic they so loyally supported, German pacifists were relatively influential. Their credibility as loyal members of the national community was increased by the fact that most of them attacked the Versailles treaty vigorously. This is a very marked feature of German contributions to the early Peace Congresses. Despite this, pacifists, or those politicians who seemed to imitate their policies, were the objects of rightist violence in the early Weimar years. As Hoog said:

we do not forget the murders of an Erzberger, of a Rathenau or of some three hundred and fifty German pacifists felled by pan-Germanist revolvers because, as our great Pascal said, we believe those who get themselves killed for their beliefs to have borne witness.⁶²

he became a judge of the International Court at The Hague. See Karl Holl, 'The role of the German peace movement in German parliamentary politics' in Art Cosgrove & J.I. Mc Guire (eds.), *Parliament and Community: Historical Studies XIV* (Dublin, 1983), p.183; Chickering, *Imperial Germany*, p.327. ⁵⁷ *Jeune-République*, 26.5.1922.

⁵⁹ Jeune-République, 26.5.1922.

⁵⁸ Georges Hoog, Le IIe Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Vienne, 26 septembre-1 octobre 1922 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1922), p. 123.

⁶⁰ Holl, 'The German peace movement,' p. 182.

⁶¹ ibid., p.183.

⁶² He Congrès, p. 122.

Such sentiments, however intensely felt, betray some of the naïveté of Hoog, Sangnier and their French supporters in relation to contemporary Germany. Certainly, they were in dialogue with some genuine German pacifists who suffered considerably for their political beliefs, Ludwig Quidde in particular. However, they were credulous if they counted such pragmatic politicians as Matthias Erzberger, organizer of German war propaganda, and Walther Rathenau, planner of the war economy, as pacifist martyrs. These were 'fulfilment' politicians, anxious to observe the terms of Versailles and genuinely desirous of reconciliation with France. However, their ardent patriotism and concern for the prestige and integrity of the Reich remained a powerful countervailing factor to any incipient liberal pacifist sentiments they may have harboured. The extreme political violence of the early Weimar Republic widened the gap in the Frenchmen's understanding. The political murders of the 'November criminals' Erzberger and Rathenau, so called for their role as signatories of the Versailles treaty, drew the cloak of martyrdom over them and obscured the fact that a politician did not have to be a pacifist to merit assassination, according to the German right. As Evans writes, for nationalist students and ex-army officers 'socialists and democrats of any hue were no better than criminals.'63

Sangnier did much to raise popular awareness in France of the persecution of German pacifists, while, in turn, the example of Marc Sangnier refracted back into the German movement was corporeal proof, even in the face of Poincaré's policy, of the persistence of 'another France.' Representing the old liberal strand of German pacifism was Ludwig Quidde, a historian, hounded as a subversive anti-militarist during the Wilhelmine era. Francophile and conciliatory, his tracts were unsurprisingly banned during the Great War.⁶⁴ President of the German Peace Association from 1914 to 1929, he sent his apologies to Sangnier at the time of the first Congress in 1921 but from 1923 on was a frequent and prestigious speaker at the gatherings.⁶⁵ Though he would be the co-recipient, along with Ferdinand Buisson, of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1927, at home he was vilified by the far-right as an antipatriot. Imprisoned in Bavaria in March 1924 for daring to speak out against the

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⁶⁴ Chickering, *Imperial Germany*, p.304.

⁶⁵ *Ier Congrès*, p. 241. (Quidde attended the Congresses of 1923, 1924, 1925, 1928, 1929 & 1931.)

paramilitary organizations of Hitler and Ludendorff, his captivity galvanised the Jeune-République into staging a large public rally in Paris for his release on 26 March 1924.⁶⁶ 'Who now can doubt their sincerity?' Sangnier asked the crowd, stressing to them how the arrest proved that his German friends were no 'hypocrites camouflaged as pacifists.'⁶⁷

German national parliamentarians, most often from the liberal DDP, attended the Congresses including Wilhelm Heile and Klara Siebert while the French press was particularly impressed at Bierville in 1926 by the fluent French and eloquence of Adele Schreiber, former Socialist member of the Reichstag and the most prominent German woman at the Congress. Nor were Weimar's artists or left-wing intellectuals untouched by the lure of Marc Sangnier's movement. The radical pacifist poet Kurt Tucholsky attended Bierville in 1926. Tucholsky was one of the most prominent of a group of anti-conformist 'cultural Bolsheviks,' associated with the *Weltbühne* literary and satirical review, who had been radicalised by the brutality of counter-revolutionary violence in Germany in 1919. Leaving Germany virtually for good in 1924, Tucholsky made Paris an adoptive home where he worked as Paris literary correspondent of the *Vossische Zeitung*. While there, he cultivated pacifist and artistic circles, canvassing German reconciliation with France as a prelude to a cosmopolitan European polity. His presence at Bierville fitted perfectly into this pattern.

A significant development at this time was the emergence of a specifically Catholic strand to German pacifism. Conspicuous by its absence before the war, Benedict XV's peace policy had legitimized Catholic pacifism in Germany.⁷¹ Fr. Magnus Jocham, president of the FDK from its foundation in 1917 to his untimely death in 1923, played an important role in this. In 1922, during the interregnum between the Paris and Vienna Congresses and about the time of Sangnier's visit to the

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⁶⁷ Jeune-République, 21.3.1924.

⁶⁸ L'Oeuvre, 21.8.1926 (Report by Stephen Valot on proceedings of 20 August).

⁶⁶ Hoog (ed.), IVè Congrès - Londres, Septembre 1924 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1924), p. 49.

⁶⁹ Istvan Deak, *Weimar Germany's left-wing intellectuals. A political history of the Weltbühne and its circle* (Berkeley, 1968), p. 38. Kurt Tucholsky (1890-1935). From a wealthy and assimilated Berlin Jewish background. Exiled subsequently in Sweden until 1935 when he took his own life.

⁷⁰ Deak, Weimar Germany's left-wing intellectuals, p. 89.

⁷¹ Holl, 'The German peace movement,' p. 182.

Reichstag, Jocham and Joseph Probst published a pamphlet in German entitled 'Words of peace' presenting some of Sangnier's recent pronouncements on reconciliation.⁷² Jocham, having memorably said Mass at the Paris Congress, contributed a preface which dwelt upon the common Christian inspiration of the movement, citing the words of Saint John emblazoned in the vestibule of *La Démocratie*: 'Nous avons cru à l'Amour.'⁷³ Jocham told the German readership that 'what Marc Sangnier wants is nothing other than the logical application of the Christian commandment of love.'⁷⁴

German Catholic supporters of the Peace Congresses had no less fraught relations with their German coreligionists than the Jeune-République had in France. Both the confessional Centre Party and the Katholikentage, de facto representative assembly of lay and clerical Catholics in Germany since 1848, were mainly imperialist, anti-democratic and anti-French in the years after the Versailles treaty. 75 A minority current in these bodies, though, led by lay politicians like Konrad Adenauer, Wilhelm Marx, Joseph Wirth and Joseph Joos, defended Enlightenment ideas and democracy. 76 This Christian Democratic strand tended to be better disposed to engagement in Franco-German dialogue, though with caution.⁷⁷ While the valency of nationalism amongst German Catholics varied, there was a near universal front against reparations. Adenauer spoke at the Katholikentage in 1922 of German victimhood in emotive terms: 'France is martyring us, France tortures us; we who are your brothers in the Faith!'78 At the previous gathering in Frankfurt in 1921, Wirth, speaking as Chancellor of the Reich on the matter of Upper Silesia, appealed for them to 'hold firm to the German fatherland.'⁷⁹ However, while ardently patriotic, this Erzberger wing desired a democratic peace with France. Sangnier met Wirth twice at

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⁷² The speeches in question were Sangnier's closing address to the Paris Congress, 11.12.1921, his intervention in the Chamber, 24. 5.1922 and that of the public meeting of 17.6.1922 attacked by the *camelots du roi*.

⁷³ I John 4,16.

⁷⁴ Magnus Jocham, 'Paroles de paix,' La Démocratie, 25.9.1922.

⁷⁵ Marie-Emmanuelle Reytier, 'Les Katholikentage dans l'entre-deux-guerres', *14-18*, 1998, p.72.

⁷⁶ Reytier, 'Katholikentage,' p.75.

⁷⁷Jean-Claude Delbreil, *Les Catholiques français*, p. 230.

⁷⁸ Reytier, 'Katholikentage', pp. 81-2.

⁷⁹ ibid., p. 79.

Genoa in April-May 1922 and the Frenchman viewed his ministry as eminently reasonable.80

The Peace Congresses did have some impact on German Catholic attitudes to France. The French consul in Nuremberg reported to Foreign Minister Briand in 1926 that Bavarian priests' attendance at the Bierville Congress was the first 'fissure' in the wall of German Catholic incomprehension about 'irreligious' France.⁸¹ It was Joseph Joos who made the most remarkable efforts to make known the 'other France' in a mirror image of Sangnier's contemporaneous attempts at home to distinguish between the 'two Germanies.'82 The sole Zentrum figure to attend the Freiburg Congress of 1923, Joos was also the first to allude to Marc Sangnier by name at the Katholikentage, in 1924, when he also dared suggest Germany had a certain political responsibility for the past war. 83 By 1927, he was, along with Quidde and Ruth Fry, a joint vice-president of the Democratic International for Peace.⁸⁴

This sat ill with the 'Grossdeutsche' discourse dominant in the Katholikentage. Slow to invite official French representation, Sangnier was, paradoxically, not quite radical enough to be invited. Instead, delegates at Münster in 1930 heard what they wanted to hear from abbé Demulier, the extreme French pacifist priest who had attended the Vienna peace Congress in 1922.85 He was curiously safer than Sangnier as his total relativism about war origins meant that he would not point the finger specifically at Germany. 86 Unsurprisingly, then, the Katholikentage refused to support any popular peace initiative such as the Congresses and virtually ignored the

80 Jeune République, 26.5.1922.

1993), pp. 74-5.

⁸¹ Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Quai d'Orsay, Paris [MAE], Série Z Allemagne 402, 'Propagande de la France, 1924-29,' ff.24-5. Report, French Consul in Nuremberg-Briand, Minister for Foreign Affairs, 15.9.1926.

⁸² Reytier, 'Katholikentage,' p. 82.

⁸³ ibid., p.79.

⁸⁴ VIIème Congrès démocratique international pour la Paix. Wurtzbourg, 3-7 Septembre 1927 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1927), p.118. 85 Ile Congrès, p. 190.

⁸⁶ Demulier's ultra-pacifist publication La correspondance catholique franco-allemande was supported by the Vatican until 1924 but the priest was put under episcopal ban in 1925. Demulier ended publication in 1927, having been the subject of an Action Française campaign accusing him of collaboration with Alsatian autonomists; Patrick de Villepin, 'Les révisionistes français au service de l'Allemagne 1919-33,' in Maurice Vaisse (ed.), Le pacifisme en Europe des années 1920 aux années 1950: Actes du colloque tenu à Reims du 3 au 5 décembre 1992 par la Centre ARPEGE (Brussels,

work of Magnus Jocham's FDK, tainted in their eyes by democracy and the secularist pacifist movement.⁸⁷

Inevitably, though, Catholic pacifism developed a radical wing advocating conscientious objection even to defensive war. The Grossdeutsche Jugend came into being with 300 members in 1922 as a radical offshoot of Jocham's mainstream FDK. Its spokesman was Nikolaus Ehlen (1886-1968), a former army officer and teacher at Velbert. He was associated with the movement's journal *Das Heilige Feuer* which published a supplement entitled *Die Grossdeutsche Jugend*. Influenced by the temperance movement and also interested in social and agrarian reform, the chief distinguishing feature of the Grossdeutschen was their integral pacifism. Unlike the FDK, they rejected Aquinas' idea of the 'just war' and preached, with reference to the Sermon on the Mount, non-violence and conscientious objection. 90

(iv) Proclaiming 'l'autre Allemagne' at home

In the shorter term, in May 1922, after speaking with German pacifists on their home ground, Sangnier returned home to relate the 'moral and material dangers' of French foreign policy. Armed with this unshakeable conviction, he delivered a speech in the Chamber on 24 May 1922 on necessity of collaboration with these same German pacifists. Significant for its emphasis on the idea of moral disarmament, the speech showed his growing lack of faith in conventional politics as a means of securing the peace (see Chapter 2). At home, of course, there was the predictable journalistic invective from *Action Française*, which plumbed new depths of depravity. Under a caricature of Sangnier swapping places in a German cuckoo clock with the LDH veterinarian Renaudel, another recent visitor to Germany, royalist scribes at the *Action Française* wondered if Sangnier had 'made the Boches sick?' They continued by asking if 'the apostle produced amongst these eaters his customary laxative

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⁸⁷ Reytier, 'Katholikentage,' p. 83.

⁸⁸ Holl, 'The German peace movement,' p.186.

⁸⁹ Winfried Becker, 'Le pacificisme sous la République de Weimar et ses liens avec Marc Sangnier et Bierville' in Institut Marc Sangnier, *Marc Sangnier la guerre, la paix 1914-39 Actes de la journée d'études du 26 septembre 1997* (Paris, 1999), p.174-75.

 ⁹⁰ Becker, 'Le pacificisme sous la République de Weimar,' p.175.
 ⁹¹ Sangnier, 'Réflexions de voyageur,' *Jeune-République*, 26.5.1922.

effect?' ⁹² (see Appendix IV.) Despite such bile, however, Farrugia exaggerates the 'overwhelmingly negative response' to the speech. ⁹³ The predictable sources depicted him as a quixotic, marginal figure. The parliamentary reporter of the conservative *Echo de Paris* expressed the feelings of most Catholics in saying that 'M. Marc Sangnier speaks with sincerity but he is one of the falsest minds I know in Parliament.' ⁹⁴

However, on the left there was a warm reception for Sangnier's revisionist views on the reparations issue and the language of cultural demobilization. The *Jeune-République* letters column included a message from an anonymous priest telling Sangnier to ignore 'the pharisees of the right.'95 However, even if publicly isolated, Sangnier received highly significant private support from Albert Thomas. Thomas, the prominent French reformist Socialist and serving Secretary-General of the International Labour Organization, wrote a letter of congratulations from Geneva. He confessed that he was 'not in the habit of manifesting [his] feelings about parliamentary speeches. However, I feel that that which you made the other day was an act of reason, an act of courage. It is on both these accounts that I feel it necessary to write a few lines to congratulate you with all my heart.'96 Thomas continued by stressing the importance of 'alerting public opinion,' referring to Sangnier's Congresses where the ILO was from the first represented.⁹⁷ The reciprocal sympathy between Sangnier and reformist socialism was once again clear and would manifest itself in the Congress' unwavering interest in international labour legislation.

In the course of the debate of 22 May, Poincaré, in jocular mood, had offered to chair the next public meeting addressed by Sangnier in Paris aimed at bringing the good news from Germany to the people, even if their deputies would not listen. Increasingly, Sangnier viewed the people, rather than their politicians, as the best vectors of cultural demobilization. As the meeting scheduled for Saturday 17 June

⁹² Action française, 10.6.1922.

⁹⁵ Jeune-République, 9.6.1922.

97 ibid.

⁹³ Farrugia, 'French religious opposition,' p.293.

⁹⁴ La Documentation catholique, 19.9.1936, col. 424-5 in Farrugia, 'French religious opposition,' p.293.

⁹⁶ IMS (Paris), M.S. Correspondance Générale, Albert Thomas, BIT-ILO. Corresp. Thomas-Sangnier, 29.5.1922.

approached, Sangnier, undeterred by the Premier's sneer, wrote respectfully to remind him of his comment and to ask him to seriously consider presiding so that he might see that the people of Paris 'have enough wisdom and generosity to know that international co-operation is needed for the reconstruction of Europe.'98 publication of Poincaré's reply in Jeune-République citing his own perfectly adequate familiarity with the views of the common man prompted another press cartoon deprecating the Prime Minister. Ère nouvelle showed Poincaré walking away from a thick-moustached Sangnier at the stage-door of the meeting on the pretext that he was expected in London (as in fact he was.)⁹⁹ (See Appendix IV)

At the same meeting at the manège du Panthéon, though, events took a sinister turn. Upwards of a hundred *camelots* infiltrated the meeting, producing batons and walking sticks during Sangnier's opening remarks. In the ensuing fracas, a score of male listeners sustained superficial injuries. Amongst the injured whose bandaged heads appeared soon afterwards in Jeune-République was Georges Blanchot, a follower of Sangnier's from Sillon days. 100 Evacuating the hall which the Camelots were happily smashing, Sangnier rallied the troops on a street corner nearby and sent women and children to the relative safety of La Démocratie. Defying police pleas that it was not safe to resume the meeting, he exclaimed: 'Liberty is well worth shedding blood for; whatever else, I don't want to give into the imbecilic violence of a bunch of fanatics.'101 Violence, it seemed, was now the preserve of fanatics, unacceptable to citizens like Sangnier who no longer felt themselves at war. The rhetoric and violent actions of the Action Française, by contrast, showed a total refusal to demobilize. Despite scores of injuries, the meeting went ahead, signalling a moral triumph for the movement. As Hoog told delegates at Vienna in September: 'Never, gentlemen, has the Jeune-République enrolled more members, nor more enthusiastic ones, than since that memorable night.'102

98 Jeune-République, 16.6.1922.

⁹⁹ From *Ère nouvelle*, June 1922, reproduced in *Jeune-République*, 26.6.1922.

¹⁰⁰ On Blanchot at Bierville (1926), see Chapter 5.

¹⁰¹ Jeune-République, 23.6.1922.

¹⁰² He Congrès, p. 123-4.

(v) The Second Congress; Vienna, September-October 1922.

The Vienna Congress, held from 26 September to 1 October 1922, continued the project of humanizing the enemy begun so audaciously in Paris the previous year by being held in the capital of a defeated, German-speaking power. The International Committee elected there reflected the diverse origins of participants and the broad base of the Congress movement. The ground was well prepared both by Sangnier's visit in May and Georges Hoog's preparatory visit to Austria in August 1922, including his meeting with the Chancellor, Mgr. Seipel, a cleric and representative of the Christian Social Party. (See Appendix I.) In opening Congress proceedings, Hoog showed great sensitivity to local conditions, namely the twin threats to the new Austrian Republic of economic and social crisis and right wing, 'pan-German' subversion. He cited the final motion of the Paris Congress calling on the League to take remedial measures helping Austria assure her independent existence. The right to self-determination was paramount. Even though the Versailles treaty forbade Anschluss, the Vienna Congress passed a motion to the effect that union with Germany should be allowed if it was clearly the free choice of the Austrian people. The tone of the Congress, though, implied a preference for a 'normal, dignified and independent existence' for Austria. 103

Continuing the work of cultural demobilization meant broadening the areas of discussion to include not just politics but also the educational and religious spheres. The continuation of post-war occupations, not least in Germany, kept the war culture alive in many quarters, including the press. Hoog and Joseph Probst (himself a German) jointly proposed a motion calling for press responsibility in the reporting of incidents in occupied territory or in operations relating to disarmament. Too often, the press behaved as if it was still at war, indulging in inflammatory 'hasty generalisations.¹⁰⁴ Another motion reminded delegates that the work of peace related to the social sphere too, urging them to lobby their national parliaments to ratify International Labour Organization conventions agreed at conferences in Washington, Genoa and Geneva. 105

¹⁰³ ibid., p. 115.

ibid., p. 242. ibid., p. 243.

The Congress innovated by means of its extracurricular activities. By visiting social works such as a children's home and a sanatorium, organisers were showing an awareness of acute economic situation in Austria. The Congresses had a franchise on symbolism and the photo opportunity. The delegates' visit to the Vienna Arsenal on Friday 29 September to see the former magazine now producing agricultural machinery, 'instruments of peace...[from the] engines of war,' was just such an occasion. There could be no more stark demobilization – military, economic or moral - than this. The event was even filmed for posterity. In chairing the final session of the Congress, Mgr. Giesswein of Hungary contrasted the visit of two days before to one he made many years before when he was seventeen. Isaiah's prophecy of swords beaten into ploughshares was being fulfilled but true progress towards peace would have been accomplished only 'on the day when not alone the Vienna arsenal but also those of Skoda and Schneider will have done the same.'

(vi) Feminism and pacifism

The other distinguishing feature of the Vienna Congress, and an indication of its broadening pacifist agenda, was the inclusion of an entire session dedicated to 'the mission of women' for peace. The Congress also resolved to create a 'female section' of the Democratic International with Germaine Malaterre-Sellier as secretary. The presence of a small but vocal female presence, which was disproportionately represented in the organising elite of the Congresses across the 1920s, shows elements of continuity with the pre-war peace movement, where peace societies and feminist activity were often linked. However, the manner of women's incorporation into the Peace Congresses was a response to the 'war culture.' The rhetoric of the 'war culture' had invested motherhood and widowhood with huge moral standing. By the end of the war, widows and bereaved mothers formed what

¹⁰⁶ ibid., p. 173.

¹⁰⁷ ibid., p. 197.

¹⁰⁸ ibid., p. 254.

¹⁰⁹ ibid., p. 178.

¹¹⁰ ibid., p. 240.

¹¹¹ Chickering, *Imperial Germany*, p.344.

Jay Winter terms a 'community in mourning.' It was natural that their voices would be deferred to in any movement for 'cultural demobilization.' Both male and female speakers cast the Congresses themselves as a community of witness and mourning. At the very first Congress, Sangnier addressed himself to women delegates, telling them that their grief meant that no one understood better than they 'the great sorrow wrought by the crime that is war. Men shed their blood...but you others, you have shed tears that still flow. That's why we need you in the fight against war.' Sangnier, in keeping with the logic of cultural demobilization, hoped that this 'community of mourning' would lend its moral authority to attempts at 'disarming hatred,' as a testament to their spouses' and sons' sacrifice and their own suffering.

Sangnier's movement, imbued with Catholicism, was particularly receptive to such demobilizing rhetoric, as it coincided with Catholic theology and iconography of the Virgin Mary as the *Mater dolorosa*. Throughout the Congresses, it was common for male speakers to refer to the common suffering of mothers in war.¹¹⁴ At the Fourth Congress in London in 1924, Sangnier referred yet again to the figure of the 'sorrowing mother' who 'whether in Germany or France or England had shed the same tears.'¹¹⁵ Reflecting starkly on the universality of motherhood, Germaine Malaterre-Sellier, now one of Sangnier's female collaborators, asked at the Würzburg Congress of 1927: 'Does a mother who loves her children believe that she must hate the children of others?'¹¹⁶ Winter documents the importance of the Pietà – the grieving Mother cradling the lifeless Christ – as an aesthetic template for post-war memorials, not least that commissioned by the German Catholic Women's League and placed in the Frauenfriedenskirche in Frankfurt in memory of lost sons, husbands and brothers.¹¹⁷ Equally, living widows re-enacted the stoicism of the Mother in the *Stabat mater*.¹¹⁸

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¹¹³ Ier Congrès, p. 284.

¹¹² On widows, see Jay Winter, *Sites of memory, sites of mourning. The Great War in European cultural history* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 46-50.

e.g. Albert Muench, German youth delegate in France in 1929 in *Croisade de la Jeunesse pour la paix (Août-Septembre 1929). IXè Congrès démocratique internationale pour la paix (Paris, La Démocratie, 1929), p.229.*

¹¹⁵ Hoog (ed.), IVè Congrès, p. 73.

¹¹⁶ VIIème Congrès, p. 89.

Winter, Sites of memory, pp. 90-91.

¹¹⁸ Audoin-Rouzeau & Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre, p. 219.

In wartime and in its aftermath, this devotion took on a new resonance, but with a change of emphasis. Though Mary was the Mother of the Universal Church, some French Catholics subsumed her cult into the national cause long before 1914. In the case of Lourdes, Ruth Harris has written of 'an almost inseparable bond between the spiritual aspirations and political visions,' with particular reference to the nationalism and monarchism of its devotees and of the Assumptionist order that popularised it.¹¹⁹ The half-century down to 1914 saw an exponential growth in the number of so-called vierges couronnées, publicly crowned Marian monument, inaugurated with the blessing of the universal Church, through a papal blessing, but often suffused with nationalist sentiment. 120 Thus, the Virgin crowned in 1873 at Sion-Vaudément – iconic for French nationalists as Maurice Barrès' Colline inspirée - gave courage to the exiled French of the surrounding Lorraine to endure occupation. 121 The exigencies of war culture exacerbated this tendency. Becker has explored the spiritual consolation that men in the trenches sought from female intercessory figures such as the Virgin and Thérèse of Lisieux. 122 More theologically problematical though was the attribution of a crucial military victory, the 'miracle of the Marne' of September 1914, to Mary's intervention, reviving memories of the Pontmain Marian apparition during the Franco-Prussian war. 123 By the 1920s, such portrayals of Mary were out of tune with Sangnier's (and the papacy's) advancement of Catholicism as a vector of reconciliation. Benedict XV who, right from 1914, had lamented the war as the 'suicide of Europe,' proposed an alternative devotion to the Virgin, capable of uniting the warring flock. In 1915, he added the title Maria, Regina Pacis (Mary, Queen of Peace) to the Litany of Loreto, a list of ancient titles given to the Virgin and commonly used in Catholic devotions.¹²⁴ This innovation was rapidly incorporated into Catholic popular piety as seen in contemporary prayer-cards

119 Ruth Harris, Lourdes. Body and spirit in the secular age (London, 1999), pp. 211-12.

121 Chanoine E. Mangetot, Sion, Son sanctuaire, son pèlerinage (Nancy, 1919) cited in Bulletin de l'Institut catholique de Paris, 1920, p.89.

¹²³ Winter, Sites of memory, p. 121; Becker, War and faith, p.75.

¹²⁰ Jean Chelini & Hénry Branthomme, Les Chemins de Dieu. Histoire des pèlerinages chrétiens des origines à nos jours (Paris, 1982), p.305.

¹²² Annette Becker, War and faith. The religious imagination in France, 1914-30, (1994; Eng. trans., Oxford, 1998), p. 79.

¹²⁴ On Litanty of Loreto, see *The New Catholic Encyclopaedia* (Washington D.C., 2nd edn., 2003), vol. 8, p. 603. Benedict erected a prominent statue of the Queen of Peace in the Basilica of S. Maria Maggiore, Rome.

and religious images.¹²⁵ (See Appendix IV.) Several public statues dating from this period in France are dedicated to N.D. de la Paix.¹²⁶ Churches were also dedicated to her, such as the Catholic church in the model *cité de la paix* at Suresnes in western Paris in 1925.¹²⁷

If Mary was a role model venerated by the Congresses, female submissiveness was not a necessary corollary of this devotion. As Blackbourn argues: 'the Virgin remained a richly ambiguous symbol, fusing the potent myths of virginity and motherhood, combining the "womanly" virtues with power.' However important the female intercessory figure remained, it was clear that, in the context of a broader opening of lay Catholicism to female activism in the interwar period, the vocal minority of women at the Congresses would not be content with merely symbolic roles. (Already, at the end of the war, Pope Benedict XV had declared he was not opposed to female suffrage. This gave women a role in the Congresses that they had been excluded from in the Sillon. (Bermaine Malaterre-Sellier's rise to prominence in the Jeune-République after 1920 was symptomatic of the movement's conversion from anti-feminism to 'reformist' feminism. (Bermaine Malaterre-Sellier's rise to prominence in the Jeune-République after 1920 was symptomatic of the movement's conversion from anti-feminism to 'reformist' feminism. (Bermaine Malaterre-Sellier's rise to prominence in the Jeune-République after 1920 was symptomatic of the movement's conversion from anti-feminism to 'reformist' feminism.

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¹²⁵ Dominican Archive, Bibliothèque du Saulchoir, (Paris), [BS], Iconographic material on Mary, Queen of Peace; Imprimerie franciscaine (Vanves) –170, 189, n.d.; Weibel (Paris) 219, n.d.; *Musée de Fourvière*, (Lyon) [MF], Uncatalogued 'images pieuses' of the *Regina Pacis*.

127 Horne, 'Locarno,' p. 81

¹³⁰ Coppa, The modern Papacy, p.167.

¹³¹ However, there were parallel female Sillon circles.

¹²⁶ Two examples: 1.The monumental statue to ND de la Paix at Miribel, Ain, designed by G. Serraz and erected in 1939; 2. Statue at Soissons, Aisne, Crowned Virgin protecting child, canon balls under her feet. Barrels of redundant canons protrude from which spout olive branches symbolising peace. See Bernard Berthod & Élisabeth Hardouin-Fugier, *Dictionnaire iconographique des saints* (Paris, 1999), p. 430.

¹²⁸ David Blackbourn, *The Marpingen visions: rationalism, religion and the rise of modern Germany* (London, 1995), p.47.

On the new wave of Catholic women's movements such as the JOCF and JACF, see Pierre Pierrard, *Un siècle de l'église de France 1900-2000* (Paris, 2000), pp.106-8.

¹³² Germaine Malaterre-Sellier (1889-1967.) Born Germaine Sellier, into the same social milieu as Sangnier, with family links both to him and the Sillon. Embraced the suffragist cause and moderate feminism of the Union française pour le suffrage des femmes before the war. During war, served as frontline nurse. Married General Malaterre in 1917. Joined the Jeune-République in 1920. From 1925, she sat on the Conseil national of the Jeune-République, becoming a joint Vice-President of the league in 1929. From 1930 she held a similar position in the Ligue Française des Auberges de Jeunesse, the youth hostel movement. In the late 1920s, she served as a French delegate to the General Assembly at the League of Nations in Geneva. See Sandrine Wierzbicki, *Germaine Malaterre-Sellier: un destin aux croisés du féminisme et du pacifisme* (1889-1967), Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université de Paris I – Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2001.

In a country like France, notoriously slow to emancipate women, the relative equality they attained in the Jeune-République and in the Congress movement is remarkable. Spokesperson *par excellence* for French women at the Congresses, Malaterre-Sellier did not lack for foreign female interlocutors, such as Klara Siebert, member of the Landtag of Baden, who had lost her only son in the war, and most particularly the English Quakers Edith Pye and Ruth Fry. The remarkable 'Sacrifice de la Réconciliation' performed at Freiburg in 1923 (discussed in Chapter 4) was another initiative taken by the Congresses' female participants. By 1928, Ruth Fry had become the first female vice-president of the movement, shoulder to shoulder with the Nobel laureate Ludwig Quidde and German politician Joseph Joos.

These were moderate women and maternalist feminists, certainly not revolutionaries, but they were no less representative for that. For instance, Adele Schreiber, the German Socialist politician who came to France in 1926 for Bierville, shared these instincts and was adamant in her rejection of radical, anti-natalist feminists whom she called 'Malthusians.' Writing on 'feminism and the home' in *Jeune-République* in April 1921, Malaterre-Sellier dismissed male and clerical objections that female suffrage would endanger family life, turning woman's traditional role into an argument for full citizenship: 'It is precisely because she is a mother, an educator and the principal guardian of that inestimable social value – the home - that she has all the more right to have her say in the affairs of the country.' McMillan claims that mainstream French suffragism had much of the 'purity crusade' about it, with both Malaterre-Sellier and Sangnier linking the vote to issues such as prostitution and depopulation. Certainly, this section of female opinion was firmly behind the anti-abortion laws of 1920 and 1923 which were passed due to a broad natalist consensus in Parliament, that included Sangnier, Buisson and Herriot. ¹³⁷

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¹³³ LSF, TEMP MSS 481, Ruth Fry Papers, box 1, diary, 4 & 5.3.1926. (Independent of any Congress, Fry enjoyed hospitality at the Mallaterre home in Paris.)

¹³⁴ Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne. Histoire des féminismes, 1914-1940* (Paris, 1995), pp. 214-15. As a socialist of Jewish extraction, Schreiber was obliged to flee to Britain from Germany during the Nazi era.

¹³⁵ Jeune-République, 24.4.1921

 ¹³⁶ McMillan, Housewife or Harlot: the place of women in French society1870-1940 (Brighton, 1981),
 p. 89; Ier Congrès, p.284; Sangnier, Discours (Vol.7) 1922-23, p. 153.
 ¹³⁷ ibid., pp. 209-10.

Moderate feminists such as these also spoke with the moral authority of participants and witnesses to the war, as mothers, widows and indeed nurses, as in Malaterre-Sellier's own case. These 'terrible trials' gave them the right to demand the vote which they would then use 'to say to the world their will that the sons of their flesh be not destined for slaughter.' Malaterre-Sellier also pointed to the indispensable role of mothers in the pacifist (and Christian) education of children. Like General Vérraux, a campaigner against toy soldiers and one of the most controversial speakers at the Bierville Congress of 1926, these mothers wished to 'demobilize' and reclaim childhood for their children. As a German delegate put it, these women wished to extirpate from children's upbringing the idea that 'the only glory is the glory of arms.' 140

Malterre-Sellier's Union Française pour le Suffrage des Femmes (UFSF) was the essence of moderation, working 'without violence or useless racket... to educate women in democracy and pacifism.' For this educative purpose, it established an ancillary League of Nations movement called the Union Féminine pour la Société des Nations (UFSDN), subvented by the Quai d'Orsay, whose express purpose was to bring together mothers, sisters and wives of ex-combatants for the sake of their children and the cause of peace. Its feminism, therefore, was at the service of cultural demobilization. Another strand of feminism represented by women such as Madeleine Vernet and Fanny Clar criticised this patriotic pacifism as anaemic. (Clar was amongst the bitterest critics of the Bierville Congress in 1926. Georges Hoog had recognised this when he had spoken of wives and mothers as a great pacifist resource, being totally anti-war as it destroyed home life. At a pro-suffrage meeting in November 1922, Sangnier spoke his 'patriotic shame' at the Senate's characteristic decision to veto votes for women, adding humorously: 'I have rarely

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¹³⁸ Ile Congrès, p. 188.

¹³⁹ ibid, p. 186.

¹⁴⁰ Ère nouvelle, 9.9.1927. (Reported remarks of Miss Fassbinder at Würzburg Congress, 1927.)

¹⁴¹ He Congrès, p. 178.

¹⁴² Bard, Les filles de Marianne, p. 135.

¹⁴³ see chp. 6 below.

¹⁴⁴ He Congrès, p. 119.

¹⁴⁵ On anti-feminism and the defeat of the 1922 bill, see Mc Millan, *Housewife or Harlot*, pp.182-5.

regretted not being a senator but I can sincerely say tonight that I do!'146 Crucially, though, Sangnier cast the argument for emancipation in terms of the legacy of the war, rather than gender equality per se. He repeated almost verbatim his words from the Paris Congress a year before. Democracy needed women because their tears acquainted them only too well with 'the crime that is war...that is why we need you in the fight against war.' On such a central issue, Sangnier had changed his attitude to feminism but that change was largely attributable to his overriding aim of deconstructing the war culture that had invested female mourning with such sacred significance.

Sangnier and the limits of pacifism (vii)

Sangnier was utterly committed to the Wilsonian principle of national selfdetermination, one of those liberal principles for which the war had been fought. As he told his guest Eamon de Valera and a prominent group of Irish revolutionaries at a reception at La Démocratie in January 1922: 'For what purpose did they fight if we have not the joyful certainty that peoples, wherever in the world they are, can at last freely govern themselves?' 148 Sangnier rejoiced at the emergence of new nation-states from the ruins of the old dynastic empires, as they would be the living stones of the New Temple at Geneva. Representatives of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Lithuania were present at the 'punch' or informal reception of 4 December 1921 that marked the opening of the First Congress in However, in the context of 'cultural demobilization,' this raised the awkward issue of violence and resistance in a war of national liberation, particularly when Sangnier viewed France's ally Britain as the oppressor. When a national group's wish for self-government was denied, was that people then entitled to resort to arms to assert that right? This represents an important

¹⁴⁶ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1922-23, p.151 (Speech at mairie du 9ème arrondisement de Paris, 7.11.1922)

¹⁴⁷ ibid., p.153.

¹⁴⁸ IMS, M.S. 23, Speech, Sangnier, reception for de Valera and Irish delegation visiting premises of La Démocratie, 28.1.1922. Eamon de Valera (1882-1975). President of Sinn Féin government, 1919-22. Later Taoiseach and President of independent Ireland. The informal reception took place on the margins of the Irish Race Convention held in Paris. Several prominent Irish nationalists accompanied de Valera to the meeting with Sangnier. These included two indomitable female revolutionaries, Mary Mac Swiney and Countess Constance Markievicz. On De Valera in Paris, see Lord Longford & Thomas P. O'Neill, Eamon de Valera (Dublin, 1970), p. 183.

qualifying case for Sangnier's 'pacifism,' anticipating the dilemmas of the Second World War.

Ireland, more than anywhere else, presented this conundrum in the period from 1919 to 1922. The plain truth was that, while Sangnier was spreading the Gospel of peace in Europe, Ireland was at war. Sangnier had long since been interested in Ireland and alluded to its fate in his propaganda speeches to the troops After winning the 1918 election, the Sinn Féin movement had established the First Dáil in January 1919 as a separate parliament. The Jeune-République paper followed the ensuing War of Independence with avid interest. 150 Though regretting its ferocity, the paper had no doubts but that the sympathy of French Republicans should lie on the Irish Republican side. By implication, then, Sangnier was a conditional pacifist who accepted the use of force in the name of liberationist nationalism. Free nations in a League of Nations would ultimately be the best guarantee of peace. During the revolutionary period, Francophiles Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh and George Gavan Duffy represented Sinn Féin's underground government alternately in Paris. 151 Sangnier was on good terms with both men. In a series of audacious speeches and political gestures, Sangnier threw his moral weight behind the Irish cause, not least the de Valera visit. Here was a distinguished French soldier and Deputy publicly thumbing his nose at France's ally Britain that viewed Sinn Féin activity as illegal and seditious. As early as June 1920, in an impassioned public speech 'pour l'Irlande libre,' Sangnier declared that no amount of English coal could buy his silence about the state of Ireland. 152

'Ireland's struggle,' Sangnier told de Valera, was like that of Alsace-Lorraine. Invoking the language of Jacobin internationalism, he made Irish

¹⁴⁹ IMS, M.S.26, Diary – entry for 6 Nov. 1918; Caron alludes to his visit to the country in 1891 and the Sillon's interest in Sinn Féin from 1906. Caron, *Le Sillon*, pp. 42, 431.

152 Marc Sangnier, Pour l'Irlande libre. Discours prononcé à Paris le 28 juin 1920 et précédé d'une allocution de M. Gavan Duffy, délégué du Gouvernement élu de la République irlandaise (Paris, La Démocratic 1920), 22 26 25

Démocratie, 1920), pp.26-35.

¹⁵⁰ This reached fever pitch with the death on hunger strike of the Sinn Féin Lord Mayor of Cork, Terence Mc Swiney, in October 1920, an event that made a particularly big impression on Sangnier's ten-year old daughter Madeleine. See *Jeune-République*, 30.10.1920.

¹⁵¹ George Gavan Duffy (1882-1951) Representative in Paris (1919-September 1920); Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh (1883-1966) Irish representative to the Versailles conference - excluded by Allies. Emissary to Paris (1919-22.) Later President of Ireland (1945-59); On Irish consular service in Paris (1919-22), see Ronan Fanning, Michael Kennedy, Dermot Keogh & Eunan O'Halpin (eds.), *Documents on Irish Foreign Policy*, vol. 1, *1919-22* (Dublin, 1998), pp. xi-xii, 387-97.

freedom part of a universal cause, that of 'all men who love liberty.' Thus, as democracy and peace were inextricably linked in the Congresses, the Irish cause could not be excluded from them. Accordingly, at the opening of the First Congress in December 1921, the participants reserved a standing ovation, not for Sangnier, nor for the returning German prodigals, but for the diminutive figure of Ó Ceallaigh, representing the 'Irish Republic' and 'saluting in him the sufferings and heroism of a martyred people.' Such endorsements on Sangnier's part demonstrate the rich ambiguity of cultural demobilization. On one level, his commitment to national self-determination overrode the pacifist impulses of demobilization. On the other hand, he also exhibited a critical distance from a wartime ally – Britain – that ran contrary to the war culture's depiction of the Allies as avatars of justice, with cruelty and injustice uniquely on the German side.

(viii) Perspectives

In the year 1921-22, Sangnier and the Congress movement had begun the task of rehumanizing the enemy. Not alone did they now know one another's names but they also recognised the diversity of formerly enemy societies. A humanized enemy was no longer an undifferentiated monochromatic herd. Workers, Catholics, Protestants, Freethinkers; all had their own distinctive part to play. By the same token, Austria's self-redemption as a republic had been recognised at Vienna. The Congresses also acknowledged the particular role of women, elevating widows and mothers to privileged positions of virtue, like that of the Virgin Mother they purportedly imitated. Sangnier had also faced awkward issues about political violence in the Irish case, resolving it in a manner he felt consistent with the indivisibility of peace and justice. Would a meeting on German soil soon be feasible or was it as yet too soon to cross that particular Rubicon? Would the recurrent crises over reparations, that threatened to lead to military action, put the whole process into reverse, resuscitating the war culture and scuppering the painstaking work of humanization started at Paris and Vienna? As the year 1923 approached, such were the challenges that beckoned for Sangnier.

154 Ier Congrès, p. 246.

¹⁵³ IMS, M.S. 23, Speech, Sangnier, reception for de Valera, 28.1.1922.

CHAPTER FOUR

From pragmatist to dove: Freiburg, 1923.

1923 was an extraordinary year in relation to the war and demobilization. It witnessed the resurgence of elements of the culture of wartime in France (and also in Germany) owing to the military occupation of the Ruhr and marked the nadir of post-Versailles Franco-German relations. Yet, in the French case, it was also the watershed in the process of cultural demobilization. The case-study of Marc Sangnier reflects this faithfully. In 1923, Sangnier was never far from the thick of the great passions aroused by French foreign policy. For the historian of Sangnier's International Democratic Peace Congresses, 1923 is synonymous, not so much with the Ruhr, as with Freiburg-im-Breisgau, site of the third Congress in August 1923. Though geographically distant, the Ruhr and Freiburg are inextricably linked in this study. The audacity of the Freiburg congress, and the attempted consolidation there of the Franco-German 'community of reconciliation' founded at Paris and Vienna, only takes on its full significance in the light of the new explosion of 'war cultures' triggered by the Ruhr invasion.

(i) The Ruhr invasion and the 'war culture,' 1923.

The figure of Prime Minister Poincaré was central to this process, both politically and in terms of the attitudes to the war he epitomised. What wonderful symmetry that he and Sangnier clashed verbally on these very issues of the Ruhr and demobilization in a face-to-face encounter in the Chamber of Deputies in November 1923! As seen in Chapters 2 and 3, the reparations issue and the fulfilment by Germany of her legal and moral obligations to France under the treaty of Versailles had been a running sore in their relations since the war. By the start of 1923, the 'policy of compliance' elaborated in 1921-22 by the Wirth-Rathenau coalition in Germany was seen by Poincaré to have failed. Soon after the Genoa conference of April 1922, stalled by Poincaré's insistence on exact conformity with the treaty, Walther Rathenau, the German Foreign Minister, was assassinated. Shocked by this loss, Sangnier and the Jeune-République were further dismayed by the collapse of

Wirth's administration in November 1922. The hapless leadership of the new Chancellor Wilhelm Cuno simply confirmed Poincaré's deep distrust of German In a move characterised by Fischer as 'predatory and explicitly revisionist,' Poincaré sent troops into Germany's industrial heartland -the Ruhr- on 11 January 1923, in fulfilment of a long-term threat to take by force the coal and mineral deposits that were France's by rights.² Faced with an occupying force of some 70,000 to 100,000 Allied soldiers, Germany's government and people were for once united in their determination to defy the invader through an official policy of passive resistance. 'Active' (i.e. violent) resistance operated within a 'murky, semi-legal status.' Unity in face of the enemy, reminiscent of the German 'domestic truce' of 1914, encompassed even the Communists, and showed a remarkable recrudescence of the 'war culture.' Conversely, France experienced a last flowering of the 'war culture.' Even in 1922, Poincaré was intensely sensitive to Communist and pacifist caricatures of him as the warmongering 'Poincaré-la-guerre.' Nonetheless, in attempting a military solution to the diplomatic problem of reparations, Poincaré's mindset and 'moral framework' was that of 1914-18. He hoped, in vain as it turned out, for a renewed union sacrée on the home front so as to force the Weimar Republic to comply absolutely with Versailles, itself a moral statement that Germany was still guilty of the crimes of 1914.⁵

The policy appalled Sangnier who, in contrast to the Prime Minister, had already travelled far down the road of demobilization. Sangnier opposed the occupation both for the fact that it would not yield practical results and, crucially, because it perpetuated those wartime categories of enmity that his Congresses were dedicated to eliminating. The week after the troops went in, his editorial in *Jeune-République* lamented that 'nationalism and pan-Germanism are making up daily the ground they had lost during the Wirth ministry.' More prosaically, did one really believe that such an operation would inculcate in Germany 'the goodwill to pay?'

¹ Craig, Gordon A., Germany 1866-1945 (1978; 2nd edn., Oxford, 1981), p. 447.

³ ibid, p.170.

² Conan Fischer, *The Ruhr crisis*, 1923-1924 (Oxford, 2003), p.3.

⁴ John Horne & Alan Kramer, *German atrocities*, 1914. A history of denial (New Haven & London, 2001), p. 358.

⁵ ibid, p. 357.

⁶ Marc Sangnier, 'Au lendemain de l'occupation de la Ruhr,' *Jeune République*, 19.1.1923. Sangnier had met Wirth twice in Genoa in May 1922. See Chapter 3.

⁷ ibid.

By adopting a variation of the mainstream French Socialist position that Poincaré was destroying German democracy, Sangnier was once again at odds with his erstwhile colleagues in the Bloc National and an embarrassment to his coreligionists.⁸

Feeling that the fate of the whole 'demobilization' project was at stake, Sangnier and the Jeune-République took their critique of Poincaré's hardline policy to the people in a series of public meetings throughout France in the first half of 1923. These meetings also served to disseminate the good news of the forthcoming Third International Democratic Peace Congress, which by June had been fixed for Freiburg during the month of August. At that congress, Georges Hoog made great play of this nationwide campaign against the Ruhr occupation:

In Rennes, capital of Brittany... as in Saint-Étienne, the great working-class town, in Bordeaux as in Lyon, in Paris like at Lille, capital of the devastated regions, everywhere, our ideas received serious, thought-out and ultimately enthusiastic welcome from populations who have suffered too cruelly from war not to passionately desire peace.⁹

Hoog chose to accentuate the positive in the popular response to the meetings, telling his German friends that 'despite the hostility of the big newspapers, these ideas of democratic peace are infiltrating minds.'¹⁰ In the meetings, Sangnier reiterated his two-pronged objection to government policy. Speaking in Paris in June, Sangnier denounced the Ruhr occupation as economic madness. While waiting for the Boche to pay, the occupation was costing France millions but had yielded not a farthing.¹¹ However, even more reprehensible than this waste was the moral corrosion of the German Republic and France's name. In Lille, in May, (where the Action Française publicly burned copies of the *Jeune-République* paper) he pointed out to a critic in the crowd that the position of that whole swathe of Catholic and Socialist opinion in Germany, once favourable to France, had been terribly compromised by the Ruhr. Without using the term 'cultural mobilization,' Sangnier sensed that the government was trapped in the logic of war and its own refusal to demobilize. When, if ever, did the government think occupation would cease to be necessary? If the government's

⁸ Fischer, *The Ruhr crisis*, p.227.

ibid.

⁹ Hoog (ed.), Le IIIe Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Fribourg-en-Brisgau (Allemagne),4-10 août 1923. Compte rendu complet, p.494.

¹¹ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) *1921-23*, p.273. (Speech at a Jeune République meeting, Salle des Sociétés Savantes, 10.6.1923).

distrust of Germany was that profound, 'would it not be more logical for [them] to demand the annexation of the Ruhr?' 12

(ii) Smiting the internal enemy; Action Française, May-June 1923

Inasmuch as 1923 represented a final flowering of the French 'war culture' it would not have been complete without the resurgence of hostility to the internal enemy to complement the odium heaped on the external one. If the renewed national effort had supreme moral value, then to oppose it or even publicly question it, was tantamount to treason. In France, the self-appointed patrioteers of the Camelots du Roi, the paramilitary wing of the Action Française, had rarely needed an excuse to engage in acts of violence and intimidation, as the Panthéon meeting of June 1922, recounted in Chapter 3, showed. However, 1923 represented a particularly busy year for 'the King's hooligans,' as Marc Sangnier memorably called them.¹³ Unlike in 1914, sceptics about the national warlike effort were not confined to tiny pacifist sects but included a broad swathe of opinion, including many on the secular left, thus presenting the Camelots with a variety of 'internal enemies' to smite. In 1923, these same unpatriotic 'demobilizers' were themselves mobilised against a new threat, Fascism, which, whether in Italy or closer to home, seemed not alone to perpetuate the war culture but to threaten the very fabric of democracy itself.

At 8.20p.m, on the evening of 31 May 1923, Marc Sangnier walked out the door of *La Démocratie* on boulevard Raspail in the company of two activists including the twenty-one year old Paul Chatelat, his secretary and future son-in-law. Still immersed in the Jeune-République's campaign against the Ruhr policy, all three were on their way to a rally against the Fascist threat in France held by the LDH at the Salle des Sociétés Savantes, for them, part of the same struggle against chauvinism and for cultural demobilization. They promptly hailed a taxi and the cab was about to move off when:

Fifteen to twenty individuals, who until then had been dispersed, gathered round. They made M. Marc SANGNIER get out of the cab, pulling him by his clothing and landing him right in the

¹² Jeune République, 21.5.1923.

¹³ AN (Paris) F7 13196 'Agression contre Marc Sangnier, 31.5.1923,' Meeting organized by Ligue des Droits de l'homme against fascism in France, Salle des Sociétés Savantes, 31.5.1923.

middle of the boulevard. Then they smeared his face with tar while striking him blows and attempting to make him forcibly swallow the contents of a flask of castor oil. The two friends who accompanied him could not usefully come to his aid.¹⁴

Fortunately for Sangnier, two policemen, the more senior of whom was actually off duty and enjoying an evening stroll with his wife, came to his aid. Thanks to the physical bravery of the pair, Sangnier got free of his assailants and, tarred but not feathered, retreated to the safety of his home with his associates. In the struggle, Camelot contempt for Republican law and 'order' was clear; 'I don't give a damn,' one of them told the Brigadier-Chief Chevillot. Ten minutes' walk away in the quartier Notre-Dame-des-Champs, a royalist medical student threw the contents of a bottle of ink at Maurice Violette and his wife, soiling the former Radical minister's face. Finally, Marius Moutet, Socialist deputy for the Rhône, sustained a head injury in a simultaneous assault. All three men, Moutet, Violette and Sangnier, had been on their way to the same anti-Fascist meeting. For the Action Française, Sangnier was the Mason-sorcerers' apprentice.

Over at the Salle des Sociétés Savantes on rue Danton the meeting was already under way with Ferdinand Buisson in the chair. Stunned shock at the breaking news turned to delirium when Sangnier, in new clothes, arrived undeterred. Entering the hall, he was hoisted onto their shoulders and 'carried in triumph' amidst calls of 'Vive Sangnier.' ¹⁸ At last, Sangnier spoke, recounting the evening's incident in a self-deprecatory manner, remarking how attempted tarring meant his eyes were still painful. 'The bastards!' an indignant voice replied. ¹⁹ For Sangnier, though, the intrinsic danger was not the attack itself but the coarsening of public life it seemed to portend. Calling for Republican solidarity, he likened the methods of the Camelots – 'the real foreigners'- to the methods of Italian Fascism and 'the prelude to

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¹⁴ ibid., 'Manifestations de l'Action Française.' Manifestation contre le meeting organise par la Ligue des droits de l'homme contre le fascisme, Directeur de la Police Judiciaire-Préfet de Paris, 1.6.1923.

¹⁵ ibid., Chevillot, Brigadier-chef de la police judiciaire-Directeur de la police judiciaire, 31.5.1923. ¹⁶ ibid., Report of M. Philipon, Commissaire d'Arrondisement, Police municipale, Quartier ND-des-Champs, 31.5.1923.

¹⁷ Centre International de Documentation, *Dictionnaire biographique français contemporain* (Paris, 1950), p. 376. (Entry on Moutet) Marius Moutet was prominent in the Ligue des Droits de l'homme. Served on the Chamber's Foreign and Colonial Affairs Commission. Subsequently, a reforming Colonies minister in the Popular Front government of 1936-7. Voted against giving full powers to Pétain in 1940, he resumed his political career in the Fourth Republic, having been in hiding during the Vichy period.

¹⁸ ibid., Meeting organized by Ligue des Droits de l'homme against fascism in France, Salle des Sociétés Savantes, 31.5.1923.

¹⁹ Marc Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) *1921-23*, p.228.

inadmissible mores.'²⁰ Such thuggery was not new. The attacks fit neatly into the schema of the heightened tensions of 1923 and the revived 'war culture.' The 'purging' of enemies with castor oil (sinisterly redolent of social 'hygiene') and the use of 'an American-style club,' as the bruised *gardien de la paix* described it, certainly showed French right-wing imitation of Blackshirt militancy.²¹ Simone de Beauvoir's memoirs recall the mirth of her father and his conservative friends at this 'most diverting lark' played on the successors of the Sillon. Initially imitating her father's amusement, the teenager was brought up short by her friend Zaza whose father shared Sangnier's Social Catholic sensibility, marking a turning point in the future feminist's attitude to her parents' class-conscious Catholicism.²² The attacks' timing was instantaneously interpreted as a delayed reprisal for the assassination, five months earlier, of Camelot secretary-general, Marius Plateau, which Sangnier had condemned.²³

Was Sangnier correct in sensing that, as with the German and Italian cases, a 'brutalization of politics' was also occurring in France in the post-war period? Prost disputes George Mosse's thesis that the war itself engendered a new strain of rhetorical and physical violence in domestic politics.²⁴ Whatever about the Freikorps in Germany, Prost finds little evidence for such a shift in France in the 1920s. After all, the Camelots had been intimidating its opponents, journalistically and physically long before 1914. French anciens combattants were marked, to a large degree, by respect for the precepts of morality and legality, incompatible with such a coarsening of mores. Prost concludes that 'this conception of politics as the continuation of war was peculiar to Germany.'²⁵ The crowd at the anti-Fascist meeting on 31 May 1923 did not have the benefit of the historian's hindsight, however. Their anger grew, fuelled by news of the other attacks, until the mob instinct for 'action' against the rue

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²⁰ ibid., p.229.

²¹ AN (Paris) F7 13196 'Agression contre Marc Sangnier, 31.5.1923,' Gardien de la Paix Louis Deschamps-Commissaire d'arrondisement (Quartier Saint-Thomas-d'Aquin, 7e arrondisement), n.d. but 31.5.1923.

²² Simone De Beauvoir, *Memoirs of a dutiful daughter* (1958; Eng. trans., London, 1984), p.132-33. ²³ Stanislas Jeannesson, *Poincaré*, *la France et la Ruhr*, 1922-1924. *Histoire d'une occupation* (Strasbourg, 1998), p.210; For a reiteration of his condemnation of the Plateau killing, see Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1921-23, p.240.

²⁴ George L. Mosse, Fallen soldiers, reshaping the memory of the World Wars (New York, 1990), p. 159.

²⁵ Antoine Prost, 'The impact of war on French and German political cultures,' *The Historical Journal*, 37/1 (1994), p. 215.

de Rome - location of Action Française newspaper offices - could only be contained with difficulty by the top table.²⁶

The next morning, the Chamber of Deputies was even fuller of 'sound and fury' than normal. Sangnier and his fellow victims were firmly in the spotlight. The wounded prophet mounted the rostrum and the moral high ground:

They can do as they wish, I shall always remain above these shameful methods. They can tar me. They can, better than last night, force me to drink Fascist castor oil. They can injure me as they did with Caillaux. They can even kill me; but what they will not do is make me hate. That, never.27

Sangnier and the Radical leader Herriot were but two of the speakers who pointed to a feeling of immunity amongst the Republic's enemies, fixing all eyes on an unrepentant Daudet. In this same session, Herriot made a stirring appeal to Republican solidarity that was publicised nationally at the behest of parliament. The physical attack on the deputies catalysed a shift in Radical allegiances in the Chamber in which the issue of the Ruhr was relevant but not central.²⁸ Events were pushing the Radicals into the arms of the Socialists with the religious question as their common watchword. By mid-June, Poincaré called on the Radicals to pick sides, and quickly. The Ruhr provided a pretext for the break from the Bloc National consummated by Herriot's full frontal assault on the occupation at the Radical Congress in October.²⁹

Just as the internal and external enemies were familiar features of the 'war culture' in 1923, so too were embarrassing divisions within 'communities of truth' such as Catholicism. Cardinal Gasparri, the Secretary of State, must have felt a sense of déjà-vu when, as in 1914, both sides solicited the Vatican's moral support, especially Rhenish Catholics under the Mercier-like leadership of Cardinal Schulte, archbishop of Cologne.³⁰ When, in mid-1923, Pope Pius XI issued an indirect and

²⁷ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1921-23, p.239. (At the end of the debate on the attacks, the Chamber, despite much criticism, voted confidence in the Minster of the Interior's ability to deal with the Fascist menace. The Chamber condemned the attacks themselves also.)

Jeannesson, Poincaré, la France et la Ruhr, p.211.

²⁶ De Jouvenel, editor of *l'Oeuvre*, appealed for calm; AN (Paris) F7 13196 'Agression contre Marc Sangnier, 31.5.1923,' Meeting organized by Ligue des Droits de l'homme against fascism in France, Salle des Sociétés Savantes, 31.5.1923.

²⁸ On 1 June, the Chamber voted confidence in the Interior Minister, albeit with 154 dissenters of whom, significantly, forty-eight were Radicals. On 5 June, the Chamber voted to placard Herriot's appeal nationally, by 280 to 214; See Jeannesson, Poincaré, la France et la Ruhr, p.210.

³⁰ ibid., p.251.

muted criticism of France's punitive application of the treaty, perfectly consistent with his predecessor Benedict XV's policy, his public letter to Gasparri resulted in an outcry in France, from several different quarters and for very different reasons. Ever loyal to Rome, Sangnier raised the misunderstandings of the Pope's position in the Chamber on 7 July. Sangnier felt that those on the left, like Herriot, who spun round from criticising the Ruhr occupation to denouncing the Pope for doing the same, should not see papal interference in what was no more than a reminder of the moral value of charity in international relations.³¹ Turning to his coreligionists, he deplored the recrudescence of wartime accusations of Vatican Germanophilia and deliberate deafness to papal pronouncements for peace. However, such was the vitality of the war culture amongst French Catholics in 1923 that not a single other Catholic deputy, not even the abbé Lemire, spoke up in the Pope's defence.³²

(iii) Freiburg Congress, August 1923.

Meanwhile, the situation in Germany continued to deteriorate. If France was losing money and prestige, passive resistance was crippling Germany. Even with 300,000 hungry children despatched to the countryside, cities warned the central government of the precariousness of the food supply.³³ Tens of thousands of railway workers and civil servants were expelled from the Ruhr for non-collaboration. Though geographically removed from the epicentre of confrontation in the Ruhr, the state of Baden, indeed anywhere in the Reich, was an audacious choice of venue for the forthcoming Congress. Clearly, after Paris and Vienna, a Congress held on German soil was the logical next step in the restoration of communion between the former enemies. Why Freiburg, though? The initiative came from the French side. It was precisely the revival of the 'war culture' that demanded such a bold 'gesture' highlighting the alternative path of dialogue.³⁴ In the first days of June, while the Camelots' ambush catapulted Sangnier onto the Parisian front pages, Georges Hoog was in Freiburg, quietly meeting the mayor Dr. Bender to inform him of the International Committee's wish to come to town in August. Both civil and religious

³⁴ IIIe Congrès, p. 436.

³¹ Marc Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) *1921-23* (Paris,1925), pp. 297, 309.

³² Mayeur, *L'abbé Lemire*, p. 553. 33 Fischer, *Ruhr crisis*, p. 114

authorities gave encouraging responses, including a promise of police co-operation.³⁵ Symbolically located on the Rhine, a crossroads of German, Swiss and French influences, it was near the new border of the post-1919 Reich, Alsace having reverted to France. Though Sangnier and the French delegates ignored the pleas of an Alsatian deputy, Broglie, on the platform of Mulhouse railway station, to turn back for their own safety, the choice also showed prudence about any French group penetrating too deeply into the Reich at such a sensitive time. Freiburg, as a centre of Catholic theology, had a certain eirenical tradition, as Delbreil points out. Home to the Social Catholic Freiburg Union in the nineteenth-century, it was the nodal point in the 1920s of several Catholic internationalist bodies such as the Union Catholique d'Études Internationales and the student-oriented Pax Romana.³⁶ It was also, as Hoog pointed out, the parliamentary constituency of former Chancellor Wirth, so esteemed by the Jeune-République.³⁷ Joseph Probst, from Bruchsal, liaised between Paris and the local committee made up of pacifist students, journalists and a deputy mayor.³⁸

The most basic aim of the Congress, which opened on Saturday 4 August, was for Sangnier and his 125 fellow French to show 'the other France' to German pacifists and population at large. As he was to tell his audience in Freiburg: 'France is not just her government and her newspapers. It is more, it is better than that'. 39 In its choice of themes and speakers, the Congress was a critique of chauvinistic nationalism, depicted as pagan and the enemy of democracy. 40 'Material and moral disarmament,' the mainstays of cultural demobilization, were firmly on the agenda.⁴¹ Congress organisation was flawless, with, as Table I shows, a variety of Catholic and municipal venues used, prompting ecumenical co-operation between stewards drawn from Catholic and Socialist youth organisations.⁴² Of the six to seven hundred formally inscribed German delegates and their associates, many were obliged to take the rack railway over the hills of the Black Forest, a mere tourist attraction normally, as the

35 ibid, p. 438.

³⁶ Delbreil, Les catholiques français, p.231.

³⁷ Georges Hoog, 'Le rapprochement moral' in Georges Hoog (ed.), France et Allemagne (Paris, 1928), p. 154. ³⁸ *IIIe Congrès*, p. 441.

³⁹ ibid, p.453.

⁴⁰ e.g. session on 'Christian and pagan conceptions of the nation'; *IIIe Congrès*, p. 505. ⁴¹ ibid, p. 536.

⁴² ibid, p. 444.

occupation of Offenburg had severed the rail link between north and south Baden. The political climate was chronically unstable. The congress coincided with the dying days of the Cuno government. On 14 August, a new and exceptionally broad coalition of moderates and Socialists took office under an ostensibly unlikely Chancellor, Gustav Stresemann. By late September, Stresemann had signalled the ignominious, if inevitable, abandonment of the passive resistance policy which was devastating the economy, beginning the process of stabilization. But during the week of the Congress itself, between 4 and 10 August, rumours of social and political revolution abounded. Nor was German 'war culture' dead in Freiburg. For patronizing the Congress, Remmele, the Socialist premier of the Baden region, had nationalist threats made against him by groups associated with a right-wing soldier, General von Chrismar. Despite these threats, Remmele pressed ahead regardless and spoke at the opening session.

The issue of the Ruhr bubbled under the surface of the extensive discussion of material and moral reparations at the Congress. The stakes were as much psychological as pecuniary when it came to reparations for, as Fischer maintains, they had become 'the litmus test of German intentions and the viability of a compromised peace treaty.' On the platform with Sangnier and Hoog at the opening session was Joseph Joos, Centre Party member of the Reichstag and Catholic trade unionist. Joos told the meeting that 'the Ruhr' represented 'an idea diametrically opposed to that which this movement and congress should represent in the world.' State Premier Remmele referred to the 'new injuries and humiliations that had been constantly inflicted on [Germany.]' He continued by saying that, in the eyes of the German public, and of a growing body of foreign opinion, the 'declaration of unique culpability imposed on Germany is a grave moral error.' Was the corollary of this revision of the treaty and the reparations scheme, agreed under duress and with false moral foundations? Probably not, but

⁴³ *IIIe Congrès*, pp.437, 615; Some 554 German delegates had formal Congress cards and accreditation, compared to nine at Paris in 1921. Hoog estimates Freiburg inhabitants' attendance at about a thousand.

⁴⁴ Craig, Germany 1866-1945, p. 457.

⁴⁵ Fischer, The Ruhr crisis, p. 15.

⁴⁶ IIIe Congrès, p.445.

⁴⁷ ibid., p.449.

⁴⁸ ibid., p.450.

it did mean Germany deserved better than this. The fault-line of treaty revisionism would affect the congress movement as a tension never fully resolved. Sangnier had no problem repudiating the Ruhr invasion *per se*. Was it possible 'to save a country while destroying another?' he asked.⁴⁹ Surely not. However, on the moral basis of the treaties themselves, Freiburg represented only a staging post on his evolution on the issue of Germany's unique culpability and for now he ducked the issue. 'We don't have the qualifications to revise the treaties,' he declared, pleading that it was an issue beyond the Congress' competence.⁵⁰

The single most radical expression of cultural demobilization came in a surprising formulation by the German Nikolaus Ehlen. Leader of a radical pacifist wing of the Catholic youth movement, the Quickborn, Ehlen showed a contempt for conventional politics characteristic of his movement by opting out of the war guilt debate as it related to Article 231, a hindrance in the truly important matter of moral reparation. Innovatively, then, he called for actual German youth participation in the reconstruction of devastated regions of Belgium and France, 'not in order to execute a treaty which he criticised forcefully but to "bury hatred". ⁵¹ Such an individual moral 'testimony' appealed to the Quaker representative Gertrude A. Giles, who found this individual moral desire appealing as 'there was to be no dealing with all the old questions of guilt and the instigator of the war, only the question as to how each and all could help build up a new world.'52 Ehlen criticised his own country for not 'proclaiming openly enough' its complicity in war crimes. 'Quickly,' he opined, 'we no longer thought about the odious invasion of Belgium.'53 But he proceeded to relativize 1914 in light of French 'harsh methods' in the Ruhr: 'Brute force is taking vengeance on children, the sick and loads of innocents, poisoning their hearts with hatred.'54 War itself, it seemed, was the true barbarity, reflecting the pacifist turn on the memory of the war.

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⁴⁹ ibid., p. 454.

⁵⁰ ibid, p. 456.

⁵¹ ibid., p. 541.

⁵² Gertrude A. Giles, 'The Third International Peace Congress', *Friends Fellowship Papers*, 1 (1923) 5,

⁵³ IIIe Congrès, p. 541.

⁵⁴ ibid, p. 556.

On a less ethereal plane, there was dissatisfaction with another aspect of the demobilization project, namely disarmament, in a session dedicated to the issue on Wednesday 8 August. League of Nations members were obliged to disarm under the Covenant of the League. Measures imposed on Germany were justified as the first stage in a general disarmament. Yet Colonel Léon Lamouche, an associate of the Jeune République, felt application had been uneven, reducing Germany to 'a sort of moral subjugation': 'History shows us that such attempts lead to catastrophe. As pacifists we must therefore demand general disarmament'. Sir Willoughby Dickinson, the English Liberal MP and a founder of the British League of Nations movement, concurred: 'either all disarm in concert or all re-arm in competition.'

On the whole, though, there was a reluctance to stray too far from saccharine declarations of fraternity. This frustrated the two Quaker pacifist delegates John Stephens and Gertrude Giles. Giles wrote of how deeply impressed she was with Sangnier's ability 'to raise the tone of a gathering to a religious plane,' describing him as 'the lion of the evening' at the closing meeting.⁵⁷ However, the deliberations of the Congress were earnest but excessively timid:

The actual burning question of the moment was not discussed for some days, although we were all thinking about it. It almost seemed as if the members were afraid to start a discussion as they could not tell into what deep waters it might bring them. There were some fine addresses…but there was a hesitation to speak out upon the present state of affairs.⁵⁸

When the Ruhr was finally openly debated in a 'study commission', charged with refining the Congress' final motions on the subject, Giles still did not like what she heard. Théodor Ruyssen, veteran French pacifist and President of the APD⁵⁹, disagreed with Ehlen and was, surprisingly, an apologist for the Ruhr intervention. This shows both the persistence of the war culture even amongst its nominal (i.e. pacifist) opponents and the doctrinaire legalism of the APD in the early 1920s. As Ingram illustrates, Ruyssen was slow to forgive and forget after the war. Though his very presence at Freiburg showed him to have overcome his immediate post-war hostility to meeting German counterparts, his clash with Ehlen over the Ruhr belies

⁵⁵ ibid., p.539.

⁵⁶ ibid., p.547.

⁵⁷ Giles, 'The Third International Peace Congress,' p.189.

⁵⁸ ibid., p.186.

⁵⁹ See Appendix III.

Ingram's assertion that, from 1922, Ruyssen had reverted to scepticism about French government policy. 60 No less than any other Frenchman, he was, in 1923, susceptible to the primal pull of the 'war culture.' Rejecting out of hand depictions of the French government as annexationist, he proclaimed Poincaré as no more than the 'punctilious defender of post-war settlement.'61 Ruyssen dismissed as exaggerated German accounts of civilian suffering owing to the occupation. The ills of ordinary Germans were the fault of the German government's financial policy, not of France. Given the delicacy of the issue, he was anxious not to comment on passive resistance but he allowed himself to wonder aloud just how 'passive' an act of sabotage was.⁶² Incidents such as the Hochfeld Bridge explosion outside Duisburg on 30 June which killed nine Belgian soldiers had a large impact on French public opinion. 63 Elements of that 'blindness' to Weimar liberalism's need for support, caused by a total conviction in the rectitude of the French cause, persisted in the APD well beyond 1922.⁶⁴ For Ruyssen, as for other pacifists, the process of demobilization was erratic, not linear. An integral pacifist like Giles despaired of such 'one-sided' relativistic pacifism. With such ill-informed contributions, 'we might have been taking part in any other sort of Congress rather than be assisting at a Peace Congress.'65

The final motions adopted by the Congress on the issue of reparations and territorial occupation attempted to keep this fine balance between competing national interests and divisions between radical and moderate pacifists. In his closing speech Sangnier had contented himself with hoping that the League could broker an end to the 'cruel burden' of military occupation. Necessarily, there was the usual serving of fudge. Motions declared the desire that 'the recent occupations of territory, fount of distrust and new conflict, be reduced as soon as Germany has given guarantees on the execution of her obligations. Revealingly, though, German delegates made a separate and unanimous declaration, a tacit admission that full Franco-German pacifist consensus was impossible on this issue. While recognising their obligation to

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⁶¹ IIIe Congrès, p. 561-2; Fischer, Ruhr crisis, p.187.

⁶⁰ Norman Ingram, The politics of dissent. Pacifism in France, 1919-1939 (Oxford, 1991), pp. 47-9.

⁶² IIIe Congrès, p. 562.

⁶³ Fischer, Ruhr crisis, p. 114.

⁶⁴ ibid, p. 40.

⁶⁵ Giles, 'The Third International Peace Congress,' p. 186.

⁶⁶ IIIe Congrès, p. 606.

⁶⁷ ibid., p. 592.

make reparations and asking their own government to pursue a 'policy of execution,' the Germans kept intact the legitimacy of non-violent 'passive resistance' in the Ruhr, particularly in light of the immoral, 'violent' sanctions used by the French.⁶⁸ However, for Hoog, the mere occurrence of such discussions, in a civilized manner, was enough grounds for hope:

Because these events took place, let us insist on this, at the most difficult moment for Franco-German relations... [and] without wishing to ignore or underestimate nationalist power across the Rhine, does not such an event attest that, in certain regions of the Reich at least, the desire for rapprochement is strongly rooted in people's minds?⁶⁹

The verbal exchanges at the Congress were matched by a strong liturgical element. Yet such liturgical set pieces were not without potential pitfalls. How to bring French and Germans together in a commemoration of a contested event like the war without being divisive? The only way to do it was to act as a 'community of mourning' turned resolutely towards the future in a determination to avoid a repition of the catastrophe. As at Paris, the Mass, and the Eucharistic theme of redemptive sacrifice, was a vector of intra-Catholic reconciliation, as seen in the Requiem Mass in Freiburg cathedral celebrated by the local Archbishop, Dr. Fritz, where the preacher was the noted German Dominican and pacifist, Franciscus Stratmann, Chaplain of Berlin University. ⁷⁰

The 'Sacrifice of Reconciliation' performed at the Freiburg Congress offered a quasi-secular, and uniquely female, variation on the idea of redemptive sacrifice. The aim of the Sacrifice was a symbolic material act of atonement by Germany in the form of a monetary gift to France acting as prelude to reconciliation. The strongly left-wing Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (founded in 1915) had floated the idea in March 1923.⁷¹ Lilly Jannasch, a key female German pacifist activist, was the driving force of the campaign. ⁷² Most German pacifists rejected the

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⁶⁸ ibid., p. 594.

⁶⁹ Hoog, 'Le rapprochement moral,' p.155.

⁷⁰ IIIe Congrès, p.462.

Vierzbicki, Sandrine, Germaine Malaterre-Sellier: un destin aux croisés du féminisme et du pacifisme (1889-1967), Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université de Paris I – Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2001, p.66; For the history of the WILPF's French section see Michel Dreyfus, 'Des femmes pacifistes dans les années trente' in Bibliothèque de documentation internationale contemporaine (ed.), S'engager pour la paix dans la France de l'entre-deux-guerres. Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps, 30, (1993), pp. 32-34.

⁷² IIIe Congrès, p.544.

idea of German war guilt and war crimes despite their centre-left antipathy to the military and the nationalist right. A few exceptions, such as the pacifist and philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster, readily accepted both, blaming them on the entire militarist culture of the Kaiserreich. Jannasch was an associate of Foerster's and a member of the editorial staff at his paper *Menschheit*. At the time of the Congress, she was preparing a book, published in 1924, in which she marshalled the available evidence to show that German war crimes had indeed occurred. Only the 'courageous proclamation of the truth,' however unpopular, could save Germany.⁷³ The Sacrifice of Reconciliation, though it preceded the book's publication, reflected this radical form of cultural demobilization.

However, in an economy ravaged by hyperinflation what was a sincere German to give? The overwhelmingly female donors offered items of jewellery whose proceeds were to be used for reconstruction of invaded regions. In the organisation of the collection, the Quickborn and Grossdeutschen were pressed into action. It was an extraordinary endeavour, given contemporary material deprivations and the ongoing struggle in the Ruhr against perceived French imperialism. Madame Malaterre-Sellier, herself a moderate feminist and pacifist, accepted the German women's donations in this emotionally charged atmosphere:

O German women, you offer us the gold of your jewels and we accept! Ah!, much less for its intrinsic value than as a symbol of your desire to make reparation, your ardent desire for fraternal reconciliation. France suffers much less from a lack of gold than from a lack of faith and confidence. Your gesture gives faith and confidence to all French delegates and they will tell in France that here they have seen your souls completely bared. The soul of the new Germany outstretched to theirs in an outpouring of generosity (offrande) and of love.⁷⁴

Then, after invoking the words of the Lord's prayer on mutual forgiveness, Malaterre-Sellier moved to embrace Jannasch and another German woman Mme. Briefs of Freiburg with whom she shared the platform.⁷⁵

Mothers' letters to the subscription were read out, confirming what we saw in Chapter 3, the importance of the Marian model of the mother with the broken heart and the female intercessory figure in postwar 'communities of mourning.' The motif

⁷³ Horne & Kramer, German atrocities, p.364.

⁷⁴ IIIe Congrès, p. 543.

recurred not alone in the words of a Christian feminist like Malaterre-Sellier but also in the liturgy of the congress itself. The Virgin, as Mother of Dolors, was the default exemplar. At the aforementioned Requiem in the cathedral, the setting of the Mass sung was *Missa in honorem BMV Matris dolorosae*, composed by the resident Kapellmeister. In his closing address to the whole congress, Sangnier showed yet again this Catholic sensibility when he spoke of the common suffering of mothers in wartime, irrespective of nationality. For the Quaker Gertrude Giles, the collection at the doors of trinkets and bracelets, all many could give, represented a release of emotion: 'Of course, there were cynical voices to be heard saying that the whole affair was worked up in a theatrical fashion and had no real value at all. Those of us who experienced the revulsion of feeling that had come over the Congress, however, were deeply thankful that for half-an-hour at least all the speakers had forgotten politics and had been just human beings.'

Pilgrimage was another traditional means of showing repentance. It was to be a recurring theme over the next decade, used particularly effectively in relation to the Bierville congress of 1926 and the Croisade de la Paix in 1929 (Chapters 5 and 7). In 1923, at a time when 'invasion' was foremost in the popular consciousness, the afternoon excursion to the mountaintop of Mont Sainte-Odile, across the border in French Alsace, within the Kaiserreich until 1918, represented an audacious pacifist 'invasion' by the Germans, reversing the French pacifist invasion of Freiburg of a few days before. Tradition held that Odile, the pious Princess of Alsace, had escaped there from her father's anger. ⁷⁸ More pertinently, though, this mountain shrine had long been revered by French nationalists who rejected the German-ness of Alsace-Lorraine as a 'Gallo-Roman and Catholic outpost against Germany.' Indeed, for the French nationalist writer and politician Maurice Barrès, these sites of collective memory and the provinces of Alsace-Lorraine in general represented the 'bastions of the east,' the phrase he used as the generic title of his pre-war trilogy of patriotic novels set in the regions.⁸⁰ An odd choice perhaps for a locus of reconciliation but one specially chosen by the young German hosts of the Quickborn and the

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⁷⁶ ibid., p. 602.

⁷⁸ IIIe Congrès, p. 471.

⁷⁷ Giles, 'The Third International Peace Congress,' p. 188.

⁷⁹ Robert Gildea, *The past in French history* (New Haven & London, 1994), p. 194.

⁸⁰ ibid. Maurice Barrès (1862-1923). The best-known of this cycle of novels are *Colette Baudoche* and *La colline inspirée* (1913).

Grossdeutschen. The Congress account alludes to a 'good hour's march from Freiburg' but, given the eighty-kilometre distance involved, and the fact that participants were expected to attend a municipal concert in the German city that night, it is reasonable to assume that the 'pilgrims' travelled by train from Freiburg to the town of Barr. From Barr, they made a final eight-kilometre march to Mont Sainte-Odile. Once there, delegates could bask in the summer sun and a relaxed atmosphere reigned, with even Sangnier's nonagenarian father, Felix Sangnier, joining in! Here, within sight of the contested Rhine, the thunderbolt of affection for the German youth movements hit Sangnier.

These folkloric youth movements, along with the very different left-wing and Catholic youth groups at the Congress, represented for Sangnier and Hoog l'autre Allemagne. Its very diversity rejoiced them, in keeping with Fischer's assertion that: 'the "other Germany" of the French left was...less a class-based or party political entity and more a moral and geopolitical option which found varying levels of expression in surprising and less surprising quarters of German society.'81 The coup de foudre between the middle-aged French politician and German youth was exemplified by his presence at a gathering of young German Socialists on the fringes of the Congress. In Sangnier, it appeared, 'our young German friends [recognised] a so profoundly young heart.'82 As shall be more fully discussed in Chapter 6, these youth movements, of different philosophical inclinations, were all part of the emergence of a distinctive youth culture in twentieth-century Europe, which, from the 1920s in particular, was mobilized for political purposes. Youth wings of parties and youth religious movements such as the Jeunnesse Ouvrière Chrétienne in France asserted what Stachura calls 'youth's demand to be recognized as an independent estate.'83 In the suitably bucolic setting of the mountain, then, Sangnier broke into a remarkable meditative sequence. Hands joined, eyes closed, he invoked the Almighty:

Lord, Eternal God, You created the world. You created us, body and soul. You made of us one family, brothers...Since I have been with you, young people of Germany, I feel your heart so close to mine that I cannot understand how one could fail to love you...Young people of

81 Fischer, The Ruhr crisis, p. 292.

⁸² IIIe Congrès, p. 568.

⁸³ Peter D. Stachura, *The German youth movement 1900-45: An interpretative and documentary history* (London, 1981), p.33.

Germany...If I did not share your desire for peace, I would no longer have the right to say that I truly love France.⁸⁴

Speaking of kneeling at the cathedral altar receiving the same Christ as them, he continued:

We want to conclude a fraternal pact. And God will bless us. What henceforth does all the rest matter? We shall be brothers. Your sufferings will be ours and your joys too. Hatred is a spent force. Only Love endures forever, since Love is greater than Hatred.⁸⁵

By the Congress' close, an important innovation, inspired by this experience, was announced. Henceforth, the International, the guiding body of the movement, would have a special secretariat for youth.⁸⁶ As the sun set on that glorious day on Mont Sainte-Odile and the singing youths returned to Freiburg in little groups, 'the dream of Gratry seemed nearly reality for them: a polity where all loved one another.'⁸⁷

(iv) Sangnier versus 'Poincaré-la-Guerre.'

As Sangnier's train pulled out of Freiburg, the dusk rang with young German voices calling 'Vive Marc Sangnier.' Sangnier, the deputy, had repeatedly promised the enthusiastic young German delegates at the Congress that he would bear witness before the French Chamber to their strength and sincerity, to tell the sceptics of that other Germany. It was this deep personal conviction that gave Sangnier's interpellation of Poincaré on 16 November its dramatic impact: 'How I regret that the President of the Council could not have attended the Freiburg congress incognito!' From the outset, Sangnier attempted not to attack Poincaré directly, pointedly backing him on the principle of reparations based on Germany having 'dragged the world into the bloody pass where so many of our own died.' However, the 7,000 Germans at the Congress' closing meeting in Freiburg repudiated Prussian militarism, he insisted. To support this point, Sangnier attempted to read into the record some of the pacifist letters of German mothers and schoolteachers who had contributed to the Sacrifice of Reconciliation. The letters drew sniggers from the extreme right, prompting a

⁸⁴ IIIe Congrès, p. 474.

⁸⁵ ibid., p. 475.

⁸⁶ ibid., p. 568.

⁸⁷ ibid., p. 476.

⁸⁸ ibid., p. 614.

⁸⁹ ibid., p. 457.

⁹⁰ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1921-23, p. 386.

⁹¹ ibid., p.360.

brilliant put down of Léon Daudet by Sangnier: 'Very funny, M. Daudet? I am glad that you have specified your psychological state by those words.' There were roars of approval from the far-left. Pedantic to the last, Poincaré reacted to Sangnier's announcement of a forthcoming exhibition at *La Démocratie* of personal items and jewellery donated to the Sacrifice by remarking that should be given to the Minister for Liberated Regions. 93

A further indication of the recrudescence of the 'war culture' was the renewed relevance of the issue of atrocities. Nikolaus Ehlen's likening of French behaviour in the Ruhr to his own country's conduct in 1914 left Sangnier open to the charge that his Congress had lent credence to German allegations of atrocities committed by French soldiers. Deputy Henry Ferrette harried Sangnier on this point. Sangnier, he was a decorated veteran and a Republican nationalist of the Déroulède school.⁹⁴ Unlike Sangnier, though, his moral outlook was firmly set in the 1914-18 'war culture.' To his mind, Sangnier had betrayed the memory of the dead by uttering 'monstrous blasphemy against the fatherland.'95 On the atrocities issue, Sangnier replied that he had asked the complainants for documentary evidence precisely as he wished to refute the calumny. (Though, in Fischer's view, the French made widespread use of civilian hostages as human shields on the railways. 96) But when Sangnier gave an emotional description of the Requiem Mass for all the fallen at Freiburg Cathedral, Ferrette could bear no more: 'No thanks! Our dead have no need of such prayers!'97 Such a hardline attitude precluded even recognizing the goodwill or even the humanity of the enemy and provided virtually no basis for reconciliation.

Marc Sangnier, the politician and prophet, was now fully armed, invoking the living and the dead for the cause of the Congress and Franco-German understanding. He cited an article earlier that year by Sillon 'old believer' Léonard Constant, a teacher in the French lycée in Mainz. In it, Constant had stressed the symbiosis of

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⁹² ibid., p.374.

⁹³ ibid., p.372.

Dictionnaire des parlementaires français. Notices biographiques sur les ministres, députés et sénateurs français de 1889 à 1940, vol.5, (Paris,1968), pp.1678-9; Henry Ferrette (1869-1933).
 Deputy for Meuse, 1898-1910, 1919-24 & 1932-3. Lawyer and Bloc national deputy.

⁹⁵ Marc Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) *1921-23*, p.313. The context of this attack is the debate of 7 July on Pius XI and the Ruhr where Sangnier echoed the Pope's condemnation of 'idolatrous' nationalism. ⁹⁶ Fischer, *The Ruhr crisis*, p.176.

⁹⁷ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1921-23, p.366.

faith and forgiveness symbolised by a Corpus Christi Eucharistic procession in Mainz, where for the first time Germans and French – even soldiers of the Army of the Rhine - had walked together behind the monstrance under the canopy: 'Here was realised, for a moment at least, a magnificent unanimity. 98 Only three weeks before this parliamentary occasion, on 24 October, Sangnier got the devastating news that Constant was dead. Amidst a riot between Rhenish separatists and their opponents, Constant came to the assistance of an elderly person caught in the disorder. 99 He was shot dead in crossfire, leaving a wife and six children. 100 He who had written the biography of Henry du Roure, that talismanic Silloniste hero killed in 1914, was now himself dead. The first blood of martyrdom had been shed in the cause of peace. Armed with such moral authority, Sangnier turned to Poincaré to implore him, as he had done in May 1922, to reveal 'the true face of France.' It was to no avail as Poincaré chose to make light of Sangnier's contribution. However, as with the wise fool in literature, many French would come to believe in the following year that the marginal Sangnier had been speaking the truth all along, as French public opinion turned against the occupation. For as he had warned the premier: 'a beloved France will more easily get payment than a misunderstood, calumnied and hated France.'101

(v) London Congress and English 'Friends,' 1924.

After the trials and tribulations of 1923, 1924 was, for Sangnier, a year of vindication for the demobilization project he had stubbornly defended in spite of the In any analytical narrative of Sangnier's career as a pacifist and of the Congresses, 1924 may be logically discussed as a postlude to the great events of the previous year. By the time of the Fourth Congress in London in September 1924, circumstances had changed dramatically. As well as marking an important staging post in his personal evolution on the matter of German war responsibility, the Congress began the process of Sangnier's integration into the mainstream of European opinion, being feted not alone by the strong British pacifist lobby but also by a foreign government as a serious French pacifist leader. Despite the loss of his own parliamentary seat, Sangnier felt a considerable sense of personal vindication from the

⁹⁸ Jeune République, 5.6.1921 cited in Hoog, 'Le rapprochement moral,' p.136.

⁹⁹ Jeune République, 26.10.1923.

¹⁰⁰ Jeune République, 2.11.1923.

¹⁰¹ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1921-23, p. 386.

defeat of Poincaré and his hardline foreign policy in the May 1924 elections, which he had predicted: 'to the surprise of many...public opinion takes revenge, throws out governments and chooses another that better corresponds with its international aspirations.' He also felt vindicated by the interim settlement of the reparations issue by means of the London Conference and the Dawes Plan of 1924, brokered by Britain's first Labour government under Ramsay MacDonald, which had helped to ease European tensions by substituting international economic guarantees for territorial occupations. As Sangnier himself put it: 'These London accords have lightened some of the dark clouds.' 103

For many Germans, though, his stance on German 'war guilt' was still the litmus test of his sincerity. Referring to German delegates' attitude to the 'war guilt clause,' Georges Hoog wrote that 'none of them, not even the most pacifist, ever accepted the idea of exclusive responsibility inscribed into the Treaty of Versailles...while not hesitating to accept the "duty of reparation". However, Sangnier's own evolution was a gradual one, reminding us of the incremental psychological and intellectual process of cultural demobilization. Only in September 1924, in London, did he accept the fact that Germany was not solely responsible and that the Treaty had been wrong to pronounce 'on the terrain of conscience.' 105 He continued: 'It is undoubtedly...one of the weaknesses and errors of the treaty of Versailles to have strayed into the domain of conscience by attempting to force the signature of an affirmation not accepted by German consciences. This is up to history to do. 106 This represented an important semantic shift in that at Paris in 1921 he declared his respect for German sensitivities; he had confirmed his own absolute belief that pre-1914 German foreign policy stood condemned. In 1924, he went further. It would be both impossible and wrong to impose a reaffirmation of guilt as a condition of German entry to the League. Cultural demobilization required the Allies to forgive and forget, to rehabilitate Germany fully into the community of nations. Moreover, Germany should have a seat on the League Council, the standing executive

103 IVe Congrès, p. 72.

Georges Hoog (ed.), Le IVe Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Londres, 16-19 Septembre 1924, (Paris, La Démocratie, 1924), p. 12.

¹⁰⁴ Hoog, 'Le rappochement moral,' p.143.

¹⁰⁵ Delbreil, Les catholiques français, p. 289 cited in Reytier, 'Katholikentage,' p.79.

drawn from the Assembly, given its objective importance: 'To pose the question is to resolve it. 107

The London Congress highlighted the growing importance of Anglophone Protestant and Quaker pacifism to the movement, an accretion that had large consequences for the internal debate within the Congresses on conscientious objection, fully recounted in Chapter 6. However, as London showed, that tension between radicalism and moderation existed within the movement long before the Bierville Congress of 1926. Upon Gertrude Giles's return to Friends House in London, the Friends' Peace Committee saluted the 'Marc Sangnier Conference at Freiburg' as 'this most heartening effort towards Franco-German understanding.' 108 The initiative to host the Fourth International Democratic Peace Congress in London in September 1924 came from the English side, from the Fellowship of Reconciliation which was a religious, anti-militarist movement for international reconciliation founded in 1919. 109 Its Secretary General, Rev. Oliver Dryer had been England's sole official representative at the Paris Congress of 1921. Rejecting all military service, it reflected a Protestant belief in a 'superior moral power...humanity and its sacred rights, the law of God and of conscience.'110 From the start, though, the Quakers' Peace Committee were fully on board, with Friends like Bertram Pickard particularly anxious to co-operate. 111 It was at this stage, in mid-1924, that the Peace Committee made their most enduring gift to the congresses in the guise of two totally dedicated women, Edith Pye and Ruth Fry. 112 Unmarried, both were wedded to humanitarian

Library of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain (Quakers), London [LSF], MSS Vol.S.107, Peace Committee Minutes 1921-25, 6.9.1923.

¹⁰⁷ IVe Congrès, p. 23. This thorny issue was ultimately resolved in September 1926 by the expedient of increasing the number of permanent seats on the Council, and throwing off 'minor' powers like Spain and Brazil

¹⁰⁹ Dryer had founded the original Fellowship of Reconciliation in Britain in September 1918. The International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) on which he also served was founded by the British Quaker MP Henry Hodgkin at a gathering of ten nationalities in Bilthoven, Holland, in October 1919, predating the congresses by two years. It embraced non-Catholic Christian rather than being specifically Quaker. IFOR's French sympathisers included the Protestant pacifist Hénri Roser; Jill Wallis, Valiant for Peace. A history of the Fellowship of Reonciliation 1914-1989 (London, 1991), pp.36-37.

Ier Congrès, p. 253.

¹¹¹ LSF, MSS Vol.S.107, Peace Committee Minutes 1921-25, 1.5.1924.

¹¹² Anna Ruth Fry (1878-1962). Awoken to humanitarian concerns by the Boer War, Fry helped set up the Friends' War Victims Relief Committee during the First World War. Travelled and wrote indefatigably. From the late twenties, she was also prominent in War Resisters International and served on the executive committee of the League of Nations Union from 1926-31; Library of the

endeavour. From the time of the London Congress of 1924 on, they became fixtures on the Democratic Peace Congress circuit, providing unstinting support without ever concealing their own absolute pacifist positions. Ruth Fry won great praise as organizing secretary to the 1924 Congress that was held in Central Hall, Westminster, from 16 to 19 September 1924. (Great personal warmth developed between Fry and Sangnier, her diary recording dining privately with the Sangnier family when in Amazingly, histories of British religious pacifism have ignored this important French connection. Martin Ceadel's recent survey of the topic excludes Marc Sangnier's Democratic International altogether, despite the contemporary importance British pacifists evidently attached to it. 115

The British left feted Sangnier as an ambassador for French 'demobilization,' acclaim that only confirmed him in this moral choice. Many in MacDonald's government were pacificists of the Union of Democratic Control (UDC) school, hostile to militarism and the old diplomacy. Former Liberal critics of the war such as Norman Angell, author of the best-selling The Great Illusion (1910) warning of economic dislocation from war, was a speaker at the Congress. 116 Labour speakers included the Anglican Socialist George Lansbury MP. 117 Sir William Beveridge sat on the honorary organising committee. 118 This helps to explain the official government reception held at Lancaster House on the morning of Tuesday, 16 September, hosted by Lord Arnold, member of government, for Marc Sangnier and five hundred delegates. 119 As if in reciprocation for this official gesture, the Congress acted on a suggestion from the floor to send a telegram of congratulations to the prime ministers of Britain, France and Germany on 'the happy results already obtained at the

Religious Society of Friends in Britain, Dictionary of Quaker Biography (typescript, work in progress) Entry for Anna Ruth Fry (1878-1962). ¹¹³ LSF, MSS Vol.S.107, Peace Committee Minutes 1921-25, 3.7.1924. Committee minutes record

Fry's acceptance of the post of secretary. Later, five official delegates were also nominated; Bertram Pickard, Ewart G. Culpin, Carl Heath, Jessie Bordie and Anna Barlow, ibid., 4.9.1924.

¹¹⁴ LSF, TEMP MSS 481, Ruth Fry Papers, box 1, diary, 3.3.1926; She records how 'the three children were there - with Paul of nine coping with his wine in true French style...M.S. was in good form and it was pleasant to see him this informally.' The elder son, Jean, born in 1912, had attended the previous year's congress in London.

115 For this exclusion from his account of the movement's European interlocutors, see Martin Ceadel,

Semi-detached idealists. The British peace movemment and international relations, 1854-1945 (Oxford, 2000), pp. 429-34.

¹¹⁶ IVe Congrès, p. 9; Ceadel, Semi-detached idealists, p. 179.

¹¹⁷ IVe Congrès, p. 77.

¹¹⁸ IMS, M.S. 38, file on London Congress, 1924.

¹¹⁹ IVe Congrès, p. 7.

London Conference which has oriented Europe towards the light of peace and turned it away from the darkness of the war and the post-war era.'120 The role of the Congress and of Sangnier as sentinels of the morning during the dark night of 1923 was vindicated and it appeared that the dawn of European cultural demobilization was at hand. All three premiers - Herriot, MacDonald and Marx - wired their thanks. 121

A measure of British pacifist respect for Sangnier was the honoured role he was given in the 'No More War' demonstrations of the weekend of 20-21 September which, by happy coincidence, occurred just at the end of the Congress. This was the last in a series of genuinely international annual anti-war demonstrations held in major European cities, which brought together pacifists and pacificists, from the League of Nations Union on the right to War Resisters International on the left. 122 Sangnier was invited to speak at the inaugural meeting at Holborn Empire theatre, in front of a largely working-class audience. (A Labour M.P. named Oswald Mosley introduced Sangnier to the crowd. 123 Mosley had yet to exchange the red flag for the black shirt!) Sangnier shared the platform with another Congress favourite Ludwig Quidde and, in a clear mark of government approval, Trevelyan, Labour's Secretary of State for Education and a former Liberal. Hailed as the representative of 'pacific and democratic France,' Sangnier called for rapprochement with Germany and Russia but stressed the indivisibility of peace and justice, a subtle but clear difference from his hosts for a great number of whom peace itself had become the supreme moral end. 124 That same Saturday afternoon, Sangnier made an unscheduled oration at a meeting in Hyde Park from an improvised platform of lorries draped in 'No More War' banners, followed by speeches to working-class audiences in East Ham and Poplar docks, with the assistance of a translator, on the Sunday. 125 The Congress' founders had been taken to the bosom of the British pacifist movement.

Sangnier returned home, buoyed by the acclamation of London, sensing that the zeitgeist was turning the way of the pacifists. In the next two years, at

¹²⁰ ibid., p. 43.

¹²¹ ibid., idem.

¹²² Ceadel, Semi-detached idealists, p. 246.

¹²³ IVe Congrès, p. 104.

¹²⁴ IVe Congrès, p. 105.

¹²⁵ IMS, M.S. 38, Souvenir programme, 'No More War' demonstration, Plashet Park, East Ham (London), 21.9.1929; IVe Congrès, p. 107.

Luxembourg in 1925 and at Bierville in 1926, the Congresses dedicated themselves to working out the political and theological ramifications of cultural demobilization, from the economy and the League of Nations to the question of conscientious objection. Sangnier, though, was now ready for the task. The pragmatic arguments about Germany's demographic might had fallen into the background, replaced, at Freiburg and London, by a new emphasis on love and moral disarmament. By September 1924, his conversion from pragmatist to 'dove' was complete.

CHAPTER FIVE

Pacem in terris; the politics and theology of cultural demobilization.

As Sangnier's efforts for cultural demobilization stood at the juncture of politics and religion, he, and the Congresses more generally, worked out the rudiments of a political doctrine and a theology of peace. How the two dimensions related to each other over the whole period of the congresses forms the subject of this chapter. The ultimate answer to the war, and its devastating destruction of the Christian and human community, could only be a theological one, even if it was a theology of action. Perhaps not surprisingly, the Luxembourg congress, held in September 1925, at the height of the diplomacy leading to the Locarno treaties, produced some of the richest debates over the politics and theology of pacifism (on education and international sanctions, for example). Now in its fifth year, the movement had reached a certain level of maturity and self-confidence and the international outlook was sufficiently optimistic to allow for delegates to project a better peaceful future.

Issues such as reform of the League and Locarno dominated the external political context of the Congresses. Internally, live issues included the education of public opinion through schooling and the press, the political mobilization of youth and economic reform. On the theological side, the most controversial issue, of recurring importance, was conscientious objection that went to the heart of the inevitable clash of pragmatic political reality and theological purity. On these issues, cross-cutting axes - national, political and religious - divided and sub-divided participants. The Congress' aim was to advance the dream of 'pacem in terris' which was simultaneously a religious ideal and a political objective. Sangnier lived this dualism, often embodying the movement's contradictions in order to preserve its common identity.

(i) Education

As we have seen repeatedly, the whole Congress movement was predicated on educating public opinion in the ways of cultural demobilization. The congresses, like the Sillon before them, had an almost boundless faith in the power of popular education to create the new pacifist vanguard to lead the mass of newly enlightened opinion. If education was to be democratic and pacifist, what practical implications might these principles have for schooling? From early Congresses there was a generalized sentiment that 'our different national educations are, usually, simple national apologetics.' For a new pacific age, new heroes were needed. Sangnier expressed his hope at the London Congress of 1924 that children would be taught to admire more the genius of men like Pascal and Pasteur than that of Napoleon. In light of the interest aroused by the issue, a whole Commission was dedicated to the theme of education at the Luxembourg Congress of 1925, reporting to a full plenary session of the Congress.

The Congress had first-rate educationalists in its ranks to discuss such matters. Ferdinand Buisson, aged eighty-six, remained the towering educational figure at the Congresses and a corporeal reminder of nineteenth-century patriotic pacifism. Part of a lapsed Protestant milieu turned evangelists of the Republic, he was also president of the League of the Rights of Man. However, for many French Catholics, his name was forever blackened by association with the Ferry laws on lay education, which he enforced as director of primary education in France from 1878 to 1896. Buisson espoused a brand of civic education that was impeccably patriotic. Indeed, Singer describes the Buisson generation of primary teachers as the 'high-priests of nation-worship before 1914. In tandem with this, however, he also believed schools should inculcate liberal, internationalist values. While consistent with his pre-1914 views, this emphasis on moral education for cultural demobilization was also a specific response to the war which, by eliminating Prussian authoritarianism, seemed to offer a

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¹ IVe Congrès, p. 62.

² ibid., p. 75.

³ Theodore Zeldin, France 1848-1945, vol.1: Ambition, Love, Politics (Oxford, 1973), p. 627.

Ferdinand Buisson, 1841-1932. Twice deputy for Paris, 1902-14 & 1919-24. Buisson also became professor of pedagogy at the Sorbonne in 1896.

⁴ Barnett Singer, 'From patriots to pacifists: the French primary school teachers, 1880-1940,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, 12, 1977, p. 414.

new world through the League of Nations. 'Today,' he intoned, 'we must inspire in children the feeling of what they owe the fatherland and what the fatherland owes to humanity.' It was in this context then that the Congress called for 'the generalisation to all countries of the annual lesson devoted to the League of Nations' already given in certain countries, such as the host country Luxembourg. The emphasis on the League of Nations and education reflected an optimistic belief in the moral perfectibility of man and human progress. If only men and nations were better educated and better behaved, the world was still capable of secular salvation through law and reason.

Maurice Lacroix, prominent Jeune République member and lecturer in literature at the Paris' prestigious Collège Henri IV, was to the fore of discussions on school matters at the Congresses. Inevitably at such polyglot gatherings the language issue emerged. From the very first Congress in Paris in 1921, the Austrian Fr. Metzger of the Internationale catholique pour la paix (IKA) advocated Esperanto as a common European language. Lacroix and Professor von Hildebrand of Munich ardently defended linguistic particularism (as distinct from chauvinism) preferring openness to other cultures over linguistic uniformity. In keeping with this desire for internationalist education was the Ecole internationale de vacances held at Bierville in August 1927, curiously overlooked by virtually all historians but vividly recalled by Jean Sangnier who, at the age of fifteen, was one of its pupils. He joined fifty French boys and girls who attended a week's summer school, along with fifty English and fifty German children, taught by teachers of each nationality. The summer school allowed the children to get to know one another and to increase their proficiency in a foreign language.

⁶ Indépendance luxembourgeoise, 13 & 14.9.1925.

⁸ Ier Congrès, p. 287.

⁵ Le Ve Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Luxembourg, 9-14 septembre 1925 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1925), p. 37.

⁷ Claudine Guerrier, '*La Jeune République de 1912 à 1945*', Thèse de doctorat, Université de Paris II, 1979, p. 428.

⁹ Xe Congrès Ostende-Bierville, les Etats-Unis d'Europe, p. 5; Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, March 2001.

In common with the pre-war peace movement, questions of national bias in schoolbooks exercised the Congresses. 10 Placing education under the banner of 'moral disarmament,' the Freiburg Congress of 1923 called for history and geography teaching to stress reciprocal influence of cultures rather than military victories. Chauvinism and narrow nationalism should be avoided in the teaching of foreign grammar!¹¹ This was part of a general movement in the 1920s for textbook revision, endorsed by writers such as Anatole France and the veteran Hénri Barbusse. In the context of a teaching profession whose national rhetoric had been tempered by the war, a motion calling for the eradication of bellicose schoolbooks was carried at a congress of the teachers' Syndicat national in Strasbourg in August 1926, the very same month as Bierville. 12 A report on schoolbooks, with particular reference to France and Germany, was submitted to the European Centre of the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace in 1923, explicitly calling for vigilance against school book chauvinism in the name of 'disarming hatred.' Was it not inevitable, the report asked, that teaching children about the recent war would create obstacles to this same disarmament? At the Congresses, amongst the radical demobilizers, there was an emotional reaction against overly patriotic schoolmasters, manifesting itself in simplistic attacks on the study of history as inherent warmongering. A spokeswoman for the Luxembourgeois women's movement, Mme. Schleimer-Kill, wanted history abolished altogether from the primary school syllabus rather than let it continue 'deforming the minds of children.' At Ostend in 1930, Lacroix remarked on similar sentiments from French instituteurs, an indication of the drift of a portion of schoolteachers from the patriotic pacifism of Buisson to full-blown antimilitarism in the 1920s and 1930s. 15 Less nihilistic was the suggestion from Carnoy, a Belgian senator, that history syllabi move away from the politico-military focus to include social and economic history as exemplified by his fellow countryman, the historian Hénri Pirenne. 16

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¹¹ IIIe Congrès, p. 590.

¹² Singer, 'From patriots to pacifists,' p. 422.

¹⁴ Luxembourg 1925, p. 34.

¹⁶ Luxembourg 1925, p. 28.

¹⁰ Holl, 'German peace movement,' p. 180; Before 1914, the German Peace Society had succeeded in convincing the Badian Diet to reform texts used in the schools under its control.

¹³ European Office of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *Enquête sur les livres scolaires d'après-guerre* (Paris, 1923), p. 8, 124.

¹⁵ États-Unis d'Europe, p. 49; Chickering, Imperial Germany, p. 373.

Lacroix managed to dissuade delegates from any condemnation of history per se. Properly taught, he declared, history could help children 'conceive of the possibility of an international society' such as the League of Nations rather than teach them hatred.¹⁷ History, then, was a prerequisite for peace, necessitating the 'reform and not the abolition of history textbooks.'18 Reform should be the joint endeavour of university conferences and teachers' congresses where texts were examined and 'books infested with nationalist spirit denounced.' To this end the Congresses established a university section.²⁰ The Carnegie philanthropists agreed with Lacroix's judgement, feeling that the League's Institute of Intellectual Co-operation should monitor schoolbooks, citing the German educationalist and associate of Sangnier's, F.W. Foerster, who felt that history should be used to show the compatibility of national and supranational entities.²¹ A measure of these ideas' currency was the way politicians such as Jean Hennessy, government minister and head of the French League of Nations movement, adopted it, excoriating, in 1929, the 'words of animosity, not to say hatred' contained in certain books.²² Whatever about popular history, what implications might self-censorship have for honest historical research on red-hot issues like war responsibility? The fact that countries on opposing sides had considered themselves to be fighting defensive wars would have made it very difficult for any country to acknowledge the existence of expansionist war aims. This was especially so for Germany. This would have alienated the moderate French Sangnier was trying to court and forced him to redouble his effort at distancing rhetorically Weimar Germany from its predecessor. Issues like atrocities were such a hornet's nest was that selective memory and voluntary amnesia became, by default, components of the 'disarmament of hatred'.

(ii) The press

The experience of 'cultural mobilisation' in 1914-18 had bred disenchantment with the press and how it wielded its power. 'The press is rotten,' a voice had shouted in agreement with Sangnier during his closing address to the Paris Congress of 1921.

¹⁷ ibid., p. 29.

¹⁸ ibid., p. 42.

¹⁹ ibid., p. 43.

²⁰ ibid., p. 29.

²¹ Carnegie Endowment, Enquête sur les livres scolaires, pp. 120, 128.

²² Croisade de la Jeunesse, p. 221.

The orator was putting on trial 'a certain press that whips up chauvinism and the wrong sort of nationalism' as one of the great impediments to altering public opinion. Indeed, before 1914, *Le Matin*, present at Bierville incidentally, was the sole mass circulation daily that showed any flicker of sympathy for pacifism. Sangnier chastised passive consumers in the reading public of this sort of 'eyewash' or 'bourrage de crâne. In a report on practical measures for 'peace propaganda', the Austrian Georges Walz outlined, at the same congress, the reductionist categories and national stereotypes the press had played up:

With seven years now, the press in all countries has habituated us to generalising all that is bad about the adversary and to treat any good as an inconsequential exception...Is it surprising that credulous readers believe they were at war with peoples composed entirely of monsters? This mentality has constructed a new Great Wall of China along the Rhine that we must destroy, brick by brick.²⁶

Sangnier thought the press were still distorting facts in a damaging way, as in their propagation of the following 'false' dilemma: 'Either you continue to love your country and renounce humanitarian pipedreams...or you love humanity and work against France,' or whichever country you came from.²⁷ Joseph Probst stated baldly that 'the blood of Erzberger and Rathenau' falls on 'certain journalists culpable of incitement to murder.'²⁸ Chauvinistic reporting, it seemed, had its own international solidarity!

Responsible journalism was a recurring theme, stressed at Bierville in particular by Stéphen Valot, of the centre-left *L'Oeuvre*, General Secretary of an International Federation of Journalists.²⁹ Hoog warned the Vienna Congress that 'the first law of the press should be truthfulness.'³⁰ For a new type of journalism it was necessary to establish 'direct collaboration between enlightened journalists of both countries to ... give the lie to news inciting hatred.'³¹ As the quintessential

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²³ Ier Congrès, p. 364.

²⁴ Chickering, *Imperial Germany*, p. 375.

²⁵ Ier Congrès, p. 364.

²⁶ ibid., p. 289.

²⁷ ibid., p. 364.

²⁸ *He Congrès*, p. 189. On these assassinations, see Eberhard Kolb, *The Weimar Republic* (1984; Eng. trans., London, 1988), pp. 44-45.

²⁹ Volonté, 12.8.1926.

³⁰ Hoog, Le IIe Congrès démocratique - Vienne, 1922, p. 119.

³¹ Ier Congrès, p. 290.

newspapermen, Sangnier and Hoog included in *Jeune-République* frequent articles on the situation in Germany by sympathisers like Joseph Probst and Hermann Platz.³² At times, a sort of 'pacifist self-censorship' came into play, to replace the 'patriotic self-censorship' they rejected. Nonetheless, the exchange of articles did contribute to the process of humanising the enemy.

(iii) Pacifism and youth culture

Congratulating Sangnier in 1929 on his Youth Crusade for Peace, Don Sturzo wrote to Sangnier that 'it is youth that can operate this transformation in minds because it is generous and has the future before it.'33 Sangnier's movement attributed a messianic role to youth in the disarmament of hatred. This lay behind the fixation on the formation of a new generation of pacifists. The Bierville Congress and the Croisade de la Jeunesse (August-September 1929) reflect this. Sangnier's efforts to mobilise youth in this period replicated much of his earlier experience in the Sillon. They also drew on the example of contemporary youth movements, at home and abroad, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. The events of 1926 represented a peak. How though to keep the spirit of Bierville alive? Sangnier proposed that a permanent Foyer de la Paix be established there as an informal Peace University, which was completed in August 1930.³⁴ A centrepiece of the Foyer was the Epi d'or, France's first youth hostel, inaugurated in 1929. The German hostel pioneer Richard Schirmann, with whom Sangnier had personal contact, encouraged this development of the hostelling movement in France.³⁵ Sangnier's faith in the idealism of youth led him to believe that hostelling, 'through the closeness it fostered between youths of all backgrounds and nations and the fecund vigour it developed in mind and body, will well serve the same cause of peace and democracy. '36

It was during the opening of the Foyer de la Paix in August 1930 that the Ligue Française des Auberges de Jeunesse (LFAJ) was founded with Sangnier in a

³³ ILS, Fasc. 436, c.20, Corresp. Sturzo-Sangnier, 29.8.1929.

³² An example of Probst's handiwork was his article on Sangnier and the Ruhr published in the *Badische Beobachter* of Karlsruhe, 26.3.1923; *IMS*, CG 10, Probst-Sangnier, n.d. but 1923.

 ³⁴ L'Oeuvre, 21.8.1926. (Report by Stéphen Valot on proceedings of 20 August).
 ³⁵ IMS, Correspondance générale, CG14, Schirmann-Sangnier, 22.12.1934.

³⁶ André Émorine & Jacques Lamoure, *Histoire des auberges de jeunesse en France 1929-51*, (Paris, Ligue française pour les auberges de la jeunesse, 1952), p. 5.

central role.³⁷ Each hostel had a Père or Mère Aubergiste who set down the limits of youth autonomy.³⁸ In the last resort then, the LFAJ was adult-led, a 'youth-tutelage group' as Stachura would have it.³⁹ The movement's bucolic bias, exemplified at Bierville, prompted Mitterauer to note this rejection of the urban and the creation of one's own counter-world elsewhere.⁴⁰ Initially broad-based, the French secularist wing of the movement left in schism from Sangnier in 1933 (founding the Centre Laïque des Auberges de Jeunesse) while Catholic bishops were none too happy at the mixing of the sexes under the same roof at the hostels!⁴¹

Captivated then by the German youth organisations he had encountered at Freiburg and Bierville, Sangnier emulated the example of the Wandervögel and the Quickborn by giving a youth wing to the Congresses, complete with its own uniform, banners and means of propaganda. Created in July 1928, the Volontaires de la Paix recruited males aged between fifteen and twenty-five and attempted to perpetuate the spirit of Bierville: 'La Paix par la Jeunesse.' (With time, the age cohort defined as youth extended downwards, in keeping with European trends. In July 1934, twelve to fifteen-year-olds were admitted to the new Cadets de la Paix. Selling of a fortnightly paper, *Le Volontaire*, was one of their core activities. The influence of the new scouting movements in Britain and France at this time is discernable, even in the very appearance of the new volunteer corps. The Volontaires were decked out in a navy blue beret with a distinctive insignia bearing the word PAX emblazoned upon a golden sun and the letter V (for victory) in red, for blood shed for the sake of peace. The institutional memory of the Jeune Garde, the confessional youth movement

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⁴⁰ Michael Mitterauer, A History of Youth (1986; English translation, Oxford, 1992), p. 214.

³⁷ Nadine-Josette Chaline, 'Marc Sangnier. La Jeune-République et la paix,' *14-18*, 1998, p. 93.

³⁸ A young French man of Norwegian extraction, Arne Björnson-Langen, did most of the practical work. He was a close personal friend of Jean Sangnier's. In interview, M.Sangnier recalls touring France by hostel together; Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, March 2001.

³⁹ Peter D. Stachura, *The German youth movement 1900-45: An interpretative and documentary history* (London, 1981), p. 36.

⁴¹ 'Témoignage de Dominique Magnant, ancien president de la Ligue française pour les auberges de jeunesse' in Institut Marc Sangnier, *Marc Sangnier la guerre, la paix 1914-39: Actes de la journée d'études du 26 septembre 1997* (Paris, 1999), p. 202.

⁴² Mathieu Noli, "L'Éveil des peuples", "le Volontaire" et "les Volontaires de la Paix" in Institut Marc Sangnier, *Marc Sangnier la guerre, la paix 1914-39: Actes de la journée d'études du 26 septembre 1997* (Paris, 1999), p. 86.

⁴³ Mitterquer A. History of Vanda 212.

⁴³ Mitterauer, A History of Youth, p. 218.

⁴⁴ Noli, 'les Volontaires de la Paix,' p. 84.

⁴⁵ ibid, p. 85; Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. For collaboration with scouts see *Croisade de la Jeunesse*, p. 185. (Meeting at Lyon-Montplaisir, 21.8.1929).

attached to the Sillon, also affected the movement. Jean Sangnier, a veteran of the Volontaires, insists on the non-confessional nature of the Volontaires, as distinct from the Jeune Garde who prayed all night at Montmartre before initiation. 46 The son of Stéphen Valot of the resolutely secular paper L'Oeuvre was a Volontaire, showing its broadness.⁴⁷ However, like the Jeune Garde, it was to be the nursery of a future pacifist elite. As Louis Primet, a volunteer from Lyon, wrote to Sangnier in 1931: 'We want to be young revolutionaries in the pacific sense of the word. That's what puts fire in our bellies.'48

To a participant such as Jean Sangnier, it was the process of initiation that left the greatest mark: 'There was a conversation with my father, an intellectual examination on the ideas of the Sillon (sic) or peace' and a physical examination like for military service!⁴⁹ Initiation into the Volontaires retained a heroic-chivalric and mystical air. Even before the tests for admission, a candidate had to spend three months accompanying and participating in their activities, during which time he was known as a postulant. As well as being ideologically committed, the postulant had to be of good moral character, an example of courage, loyalty and purity.⁵⁰ Once deemed suitable, the postulant recited a pledge to the movement:

In all sincerity and liberty, I affirm that I see brothers in all men and that, in union with all the young people of the world who pursue the same ideal, I wish to be strong, loyal, pure, courageous and disciplined to labour in the work of peace. No material interest drives me. It is with total frankness and goodwill that I ask to be enrolled in the Volontaires de la paix.⁵¹

Sangnier then dubbed the new knight of peace, exhorting him to 'be ever strong, loyal, pure.'52 Like contemporary youth movements elsewhere, the rigorous tests for aspirants, the role of charismatic leadership and a 'millenarian sense of need for the heroic and for self-sacrifice' all coalesced in 'a secularised form of a religious order.'53 The young man then took his place in an équipe and a whole paramilitary system of rank and symbols, showing the ambiguity of such attempts at demobilization. Would their very formation into such a group not make them the

⁴⁶ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (see Appendix.)

⁴⁷ Croisade de la Jeunesse, p. 179.

⁴⁸ IMS, CG10, Corresp. Louis Primet-Sangnier, n.d. but March 1931.

⁵⁰ Noli, 'les Volontaires de la Paix,' p. 84.

⁵¹ La paix des peuples par la Société des Nations. VIIIème Congrès démocratique international pour la paix, Genève-Bierville, 12-23 septembre 1928, (Paris, La Démocratie, 1928), p. 67. 52 ibid.

⁵³ Stachura, The German youth movement 1900-45, pp. 46-48.

focus of physical attack, obliging them to respond with force? Was it not an admission that pacifists had failed to elaborate a new and untainted symbolism which condemned them to imitating the militarists? The Volontaires and the pacifist youth movements associated with them are striking example of an esprit du temps of the 1920s and 1930s that saw opposing ideological groups adopt remarkably similar patterns of liturgy. Even those who opposed militarism simulated martial shows of force, unity and discipline. It is an open question how much of this was due to war 'brutalization.' Evans' observation on the pervasiveness of violent political language after the war is not just applicable to Germany; 'Uniforms were everywhere. Politics ... became war pursued by any other means.'54 Social hygienist views were also ubiquitous in this period and meant virtually all groups donned uniforms and espoused healthy minds in healthy bodies. Proposing a toast at the end of the Eighth Congress at Bierville in September 1928, Jean Sangnier acknowledged this selfconscious use of martial trappings as 'a bit revolutionary,' continuing by saying that 'there is a certain beauty in military things, a terrible beauty, a hateful beauty, but they (the Volontaires) have transformed it into a sublime and still greater glory.'55

At this time, all ideological groups, not least the Catholic Church, were consolidating centralized auxiliary youth wings. Pope Pius XI encouraged unified Catholic youth movements in tandem with his 'grand plan' for specialised Catholic Action under clerical guidance. Sangnier's youth movement existed in the shadows of the startlingly successful Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne (JOC). A youth movement for Catholic workers, the JOC attempted to bring Christ to the factory floor. Dansette describes it as 'a new Sillon, a workers' Sillon, a Sillon gifted with a sense of organization the first one lacked. Founded in Belgium by Fr. Joseph Cardijn in 1919, the JOC came to France in 1926 with its first section at Clichy in the 'red' suburbs of Paris, instituted by Fr. Georges Guérin, a veteran of the Sillon.

Pierrard maintains that, as an apostolic and missionary movement of young workers, by themselves and for themselves, and by promoting the social and spiritual

54 Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich* (London, 2003), p. 72.

 ⁵⁵ Genève-Bierville 1928, pp. 108-9.
 Mitterauer, A History of Youth, p. 220.

⁵⁷ ibid.

⁵⁸ Adrien Dansette, *Destin du catholicisme français*, 1926-1956 (Paris, 1957), p. 93.

⁵⁹ Joseph Débès & Émile Poulat, *L'appel de la JOC*, 1926-28 (Paris, 1986), p. 21.

well being of workers, the JOC cast off traditional ecclesiastical distrust of worker organization, thus gaining new credibility with the working class. This 'new Pentecost' diversified its forms to cater for every section of French Catholic youth. Thus, the late 1920s saw the formation of the JOC's female, student and rural versions, namely the Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne Féminine (JOCF), the Jeunesse Étudiante Chrétienne (JEC) and the Jeunesse Agricole Chrétienne (JAC) in 1929. The JOC happily collaborated in some Congress events as Sangnier was a key inspiration for them. The tenth anniversary celebrations of the JOC at Paris' Parc des Princes in July 1937 drew some 80,000 young people. During the evening Cardinal Gerlier, then bishop of Lourdes, turned to Sangnier and said: 'Marc, be content tonight. You are one of the great workers of the miracle we see just seen!' 63

In discussing the hostels and the Croisade of 1929, Jean Sangnier stressed how struck he had been by the 'very particular character these young Germans had.'64 So what exactly were these charismatic German youth movements? They can only be understood in light of the emergence, over the preceding half-century, of a distinct social category of youth. Across Europe, the offspring of the bourgeoisie, at least, were remaining in school longer and had just a little more pocket money to spend. This sociological change coincided with, or even accentuated, fin de siècle disenchantment with their bourgeois parents' apparently barren and boring world.⁶⁵ The Wandervögel, made up of middle-class Protestant youth formalised by Karl Fischer in 1900, was part of a broader and even more diffuse phenomenon, that of Free German Youth. Jean Sangnier stresses the guitar-strumming musicality and fondness for folksong of the Wandervögel with whom he traversed France on the Croisade de la Jeunesse in September 1929.66 Though not monochromatic in their politics, the vegetarian, teetotal Wandervögel were generally anti-industrial and antiurban and sought solace in an idealised medieval völkisch Germany. Splintered by the trauma of 1918, those who engaged with Sangnier represented an impressive,

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61 Dansette, Destin du catholicisme français, p. 90.

⁶⁰ Pierre Pierrard, L'Église et les ouvriers en France, 1840-1940 (Paris, 1984), pp. 529-30.

⁶² Croisade de la Jeunesse, p. 185. (JOC participation in meeting with Marc Sangnier as speaker held at Lyon-Montplaisir, working-class suburb, 21.8.1929.)

⁶³ Pezet, Chrétiens au service de la cité, p. 191.

⁶⁴ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (see Appendix).

⁶⁵ Stachura, The German youth movement 1900-45, p.14.

⁶⁶ Interview with M Jean Sangnier, 5.3.2002; Stachura, The German youth movement 1900-45, p.23.

'demobilized' pacifist minority, very different from the 'non-demobilized' Wandervögel who had joined the Freikorps in 1919.⁶⁷

Catholic equivalents of the Wandervögel such as the Quickborn and Grossdeutschen were even more congenial to Sangnier. Romano Guardini, the Catholic apologist and theologian, was the outstanding influence on these movements. The Quickborn's origins went back to 1909 when three Silesian priests – Hoffmann, Neumann and Strehler - formed a Catholic youth movement opposed to the Wandervögel's social libertarianism but equally enamoured of the cult of the outdoors and folkloric custom. Possessed of a formal organisation from 1917, the Quickborn (meaning 'gushing source') had a mixed, male-female membership of 6,500 in 1921.⁶⁸ Sangnier's praise for this 'new' German youth knew no bounds: 'they have understood that it is the old order in Germany and the world that must be overthrown and destroyed. They wish to create something totally new.'69 Sangnier correctly sensed their radical pacifism, describing them as 'a strangely mystical, fraternal youth...adopting theories close to those of Tolstoy on non-resistance to evil.'70

A religious-socialist and internationalist wing, led by Nikolaus Ehlen, and a nationalist right wing, tussled for supremacy within German Catholic youth.⁷¹ In parallel with the Wandervögel, the Quickborn also took refuge in the mysticism of the Middle Ages (albeit the Catholic Middle Ages in its case). To this end, it even acquired its own mountain castle, the Burg-Rothenfels, a stronghold visited by Sangnier and his French youths after the Würzburg Congress of September 1927.⁷² German Protestant youth groups also attended, albeit intermittently. consistent was Neuwerk made up of religious socialists influenced by theology of Karl Barth and Paul Tillich. 73 Socialist youth participation included Die Proletarische Freie Jugend. The example of all these groups prompted a unique Franco-German Catholic youth movement, Les Compagnons de Saint François, a 'third order of the

⁶⁷ Walter Laqueur, Young Germany. A history of the German Youth Movement (London, 1962), p.90; Chickering, Imperial Germany, p. 169-70.

⁶⁸ Stachura, The German youth movement 1900-45, p. 74.

⁶⁹ Sangnier, *Discours* (Vol.7) 1921-23, p. 368.

⁷⁰ ibid.

⁷¹ Laqueur, Young Germany, p. 71.

⁷² Hoog, 'Le rappochement moral' in Hoog (ed.), France et Allemagne, (Paris, 1928), p. 152.

⁷³ IVè Congrès, p. 93; Laqueur, Young Germany, p. 119.

roads,' combining eirenicist pilgrimage, love of nature and Franciscan spirituality. Joseph Folliet⁷⁴, of the Lyon Jeune-République, and Franz Stock, a German seminarian in Paris, met at Bierville in 1926 and founded the pilgrims' movement in 1927.⁷⁵ In this, as in so many ways, Bierville was the site of cross-fertilization between the German and French youth movements, prompting Jacques Nanteuil of the Jeune-République party to write how 'the Compagnons replicate, on this side of the Rhine, the Quickborn whose joyful song filled the Bierville domain in 1926...[with the] same return to simplicity, same religious élan, same effort at peace through meeting those of goodwill.'⁷⁶

(iv) Peace and social justice

Social justice was as crucial a part of Sangnier's theology of peace as the messianic role of youth. Count Harry Kessler leaves us in no doubt of Sangnier's personal privilege: 'Lunch at Marc Sangnier's. Very elegant apartment, a number of footmen, magnificent floral decoration: ambassadorial style.'⁷⁷ A long-time social campaigner, his social consciousness drew scorn from the scoffers for being upper class guilt. Claiming the heritage of 1789 and 1848, Sangnier, had spoken in 1908 of materialistic Marxism as a 'deviation from traditional French socialism,' casting the Sillon as the true heir to the utopian socialism of Saint-Simon and Fourier.⁷⁸ In Paris in 1921, he again rejected class warfare in favour of 'substituting for the present regime, which puts labour at service of capital, a new system where capital –as inert matter- is subservient to labour, free and intelligent matter.⁷⁹ At Bierville, Joseph Folliet summarised the general sentiment on the social question by saying that 'we

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⁷⁵ Antoine Delery, *Joseph Folliet* (Paris, 2003), p. 64.

⁷⁷ Kessler, *Diaries of a cosmopolitan*, p. 145. (Entry for 13.12.1921).

⁷⁹ Ier Congrès, p. 376.

⁷⁴ Joseph Folliet (1903-72). From Lyon, he dedicated his life to lay evangelisation. Editor of *Chronique social de France* in 1938. A resister and contributor to *Témoignage chrétien*. He attended the Second Vatican Council as a lay observer and took Holy Orders in old age. Associated with Fr. Louis Rémillieux's innovative working-class parish of Notre-Dame de Saint-Alban in Lyon; Florence Denoix de Saint Marc, *'Joseph Folliet et les Compagnons de Saint François de 1926 à 1958'*, Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université de Lyon 2, 1986, p. 22.

⁷⁶ Jacques Nanteuil, 'Les Compagnons de Saint François' in Georges Hoog(ed.), *France et Allemagne*, (Paris, 1928), p. 180.

⁷⁸ Sangnier, speech of 5.4.1908 cited in Robert Gildea, *The past in French history* (New Haven & London, 1994), pp. 242-3.

should seek peace between classes with no less determination than peace between peoples...we must learn to know one another the better to understand one another.' 80

Before the war, one of the most notable support bases for pacifism was the non-socialist co-operative movement, headed by Charles Gide, leading light of the École de Nîmes school of economic solidarity and interdependence.⁸¹ Gide proposed a middle way between capitalism and collectivism by means of the co-operative movement that would allow the gradual, non-violent emancipation of the workingclass. Sangnier's economic philosophy privileged the cooperative sector, as 'a more democratic organisation of relations between capital and labour which progressively links the latter to the management and profits of the business.'82 This mirrored some aspects of reformist syndicalism that envisaged autonomous co-operatives producing for the needs of the community.⁸³ The successors of the Sillon were sympathetic to corporatist ideas, though this enthusiasm was tempered, as it was for many previously loud advocates on the left, by Mussolini's embrace of it. Nonetheless, the appointment of their old friend Charles Gide to a new National Economic Council in 1925, set up by Herriot and the Cartel des Gauches, was a step in the direction of the social economy they desired.84

Social reform went hand in hand with international solidarity. At home in France, the Jeune-République constantly highlighted the scandal of urban slums and the deleterious effects of price inflation or 'la vie chère' on middle income earners, a familiar complaint up to 1926 and the abandonment of the 'franc fort.' The visits of Congress delegates to various social works such as sanatoria and specially aerated anti-TB schools in Luxembourg showed this commitment to social inclusion. 85 As with abbé Keller's social housing project, the City of Remembrance, in Paris's XIV arrondisement, an explicit link was made between such social works and the memory

⁸⁰ L'Oeuvre, 21.8.1926. (Report by Stéphen Valot on proceedings of 20 August).

82 He Congrès, p. 121.

⁸¹ M. Prevost, R. d'Amat, H. Tribout de Morembert (eds.), Dictionnaire de biographie française (Paris, 1982), vol. 15, cols. 1479-80.

⁸³ Richard F. Kuisel, Capitalism and the state in modern France. Renovation and economic management in the twentieth century (Cambridge, 1981), p. 78. 84 ibid., p. 83.

⁸⁵ Luxembourg 1925, pp. 54-5.

of the war dead.⁸⁶ While the Congress movement's proposed solutions to social problems rarely rose above the platitudinous, its social orientation meant that Sangnier was amongst the few of his class who rejoiced at the Matignon Accords of 1936.

For the Congress movement the best hope of internationalising and resolving these problems lay in the Geneva-based International Labour Organisation, under the stewardship of Albert Thomas, the French reformist socialist and wartime Minister of Armaments. Thomas used the ILO to further the cause of reformist Socialism, thereby spurring the left to redefine their programme.⁸⁷ Speaking in Paris in 1921, Gaston Tessier, founder of the French Catholic trade union, the Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens (CFTC), articulated an explicit link between implementation of the economic terms of the Treaty of Versailles on the dignity of workers and the Church's social teaching as expressed in the encyclicals of Leo XIII.88 It was unsurprising that the ILO should, without fail, send a representative to the Congresses of Marc Sangnier, beginning with Paul Devinat in 1921. As instanced by Thomas' letter of congratulations to Sangnier on his parliamentary speech of 22 May 1922 on the necessity of disarming hatred, there was a reciprocal admiration between the representatives of social Catholicism and reformist Socialism. For both of them, international peace without social progress was as durable as the proverbial horse built on sand.89

The pinnacle of these cordial relations came during the Geneva-Bierville congress of 1928 when Albert Thomas received a delegation led by Sangnier and Germaine Malaterre-Sellier. When the Secretary-General welcomed them in Geneva to the chamber of the International Labour Organisation's administrative council on 14 September 1928, Sangnier hailed Thomas as a friend of peace, adding that his

Annette Becker, War and faith. The religious imagination in France, 1914-30 (1994; Eng. trans., Oxord, 1998,) p. 143; Jay Winter, Sites of memory, sites of mourning. The Great War in European culural history (Cambridge, 1995), p. 53.

⁸⁷ Kuisel, Capitalism and the state, p. 58.

⁸⁸ Ir Congrès, p. 334.

⁸⁹ MS (Paris), M.S. Correspondance Générale, Albert Thomas, BIT-ILO. Corresp. Thomas-Sangnier, 29.5.1922.

followers were not merely 'bleating pacifists.' ⁹⁰ Thomas saw in this meeting the confluence of moderate Socialism and Catholicism, for which he thanked Sangnier:

You, in particular, represent the great social reform tradition of the Catholic Church. Without the least reserve and whatever our individual beliefs or our personal private faith, we salute in you one of the great moral forces that, with fifty years, has helped modern society achieve essential reforms.⁹¹

(v) Reforming the League of Nations

It is impossible to divorce the impulse for 'cultural demobilization' from the external political context of the early to mid-1920s. The Congresses took place in the context of the quest for European security, which makes sense of their concern for reform and strengthening of the League of Nations. Asked in Paris in 1921 why he had voted for the military budget in the Chamber, Sangnier replied that it would be dangerous to disarm given the current inorganic state of the League of Nations. 92 The continuing 'moral reckoning' for the war complicated the quest for security. At a Jeune-République meeting in February 1920, members discussed the inter-Allied War Crimes Tribunal which, under the Versailles treaty, was to be responsible for trying those who had broken the code of civilisation in wartime. Paul Bureau saw Article 228, which provided for such trials, as an incitement to German hatred. As Horne and Kramer point out, Articles 227-30, the so-called 'responsibilities' clauses, including the extradition of the Kaiser, were even more pertinent in 1919-20 to German 'innocentist' propaganda than the better known Article 231 on war 'responsibility.'93 Sangnier wanted a court without retrospective jurisdiction composed not just of Allied judges but solidly under League auspices, so as to avoid the charge of victors' Sangnier had been correct to sense the impracticality of seeking the extradition of alleged German war criminals in the face of potential mass nationalist (In 1922, indeed, faced with a string of political mobilization against it. assassinations, the Reichstag was to promulgate the Law for the Protection of the

⁹⁰ Genève-Bierville, p. 43.

⁹¹ Genève-Bierville p. 45.

⁹² Ier Congrès, p. 373.

⁹³ John Horne & Alan Kramer, *German Atrocities 1914. A history of denial* (London & New Haven, 2001), p. 329.

⁹⁴ La Démocratie, 15.2.1920.

Republic.⁹⁵) The very same week in 1920 as the Sangnier meeting on war crimes, the French government had compromise forced upon it by Lloyd George who wished to begin putting 1914 back into the past by allowing such trials to take place under jurisdiction of the German Supreme Court in Leipzig.⁹⁶ These Leipzig War Crimes Trials duly collapsed in 1921, having given the British some satisfaction but the French virtually none.⁹⁷ Implicitly, Sangnier regarded the whole episode as a distraction from the disarmament of hatred.

Sangnier was more positive about attempts at international justice under League auspices. He desired the League to have more democratic legitimacy, Sangnier repeatedly calling for popular or parliamentary election of the League representatives of each nation. A Permanent Court of International Justice, founded under Article 14 of the League Covenant in 1921, was the bearer of many hopes for the prevention of war. The Congresses were favourable to the so-called 'Optional Clause' whereby decisions on disputes voluntarily submitted to the International Court were accepted as binding. However, such League structures were all well and good but how to deal with an errant and aggressive member of the family of nations? What teeth did the paper tiger have?

There were passionate divisions within the Congresses over international guarantees between sanctionists, 'realists' who felt right not backed up by force was illusory, and idealists who felt any sanction to be warmongering. A 'liberal pacificist,' to use Martin Ceadel's terminology, Sangnier sought security by enhancing the collective-defence capacity of the League not so much through a cumbersome Covenant amendment but by means of a supplementary treaty.⁹⁹ The Draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance, proposed in 1923, would have set up a security system parallel to that of the Covenant based on pre-existing regional alliances, though it failed for want of support. In October 1924, the new premiers MacDonald and Herriot jointly proposed the Geneva Protocol. Unlike the Draft Treaty of the previous year it attempted to strengthen the League Covenant rather than side step it.

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95 Kolb, The Weimar Republic, p. 45.

⁹⁶ Horne & Kramer, German Atrocities, p. 344.

⁹⁷ ibid., p. 351.

⁹⁸ Ile Congrès, p. 120.

⁹⁹ Ceadel, Semi-detached idealists, p. 241.

Its originality lay in the idea of compulsory arbitration of international disputes. The Protocol, if adopted, would have provided reassurance to France and had the advantage, in Sangnier's eyes, of being universal in scope and loyal to the theory of the League. Indeed, when the Rhineland Pact was negotiated at Locarno, Sangnier welcomed it heartily but not without regretting the failure of the Geneva Protocol that 'had more generality' and was 'a more complete and less empirical system' than the ad hoc pragmatism of Briand and Stresemann in Switzerland. ¹⁰⁰

The willingness of the Protocol's advocates to identify aggressors, against whom action had to be taken, disturbed those for whom war was the ultimate evil, a fact reflected in the deliberations of the following congress in Luxembourg in September 1925. Prof. Louis Rolland of the Paris Law Faculty, a supporter of the Geneva Protocol, felt that 'in the present state of the world, it would compromise international justice, and consequently peace, not to envisage sanctions aimed at any nations which rose up against the international order.' 101 Charles Richet, the old liberal pacifist, also deemed any state refusing arbitration an aggressor. 102 However, liberal pacifism clashed with radical pacifism when Ruth Fry, the English Quaker, announced she was against sanctions, even economic ones, citing her first-hand knowledge of the suffering of innocent Germans at the hands of the Allied blockade during the war. 103 Rolland, meanwhile, when pressed, was willing to consider armed force as a sanction of last resort. For Fry, this was muddled thinking; if war was wrong (as it was) then it should never be used, not even as a sanction: 'Our ideal can only be a world without war. That is the Quaker ideal. One has to choose between being a Christian and being bellicose.'104 exchanges between Rolland and Fry were so heated that Sangnier had to defuse them with meaningless bluster. When the lawyer and the Quaker were about to shire a platform again in Paris the following year, Sangnier whispered roguishly to Fry that she was about to bait again 'votre adversaire.' Fry's position was exreme even by the standards of her own milieu. The willingness of most

1100 Ieune République, 23.10.1925.

¹¹⁰¹ Indépendance luxembourgeoise, 12.9.1925.

bid.

¹¹⁰³ Luxembourg 1925, p. 69.

¹¹⁰⁴ bid., p. 68.

Library of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain (Quakers), London [LSF], TEMP MSS 481, IRuh Fry Papers, box 1, diary, 3.3.1926.

pacifists, except the most irreducible, to countenance economic sanctions points up an apparent, if unspoken, inconsistency; these pacifists rejected the use of certain types of force (i.e. military) as against the use of force per se. However, for Ruth Fry, pacifism was a faith, much more than a practical programme of workable political reforms.

Treaty revision was another minefield for Marc Sangnier and the Congresses. The London Congress (1924) had marked a turning point for Sangnier in that he acknowledged that Article 231 had been a mistake. However, not wishing to alienate moderate pacifist opinion (of which he counted himself part) and genuinely unsure about the issue, he continued to give ambiguous signals in 1925, open to interpretation as a growing conversion to revisionism. The moment when Sangnier most publicly associated himself with the revisionist movement for 'moral disarmament' was when he signed the Appel aux consciences instigated by Victor Margueritte in July 1925. A literary and political outsider, Margueritte (1866-1942), was an absolute pacifist who fervently pursued a revisionist agenda in the review L'Évolution from 1926 to 1933. 107 The introduction to the Appeal called for 'moral disarmament' and above all recognition of the injustice of the Allies' moral case. War was the real atrocity; the war crimes trials represented a 'derisory perpetuation of hatred.'108 Sangnier was one of 103 eclectic left pacifist signatories including Hénri Barbusse, Romain Rolland and Félicien Challaye. Another was Georges Demartial who had claimed that anti-German atrocity stories were nothing but deliberate propagandist lies. 109 Théodore Ruyssen of the APD was genuinely shocked that this Appeal had been signed not just by the usual suspects such as Georges Demartial and Charles Gide but also by moderates like Victor Basch and Sangnier. Ruyssen wished to eave them under no illusion as to 'the danger that their campaign is causing to the present peace; imperfect peace...but real peace, and just peace on many points.'110

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106 Ceadel, Thinking about peace and war, p. 143.

¹⁰⁸ Appel aux consciences. Vers la paix (Paris, 1925), pp. 14-15.

¹⁰⁷ l'atrick de Villepin, 'La revue *Évolution* et le pacifisme révisionniste (1926-33),' *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, 30, (1993), pp. 11-13; Horne & Kramer, *German atrocities*, p. 370.

¹⁰⁹ Horne & Kramer, German atrocities, p. 367.

¹¹⁰ luyssen, 'Encore l'Article 231!,' La Paix par le Droit, 35/5, May 1925, p.203 cited in Ingram, The politics of dissent, p. 43.

Conscious of the criticism of his friends, even within the party, Sangnier told *Jeune-République* readers that the Appeal was not meant to give succour to German nationalism but to be 'a step towards human solidarity.'¹¹¹ As for the fact that many of the other signatories were unfriendly to the Catholic Church, Sangnier drew a sharp distinction between the peace issue and that of confessional solidarity. Sangnier argued his signature remained consistent with his support for sanctions against war crimes but against a 'tribunal...exclusively composed of the victors.'¹¹² Germans 'manifestly believe' Article 231 to be 'in opposition to the truth,' so it should be modified to be acceptable to all.¹¹³ While preferring the healing ministries of time and the League of Nations, Sangnier had set his face against an absolute refusal to consider some future revision of the Versailles settlement. At the Würzburg Congress in 1927, delegates were willing to revisit the 'errors' in the delineation of frontiers in central and eastern Europe at Versailles by means of Article 19 of the League of Nations Covenant.¹¹⁴

The revisionist controversy raised the broader point of Sangnier's relationship with French pacifism generally. In Norman Ingram's view, it was 'not a shortage of pacifists but rather a duplication of effort [and] an inability to coalesce' that 'left French pacifism balkanised and weak.' This is qualified somewhat by the Sangnier case. As a social Catholic he was able to coalesce with a broad swathe of the secular left on a peace platform. Thus at the opening of the Foyer de la Paix in 1930, Jules Prudhommeaux, speaking as president of la Paix par le Droit and secretary of the International Union of League of Nations Associations, rejoiced that 'on the common ground of peace a close collaboration could occur between all republicans of goodwill.' Elderly survivors of old world pacifism such as Charles Richet were lionized at the Luxembourg Congress(1925). This temperate pacifism had fellow travellers in the Radical party -Édouard Herriot and Pierre Mendès-France, for example- and their kinsfolk in the Masons. Distrustful of soldiers and against all but

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¹¹¹ Jeune-République, 24.7.1925.

¹¹² ibid., 24.7.1925.

¹¹³ ibid., 24.7.1925.

¹¹⁴ VIIème Congrès démocratique international pour la Paix. Wurtzbourg, 3-7 Septembre 1927 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1927), p. 108.

¹¹⁵ Ingram, *The politics of dissent*, p. 82 cited in Farrugia, 'French religious opposition,' p. 280.

nigrani, The pointes of dissent, p. 62 ened in Fairtagia, Trenen religious opposition, p. 266.

Reported by Maurice Coquelin in la Dépêche de Toulouse, 31.8.1930, cited in Etats-Unis d'Europe, p.60.

¹¹⁷ Indépendance luxembourgeoise, 12.9.1925.

defensive war, these men, like Sangnier, could retain ambiguous attitudes to war in that they were susceptible to 'a left-wing Jacobinism that opposed pacifism.' ¹¹⁸

Many of these secular friends lent their moral support to Bierville in 1926, including Camille Chautemps, Joseph Caillaux, Jean Luchaire, Mendès-France, Charles Richet and Théodor Ruyssen. 119 Ferdinand Buisson, a lifelong Radical, was prominent at three congresses - Paris (1921), Luxembourg (1925) and Bierville In 1912, Buisson had exasperated Sangnier by referring to Catholic Republicans as 'bicephalous monsters.' In the 1920s, however, the pair's enduring personal friendship revealed not just intellectual maturity and tolerance on both parts but also of a broader meeting of minds in the Third Republic that was obscured by the acrimony over the public place of God. Sangnier's generation of Catholics and Buisson's contemporary Radicals were divided by faith, but not by morals. 121 On a secular ethic, including the League of Nations, they could coalesce. Tensions remained, though, and the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme of which Buisson was President found the Catholic Sangnier a somewhat awkward figure. At the same time as saluting the courage of Sangnier in the face of royalist attackers, the movement's Dijon section was still fulminating against the religious congregations and the socalled 'parti-prêtre.' 122

Sangnier's rapport with Albert Thomas has already highlighted the importance of Socialists to the movement. Theodore Zeldin maintains that French anti-militarism developed in close association with socialism.¹²³ The split of 1920 within French socialism cast men like Léon Blum and Thomas amongst the moderate Socialists who found collaboration with Sangnier possible and were united with him in their common opposition to the new Communist Party and its organ *L'Humanité*. Like Jaurès before 1914, the moderate Socialists were willing to coalesce with liberal pacificism. More generally, pacifism, ranging from the pedantic variety to integral pacifism defined the

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¹¹⁸ Farrugia, 'French religious opposition,' p. 280.

¹²¹ Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, vol.1, p. 690.

Ruyssen, a professor of philosophy at Aix-en-Provence, whose study of the proto-pacifist Kant earned him recognition from the Acedémie française; Chickering, *Imperial Germany*, p. 347.

¹²⁰ Jean-François Kesler, 'La Jeune-République de sa naissance au tripartisme, 1912-1947,' *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 25, 1978, p. 63.

¹²² AN, F7 12884, 'Ligue des Droits de l'homme,' Police report, Vallée (Dijon)-Direction de la Surété Générale, Ministère de l'Intérieur, 28.6.1923. (On meeting of 20.6.1923.); *Ère nouvelle*, 28.6.1923.

SFIO much more comprehensively after the war than before. Nothing symbolized this more during the years of the Bloc National than the SFIO's annual ritual vote against military credits.¹²⁴

(vi) Conscientious objection

However, theological disputes with political implications, such as the attitude to military service, created potentially the worst divisions. At Vienna, in 1922, Sangnier announced he was out to subvert the conventional war culture: 'We are, and I am not afraid to use the words, militant pacifists in the sense that we want to keep what was...valiant...in the warrior spirit of other times...and direct it, not for war and hatred, but against them so as to save all our brothers.' Sangnier was at a midway point between Catholicism and radical pacifism. This required sustained tightrope walking, most particularly on the issue of conscientious objection. The tectonic plates of interwar pacifism often had a semblance of unity but subterranean tensions remained. Rubbing off one another over years, there were spasmodic tremors when conflict between the forces was felt above ground. The fault lines along which this happened, in Sangnier's as in other peace movements, was the individual's duty when faced with war.

English Quakers found French attachment to national service disturbing and dangerous by treating 'the right of the community as above the right of the individual.' ¹²⁶ At Freiburg in 1923, John Stephens, an English Friend, said that 'it would be a great day for France and her pacifist movement when Marc Sangnier found himself in prison as a conscientious objector to all war.' ¹²⁷ The official account chastely omitted this strong statement that had 'shaken the event out of its complacency'! ¹²⁸ Giles portrayed Sangnier's measured reply –that defensive war was admissible to defend the oppressed in the absence of a world organisation capable of

¹²⁵ *He Congrès*, p. 251.

Giles, 'The Third International Peace Congress', p. 187.

128 ibid.

¹²⁴ Michel Bilis, Socialistes et pacifistes: l'intenable dilemme des socialistes français, 1919-1939 (Paris, 1979), p. 16.

¹²⁶ John P. Fletcher, Carl Heath, Bertram Pickard, 'Pacifists in Paris', *Friends Fellowship Papers*, 1 (1923), p. 8.

enforcing justice- as flaccid for all wars were sold as defensive 'before the support of the peoples can be obtained.'129

The issue surfaced with particular clarity at the Bierville Congress of 1926, resulting in very real disagreements rumbling under the surface of the apparently peaceable, even saccharine, encounter. If the Congress was a forum for the elaboration of a theology of peace, then the most theologically contentious issue was that of conscientious objection which had to be faced head on. On Friday 13 August, during a session dedicated to 'National Youths and the Problem of Peace,' Nikolaus Ehlen spoke on pacifism amongst German youth. 130 In his catechesis, Ehlen, himself a former soldier, drew a key distinction between national service, imposed without the consent of sacred conscience, and the heroism of the freely engaged volunteer. Youth, he said, rebelled against general military service and its violation of the divine spark of human conscience.¹³¹ It was reminiscent of Tolstoy who had written that 'government is violence; Christianity is meekness, non-resistance, love.' Such a return to Gospel simplicity clearly influenced Ehlen's pacifism: "He who lives by the sword, perishes by the sword."...The way to triumph is through freely accepted suffering, like we saw at Golgotha.'133

In a radical redefinition of heroism, the radical love of one's enemies made the victim the moral victor. 134 The discussion became heated the following week during the deliberations of the Moral Commission of the Congress that considered two competing sets of motions for ultimate adoption by the Congress as a whole. Such was the controversy that the Commission had to hold two extra afternoon sessions on Friday 20 and Saturday 21 in order to reach a compromise. Ehlen's motion was philosophical but brief, denouncing obligatory military service as morally illegitimate. 135 It had, broadly speaking, the support of young German delegates though old style German pacifists in the FDK and the Dominican theologian Stratmann opposed Ehlen. The French were generally hostile too. The main

129 ibid., p. 189.

¹³⁰ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 71

¹³² Peter Brock, Pacifism to 1914: an overview (Toronto, 1994), p. 46.

¹³³ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 72.

¹³⁴ ibid.

¹³⁵ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 149-50.

spokesmen for the median position were Maurice Lacroix, stalwart of the Jeune-République, Buisson, representative of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme and Canon le Picard. They accepted that conscientious objection existed, based on eminently respectable convictions, which, for liberalism's sake, should be respected on condition that its sincerity was verifiable. Going further, they felt that in the case of an illegitimate war, citizens had both the right and the duty to refuse to bear arms. However, they would not endorse Ehlen's fundamentalist position: 'We are the Body of Christ. His life is in us, our lives must reproduce His.' For many 'old style' pacifists, like Ruyssen and Prudhommeaux, objection represented an unacceptable individualisation of pacifism. It was also very divisive and Buisson himself had been central to brokering compromise on it at the Universal Peace Congress in Paris in 1925, as if in preparation for Bierville! The mutual incomprehension was worsened by the linguistic factor, with the objectors being mostly German-speaking or English-speaking and their opponents French. Nearly all of the Anglophone dissenters were Quakers.

This was also a generational divergence of opinion where the old saw the young as 'adventurous anarchists' and the latter rejected the 'timid old men making too many concessions to the old world.' This would tend to confirm what Sirinelli sees as an intensified generational 'pacifist trend' in the 1920s. In the animated sub-commission debate, a majority was sympathetic to Ehlen with a sizeable minority fiercely opposed. A young priest writing privately to Jean Guiraud, correspondent of *La Croix*, tells of how the compromise Lacroix motion was studied in sub-commission for no less than eight hours. Louis Rolland and Emile Giraud, old Sangnier sympathisers teaching at the Law Faculties of Paris and Rennes respectively, delivered a juridical defence of the older conception of the relationship between

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¹³⁷ Norman Ingram, 'Pacifisme ancien style,' *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps*, 30, (1993), p. 4.

¹³⁸ Ingram, The polities of dissent, p. 50

¹³⁸ Ingram, The politics of dissent, p. 59.
 ¹³⁹ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 150.

¹⁴¹ AN, Jean Guiraud Papers, 362 AP 56, Dossier 4. Corresp. Fr. Gabriel Lambert-Guiraud, 6.9.1926.

¹³⁶ Georges Blanchot Papers. Private collection. 'Réunion du 14 août 1926 à Bierville entre chrétiens français et allemands. Étude sur le devoir chrétien en temps de guerre', Memorandum on subcommission of Commission moral at Bierville Congress.

 ¹⁴⁰ Jean-François Sirinelli, 'La France de l'entre-deux-guerres: un "trend" pacifiste?' in Maurice Vaisse (ed.), Le pacifisme en Europe des années 1920 aux années 1950: Actes du colloque tenu à Reims du 3 au 5 décembre 1992 par le Centre ARPEGE (Brussels, 1993), p. 46.

citizenship and the soldier. 142 Lowry, from the French section of the Society of Friends, spoke in agreement with Ehlen. The continuing deadlock is described in great detail in a private memorandum of the event kept by Georges Blanchot. An extremely important young Silloniste before 1914, Blanchot, a mutilé de guerre, was increasingly estranged from the movement in the 1920s as he felt its pacifism was not integral enough. 143 Ironically, though, his record shows that the most forensic critic of Ehlen's absolutism on the sub-commission was Blanchot's own spiritual director in his new life of lay apostolate in working-class Paris, the abbé Bach, of the Sillon catholique, the conservative, clerically-led successor organization to Sangnier's great movement.

Blanchot records that on 14 August, Bach challenged Ehlen on his refusal to bear arms. As this afforded no means of defence to the weak, Bach wondered if such a stance was quite simply 'killing by allowing killing?' Refusing to budge from his absolutist position, Ehlen retorted that in that case 'you would always make war because the press, government and opinion would always present the war they are planning as good and legitimate.'144 Bach wondered what if, after attempts at League arbitration, the League of Nations prescribed war in defence of an oppressed state? Could a Christian serve in such an international army created by the SDN? Bach was raising the issue of the 'competent authority' in the declaration of war, one of the 'jus ad bellum' conditions of the just war tradition. He was also teasing out where Ehlen stood on the liberal pacificists' view that measures which from a state are warlike are 'transmuted into acceptable "police measures" when authorised by an international organization.'145 Invoking the exemptionist tradition of pacifism (sometimes viewed by cynics as self-exculpatory), Ehlen stated that he could serve in a League police force (de facto army) but was not bound to, to which another German added, 'a Christian is not a gendarme.' As for extreme pacifists generally, League of Nations sanction did not legitimise killing. 147

¹⁴³ Ernest Robidet, 'Georges Blanchot,' L'Âme commune, March 1964, p. 18.

¹⁴² Significantly, Giraud was also an assistant to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations at Geneva and played host to Sangnier there in 1928; La paix des peuples par la Société des Nations. VIIIème Congrès démocratique international pour la paix, Genève-Bierville, 12-23 septembre 1928, (Paris, La Démocratie, 1928), pp. 40-1.

¹⁴⁴ Georges Blanchot Papers. Private collection. Memo., 'Réunion du 14 août 1926 à Bierville.' ¹⁴⁵ Ceadel, Thinking about peace and war, p. 142.

¹⁴⁶ Georges Blanchot Papers. Private collection. Memo., 'Réunion du 14 août 1926 à Bierville.' ¹⁴⁷ Ceadel, Thinking about peace and war, p. 143.

In the end, the sub-commission could not avoid a vote. The moderate Lacroix motion was adopted almost unanimously, that of Ehlen passed narrowly. motions were put up for a poll and the main arguments were recapitulated. In truth, though, there was more than a shade of contradiction between the two positions. To this end, the plenary session of the whole Congress, which met on Sunday 22, charged with ratification of the motions formulated at the Moral Commission, choose, with Sangnier's connivance, to overlook the Ehlen motion and to approve the Lacroix motion as the collective and consensual judgement of the Congress. The Friends' Peace Committee in London duly noted this declaration of the outer limits of the theology of peace. In Lacroix's consensual motion, the Congress 'denied the right of the State ... to violate the dignity of individual conscience,' reaffirming 'the right and the duty' of every citizen of a rogue state to 'refuse to bear arms.' In other states, 'until obligatory military service is generally abolished, it is desirable that States where it exists should arrange for civil service for conscientious objectors which might well exceed military service in duration, in hardship and in dangers.' However, at the plenary session, an addendum proposed by Ferdinand Buisson was carried. Insisting that objectors would have to prove their bona fides by means of rigorous civil national service, its final lines hardened the tone appreciably by 'declaring itself against recognition of the absolute right of all citizens individually to escape military service on their mere ipse dixit, without anything in substitution, while their fellow-countrymen have to bear the whole burden.'148

As well as pitting various permutations of nationalities and age groups against one another, there were also, as we have seen, intra-Catholic tensions. The young priest Lambert took the conservative Guiraud to task for attacking the Lacroix motion whose drafters included no less than three priests, including himself: 'Refusing service in the case of an unjust war, why that's the very teaching of the Church itself.' Guiraud was disturbed by the alleged crypto-Protestantism and rationalism of the discussions and he was not alone in his doubts. Writing in *Le Correspondant*, Mgr. Julien, bishop of Arras and star of the Congress, distanced himself from

¹¹⁴⁸ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 206; LSF, MSS Vol.S.107 Peace Committee Minutes, 1921-25, entry 328 fos.99-101.

anything that smacked of integral pacifism. He feared conscientious objection was the Trojan horse of subjectivist individualism, declaring: 'I see Tolstoy coming...careful now! Shall individualism compromise the very fabric of States? ...Reasons of conscience can be covers for bad faith and pure cowardice.' Tolstoy, as a Christian anarchist, had indeed identified 'universal military service is the keystone of the arch holding up the edifice' whose removal would bring the state tumbling down. 151

In light of Bierville, the socialist, feminist and radical antimilitarist Fanny Clar had written an Open Letter in the centre-left *Ère nouvelle* accusing Julien and the Church of relativizing murder by not supporting conscientious objection. Their very own catechisms, shamefully subordinated the commandment 'thou shalt not kill' to nationalism. Julien responded directly to her charges, arguing that she was an extremist individualist who wanted to turn the natural social order upside down: 'God, having created it as it is, cannot then destroy it.' The issue was problematic for former combatants too. Stéphen Valot had reported that an international meeting of veterans and *mutilés* at the château de Bierville on 20 August had 'deliberately steered away from this question as it was insufficiently studied.' Instead, they put their moral authority to more generalised effect: 'saluting the memory of their comrades who had fallen on the field of battle...affirming their horror of war and their desire for universal peace [and] giving to pacifist groups the moral surety of their sufferings and injuries.'

Such a statement conveys the *anciens combattants*' sense that they had both a right and a duty to make themselves heard on the peace issue. In this regard, as in the veterans' movement generally, the moral authority of René Cassin was crucial.

¹⁵⁰ Le Correspondent, 25.9.1926, cited in Documentation catholique, 16, 361, (25.12.1926), col. 1244-46

¹⁵¹ Peter Brock, *The roots of war resistance: pacifism from the early Church to Tolstoy* (Toronto, 1981), p. 73.

 ¹⁵² Fanny Clar (b. 1888). Associated with advanced female pacifists such as Madeleine Vernet.
 Married to the sculptor Louis Dilligent. Prominent in SFIO federation of the Seine-et-Marne. See Jean Maitron (ed.), *Dictionnaire biographique du monde ouvrier français*, vol. 22, (Paris, 1984), p. 331;
 Christine Bard, *Les filles de Marianne. Histoire des féminismes*, *1914-1940* (Paris, 1995), p. 139.
 ¹⁵³ Fanny Clar, 'Pour la communion spirituelle: Lettre ouverte à Mgr. Julien, évêque d'Arras,' *L'Ère nouvelle*, 25.8.1926.

¹⁵⁴ Le Correspondant, 25.9.1926, cited in *Documentation catholique*, vol. 16, no. 361, (25.12.1926), col. 1241.

¹⁵⁵ L'Oeuvre, 21.8.1926

Himself a *mutilé*, he spoke at Bierville for the centre-left Union fédérale (UF) veterans' organization and its paper *La France mutilée*. Since 1924, Cassin and other veterans' leaders had been touring France in support of arbitration, security and disarmament through the League of Nations. From 1926, these men saw in the Locarno reconciliation project the best testament to the death and suffering of comrades. As Prost's classic study of French veterans shows, this 'sensible' and patriotic pacifism accounts for the virtual cult of Briand amongst veterans after Locarno, which intensified after his death in 1932. A little more slowly than the Union fédérale, the centre-right Union National des Combattants (UNC) came round to the general consensus, a choice influenced, according to Prost, by the residual influence of Marc Sangnier's eirenicism on Christian Democratic leaders of the UNC like Ernest Pezet. 158

At the closing meeting of the Congress on Sunday 22 August, Ehlen accepted he had not won the day but, to applause, declared his pride in having held firm to his principles: 'Never, ever, will we go to war.' Initially bitter at the way consensus had been contrived, Ehlen quickly relented. Sangnier too was forced to address this tension amongst the Congressistes in his closing oration at that same meeting. The participants, he maintained, were no cowards, timidly avoiding agonising problems: 'Some, with a more daring step...threw themselves, with one leap, into the future, while other, wiser souls, taking more account of present realities, sought above all to identify the first steps to be taken.' At Würzburg in 1927, Sangnier was again on the side of moderation. However, the Moral Commission passed a hard-line motion, proposed by Vitus Heller, with seventy for, thirty-seven against with twenty abstentions. Was Sangnier's thinking muddled? If so, he was not alone. The ambiguity issues from a tension between his Republican patriotism as a citizen-soldier equal with all Frenchmen before the 'impôt du sang,' and the call of the individual conscience, particularly on an issue that related to the construction of peace on earth.

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¹⁵⁶ Antoine Prost, Les anciens combattants, 1914-1939 (Paris, 1977), p. 119.

¹⁵⁷ ibid.

Antoine Prost, 'The impact of war on French and German political cultures,' *Historical Journal*, 37, 1, (1994), p. 210.

¹⁵⁹ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 223.

¹⁶⁰ IMS, M.S. 38, File on Bierville (1926); translation of article – Nikolaus Ehlen, 'Die Wirklichkeit von Bierville,' *Heilige Feuer*, n.d. but 1926. Response to extremely negative evaluation of Max Barth. ¹⁶¹ *La Paix par la Jeunesse*, p. 211.

¹⁶² Würzburg 1927, p. 110.

Sangnier was an agnostic on conscientious objection. He respected the convictions of the proponents of the principle, even publicly defended them, but was not one himself. Jean Sangnier confirms that his father 'considered that there were circumstances where one had to fight against sickening, criminal violence.'163 The objectors' 'only crime is to be ahead of a revolution.' His ambivalent position on this crucial issue came under public scrutiny at the time of the infamous 'Chautemps circular' in 1933. This was a private memo to government prepared by Camille Chautemps, the Minister of the Interior, about non-Communist conscientious objection. 165 As Ingram demonstrates though, the label of 'Chautemps circular' is something of a misnomer as the War Minister, Édouard Daladier, and the General Staff itself, were even more alarmed at the apparent contagion. 166 The circular issued in Chautemps' name singled out for particular attention certain religious movements, not least the reformed churches, teachers and posts and telegraph workers for observation. Prefects' responses to the circular cited Sangnier's unsuccessful pleading in May 1932 for a young Protestant instituteur and objector Camille Rambaud.¹⁶⁷ Farrugia is not exaggerating when he says that religious leaders like Marc Sangnier and the Protestant Henri Roser were precisely the men the government feared most. 168 Leaked to the conservative Echo de Paris, the document aroused great controversy, shocking the establishment with the alleged infiltration of conscientious objection outside the normal Communist constituency.

The naming of Sangnier on this list, along with the Catholic extremist abbé Demulier, showed an abject official inability to distinguish between the mainstream peace movement and the subset of conscientious objectors tolerated within it.¹⁶⁹ The publication of his name coincided with, and magnified media coverage of, Sangnier's appearance before the Military Tribunal at Orléans as a character witness for Armand

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¹⁶³ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002.

¹⁶⁴ Hoog (ed.), Le Congrès de Fribourg-Constance, 5-9 août 1931, p. 156.

¹⁶⁵ AN, F7 13352, 'Objection de conscience,' Minister of the Interior-President of the Council, 9.1.1933.

Norman Ingram, 'The *Circulaire Chautemps*, 1933: The Third Republic discovers conscientious objection,' *French Historical Studies*, 17, 2 (1991), p. 391.

¹⁶⁷ AN, F7 13352, 'Objection de conscience,'. 'Liste des objecteurs de conscience et des personnes ayant défendu l'objection, 15.4.1933.'

¹⁶⁸ Farrugia, 'French religious opposition', p. 285.

¹⁶⁹ Norman Ingram, 'The Circulaire Chautemps, 1933,' p. 396.

Rolland, a Catholic turned anarchist and conscientious objector who declared he did not want to die for the industrialists and that '[his] body is [his] own.' At the instigation of the local Jeune-République, Sangnier was willing to vouch for the twenty-seven year old Rolland's sincerity despite not knowing him. For his own part, he was emphatic: 'I am not a conscientious objector and I have proven it.' Arguing that the law should allow for moral as well as physical inaptitude, Sangnier cited the example of other famous objectors such as Einstein and the curé d'Ars. In the end, Rolland's steadfast refusal to back down earned him a year in gaol. The leak of the circular opened up a new front in the conservative assault on the dangerously 'antipatriotic views 'of 'some ultra democratic and internationalist Catholics,' like Sangnier and Francisque Gay's paper *L'Aube*. The rue de Rome gloated how 'the Sillon is working for conscientious objection...Behold religious confusion, behold the crime against the fatherland that we won't allow be camouflaged.'

The contrast with French Protestant experience deserves evaluation. Henri Roser was a central figure in the French branch of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, whose English branch was so associated with the London Congress. ¹⁷⁴ However, while the trainee cleric shocked the Missionary Society for whom he worked in 1922-3 by returning his military papers and while he met a series of institutional obstacles, French Protestantism still allowed him relative independence in his writings on conscientious objection in his paper, *Cahiers de la Réconciliation*. Such freedom would have been unthinkable for Sangnier in relation to the bishops. ¹⁷⁵ Roser, as a radical, clashed with Ruyssen at the Boulogne-sur-Mer congress of the APD in 1930 on the issue. ¹⁷⁶ Sangnier, as a Catholic, was obliged by denominational constraints to 'avoid open praise of the objectors as this would imply criticism of the Catholic hierarchy which opposed them.'

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¹⁷⁰ La France du Centre, 11.5.1933.

¹⁷¹ ibid.

¹⁷² Eugène Delahaye, 'Ca devait arriver,' *La Province*, 3.5.1933.

¹⁷³ L'Action française, 12.5.1933.

¹⁷⁴ Jill Wallis, Valiant for Peace, pp. 36-37.

¹⁷⁵ Farrugia, 'French religious opposition', p. 285.

¹⁷⁶ Ingram, 'Pacifisme ancien style', p. 4.

¹⁷⁷ Farrugia, 'French religious opposition', p. 297.

Sangnier operated in the context of Catholic thought on the issue. December 1932, the distinguished Dominican theologian J.V. Ducatillon delivered a series of controversial lectures on 'true patriotism' to the Institut Pie XI, the young study circle attached to Francisque Gay's Volontaires du Pape. By contrasting the 'neo-pagan' nationalism of Maurras with healthy, Christian patriotism, Ducatillon provoked the Action Française's fury. Indeed, the lectures were a spur to Daladier and Chautemps' national investigation. Having begun the lecture series with pronouncements tending towards an endorsement of objection on Catholic grounds, the Dominican ended the lecture series not with a clarion call against conscription but, under subtle pressure from the General Staff, with the rather tame assertion that the world was not quite ready for such a radical conversion. Now firmly opposed to conscientious objection, he marshalled Saint Paul and Aquinas to demonstrate the Catholic duty of obedience to civil rulers, save in the most extreme cases.¹⁷⁹ Declaring himself for collective security and simultaneous disarmament, Ducatillon warned against precipitous abolition of military service: 'For a country to abandon it, pure and simple, could be dangerous, a morally unacceptable act of imprudence...we de not have the right to inconsiderately expose ourselves to death. 180

Writing in 1941, A. C. F. Beales, the English Catholic apologist, observed a growing tendency for Catholics to object to 'modern war' as disproportionate in terms of the conventional Thomistic 'canons of justification'.' The German Dominican Franciscus Stratmann, author of *The Church and War* (1929) and homilist for the Peace Congress delegates at Freiburg Cathedral in August 1923, was generally sympathetic to the Catholic pacifist position. For an English Quaker like Gertrude Giles, he was one of the rare Catholic speakers who spoke like a true pacifist. As Bierville showed, though, he too drew the line at conscientious objection. A Congress of Catholic Theologians, drawn from France, Germany and Switzerland, meeting at Freiburg in 1931, touched on these questions. It resolved that the League limited justifications for war, except that of defence, and supported the automatic test of

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¹⁷⁸ Ingram, 'The Circulaire Chautemps, 1933,' p. 394.

¹⁷⁹ J.-V. Ducatillon, Le vrai et le faux patriotisme (Paris, 1933), pp. 236, 247.

¹⁸⁰ Ducatillon, Le vrai et le faux patriotisme, p. 249.

¹⁸¹ A.C.F.Beales, *The Catholic Church and international order* (London, 1941), pp. 106, 112.

¹⁸² Giles, 'The Third International Peace Congress,' p. 185

aggression contained in the Geneva protocol of 1924.¹⁸³ Many viewed the League of Nations as 'the third circle of human society,' above the individual and the state that St. Augustine had written of.¹⁸⁴ Sangnier's Italian friend, Don Sturzo, reflecting on Benedict XV's declaration against generalized military service, went so far as to state that, given the existence of the League of Nations, 'every future war, since it is evidently not necessary (sic), must always be an unjust war.'¹⁸⁵ Therefore, Catholics were morally bound to resist such a war. However, Catholics generally did obeisance to civil authority since it came from God. As a contemporary of Beales' put it: 'The presumption that a Catholic cannot plead conscientious objection is as strong as that in favour of a Quaker who does so.'¹⁸⁶

Specifically French factors were also at work in the antipathy to objectors. French political culture, while republican, was not a liberal individualist one, exalting bonds of national community and the national myth of *la nation armée*. Geography and recent history meant France had more reasons than most to feel insecure. However, the signature of the Locarno accords in 1925 seemed briefly at least to lighten France's sense of chronic insecurity that had bedevilled attempts at diplomatic rapprochement since 1919. In October 1925, the Foreign Ministers of France and Germany Aristide Briand and Gustav Stresemann agreed the Rhineland Pact whereby Germany, France and Belgium pledged themselves to uphold their existing frontiers and to accept the demilitarised status of the Rhineland, with Britain and Italy as guarantors. They promised not to resort to force to change the territorial settlement in Western Europe. In the east, Stresemann agreed to go to international arbitration about borders with the Poles and the Czechs. Stresemann, though unhappy with German loss of territory, was a pragmatic nationalist, willing to use diplomacy to soften the edges of the Treaty of Versailles.

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¹⁸⁴ ibid., p. 109.

¹⁸³ Beales, The Catholic Church, p. 111.

¹⁸⁵ ILS, Serie BW, Fasc. 436-7, 'Movimento pacifisto,' Memo. of Luigi Sturzo, 'War from the Catholic Viewpoint,' n.d. but post-1928.

¹⁸⁶ Reginald Dingle cited in Beales, *The Catholic Church*, p. 112.

¹⁸⁷ Ceadel, *Thinking about peace and war*, p. 7.

¹⁸⁸ Ruth Henig, Versailles and after, 1919-1933 (London, 1984), p. 40.

(vii) 'Une Victoire': Locarno, 1925

Carlton Hayes rightly observed that, politically, Locarno was 'dictated to the French by fear, not love.' Nevertheless, the psychological impact of the apparent détente was so great as to become a significant political force in its own right as the Peace Congresses show. As well as being a diplomatic event, Locarno was a cultural one, a great leap forward in the process of cultural demobilization. The civility and good grace of the participants, 'the atmosphere of goodwill which has not ceased to reign at Locarno' struck many contemporary observers, including Sangnier. Through their 'sacramental' meal together at Thoiry, Briand and Stresemann engaged in that humanization of the enemy Sangnier had been preaching since 1921. The two foreign ministers used oratory to dismantle the 'war culture' and invest themes like 'sacrifice' with new pacific meaning, not least for veterans.

'We were not mistaken. We have the right to rejoice.' Thus cried a vindicated Sangnier in *Jeune République* dubbing the Locarno accords 'Une Victoire.' Long dismissed as 'cranks, accused of betraying the very interests of our country,' the stone that the builders rejected had become the corner stone, they trumpeted. Sangnier could not resist recalling his plea to Poincaré in the Chamber in November 1923 and the abject failure of the Prime Minister's 'haranguing brusqueness.' Nor did he forget 'the indignant scandal' of his more conservative Christian Democratic colleagues in the Parti Démocrate Populaire at his support for the more constructive Briand policy. These barbs aside, the moment was one for magnanimity, joy but not complacency. The prophetic 'cultural demobilization' of the Congresses could take a bow. To Sangnier's mind, though, Locarno merely heightened the need for the disarmament of hatred. The Peace Congresses should redouble their efforts, encouraging the faltering steps towards the new world order while also hectoring recidivists of the old school: 'Therefore if we wish international anarchy to end and for there to be, at last, law-bound relations between states, public

¹⁸⁹ Carlton J.H. Hayes, France: a nation of patriots (1930; New York, 1974), p. 324.

¹⁹⁰ Jeune République, 23.10.1925

¹⁹¹ John Horne, 'Introduction – Démobilisations culturelles,' 14-18 aujourd'hui, 5, p. 50.

¹⁹² ibid, p. 48.

¹⁹³ ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Jeune République, 23.10.1925.

¹⁹⁵ ibid.

opinion must be able to recognise and even demand such previously unknown legality.' The theology of peace, with its political elements and domestic and international manifestation, was well under elaboration by 1926. Locarno, while a multilateral accord strictly out of Geneva's ambit, gave this theology of cultural demobilization a new impetus. Without those agreements, the liturgical expression of that theology at the Bierville Congress would have been unthinkable. In all this, the Congresses strove to implement the millenarian liberal internationalist creed summed up by Louis Barthou when he addressed delegates at the Quai d'Orsay on 14 August 1926: 'The League of Nations will be the law of tomorrow.'

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¹⁹⁷ Le Matin, 15.8.1926.

CHAPTER SIX

Bierville and the Liturgy of Peace, 1926.

'Bierville 1926. I am ashamed to use the cliché: an unforgettable memory. But nothing else says it as well. The long, white lines of tents, where the pilgrims of peace are staying, drawn form all over the world and each with their own tongue...And like a loud-hailer commanding the murmur of a human crowd, sounded the clear, lively vibrant eloquence of Marc Sangnier.' Joseph Folliet's memory confirms Sangnier's iconic status amongst a whole generation of young eirenical Catholics. However, from 1926, the word Bierville came to rival the leader as an object of veneration. For those youths who had experienced Bierville in August 1926, the name became more than a geographical location, more even than a specific and chrononologically apt Peace Congress, it conjured a sense of pacifist hope and faith that a new moral disposition towards peace on the part of young people of formerly opposed nations really could save the world. To put it in the terms of this study, Bierville was the living manifestation, intellectually and liturgically, of cultural demobilization. From the Third Congress at Freiburg in 1923, Marc Sangnier had articulated in a special way his faith in the Messianic role of the young generation in the establishment of peace on earth. It was a highly idealistic and idealised view of youth but one that he and the Democratic International cultivated assiduously. At the Luxembourg Congress of 1925, the idea of a congress dedicated entirely to youth and its preoccupations was conceived. Georges Hoog said that its programme could be summarised in five words: La Paix par la Jeunnesse (Peace through Youth).²

There was of course a distinct chronological relationship between the timing of the Congress and the Locarno Treaty of October 1925. The 'Bierville moment' of August 1926 would have been unthinkable without Franco-German détente. Congress organisers told journalists visiting the Peace Camp in August that 'they wanted to give

² La Paix par la Jeunesse. Le Mois international de Bierville (août 1926).VIè Congrès démocratique

international pour la Paix, 17-22 août 1926 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1926), p. 1.

¹ Florence Denoix de Saint-Marc, Joseph Folliet et les Compagnons de Saint François de 1926 à 1958, Mémoire de maîtrise, Université de Lyon 2, 1986, p. 15. On Folliet at Bierville 1926, see Antoine Delery, Joseph Folliet (Paris, 2003), pp. 61-6.

material form to and bring to fruition the Locarno accords.' Hailing Briand-Stresemann diplomacy in October 1925, *Jeune-République* rejoiced at the 'first fruits' of a policy of reconciliation and collaboration which made the 'psychological preparation of peace' more, not less, urgent. Coming a month before Germany's historic entry to the League of Nations in September 1926, the Congress had a big contemporary impact on account of the way it echoed Briand and Stresemann's attempts to dismantle the language and cultural categories of the war culture, making war itself rather than the 'enemy,' the real barbarism. This was a semantic and political process which reached its apogee in the speech of Briand a few short weeks later at Geneva, welcoming Germany back into the family of nations.⁴ Crucially, Bierville gave such sentiments an important ceremonial gloss.

(i) Background to the Bierville Congress

Bierville, a country estate in the Juisne valley of the Beauce region, seemed the perfect setting for such a liturgy. Its location in the département of Seine-et-Oise, and its rail link to relatively nearby Paris, are seen in the accompanying maps. (See Appendix IV.) Sangnier purchased the estate in 1922, taking up residence at the château that Easter. This was turned into a major event for the Jeune-République milieu as Sangnier's good friend the local bishop, Mgr. Charles Gibier of Versailles, blessed the estate. The diocesan newsletter enthused about this 'superb Family House which shall welcome all the Parisian Catholic clientele that Marc Sangnier surrounds himself with.' In 1923, a guesthouse was completed. The commune of Boissy-la-Rivière that surrounded Bierville was home to 200 souls. Its mayor was none other than Marc Sangnier, elected in 1925, a seemingly meagre consolation for the loss of his parliamentary seat in 1924. On 8 November 1925, at a meeting of the Ligue de la Jeune République in Paris, Sangnier announced that the next Congress would take place at Bierville from 16 to 22 August 1926, with delegates staying at the Camp de Bierville for the entire month.' 6

³ Le Journal, 15.8.1926.

⁴ John Horne, 'Locarno et la politique de démobilisation culturelle: 1925-30,' 'Démobilisations culturelles après la Grande Guerre,' *14-18 aujourd'hui*, 5, p. 77.

⁵ La semaine religieuse de la ville et du diocèse de Versailles, 17/17, 23.4.1922, p. 275.

⁶ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'VIe Congrès démocratique international pour la paix août 1926 & VIIe Congrès Würzburg septembre 1927' Prefect of Département of Seine-et-Oise – Minister of the Interior, 5.1.1926.

It was both as mayor and activist then that Sangnier approached the Sous-Préfet at the nearby town of Ētampes on 30 December 1925 for official approval and support. He did so citing the presence on the organizing committee of respectable liberal pacifists such as Ruyssen and Prudhommeaux of the APD.⁷ (Prudhommeaux spent the following August at Bierville, accompanied by his wife.⁸) By March 1926, the Prefect reported to the Minister that preparations were taking shape with, irony of ironies, the War Ministry, under Paul Painlevé, providing tented quarters for delegates at Bierville and mobile, military kitchens.⁹ Other delegates, meanwhile, would be provided with accommodation in various establishments in Étampes and the surrounding area. This was an enterprise with backing from the highest levels as seen in the Prefect's report to Camillle Chautemps, the Radical Socialist Minister of the Interior:

The programme shall be inspired by the Locarno accords and by recent utterances of the M. le Président du Conseil [Prime Minister Briand]...In accordance with your instructions, I have given the best possible welcome to M. Marc SANGNIER who, moreover, presents himself under your auspices and under those of MM. Aristide Briand, Édouard Herriot and Paul Painlevé.¹⁰

As if consciously preparing public opinion for this daring event, he toured Brittany from 24 to 30 November 1925 and the East and South-East of France from 8 to 14 December. Significantly, he visited Amiens (11 January) and Rouen (27 February), both of which were to feature in the itinerary of the Pilgrimage of Peace, which was to make up the first week of the Congress. Locally, at Etampes in March, Sangnier and Prudhommeaux spoke to reassure the populace. In welcoming Germany there was no attempt to sanitise the historical record. But neither would the Congress be the prisoner of history: 'He [Sangnier] insisted upon the growing antagonism that existed between the old nationalist, Pan-Germanist Germany and the young pacifist Germany that admits the primary responsability of their country in the

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⁷ ibid.

12 ibid.

⁸ Norman Ingram, The politics of dissent. Pacifism in France, 1919-1939 (Oxford, 1991), p. 62.

⁹ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Prefect of Département of Seine-et-Oise – Minister of the Interior, 3.3.1926.

¹⁰ ibid.; Briand's Ministry, succeeding that of Painlevé, was in office from 28 November 1925-17 July 1926, being replaced by Poincaré's fourth cabinet (which governed until November 1928.)

¹¹ Olivier Prat, 'La Paix par la Jeunesse: le Congrès de Bierville, août 1926,' Institut Marc Sangnier, *Marc Sangnier, la guerre, la paix, 1914-1939* (Paris, 1999), p. 62.

last war.'13 Sangnier was maintaining his ambiguity on the 1919 settlement, suggesting, like many liberal pacifists, that admission of German culpability in 1914 did not preclude attachment to the demobilization project.

Soon, though, Sangnier had problems even nearer home. While not a locus of high politics, the commune of Boissy-la-Rivière and the reception of the prospective Congress at the local level has a microhistory all of its own. For all was not well in the sleepy village, where the divisions between the Locarno honeymooners and sceptical nationalists were replicated. On 1 May 1926, the Prefect of Seine-et-Oise wrote to the Minister of the Interior to inform him of the publication of a residents' protest in the local press against Sangnier's congress. 14 The petition was politically motivated, a direct challenge to Sangnier's idea of a new harmonious concert of European nations. The prefect, considering this as only the most recent attempt to scuttle the gathering, saw the protest as mischievous in motivation and was not slow to point the finger at the likely ringleader, Christian Frogé¹⁵, 'man of letters in Paris, domiciled at Boissy-la-Rivière and affilated to the Parti Fasciste of the newspaper Le Nouveau Siècle.'16

By this stage, Frogé and Sangnier were old adversaries. The municipal election campaign of 1925 had been fought with unaccustomed vitriol in Boissy-la-Rivière. During the campaign, Frogé, Sangnier's rival, had attacked him for 'his Boche friends.' He also tried to turn locals against this Parisian do-gooder, accusing him of trying to buy the election by inviting villagers (and prospective voters) to dine at the chateau.¹⁸ Though offered in the Sillon spirit of fraternity and inter-class solidarity, the meals could smack of crumbs from the table of the bourgeois urbanite turned country squire. There are echoes of a socially conscious guilt complex in

13 ibid.

18 ibid.

¹⁴ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Prefect of Département of Seine-et-Oise - Minister of the Interior, 25.3.1926.

¹⁵ Frogé was an ultra-patriotic veteran and writer on war experience. Active in the right-wing veterans' Legion set up by former Camelot du roi Georges Valois at Easter 1925, Frogé also wrote for Le Nouveau Siècle, set up by Valois in February 1925. Authoritarian in politics, it soon became a vicious rival of Charles Maurras' Action française on the extreme right, especially when Valois set up an independent political grouping, the Faisceau, in November 1925. See Eugen Joseph Weber, Action française. Royalism and reaction in twentieth-century France (Stanford, 1962), pp. 208-9.

16 AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Prefect of Département of Seine-et-Oise

⁻ Minister of the Interior, 1.5.1926.

¹⁷ Jeune République, 22.5.1925.

Sangnier's reply that 'I would be ashamed to live in a château if I did not succeed in making it the fraternal home of the entire populus of the vicinity.¹⁹ In his own bumptious way, Frogé had hit a raw nerve.

Despite mobilizing some local and Parisian mutilés and veterans against the scandalous gathering, Frogé's efforts at hindering the congress failed.²⁰ Failing to orchestrate an irresistable groundswell of protest on principled grounds of opposition to the demobilization project per se. Frogé suddenly shifted the goalposts and objected on practical grounds. The petition, signed by 32 residents, in a commune of only 60 households, is difficult to adjucicate on. Was it merely synthetic, the desperate last gasp of an outside agency? Alternatively, did the signatories reflect a significant, recalcitrant current in the community? In either case, exaggeration and scaremongering was the order of the day. Bierville was too small for an influx of 5,000 visitors.²¹ On the defensive, Frogé threw anything at all at the pacifist coven, including prices ('la vie chère') and the dangers of campers playing with matches: 'Indeed, the month of August is one of drought and fires are to be feared'!²² The petition envisaged a horrendous breakdown in order with police unable to prevent conflict between locals and foreigners leading to unspecified complications.'23 However, the initiative of the Mayor Sangnier had practical support from others in the community, as shown by a Bierville resident's anonymous contribution of five francs to the Jeune République's subscription fund for the Congress.²⁴ The authorities were not minded to heed the petitioners' exaggerations. Only 1,000 to 1,500, not 5,000, were expected. The groups, largely boy scouts under responsible leaders, would barely leave Sangnier's private property at all and have little or no interaction, for good or ill, with the local population.²⁵

Unlike previous Congresses, Sangnier's movement was now fashionable, attracting high-powered political patronage. Sangnier's series of meetings with

19 ibid.

²¹ ibid.

²⁰AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Prefect of Département of Seine-et-Oise - Minister of the Interior, 1.5.1926.

²² Le Réveil d'Étampes, 24.4.1926.

²⁴ Jeune République, 4.6.1926.

²⁵ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Prefect of Département of Seine-et-Oise - Minister of the Interior, 1.5.1926.

Aristide Briand and Paul Painlevé were portents of élite approval. He met them first in the final week of January, meetings which dissipated initial uncertainty on the part of the officials at the level of the département of the Seine-et-Oise of how to treat Sangnier's requests for help. At the Quai d'Orsay on 27 January, Briand assured Sangnier of 'his entire sympathy for the Congress' work', promising all the cooperation of the government in its preparation. 26 It was at a subsequent meeting on 1 June that Briand promised to receive the delegates formally at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²⁷ Painlevé, the War Minister, had already expressed his 'very particular interest' and his intention to attend, a promise unfulfilled in the event.²⁸ A letter of regret for his non-attendance at Bierville confirmed Painlevé's personal interest in the Painlevé personally encouraged Sangnier in his eminently patriotic enterprise because 'rapprochement between peoples' was one of the essential 'facets of National Defence.'29 Inversion of the language of national defence by one of the most senior politicians in the land shows what a psychological landmark Locarno had been and how Bierville fitted perfectly into the new political and cultural dispensation.

By early June, the police in Paris were reporting the printing and display of some 3,000 posters inviting the French population to extend a good welcome to the young pacifists, concluding with a long list of Ministers and parliamentarians.³⁰ Subverting once again the language of the war culture, it called for a 'union sacrée pour la paix.'³¹ The petition opened by highlighting Briand's endorsement, coattailing on his rhetorical 'new spirit' of the Locarno accords and an 'era of confidence and collaboration.'³² The Congress aimed to 'educate international public opinion in the spirit of peace.'³³ The impressive list of 117 national politicians reflected this co-operative spirit and the degree of political support the Bierville Congress attracted, on a scale unthinkable at the time of, say, the Vienna and Freiburg

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²⁶ Jeune République, 29.1.1926.

²⁷ ibid., 4.6.1926; *La Paix par la Jeunesse*, p. 117.

²⁸ *Jeune République*, 29.1.1926. (At the conclusion of the Congress, Painlevé was represented by his chef de cabinet Charles-Henry; *La Paix par la Jeunesse*, p. 228.)

 ²⁹ IMS, M.S. Correspondance Générale, Paul Painlevé. Corresp. Minister of War-Sangnier, 17.8.1926.
 ³⁰ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Report, Commissaire special de police, Paris, 1.6.1926.

³¹ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 7.

³² ibid., p. 6.

³³ ibid., p. 7.

Congresses.³⁴ As early as January 1926, Camille Chautemps, then Minister of the Interior in Briand's cabinet, as well as Mayor of Tours, lent his name to the Congress effort.³⁵ Forty-two per cent of the signatories were Radicals or Radical-Socialists while 15% were Socialist.³⁶ At a time when Catholic suspicion of the Cartel des Gauches was high, the clear left-wing bias of the Congress' political supporters no doubt discomfited many of Sangnier's co-religionists.

Predictably, Painlevé, the War Minister, in view of his practical help, headed the list, followed by two former Prime Ministers, Joseph Caillaux and Edouard Herriot. Sangnier personally lobbied Herriot who was then serving as Minister of Public Instruction. The old Radical politician replied warmly, giving his support.³⁷ 13 serving or past cabinet members, as well as 36 senators and 62 deputies signed.³⁸ One former minister signatory was Justin Godart, senator for the Rhône, who had given official War Ministry sanction for Sangnier's appointment as Army propagandist in 1918. Marius Moutet, deputy for the Rhône, Socialist and simultaneous victim of the camelots du roi in 1923, signed.³⁹ Poincaré, upon becoming Premier again in July 1926, inherited from Briand, his predecessor and continuing Foreign Minister, a commitment to help organize a party for the delegates to Marc Sangnier's Congress. This was in spite of the fact that Sangnier had been one of the most consistent critics of Poincaré's foreign policy three years earlier. Given that the tents and the official reception were comparatively small beer politically, Poincaré was prepared to tolerate or ignore these marks of official endorsement, although he forbade the Prefect of the Somme, in a personal order, to grant a last minute request from Congress organizers for extra military matériel as sleeping accommodation at Amiens.40

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³⁴ For full list of 117 signatories, see *La Paix par la Jeunesse*, pp. 280-82.

³⁶ Prat, 'La Paix par la Jeunesse,' p. 62.

³⁵ Prat, 'La Paix par la Jeunesse,' p. 61; *La Paix par la Jeunesse*, p.280; Centre international de documentation, *Dictionnaire biographique français contemporain* (Paris, 1950), p. 141-2

³⁷ *IMS (Paris)*, M.S. Correspondance Générale, Édouard Herriot Uncatalogued corresp., Herriot-Sangnier, March 1926.

³⁸ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 7.

³⁹ ibid., pp. 280-82.

⁴⁰ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Prefect of Département of the Somme – Minister of the Interior, 29.7.1926.

By now La Démocratie's offices in boulevard Raspail and the estate at Bierville were alive with activity, buoyant with optimism. By July 1926, an average postbag of 81 letters a day was arriving at La Maison de la Démocratie with registrations for the Congress, including some five hundred youths inscribed for the Pilgrimage of Peace. 41 Joseph Probst in western Germany had informed readers of the Jeune République in April that there had been 400 German subscriptions to the Congress, of which fifty were from priests, compared with the official German presence at Freiburg in 1923 of 554. 42 Meanwhile, a subscription had been opened in the Jeune République in November to help finance the Congress.⁴³ By the time the fifth list of contributors was published in early January 1926 some 10,659 francs had been raised.44 There was a preponderance of clergy amongst the contributors and a bias in contributions from areas associated with popular Catholicism and the Silloniste diaspora such as the Nord and Brittany. The dedications accompanying the gifts offer a unique insight into the hearts and minds of Sangnier's supporters and popular attachment to demobilization. They ranged form the sentimental ('So that Marc Sangnier will obtain the Nobel peace prize') to intensely personal statements of war rememberance, with an offering in memory of Henry du Roure, the iconic 'lost youth' of the Sillon's roll of honour. 45 A sense of paying a levy so as to avoid a repetition of the war pervaded the contributions, especially those from clergy and parents. War had to be prevented for the sake of the family and one's own children. Most touching of all though was the example of the Bouché family from Angers whose five boys raided their 'poor piggybank to help Marc consolidate Peace through Love.'46

(ii) Modalities and debates of the congress

German delegates dedicated the first week of August to an emotionally charged 'pilgrimage of peace' in the north and east of France. The second week saw the congressistes settle down at Bierville for a week of 'international education classes' given by French and foreign university lecturers amongst others. The third week was that of the Congress itself, while during the last week of August the

⁴¹ Prat, 'La Paix par la Jeunesse,' p. 62.

⁴² ibid., p. 62.

⁴³ ibid., p. 61.

⁴⁴ Jeune République, 8.1.1926.

⁴⁵ ibid.

⁴⁶ ibid.

remaining guests were in tourist mode, visiting gems of French civilisation in the Île de France such as Versailles, Rambouillet, Chartres and Paris.⁴⁷ On the obvious issue of language, polyglots were the exception rather than the norm. Therefore, the burden of translation fell to a handful of dedicated individuals - Aloys Zenner of Metz, Lorraine, and on the German side, Probst and Platz – all of whom were to repeat their role at the second Bierville meeting in 1928.⁴⁸

The hugely symbolic Pilgrimage of Peace belongs more properly to the thematic discussion of the 'liturgy of peace' where it is discussed in detail. At its end, on Saturday 7 August, the German delegates had only come as far as Paris. The pilgrims were about to become delegates as, after a morning spent seeing the sights of the City of Light, they got on board a fleet of thirty buses bringing them to Bierville. The previous evening, one thousand Germans had been honoured with a reception at the premises of La Démocratie, boulevard Raspail, its rooms 'brilliantly illuminated' and its gardens bursting at the seams.⁴⁹ Such was the crowd that Sangnier was obliged to speak twice alternating between the editorial office and the printing press works. Memories abounded of the December night in 1921 when the same premises had welcomed the modest delegations of 21 countries at the First Congress. Having arrived at Bierville, where they were welcomed by local mayors, including Sangnier, and the Sous-Préfet d'Etampes, Paul Moine, the delegates were thrice blessed with a welcome in front of the chateau, a welcome at the Théâtre de Verdure and, at last, a meal which was peppered with even more speeches in the form of toasts.⁵⁰

Therefore, Monday 9 August saw the beginning of the Cours d'Enseignement International. This first week was didactic in purpose, forming activists who would be informed and have been exposed to various countries' experience. The work of the Commissions and the International Education Classes preceded the Congress proper. This manner of organizing the International Month replicated the popular education efforts of the Instituts populaires du Sillon before 1910.51 The list of speakers at the preparatoty week is impressive, including many old friends of the Internationale

⁴⁷ La Paix par la Jeunesse, pp. 41, 60, 85.

⁴⁸ La paix des peuples par la Société des Nations. VIIIème Congrès démocratique international pour la paix, Genève-Bierville, 12-23 septembre 1928 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1928), p. 111.

⁴⁹ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 30.

⁵⁰ ibid., p. 31.

⁵¹ Prat, 'La Paix par la Jeunesse,' p. 65.

démocratique. From Germany, for instance, there was Hermann Platz, Professor of French literature at the University of Bonn and Nikolaus Ehlen. Professor Kingsley Martin of the London School of Economics spoke of democratic ideas and war in his country while another Briton, Harold F. Bing, spoke for the British Youth Federation. (See Chapter 4). The more prominent French contributors were the indefatigable Georges Hoog and André Toledano of the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation attached to the League. General Streicher spoke on Christian civilisation and peace. René Cassin, French delegate to the League of Nations and future Nobel laureate and human rights activist, spoke of behalf of *mutilés*. 52

The Sixth International Democratic Peace Congress itself took place at Bierville during the third week of that sunbathed month, with its formal opening ceremony on Tuesday 17 August. Officially, there were some 5,410 delegates representing thirty-three nations. Seven delegates had even come from the Far East. However, it was truly a German visitation, or invasion, depending on your point of view, with some 59% of the delegates coming from across the Rhine, almost double the proportion of French delegates at 31%. (The Prefect of Seine-et-Oise had to be reassured in early August that, during the Congress, the Germans would never leave the estate unaccompanied.⁵³) British and Americans made up about 5% of the delegates. Only an impressionistic sociological profile of participants is possible. Buisson, in *Le Quotidien*, remarked upon the presence of workers. Border officials had remarked upon the strong clerical and teacher presence on the German side. The presence of women as autonomous activists and political actors is also very noticeable. The most prominent, of course, were Germaine Malaterre-Sellier and the English Quakers, Edith Pye and Ruth Fry.

The Bierville Congress was a forum for the elaboration of a theology of peace, as well as the temple of the liturgy of peace, giving rise to discussion of contentious issues, such as conscientious objection. From Tuesday 17 to Friday 20

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52 L'Oeuvre, 12.8.1926.

⁵⁴ Prat, 'La Paix par la Jeunesse,' p. 63.

⁵³ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Prefect of Département of Seine-et-Oise -Minister of the Interior, 3.8.1926.

⁵⁵ Le Quotidien, 24.8.1926; Prat, 'La Paix par la Jeunesse,' p. 66.

⁵⁶ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissariat Spécial des Ponts du Rhin et Port de Strasbourg (Kehl)-Directeur de Police d'Alsace et de Lorraine (Strasbourg), 31.7.1926.

August, the afternoons were subdivided into a number of thematic commissions, following practice laid down over the five previous congresses. Stéphen Valot of *l'Oeuvre* wrote that 'the commissions did their work under trees and on the lawn as they would have in sealed halls in the middle of Paris with the same meticulous attention.'⁵⁷ Complementing these commissions was a series of *réunions générales* or plenary sessions, scheduled for these same days, up to and including Saturday 21. At these sessions, as many congressistes as possible developed the ideas that had been formulated in the more intimate setting of the Commissions.

The function of these three commissions was the elaboration of resolutions that would be discussed and approved at the final Assemblée générale on Sunday 22 August. The Moral Commission had potentially the most political of the themes, that of 'the orientations of international youth.' The Social Commission deliberated on the economic situation of youth. Only the Moral Commission really rose above banality, a forum of genuine debate, a place where conflict, national, generational and ideological, got an airing, most acutely on the issue of conscientious objection. The 'réunions généraux' varied in liveliness but as with the Commissions, they were often a long series of speeches delivered by representatives of several countries and movements on a common theme whose vagueness allowed a great deal of leeway to the individual speaker. Usually, a half-dozen speakers addressed the theme, with, in most cases, a French, British and German perspective as *de rigeur*. There were many exotic speakers too including Poles, Asian delegates (Indonesians and Azerbaijanis for example) and, of course, League of Nations speakers all the way from the promised land of Geneva.

The first full plenary session, held on the morning of Wednesday 18 August, addressed successively by the exiled Italian former prime minister, Nitti, and French antimilitarist General Verraux, was amongst the most controversial. Visiting Bierville briefly, where he was welcomed by Sangnier, Nitti introduced himself as a 'sincere friend of peace as I have suffered for it.' Nitti's self-deprecating yet deadly serious

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⁵⁷ L'Oeuvre, 21.8.1926.

⁵⁸ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p.146.

⁵⁹ ibid., pp. 152, 159.

⁶⁰ ibid., p. 164; Francesco Saverio Nitti (1868-1953.) Italian Radical deputy, participant in several of Giolitti's liberal cabinets including Minister of Agriculture (1911-14), Minister of the Treasury (1917-

liberal speech endeared him greatly to delegates at the Théâtre de Verdure. Outside the Congress, reaction to Nitti, both the man and his message, was ferocious and bitter. Nitti, during his year as Radical premier of Italy, from June 1919 to May 1920, had intensely annoyed the French, by backing Lloyd George on the lenient application of Versailles, choosing to believe in the good faith of the new Germany. He infuriated Prime Minister Millerand by joining the protests against French occupation of Frankfurt in April 1920.⁶¹ In anti-Fascist exile since 1924, Nitti, like Sangnier, evolved increasingly in the revisionist direction, later writing a trilogy of books attacking the 1919 settlement and denying Germany's unique responsibility for the war.⁶² A police report on the Congress' political implications noted anger in the press at the presence of this 'known Francophobe.'⁶³ His presence merely confirmed in Baudrillart's mind that Bierville was a Masonic holiday camp, interspersed with bad Catholics.⁶⁴ Fr. Lambert of Toulouse told Guiraud of his indignation at hearing some Catholics 'express aloud their regret that the government didn't have Nitti assassinated: "Fine Christian spirit!" "Yes," said X, "life is a battle".'⁶⁵

General Verraux followed Nitti to the podium. The former military man had been a wartime correspondent of the left-wing *L'Oeuvre* which had had a fraught relationship with the censor, been resolutely against 'bourrage de crâne' or patriotic 'eyewash' and critical of the Army and military 'justice,' all of which triply damned it in most Catholic eyes. A cultural demobilizer *de la première heure*, Verraux's outright rejection of legitimate national defence was as controversial as it was extreme. Verraux wanted to implement the Congress' motto – Peace through Youth in the nursery, thereby proposing the 'demoblization of childhood,' the logical extension of educational and school book reforms. In wartime, the cult of the heroic

⁶¹ Christopher Seton-Watson, *Italy from liberalism to fascism 1870-1925* (London, 1967), p. 558.

⁶² Coppa (ed.), Dictionary of modern Italian history, p. 295.

⁶⁴Alfred Baudrillart, *Les Carnets du Cardinal Alfred Baudrillart.13 avril 1925-25 décembre 1928*, ed. Paul Christophe (Paris, 2002), p. 444-45 (Entry for 19 August 1926).

⁶⁵ AN (Paris), Jean Guiraud Papers, 362 AP 56, Dossier 4. Corresp. Fr. Gabriel Lambert-Guiraud, 6.9.1926.

^{19.)} Head of government from June 1919, he signed the Treaty of Saint-Germain for which nationalist agitators never forgave him. Driven from office in May 1920, Nitti was an inveterate anti-Fascist and went into exile in 1924, first in Switzerland and later in France. See Frank J. Coppa (ed.), *Dictionary of modern Italian history* (London, 1985), p. 295.

⁶³ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissaire de Police, Paris – Directeur de la Sûreté Générale, Paris, 21.8.1926.

⁶⁶ L'Oeuvre was founded in 1915 and edited by Gustave Téry. An offshoot of it was the satirical *Canard enchaîné;* Claude Bellanger (ed.), *Histoire générale de la presse française*, 3 vols (Paris, 1969-72), vol.3, *De 1871 à 1940* (Paris, 1972), pp. 438-39.

child along with anti-German guerilla sentiments had been inculcated through games, books and schooling.⁶⁷ For Verraux, this odious manifestation of the war culture had to go: 'let us not teach children to play at war; let us not habituate them to handling arms and guns, even in the form of inoffensive toys.'⁶⁸ Moderates like Fr. Lambert were embarrassed, stressing how 'he was the only one of his type' at Bierville.⁶⁹ Outside Bierville, however, there were an increasing number of radicals who also viewed such games, in Audoin-Rouzeau's words, as 'vectors of propaganda,' in the most damning sense.⁷⁰ Singer writes of an increasing number of primary teachers who removed war toys from children and influenced manufacturers to replace toy soldiers with eirenical tram conductors and postmen!⁷¹ In *La Croix*, meanwhile, Guiraud was incredulous at what he saw as dangerous naïvété. Verraux was insulting the dead by refusing to teach children the glory, discipline and respect of hierarchy that came from things martial: 'To speak thus is to set in motion the destruction of the army and to give our country up to the attacks that could be directed against her liberty and even her existence.'⁷²

(iii) The liturgy of peace

However, the theology of peace elaborated at the Congresses needed liturgical expression in order to attain the hearts of its followers and not just their heads. Even more than the contentious discussions on conscientious objection, the liturgy of peace was the real originality of the Bierville gathering. True, such a liturgy would have been mere entertainment without its theological background but the liturgy and the liturgists are sufficiently interesting in their own right to merit separate and extended examination. If the 'Bierville moment' was synonymous with liturgy, then the Bierville estate was the new faith's temple. At Bierville, a veritable topography of peace had been engineered. The entire estate was re-ordered into a Camp de la Paix. Though overseen by Sangnier, the professional engineer, most of the re-organization of the estate fell to two particularly devout members of the Jeune-République faithful,

68 ibid. p. 166.

⁷⁰ Stépiane Audoin-Rouzeau, La guerre des enfants, 1914-1918 (Paris, 1993), p. 43.

⁷² Jean Guiraud, 'Pacifique et pacificiste,' La Croix, 27.8.1926.

⁶⁷ Leorard V. Smith, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, & Annette Becker, *France and the Great War, 1914-18* (Canbridge, 2003), p. 59.

⁶⁹ AN, Jean Guiraud Papers, 362 AP 56, Dossier 4. Corresp. Fr. Gabriel Lambert-Guiraud, 6.9.1926.

⁷¹ Barrett Singer, 'From partriots to pacifists: the French primary school teachers, 1880-1940,' *Journal of Conemporary History*, 12, 1977, p. 422.

Gaston Rufy and Georges Lanfry. Both were active in the Jeune-République in Rouen and also prominent in the Philippins, another apostolic youth movement. The physical alterations made at Bierville, particularly the completion of an open-air amphitheatre, the aptly named Théâtre de Verdure, were to serve a clear liturgical purpose. (See Appendix IV.)

If Bierville was the great pacifist shrine, it was appropriate that visitors should approach it in a spirit of pilgrimage. This is exactly what German delegates to the International Month did. Pilgrimage has long been as essential part of Christian ritual, an external manifestation of the inner desire for purification, change of heart and amendment of life. The journey undertaken by the 900 'peace pilgrims' in the first week of August 1926 reconnected with that tradition. As Don Sturzo wrote to Marc Sangnier of the itinerant pacifist column: 'In this historic period, in which international capitalism and nationalism are united in the work of paganism against all the ideals of pacification, the Pilgrims of Peace, coming from north and south, with all different flags, are the voice of humanity that suffers, hopes and prays.'73 Different German contingents, coming from Strasbourg, Maubeuge and Sarrebruck, fused at Metz in Lorraine to form a single, pacifist convoy.⁷⁴ At border crossings, the German pilgrims sheepishly held aloft flimsy banners saying 'POUR LA PAIX - Bierville 1926' to counter the 'hostile curiosity' of the locals. The rail journey was one of reflection and self-examination for many Germans, as Joseph Probst's feelings indicate: 'Our hearts are rent as we traverse the front. Verdun, the great killing field, with the poignant memory of its forts, Vaux and Douaumont, flashes across the screen of our memory the most awful hours of the war, whose anniversary, to the day, it was. '76

Having penetrated France's eastern frontiers, over 900 German pacifist pilgrims arrived at the city of Reims at about 11pm on 1 August 1926. Despite the late hour, the probable exhaustion of the travellers and the banality of a railway station, there was a *frisson* of nervous excitement in the air. In the preceding days, a

⁷⁴ La Paix par la jeunesse, p. 13.

⁷⁶ La Paix par la jeunesse, p. 13.

⁷³ Instituto Luigi Sturzo (Rome), [ILS], Fasc. 436, c.1, Corresp. Sturzo-Sangnier, 27.7.1926.

⁷⁵ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissaire de Police (Maubeuge)—Directeur de la Sûreté Générale, Ministry of the Interior, 2.8.1926.

steady stream of communication, including phone calls, between the police, the local Prefecture and the Ministry of the Interior in Paris, showed just how anxious the authorities were too: 'The planned demonstration…is contrary to public opinion which lumps all the pacifists in with the same German nationality.' By choosing Reims, the Pilgrims were tackling the war culture head on. Before they could proceed to the liturgy of peace at the verdant shrine at Bierville, the German pacifists had to fulfil one of the crucial criteria of Christian pilgrimage: penance. The Germans were allowing themselves to be confronted with one of their nation's most infamous human and cultural atrocities of 1914 – the bombardment of Reims and the destruction of its great cathedral, that 'reliquary of memory.' The penitential rite would include contrition, prayer, the beginnings of reconciliation and, of course, some attempt at restitution, without which, as any Catholic knew, the whole ritual was null and void.

Le Goff writes that 'in the memory of the French, Reims is a city, a cathedral and a ceremony...the anointing and coronation of the kings of France.'⁷⁹ Linked with the baptism of Clovis in 496AD, 'the founding myth of French national memory,' Reims also had the added significance for French Catholics of being where France's vocation as the Eldest Daughter of the Church began.⁸⁰ Therefore, 'when the cathedral was severely damaged by shelling, the injury to the monument was felt as a wound to memory itself.'⁸¹ On 19 September 1914, about three hundred shells fired by General von Heeringen's artillery hit the cathedral. A fire ensued and, in a cruel twist of fate, Germans held in the nave burned to death.⁸² Partially destroyed, subsequent fighting inflicted further damage though the cathedral was not entirely demolished. Nonetheless, the Shakespearean phrase was painfully apt: 'Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope/ The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence/ The life o' the building!' In a war fought on multiple fronts, not least cultural and

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⁷⁷ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissaire de Police (3ème arrondisement, Reims) – Sécrétaire Général du Ministère de l'Intérieur, 31.7.1926; also, written record of phone call, Sous-Préfet de Reims-Ministry of the Interior, 31.7.1926.

⁷⁸ Jacques Le Goff, 'Reims, City of Coronation' in Pierre Nora (ed.), *Realms of Memory*, vol.3, *Symbols* (English translation, New York, 1998), p. 208.

⁷⁹ ibid., p. 193.

⁸⁰ ibid., p. 198.

⁸¹ ibid., p. 195.

⁸² ibid., p. 246

psychological, the image of the German Vandals desecrating the seat of French royal religion was potent and much favoured by Allied propaganda.⁸³

Unsurprisingly, the task of reconstruction, completed in 1938, was a national project, patronised by potentates of Church and State. It was into this cathedral, this 'martyred monument', in the throes of renovation, that the German pilgrims stepped on the morning of 2 August.⁸⁴ Probst wrote how priests from the German delegation said Mass there while 'the past, majestic and sorrowful, weighs on this place.'85 German priests saying Mass in the wounded cathedral, under the benevolent watch of Joan of Arc, the French national saint and scourge of the foreign aggressor, was loaded with symbolism, as striking, in its own way, as the occasion, in 1962, when Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle heard Mass there together. As the German pilgrims of 1926 stood in front of the cathedral afterwards, Dr. Baur, a barrister from Constance and prominent German pilgrim, verbalised his compatriots' feelings about the building's 'lesson in peace.'86 The visit to the cathedral was a gesture that left a deep impression on the German participants, both in rejecting their own history of militarism while also damning war as the true barbarity. If the Baudrillart diaries are to be believed, however, it was not quite as edifying an occasion as the Congress account tells us. National sentiment beat Christian charity hands down, at least in one case: 'At Reims, the Germans dare show themselves. Two [German] priests wanted to say Mass in the cathedral; the archdeacon Mgr. Camu asked them to remember the authors of its destruction and turned his back on them.'87 Baudrillart's information flatly contradicts the Congress account on this point. Either the official account hid the unpalatable truth or German priests found a way around the archdeacon's refusal. Even if apocryphal, the anecdote shows how bitterly resentful of Germany some of the local clergy were.

The centrepiece of the visit, the reception at the Hôtel de Ville on 2 August, was a potential flashpoint which had to be carefully choreographed. Admittance to the reception, originally scheduled for a more public space and now relegated to the

⁸³ Horne & Kramer, German atrocities, pp. 217-20.

⁸⁴ Le Goff, 'Reims,' p. 248.

⁸⁵ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 13.

⁸⁶ ibid., p. 14.

⁸⁷ Baudrillart, Les Carnets 1925- 1928, pp. 444-5. (Entry for 19 August 1926).

relative seclusion and safety of the Hôtel de Ville's precincts, was strictly restricted to delegates and councillors. In this sensitive context, and at police prompting, Councillor Laurent, a deputy mayor, agreed to write an article published in the local press that would attenuate as far as possible local protest by stressing just how diverse and lovable the visitors were. Laurent's article duly appeared in the local newspaper, the Éclaireur de l'Est. L'Eclaireur was an old Radical paper with far and away the largest cirulation in the region. According to the police commissioner, Laurent's article defused the 'bellicose ardour' of the protesters.

On Monday, 2 August, at 3p.m., the provisional Hôtel de Ville (the original having been destroyed in the war!) played host to 1,200 Germans. Joseph Probst sets the scence memorably in the official account. Laurent and ten other municipal councillors hosted the reception. Marc Sangnier's speech 'exalted the blessings of rapprochement between the two great French and German peoples. Youth wants peace, he told the assembled pilgrims, and it would have it by fighting against a 'violent and hateful state of mind. Sangnier was an unequivocal proponent of the demobilization of minds! In the course of the event, the German pilgrims presented a gift of 10,000 francs to the municipality. It was both a gift and a donation towords postwar reconstruction and hence an act of restitution for past wrongs. In a conscious parallel with the sacrifice of the Mass, the offering was presented as the 'Sacrifice de la Réconciliation.'

The sum represented the proceeds of a collection begun at the Freiburg Congress of 1923. At Reims, Sangnier emotionally recalled the occasion three years earlier at Freiburg when young Germans had parted with rings, gold watches and medallions for the sake of the 'Work of Reconciliation.' Only twelve years after the atrocious events, Sangnier and his German sympathisers picked precisely this place,

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⁸⁹ Bellanger (ed.), *Histoire générale de la presse française*, vol.3, pp. 614-15.

⁹¹ La Paix par la jeunesse, p. 14.

⁸⁸AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissaire de Police (3ème arrondisement, Reims)-Ministry of the Interior, 31.7.1926.

⁹⁰ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissaire de Police (3ème arrondisement, Reims) - Ministry of the Interior, 2.8.1926.

⁹² AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissaire de Police du 3e arrondisement de Reims-Prefect of the Département of the Marne, 2.8.1926
⁹³ ibid.

⁹⁴ La Paix par la jeunesse, p. 14. See Chapter 4.

despite local grumbling and threats, to stage a ritual of atonenment. Moved by this destruction, the German delegate, Dr. Baur, a Catholic lawyer from Constance, said: 'The nameless destruction we have seen at Reims and its environs, and the enormous cemeteries, address imperiously to us an invitation to look for new ways.' Even the police observer present commented in his report: 'this ceremony did not want for a certain grandeur.'

It concluded with a symbolic tree planting. A single sapling was planted by eight German youths. Designated 'Arbre de la Paix' or 'Tree of Peace,' it was a variation on the French Republican symbolism of 'Trees of Liberty' or 'Arbres de la Libérté' dating from the Revolution. Cllr. Laurent recalled in his speech the trees 'planted by our fathers' in 1793 and 1848. 97 As the assembled crowd began to throw soil on the roots of the symbolic tree, Marc Sangnier prayed aloud that 'this Tree of Peace, planted by the pacific youth of Germany in the generous earth of France, may grow strong and shelter, in its shade, the Fraternity and Love of the reconciled peoples.'98 However, there was to be no sentimental ending. Baudrillart remarked sourly in his diary; 'the Germans planted, with some French socialists, a "Peace Tree." It was cut down the next day, like the fruit trees cut down by the Germans.'99 This refers to the destruction wrought by German troops in the invaded regions in 1914. By destroying sites of cultural and civic significance (cathedrals or town halls) as well as the natural environment (and sylvan patrimony in particular), the Germans had struck hard at the sense of local pride and civic attachment to village, town or area that had cyrstallized in France over the previous century. 100 Mutilation of trees, especially when fruit-bearing, attacked not alone the food supply and local microeconomic interests, but also suggested a perverse fury that wished to destroy the natural world and order. Baudrillart, influenced by these images from a decade before, was unimpressed at the Reims' local authority's persistence with such undeserved rehabilitation of the furious Teuton: 'the socialist Council has planted another and is having it guarded.'

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95 ibid., p. 18.

⁹⁶ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissaire de Police du 3e arrondisement de Reims-Prefect of the Département of the Marne, 2.8.1926.

⁹⁷ La Paix par la jeunesse, p. 16.

⁹⁸ ibid., p. 19.

⁹⁹ Baudrillart, Les Carnets 1925-1928, p. 445. (Entry for 19 August 1926).

It was not just nationalist activists who were unhappy at the visit, though. The editor at Le Nord-Est¹⁰¹, acknowledged the sincerity and impeccable behaviour of the guests. 'This visit, in such numbers, is premature in a city which suffered so much in the war.' Even the 'so-called Sacrifice of Reconciliation, however sincere it be' appeared quite modest as, with the 10,000 francs collected at Freiburg, 'there was hardly enough to raise up the most modest house from its ruins.'103 The urbane tone of grudging respect mixed with deep hurt seemed to occlude any wholehearted embrace of the Congress. Joseph Probst brought readers of the Jeune République the feelings of an unnamed German youth on the train after Reims: 'I am profoundly sad and search in myself and in my weaknesses for the cause of these misfortunes...And then I see the day of 2 August 1926, twelve years to the day after the explosion of 1914, and our immense demonstration, full of hope, at the City Hall of this martyred town.'104 With the departure of the pilgrims for Laon and Amiens, again under police surveillance, on the morning of 4 August, the police commissioner assessed the reaction. His final analysis was as pithy as it was unflattering: 'In summary, no enthusiasm greeted them, no regret at their departure. '105

A two-hour stop for lunch at Laon, in the département of the Aisne, on 4 August was incident-free. Containing the Chemin des Dames battlefield, the north of the Aisne département was occupied during the war. The centre was fought over and the south was in the French rear echelons. In fact, almost all the département was overrun twice, in September 1914 and April-May 1918. The pilgrims, in transit from Reims to Amiens, were met by local delegates from the Association 'Pour supprimer ce crime: la guerre' and Ligue des Droits de l'Homme. However, two days before, an angry mob had attacked some hapless Germans assumed to be on their way to

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¹⁰¹ A regional paper of moderate politics. Founded in 1923, it presented the *Éclaireur de l'Est* with the only serious competition, even though its circulation was only a third of the Radical stalwart; Bellanger (ed.), *Histoire générale de la presse française*, vol.3, pp. 604, 615.

^{102 &#}x27;Sur la visite des pacifistes,' Le Nord-Est, 3.8.1926.

¹⁰³ ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Jeune République, 6.8.1926.

¹⁰⁵ AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissaire spécial de Police (Reims) -Directeur de la Surêté Générale, Ministry of the Interior, 4.8.1926.

¹⁰⁶ ibid., Prefect of Département of the Aisne-Minister of the Interior, 4.8.1926.

Reims. 107 The visit of the pacifist roadshow to Amiens (and yet another battle-scarred cathedral) on 4 August showed once again the broad spectrum of indivivuals and organizations that collaborated in the local welcoming committees. Georges Hoog pointedly referred to a 'Comité d'union sacrée pour la paix' at each port of call, bringing together the broader Republican family. 108 The tour's opponents were equally familiar. Joseph Grommers, a German pilgrim, wrote of how embarrassed his hosts were by the royalist poster screaming 'caravanes des Boches,' an abusive term he otherwise never once met in his three weeks in France. Undeterred, the delegates paraded into town with banners, including the blue flag with the inscription Speaking at Amiens City Hall, Sangnier inverted the pageantry of war contrasting the symbolism of the procession (note the cadence of the sacred) favourably with the march to war along the same routes in 1914. 110 After the exit of the pilgrims from a visit to the city's cathedral, Sangnier made another speech, to a crowd that included several thousand workers and clerks heading home after work. Ever didactic, Sangnier told the open air assembly what they could learn from the metaphor of the cathedral: 'Peace is also a cathedral that all peoples should build, stone by stone, because it can only grow out of the daily and tenacious collaboration of all those of pacific goodwill.'111

On the next evening, 5 August, the 'union sacrée pour la paix' was again to the fore at a meeting in Rouen. The Cirque de Rouen, with a capacity of 4,000, was filled with the pilgrims and sympathetic locals. An orchestra struck up the overture to *Tannhäuser* by Wagner (of all Germans!). (His music, of course, had yet all the political connotations it was to acquire under the Nazis.) Its 'Pilgrims Chorus' will have struck the musically erudite as appropriate, whatever about the nationalist ardour of the composer. No discordant note was struck at the welcome, though, but even more symbolic was dinner hosted beforehand by the local Catholic youth movement, the Philippins, establishing fellow feeling with German youth movements such as the Quickborn and the Grossdeutschen. Edward Montier, leader of the Philippins, gave

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108 La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 2.

¹¹⁰ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 22.

¹⁰⁷ ibid., Commissaire Spécial de Police, Laon - Directeur de la Sûreté Générale, Ministry of the Interior, Paris, 2.8.1926 "Incident provoqué sur la voie publique par un groupe de camelots du Roy"; *La Paix par la Jeunesse*, pp. 20-24.

¹⁰⁹ IMS, M.S. 38, File on Bierville (1926), translation of anonymous German account, n.d..

¹¹¹ ibid.

¹¹² ibid., p. 27.

an emotional panegyric at the banquet, explicitly invoking Christian ideas of the divine banquet and Catholic theology of the Eucharistic meal: 'We are disciples of the Prince of Peace who first gave us the beautiful example of breaking bread.' ¹¹³ If the Eucharist filled life with transcendental meaning, then the banquet had a higher meaning too. Montier digressed into a soliloquy prompted by loss and mourning for young comrades. The youths before him, it seemed, could, in a novel twist on the wartime myth of 'Debout les morts!' be themselves transfigured in the image of the virtuous dead:

Young Germans, at these tables where you sit, laughing and happy, sat, exactly twelve years ago, other young men, smiling happily like you... They did not want war: they were obliged to go and they did not come back. At this moment, at each of the places occupied by you, I see their dear faces that arise and...superimpose themselves on yours while yours blend more or less with theirs...Yes, my sons, we are adopting you. Do you want to be, each of you, yet another, while remaining yourself?... Moreover, we, in our turn, will love you as sons. 114

At Bierville, where the purified German pilgrim penitents now arrived on 8 August, a whole ritual of cultural demobilization was to be acted out. Marc Sangnier, speaking during the Congress itself, argued that, as part of the 'disarmament of hatred,' the cultural demobilisers had to create their own symbols and ceremonies to rival those of the warmongers. He said:

Let us have panache! There are enough military reviews with bands, bugles, drums, and assemblies of young men, slaves to brute force. Let us, for our part, place all this radiant enthusiasm and passion, which were the monopoly of the forces of war, at the service of the great power of love and peace.¹¹⁵

Even before 1926, the Bierville estate was littered with actual monuments to the adaptation of Catholic popular piety to the cause of demobilization. Le Calvaire de la Paix was an outdoor Way of the Cross, dating from 1923, whose fourteen stations punctuated the hillside opposite the house. It was the work of an eighty-strong volunteer corps whose labours were united with Jesus' sufferings, Christ's example 'to all men and races.' After the Congress in Germany in 1923, the

¹¹³ ibid., p. 28.

¹¹⁴ ibid., p. 29.

¹¹⁵ ibid., p. 232.

¹¹⁶ Xe Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Innauguration du Foyer de la Paix de Bierville, 24-31 août 1930. Réunions d'Ostende, Bruxelles, Anvers et Liège sur les Etats-Unis d'Europe (Paris, La Démocratie, 1930), p. 3.

municipality of Freiburg made a gift to Sangnier of two robust Black Forest pines, which constituted the most striking memorial on the estate, la Croix de la Réconciliation. Atop the hill up which the Via Crucis climbed, it dominated the plateau where the Camp de la Paix was constructed and became the focal point during the High Mass celebrated on Sunday 22 August. Fitted to the plinth on which stood the Cross was a marble plaque, sent from Saxon quarries as a gift from the Prince of Saxony on the occasion of his entry to the seminary. It bore this inscription: 'May the Peace amongst peoples that the Saviour of the World was willing to earn for the world, by the way of the Cross, become as solid as this Saxon marble.' The grottos of St. Francis of Assisi were reminders of the Franciscan model of pacifism. Saint John the Evangelist whose dialectic of the Incarnation allowed men such as Sangnier to invest affairs of the earthly city with transcendant meaning also had a prominent statue. Blessed by Mgr. Gibier during the Congress, 'every visitor [was] brought to see' the inscription Sangnier had made his own: 'Et nos credimi carititati.'

Jean Sangnier recalls: 'my father loved towers. Towers everywhere! Even here at *la Démocratie*!'¹¹⁹ Suitably enough, then, towers dotted the landscape, dedicated, amongst others, to Saints Paul and Catherine of Siena. Appropriately, though, in light of our discussion of the links between female intercession, Marian piety and eirenicism already discussed, the most prominent tower on the estate was dedicated to Notre Dame de la Paix, having been completed by a sculptor-friend Jacques Martin just a number of days before the descent of the crowds on the hamlet. To recapitulate, the Bierville Mary was an eschatological portent of peace, 'supporting, in a gracious gesture, the arm of the Child Jesus which blesses the world.' At her feet, Sangnier uttered, on behalf of Catholic delegates, a heartfelt prayer 'towards her whom their hearts spontaneously recognised as the Queen of Peace.' 122

Blessed by Mgr. Julien himself, the monument was an amalagm of war memorial and Catholic shrine. In keeping with this Catholic eirenical spirit, Julien

117 Xe Congrès, p. 4.

120 See Chapter 3.

122 ibid.

¹¹⁸ Le Journal, 15.8.1926; La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 248.

¹¹⁹ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (See Appendix II).

¹²¹ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 248.

was both the orchestrator and guardian of a pacifist Catholic memory and memorialization of the war. In the 1920s, he was the driving force behind the construction of a memorial at the battlefield of Lorette that is better known as the Ossuaire de Notre-Dame at Lorette (Pas-de-Calais). Julien's wording of the inscription on the Lorette monument - 'here they died for peace' - attempted to reconcile the memory of the great sacrifice with a living commitment to preventing future war, without in any way dishonouring the dead, a crime of which pacifists were often accused. 123 Over time, as Becker describes, this 'site of memory' with its distinctive Lanterne des Morts transmuted into an important religious symbol, and byword for the war, to which we shall return in the context of the Croisade de la Jeunesse of 1929. 124 As La Vie catholique asked of the Bierville sanctuary: 'How can we not place hope in this peace that is taking shape in the shadow of the Cross and under the Virgin's smile?' 125

Logically, then, the Sacrament of the Eucharist was central to this 'liturgy of peace' as it permitted a 'communion of souls' where nationality was irrelevant. Catholic media approvingly reported Jean Guiraud's observation that over one hundred masses (with 1,200 communicants) were celebrated each day of the Congress. 126 Mgr. Gibier celebrated Mass at the Calvaire on Sunday 22 while Quakers, Lutherans and Free Christians held their own services. More than the words of the celebrant, or the Pope's message of approval, it was the ancient rubric and ritual that made the occasion truly catholic: 'The Holy Sacrifice continues while French and German choirs alternate. Above these thousands of bowed heads...the arms of the blessed Crucified One extend widely in a boundless gesture of Love, Reconciliation and Fraternity.'127

Writing to her fellow Quakers in 1927, Ruth Fry took as one of the great lessons of Bierville the need 'to enlist pageantry on the side on the angels.' The

¹²³ Chaline, 'Marc Sangnier. La Jeune République et la paix,' p. 91.

¹²⁵ La Vie catholique, 14.8.1926.

¹²⁴ Annette Becker, War and faith. The religious imagination in France, 1914-30 (1994; Eng. trans., Oxford, 1998,) pp. 123-30.

¹²⁶ La semaine religieuse de la ville et du diocèse de Versailles, 21/35, 29.8.1926, p. 553.

¹²⁷ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 198. ¹²⁸ IMS, M.S. 38, 'Congrès de la paix,' Article by Ruth Fry, 'Advance in the peace movement,' The World Outlook: a Quaker survey of international life and service, 7.1.1927.

Theâtre de Verdure, the estate's specially constructed liturgical space, was ideal for showcasing the liturgy of peace. Site of both opening plenary sessions of the Congress, its tiered platforms, as seen in the photograph (see Appendix), were built into the hill to create the illusion of a natural, tree-bound amphitheatre. Congress' grandiose séance d'ouverture set ablaze the Juisne valley on Tuesday, 17 August. Attended by some 9,000 people, visitors and locals, it revived the old religious ritual of the vigil, used by the Jeune Garde at Montmartre in Sillon days, in a political context and through the use of technical means inconceivable before the war. For instance, the Theâtre de Verdure was illuminated by electric searchlights. The loudspeaker amplified oratory. The opening ceremony thus belonged to a new type of mass meeting of the 1920s made possible by technical advances originally made for military purposes in wartime. Searchlights, developed so as to identify enemy aircraft at night, were now been used to floodlight a pacifist vigil, so that as Mitterauer has identified, the phenomenon was not limited to the right. Marching in serried ranks and carefully choreographed pageantry replaced anarchic groups of individuals and, given the German bias of the participants, reflected a militarisation of ceremonial in all wings of German youth movement in the 1920s, a clear after-effect of the 'war culture.'129

Sangnier led a torchlit procession of a thousand congressistes from the hilltop Camp de la Paix, amidst singing and a profusion of national flags over which an enormous blue PAX banner took precedence. With due reverence, this river of light processed downhill, spellbinding onlookers with the 'near-fairylike sight of this long ribon unrolling in the night. Conifer torches...[like] golden stars, hugging the hillside of Bierville.' Crossing the parkland in front of the chateau, the procession duly ascended the steep slope that led to the packed and expectant Theâtre de Verdure. Each of the three levels of the large tiered rostrum was then filled, the top two with national flags centered on the blue Pax banner, forming an enchanted backdrop for the speakers on the raised dias below.

Sangnier quoted the German Christian pacifist and educationalist F.W. Foerster who had said that 'the French Republic [had] the duty of the firstborn

¹³⁰ La Paix par la Jeunesse, pp. 121-2.

¹²⁹ Michael Mitterauer, A History of Youth (1986; English translation, Oxford, 1992), p. 219.

towards the young German republic.' Therefore, the anniversary of the adoption of the Weimar constitution of 11 August 1919, which fell during the Congress, called for a liturgical celebration of this new 'demobilized' Germany. That evening, after nightfall, there was another quasi-military procession, following the same route and led by guitar-strumming Wandervögel bearing the pennants of the French and German republics. Here politics and pageantry met. At the amphitheatre the 500 torchbearers fanned out along the three elevated platforms of the stage: 'Magical illumination like a great chandelier alive with three rungs of flames. In the centre, the flags. To the crowd Marc Sangnier then made some brief and enthusiastic remarks, cut off by the cries of "heil," "bravo" and by applause.' From the fragmentary manuscript notes that survive of the speech (in German) made by the youth Kurt Dobler, we can get some sense of the near-religious fervour of this vigil. Acknowledging that some of his compatriots had arrived at the Congress a little wary and cynical about the whole exercise, the wonder of Bierville and the sincerity of their host had won them over:

Marc Sangnier gave us this beautiful evening and helped us to celebrate the day of our Constitution on France's hospitable soil. One thing is certain for us; how much Marc Sangnier stands by the new Germany, how much he believes in us and trusts in the young German Republic; above all, how much he seeks to understand us young people.¹³³

Ritualizing the rehabilitation of Germany through her youth, the ceremony also showed how 'torchlight processions, running in relay and shouting in unison were all new forms of expression in this period.' 134

The closing ceremony reiterated the theme of Franco-German reconciliation. The so-called Fête de la Paix took place at the same venue on the afternoon of Saturday 21 August. It was a spectacular affair and by far the most elaborate liturgical representation of demobilization. Accompanied by a scattering of lyric and dramatic artists from Parisian theatres such as the Odéon, the Opéra-Comique and the Comédie-Française, the performing artist Firmin Gémier and his director Pierre Aldebert conceived of the pageant as a 'fête populaire,' a variation on the medieval mystery play with popular participation. At the Theâtre de Verdure, a representative of each nationality took their places on the terraces. As the ceremony proper began

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¹³¹ ibid., p. 244.

¹³² ibid., p. 244.

¹³³ IMS, M.S. 38, Peace Congresses, Manuscript notes of speech by Kurt Döbler, German youth delegate, at ceremony for anniversary of the Weimar Constituion, Bierville, 11.8.1926.

¹³⁴ Mitterauer, *A History of Youth*, p. 219.

attention turned to rings of children shouting for joy at the reign of Peace. Suddenly, their play was stilled by the arrival of the bereaved of the war, mothers and widows, clad in large symbolic capes in mournful black: 'the joy of childhood makes way for the sorrow of the generations most cruelly tested by the war.' Now the Christian aesthetic of the mournful female intercessor, discussed in Chapter 2, had returned, this time in secular artistic form. Even the dramatic use of widow-actresses to represent all heartbroken women echoed the prominence given to a fictional grieving 'family,' representing the nation, at the funeral of France's Unknown Soldier in November 1920.¹³⁶

Aided in their *via dolorosa* by the children, the women came to kneel at the foot of a borderpost, symbol of man's sinful division, which was immediately transformed into the Cross, the symbol of pardon and reconciliation. The emotional highpoint of the pageant was reached when the two grieving mothers, one French, one German, having been reconciled with one another at the foot of that same Cross, advanced together towards the future and a child clad in brilliant white representing Peace who emerged miraculously from behind the tree cover. This was a moment of emotional release for all present, captured for posterity by the photographer. (See Appendix IV.) As the official account recorded: 'it is, at last, a moment of general reconciliation, a joyous fusion of all the delegations, the great, reconstituted human family hailing Peace, Work, Love.' ¹³⁷

Clearly, then, the arts, especially song and film, had a special place in the elaboration of this liturgy of peace so clearly demonstrated at Bierville and by the Congresses generally. Quick to embrace the new medium of cinema, their famous visit to the Vienna arsenal in 1922 had been filmed. At Bierville, delegates enjoyed a German film made about the Wandervögel. Cameramen, not least those of Pathé, came to Bierville and the following year at Würzburg Aloys Zenner's film *La Paix par la Jeunesse* shot during the congress got an ecstatic response. Music and

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¹³⁵ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 193.

¹³⁶ Becker, War and faith, p. 176.

¹³⁷ La Paix par la Jeunesse, pp. 193-4.

¹³⁸ L'Oeuvre, 12.8.1926.

¹³⁹ Original film footage of the Bierville Congress is available at the Centre National de Cinéma (CNC), Service des Archives du Film, Bois d'Arcy. It was used in the recent doucmentary on Sangnier's life; Ghislain de Place, *Marc Sangnier, le sillon de l'Europe* (VHS, Paris: Les Films du

Iiturgical singing were hugely important at the Congresses in fostering *esprit de corps*. Zeldin writes that this genre of utopian political song represents an unexplored 'archaelogy of popular sentiment.' The Wandervögel led the way with traditional folksong repertoire and the marching songs that followed them around France during the Croisade de la Jeunesse in 1929. Sangnier's youth movement had its own musical tradition going back to the troubadour of the Sillon Hénri Colas, who, according to Sangnier, had 'done more for peace through his songs, those refrains of fraternity and love, than many jurists and diplomats had.'

Hénri Colas (1879-1968) was an 'apostle through song.' Typical of a certain stratum of clerk and low-paid worker attracted by its popular Catholicism, he joined the Sillon in 1902 while an employee of the Crédit Lyonnais bank in Paris. Folliet recalls that, like many socialist equivalents, 'he became a songwriter as a consequence of being a militant,' a self-conscious successor to the bards of the workers' movement of 1848. 143 Replete with religious references, Colas' songs carried political messages through the use of melody and lyrics suited to congregational singing. Colas composed both the Chant du Sillon and the Chant de la Jeune-Garde which included the lines: 'Mais notre vie à la Cause, Nous mourrons dans notre Sillon.' Eking out a precarious living from church music and hymnwriting, along with editorship of the music review Nos Chansons Françaises, he also wrote social campaigning songs about the plight of night workers, for example.¹⁴⁴ From 1914 to 1917 he and his wife Marie volunteered their services to the War Ministry, performing for the troops in hospitals and in camps in the rear, mirroring Sangnier's army propaganda in the hardline patriotic content of his songs. Mobilized as a nurse in 1917, he became brutally acquainted with the sufferings of war over two years and determined to put his musical talent at the service of international reconciliation.

In the 1920s, Colas acted as the musical 'echo' of Marc Sangnier in the matter of 'disarmaming hatred.' Fittingly, *Le Torrent d'Amour*, the song he wrote for the

Capricorne & Institut Marc Sangnier, 2003, 56mins). While privately shown, this film has yet to receive public transmission.

¹⁴⁰ Theodore Zeldin, France 1848-1945, vol.1: Ambition, Love, Politics, (Oxford, 1973,) p. 432.

¹⁴¹ Genève-Bierville 1928, pp. 65-66.

¹⁴² Jeanne Caron, *Hénri Colas 1879-1968* (Le Mans, n.d.), p. 9.

¹⁴³ ibid., p.16.

¹⁴⁴ Also composed the JOC anthem, 'Jociste, où vas-tu?'; Caron, *Hénri Colas*, p. 37.

Freiburg Congress, combined popular pacifism and religiosity, emphasising the faceto-face encounter with the enemy that were at the heart of the Congresses as a precondition of moral awakening:

Beyond the frontiers,

Men have come together;

They have said: 'We are all brothers.

Friends, let us no longer tear one another asunder!

Eye to eye, face to face,

Let us, at last, look at each other without hatred!

May the wicked past recede!

Justice and peace, embrace one another!145

And the messianical refrain:

The sun lights the plain;

Peoples, arise, behold the day,

Where horrific hatred is swept away,

When comes the great torrent of Love! 146

Living close by, Colas sang at the Bierville campfire at night while his new pacifist composition, *Brisons nos chaînes*, was sung with great emotion during the German visit to Amiens City Hall discussed earlier.¹⁴⁷ (See Appendix IV.) Xavier Privas, the anticlerical Lyon folksinger, was proud to interpret the songs of Colas who was also the composer of a cantata entitled *L'Appel du Maître* aimed at recruiting these same nefarious priests!¹⁴⁸ In the creation of an alternative eirenical sub-culture, Colas' songs were as indispensable as the Internationale was to socialists. His songbooks – such as that for the Croisade de la Jeunesse of 1929 - were vademecums. In his own words: 'Tell me what you are singing and I'll tell you who you are.' 149

By the end of the week of the Congress proper, as a residual group of delegates began a week of relaxation and sightseeing in the Ile de France, the

¹⁴⁵ IIIe Congrès, pp. 586-87. [Original French of Colas' lyrics: 'Par delà les frontières, Les hommes se sont reconnus; Ils ont dit: "Nous sommes tous frères, Amis, ne nous déchirons plus; Les yeux dans les yeux, bien en face; Sans haine enfin regardons-nous; Que le passé méchant s'efface!; Justice et paix, embrassez-vous!".']

¹⁴⁶ IIIe Congrès, p. 587. [French org.; Le soleil éclaire la plaine; Peuples, debout, voici le jour; Où, balayant l'horrible haine; Va passer le torrent d'Amour!]

¹⁴⁷ La Paix par la Jeunesse, p. 22.

ibid., pp. 191-2. On Privas and Colas, see Pierre Pierrard, *Un siècle de l'église de France* (Paris, 2000,) pp. 70, 96.

¹⁴⁹ Hénri Colas, Nos Chants – les Volontaires de la Paix (Paris, La Démocratie, 1930), p. 1.

Parisian police commissioner attempted to assess the event's political implications. The assessment was at best mixed, if not slighting. It had garnered 'but little confidence' in the political press and many even saw it as quite 'inopportune.' 'Nothing of benefit to France would come out of these pacifist meetings' which would merely bolster Germany and leave her 'in a better situation than she might otherwise have reason to expect' when it joined the League of Nations in Geneva in September. Sangnier and the avant-garde of cultural demobilization would have drawn a different conclusion from the events of August. Even if there were still hesitations and obstacles, they had done what many had said was impossible: they had organized a peacable mass meeting with Germans in the heart of France. They had done so in the context of a 'liturgy of peace' that gave expression through religion, music and the arts to the confluence of political and psychological factors involved in the demobilization project and the living out of the pacifist promise of the Locarno honeymoon.

AN (Paris), F7 13962 'Congrès démocratique international,' Commissaire de Police, Paris – Directeur de la Sûreté Générale, Paris, 21.8.1926.
 ibid

CHAPTER SEVEN

Zenith and decline, 1927-32.

In retrospect, Bierville represented the high-point of the congress movement and of Sangnier's own endeavour to disarm the mentalities that had made war – the Great War – possible. While the momentum and creativity of the mid-1920s continued for some time, as is evident in the Croisade de la Jeunesse in 1929 and even the tour of a Musée de la Paix in 1931, the tide inexorably turned. The onset of the Depression, and, a little more than three years later, the Nazi seizure of power, ended all practical hope of pursuing the path outlined by Briand and Stresemann, and on which the far more idealistic hopes of the congress movement were premised. Even at its zenith, the question of the significance of the congress movement was one that preoccupied contemporaries – not least other and more powerful strands of French Catholicism – and the question remains important. This chapter is therefore concerned both to trace the decline of Sangnier's trajectory of cultural demobilization and to assess its broader importance when at its height.

(i) Sangnier in a Catholic context

Delbreil correctly places Sangnier amongst the Catholic 'extremists' of rapprochement, though not quite to the degree of abbé Demulier, the revisionist priest disciplined by the Church authorities for his advanced pacifism.¹ His view that the Jeune-République's 'isolated action remained essentially unknown by the great mass of French Catholics before 1925' is incontestably true.² Russo contrasted the courage of Sangnier in 'publicly manifesting aversion' to the conservative Catholicism of General de Castelnau's Fédération Nationale Catholique (FNC) with the timidity of the larger but more conservative Christian Democratic party, the PDP.³ From its formation in May 1924, the Cartel des gauches government had threatened the Vatican embassy and the imposition of secular laws in Alsace-Lorraine, along with

¹ Jean-Claude Delbreil, Les Catholiques français et les tentatives de rapprochement franco-allemand dans l'entre-deux-guerres, 1920-1933 (Metz, 1972), pp. 31-35, 219.

² Delbreil, Les Catholiques français, pp. 216-17.

³ Istituto Luigi Sturzo, Fasc. 290, c. 32, Corresp. Domenico Russo-Sturzo, 10.3.1925.

the expulsion of non-regularised religious orders.⁴ De Castelnau was the bishops' choice of organizer for the counter-offensive. Sangnier looked askance at the FNC for attempting to harness legitimate Catholic grievance for the right. However, Castelnau's movement dwarfed Bierville with 1.8 million members in 1926.⁵

The marginal position of Sangnier, even within Christian Democracy, cannot be overlooked. The PDP, formed in 1924 by those centrist Christian Democrats whom Sangnier's radicalism had alienated, displayed 'a certain nationalism' that left them feeling ambivalent about the Locarno process.⁶ Pragmatic supporters of the new diplomacy, Robert Cornilleau summed up their attitude to Locarno in Le Petit Démocrate when he wrote that 'Poincaré's policy has failed. We are no longer spoiled for choice.' This same ambivalence affected their relationship with the Peace Congresses. While not hostile, contact was minimal. Thus, Raymond Laurent received delegates to the Bierville congress at the Hôtel de Ville on 29 August in his capacity as Secretary of the Municipal Council of Paris rather than as Secretary General of the party. Le Petit Démocrate relegated the event to an obscure corner of the paper and ignored the Würzburg congress of 1927 altogether.⁸ When, through the Sécrétariat Internationale des Partis d'Inspiration Chrétienne or International Secretariat of Democratic Parties of Christian Inspiration (SIPDIC), founded in 1925, the PDP took its first faltering steps towards meeting Germans, the PDP kept the Jeune-République at arm's length. The party effectively snubbed and excluded the Sangnier movement from their Franco-German Catholic conferences of Paris (1928) and Berlin (1929).9 This mirrored its domestic political stance. Despite a series of articles by Robert Cornilleau in Le Petit Démocrate in 1928 entitled 'Pourquoi pas?' discussing the possibility of alliance with socialists and giving rise to the taunt of 'red Christians,' the party became increasingly allied with the right-wing Fédération républicaine and fought against the Popular Front in 1936. 10 Sangnier's prediction at

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⁶ Delbreil, Les Catholiques français, p. 54.

⁴ Gérard Cholvy & Yves-Marie Hilaire, *Religion et société en France, 1914-45* (Toulouse, 2002), p. 61.

⁵ Theodore Zeldin, France 1848-1945, vol.2: Intellect, Taste, and Anxiety, (Oxford, 1977), p. 1020.

⁷ Robert Cornilleau, 'De Versailles à Locarno', *Le Petit Démocrate*, 18.10.1925. ⁸ *Le Petit Démocrate*, 29.8.1926; Delbreil, *Les Catholiques français*, p. 54.

⁹ Delbreil, Les Catholiques français, p. 135-7.

the time of the PDP's formation had been proved right: specifically Catholic parties would always be on the right 'whether they like it or not.'11

How then did the hierarchy and Catholic press more generally receive Sangnier's message of cultural demobilization? A revealing anecdote appeared in the pages of La Nouvelle during the Bierville Congress. Mgr. Julien, bishop of Arras, approached by a priest who told him of asking his own bishop's permission to attend the event, smiled and was heard to quip in reply: 'What impudence... You don't ask a bishop's permission to enter such a dangerous milieu!' The joke's serious point was the suspicion of Sangnier and of pacifism that reigned even amongst mainstream Catholics. Though now favoured by the Holy See, Sangnier, the prophet, had a fraught relationship with the hierarchy. Two bishops graced the Bierville Congress with their presence and spoke openly there - Mgr. Gibier, bishop of Versailles and Mgr. Julien, bishop of Arras. A loyal friend to Sangnier, Charles Gibier, the local bishop, had courageously defended Sangnier's reputation in Rome in 1910.13 Reputed a 'democrat' and socially progressive for the innovative and vibrant working-class male apostolate in his diocese, he was a natural choice to say the High Mass of the Congress and to read the telegram of blessing from the Pope, customary at each Congress. 14

However, even more striking than Gibier's presence at Bierville was that of Mgr. Léon-Adolphe Julien, bishop of Arras. A clerical super patriot in 1914, he became bishop of the war torn and partially occupied Arras diocese in 1917. Assuming the mantle of a French Cardinal Mercier, Julien was even the government's preferred candidate for the vacant Archdiocesan See of Paris in 1920. In 1918, he had been a prestigious addition to the French Catholic Mission to the USA in October-November 1918 organized by Baudrillart's Catholic Committee for French Propaganda Abroad. While there, he met President Wilson. This visit led him to

¹¹ Jeune-République, 21.11.1924.

¹⁴ La semaine religieuse de la ville et du diocèse de Versailles, 21/35, 29.8.1926, p. 553.

¹² La Nouvelle, 20.8.1926.

¹³ Étienne Marotaux, 'L'action pastorale de Mgr. Gibier dans le diocèse de Versailles, 1906-31,' Mémoire de maîtrise, Université de Paris IV-la Sorbonne, 1984, p. 103. (Until Gibier's death in 1931, both men met regularly, the bishop a constant source of 'comfort' and 'advice' for Sangnier; *Jeune-République*, 10.3.1931).

embrace American designs for a League of Nations, for which he set about elaborating a specifically 'Catholic theory.' 15 Unlike Gibier, Julien had no history of Silloniste sympathies and only came to Bierville after coaxing. A moderate Catholic pacifist, in keeping with papal teaching, he spoke on Church doctrine on peace and war at the Semaines sociales de France, the premier Social Catholic annual forum since 1904, held at Le Havre in August 1926 - a mere fortnight before Bierville, forming the basis of another pamphlet. 16 Julien, like Sangnier, saw the greatest impediment to Franco-German reconciliation as the psychological one. However, this could not be addressed by amnesia. Rather, the memory of the war had to be perpetuated as a vehicle, not of division, but of reconciliation. This was at the heart of his most enduring achievement, the construction of the war memorial at Lorette, a project the Jeune-République supported from its inception. 17

The bishop's speech at the Congress' opening ceremony on the Christian attitude to peace and war was impeccably orthodox and unlikely to raise protest. However, it was Julien's willingness to literally embrace the domestic consequences of the demobilization project that led him into controversy. Put simply, reconciliation, like charity, began at home. Love of the foreign adversary was a lie if it co-existed with hatred and distrust of fellow Frenchmen who subscribed to different creeds or ideologies. If cultural mobilization was built on a façade of national unity, this was one aspect of the war culture Julien wanted to keep. In order to 'demobilize' the foreign foe, one had to dismantle the category of internal enemy as well. The problem was that the pacifist movement appeared as 'a haven for just the kinds of people they [French Catholics] found most objectionable.'

For most Catholics, the Masons, the Socialists and the Third Republic intelligentsia represented by Ferdinand Buisson on the Bierville platform were 'outright enemies,' as Baudrillart put it, with whom there could be no compromise.

¹⁵ Mgr. Léon-Adolphe Julien, *La SDN*, une théorie catholique (Paris, Bould et Gay, 1919).

¹⁷ *Jeune-République*, 15.1.1922.

¹⁹ Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and a world without war: the peace movement and German society, 1892-1914* (Princeton, 1975), p. 379.

¹⁶ Mgr. Léon-Adolphe Julien, *L'Évangile nécessaire à l'ordre international* (Paris, Bould et Gay, 1927).

¹⁸ La Paix par la Jeunesse. Le Mois International de Bierville, Août 1926. VIe Congrès Démocratique International pour la Paix, 17-22 Août 1926 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1926), pp. 127-35.

Thus, any Catholic who coalesced with them, albeit for the best of motives, and even when he had proven his willingness to stand up for his faith, was either a dupe or a traitor or both. Sangnier, then, for cooperating on the peace issue with such reprobates, gave the impression of being a mealy-mouthed Catholic, one whose bonhomie would get the better of his judgement and who set a scandalous example of indifferentism. Yet the Jeune-République was firmly on the side of Catholic defence, and against anticlerical discrimination, a fact only grudgingly acknowledged by Catholics, often susceptible to the Maurassian virus. The cool reception given to the Jeune-République speaker Arsène Couvreur at a rally of the Droits des Réligieux Anciens Combattants (DRAC) in 1925 shows this ambivalent attitude on the part of the mainstream.²⁰

Ferdinand Buisson, with whom the Bishop of Arras shared a platform at the opening session of the Congress on 17 August, epitomized anti-Church malfeasance. Julien, irrespective of continuing disagreements in other areas and committed to the overriding goal of prolonging the wartime 'sacred union' for the sake of peace, was willing to accept the old Radical as an honorable interlocutor. Therefore, in the ecumenical cocoon of Bierville, Julien, impressed by the generosity of the speech just completed by Buisson, rose spontaneously and went over to shake hands with him: 'At this manifestation of internal peace, on the terrain of peace that unites such eminent and exemplary men of goodwill, there was a new wave of prolonged applause.'²¹

Mgr. Julien, conscious of the scandal given to some of his flock by such a gesture, not to mind the fury of the Action Française, attempted to contextualise his by now infamous handshake in *Le Correspondant*. Acknowledging Pius X's directives that Catholics avoid 'rationalist' congresses in favour of wholly Catholic movements, Julien said that

if any question should be exempted from this rule of conduct, it is that of the peace of the world. If the hard law of war demands all citizens to rally to the same flag, in spite of spiritual

²¹ La Paix par la jeunesse, p. 137.

²⁰ Archives nationales, [AN], (Paris), F7 13228, Mouvement catholique (1924-27), D.R.A. C., 'Meeting DRAC et la Ligue des Droits du Prêtre,' Grande Salle de Luna Park, Paris, 16.12.1925.

divergences, why should it not be permitted to all to collaborate...in the universal work of peace?²²

Sangnier, in his closing address at Bierville, had eulogized Julien's gesture, making remarkably similar observations about the nature of co-operation with non-believers in a new sacred union: 'We are not like those cowards who dream of collaboration based on concessions and abdications...Before, we had the "union sacrée" on the battlefield for the defence of the land...today it's the "union sacrée" on the field of human endeavour for the reconstruction of the world.'²³

Dipping his pen in acid, an unimpressed Baudrillart wrote: 'Mgr. Julien and Ferdinand Buisson fraternise and embrace one another. How infinitely touching!'²⁴ Letters poured into Archbishop's House in Arras accusing Julien of betraying the flock and of fraternizing with the sworn enemies of France and of Holy Mother Church: 'Shame on the democrat-pastor who treats with wolves...Arras was destroyed by the Boches!'²⁵ Be it the enemy without or within, there was to be no truck with sinners or demobilization, apparently. Christened 'the mitred Sangnier' by *Action Française*, Julien was chastened by the experience. In March 1927, the bishop was obliged to back out of speaking at a meeting of the League of Nations movement in Paris where Sangnier was also to speak.²⁶ In July 1927, it appears as if the whole Bierville incident cost him the support of Poincaré's government for promotion to the Archdiocesan see of Besançon: 'his place is not on the frontier.'²⁷

By 1929, when Sangnier sought his support for the Crusade of Youth, the discouraged bishop felt obliged to draw back from full public association with the Catholic pacifist movement. Torn between the prophetic and pastoral dimensions of his function, he knew well he had a duty to preach the Gospel, however unpalatable, to his flock. He poignantly concluded that he could not go so far ahead of them that

²³ La Paix par la jeunesse, p.137.

²² Mgr. Julien, 'A propos du Congrès de Bierville,' *Le Correspondant*, 25-9-1926, cited in *Documentation catholique*, Vol.14, col.1236 (1926).

²⁴ Alfred Baudrillart, *Les Carnets du Cardinal Alfred Baudrillart.13 avril 1925-25 décembre 1928* ed. Paul Christophe (Paris, 2002), p. 444. (Entry for 18 August 1926)

²⁵ Corresp. Paul de Puniet de Parry-Julien, Julien papers, cited in Philippe Chenaux, 'Monseigneur Julien et l'Allemagne,' in Institut Marc Sangnier, *Marc Sangnier la guerre, la paix, 1914-39. Actes de la journée d'études du 26 septembre 1997*, p. 116.

²⁶ Chenaux, 'Monseigneur Julien et l'Allemagne,' p. 117.

²⁷ Baudrillart, *Les Carnets*, 1925-28, p. 732 (Entry for 30 July 1927.)

he completely lost authority over them and the ability to guide the people of his diocese:

My 'episcopal' personage obliges from me a certain reserve. As you well know, Christian pacifism, such as you preach it, infuriates a lot of Catholics whose only mark of being Christian is their baptism. Already, my presence at Bierville was for many a sort of scandal. I do not neglect a single occasion to remind them of the Church's true doctrine but, if my pacifism is pardonable in the exercise of my episcopal functions, [one would react] against a demonstration of the type you are proposing. Rather, I would prefer to renounce the honour of enjoying your company in posterity and having a share in your glory when your ideas will have at last triumphed. I need...to tend souls, all souls, getting them to bear only as much of tomorrow's truth as they are able to. 28

A prominent French Catholic journalist at Bierville who manifested a schizophrenic attitude to the whole undertaking was Jean Guiraud, editor-in-chief of La Croix since 1919. As such, his attitude was representative of the mainstream Catholic press. A relatively benign sceptic, he quoted Julien's speech at the Congress approvingly: 'One cannot indulge in illusions which shall lead to rude awakenings. The psychology of peoples, even Christians, is not such as to encourage prophets of peace.'29 Described by Weber as 'a man of the traditionalist nationalistic Right,' this historian and former lecturer at the University of Besançon was initially hesitant about going to Bierville. 30 Sangnier had had to court him over lunch in Paris to do so. 31 La Croix was the 'official newspaper of French Catholicism' in this period, according to Rémond.³² Guiraud's coverage of the Congress came at a critical juncture in the paper's history. At this time, La Croix hesitated between the Catholic internationalism of the popes and the integral nationalism of Maurras, on the point of Roman anathema, and these tensions were discernable in the coverage of Bierville. Indeed, Fleury's study of the paper and its attitude to Germany in the 1920s refers to the consternation within the paper caused by Guiraud's going to Bierville.³³ As such

²⁸ Institut Marc Sangnier [IMS], (Paris), M.S. Correspondance Générale, Mgr. Julien-Sangnier,

²⁹ Jean Guiraud, 'Pacificistes et pacifiques,' *La Croix*, 31.8.1926.

³⁰ Eugen Joseph Weber, Action Française. Royalism and reaction in twentieth century France,

⁽Stanford, 1962), p. 244.

Stanford, 1962), p. 244.

AN (Paris), Jean Guiraud Papers, 362 AP 107, dossier 4. Corresp. Sangnier-Guiraud, n.d. but July 1926.

³² René Rémond, 'L'évolution du journal "La Croix" et son rôle auprès de l'opinion catholique, 1919-1939,' Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire Moderne, 57 (1958), p. 4; Guiraud the historian was editor of the Revue des questions historiques.

³³ Alain Fleury, La Croix et l'Allemagne, 1920-30 (Paris, 1926), p. 55.

a niggardly approach was out of sync with Vatican support for the Locarno spirit and coincided with the paper's marked reluctance to take up cudgels with the Pope against Charles Maurras, Pius XI was determined that the quasi-official paper of French Catholics would have an editor loyal to the papacy alone rather than to the nationalistic right. In an unprecedented move, the Pope exerted pressure on the paper and the Assumptionists to install the more mainstream Assumptionist Léon Merklen as co-director of the paper. Merklen took over as editor of the paper in December 1927, replacing Père Berthoye, an appointment that marked a decisive turning point in *La Croix's* political and international outlook.³⁴

In the shorter term, Guiraud was willing to give Bierville his guarded endorsement, stressing the Catholicity of the event. This prompted a long anonymous letter of protest from a seminarian, formerly an army officer, styling himself 'Miles Christi,' attacking both the writer and the Congress on patriotic and Catholic grounds. 'Miles Christi' wrote of 'a duty to be scandalised by the presence of Germans, speckled on sites of the martyrdom which they inflicted on our country, as an act of indecent bad taste.' He lacerated 'aberrant Catholics' for their 'puerile' desire to ape the 'Protestant and Masonic pontiffs of the modern international ideology.'35 This particular Christian soldier was totally unwilling to demobilize either the internal or external enemy. The more measured Guiraud still saw dangerous individualism at work in conscientious objection. He preferred interpretation of scripture by the Magisterium of the Church because 'individual interpretation of the Gospel can lead, in these matters, to the worst errors.'36 For Guiraud, Bierville had shown the outer limits of acceptable and laudable Christian eirenicism and he contrasted it unfavourably with radical, antipatriotic pacifism. The speeches of Mgr. Julien, bishop of Arras, and the renegade General Verraux, opponent of children's war-games, were placed by Guiraud at two ends of a Manichean spectrum, the clash of 'the most noble thought and the most absurd errors.'37

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34 Rémond, 'L'évolution du journal "La Croix", 'p. 8.

³⁵ AN (Paris), 362 AP 56, dossier 4. Jean Guiraud papers. Readers' letters to *La Croix*. Corresp.

^{&#}x27;Miles Christi'-Guiraud, 11.8.1926

³⁶ Jean Guiraud, 'Retour de Congrès', *La Croix*, 24.8.1926.

³⁷ Guiraud, 'Pacifique et pacificiste', *La Croix*, 31.8.1926.

(ii) The Communist critique

Of course, the 'fun and games at Bierville' reverberated way beyond the immediate Catholic realm, into the secular press, in particular.³⁸ As seen in Chapter 2, Sangnier disavowed Communism not alone for its materialism but because he saw in it 'the survival of the militarist spirit': 'old-style war is not destroyed by class war.'39 Of course, the French Communist Party (PCF) had an ambiguous relationship with interwar pacifism to begin with. On the one hand, the Communists were vehemently opposed to wars caused by capitalism, thus condemning virtually any war the bourgeois nation-state was liable to be party to. At the same time, though, they sought to advance class struggle and hasten the proletarian revolution, even if that potentially required violent means, as it had in Russia. Thus, Sangnier's opposition to the Ruhr occupation was of quite a different order to that of the Communists who would have been happy to 'remoblilise' the warlike spirit, in order to link up with the workers of Germany in internationalised class struggle. Contemptuous of 'bourgeois' peace efforts aimed at perpetuating capitalism, the Communist paper L'Humanité was downright hostile to Sangnier's movement as their scornful reaction to Bierville shows.

L'Humanité depicted Sangnier's 'peace tourists' of 1926 as dupes and their Congress as 'odious palaver,' a diversionary tactic designed to con the working class into accepting the status quo. 40 Predictably, it was the patronage of several prominent politicians that made the Bierville enterprise particularly suspect in Communist eyes. The Quai d'Orsay, 'cavern of criminal intrigues', played host to the delegates for whom 'little Barthou made a tear-jerking speech on the will to peace of imperialist France.'41 The paper pointedly asked why, if these people were so fond of peace, did they ignore the dirty colonial wars France was engaged in at the very moment in Morocco and Syria. Were they, l'Humanité pointedly asked, 'so busy planting "peace

³⁸ L'Humanité, 20.8.1926.

³⁹ Compte-rendu complet du Ier Congrès démocratique international de la paix, Paris, 4-11 décembre 1921 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1922), p. 370.

⁴⁰ L'Humanité, 20.8.1926.

⁴¹ AN, F7 13962, Bierville Congress, Coupures de presse, *L'Humanité*, n.d. but Aug. 1926.

trees" that 'they failed to raise their voices while Herriot, Briand and Painlevé imprisoned, by the hundred, the brave who stood out against colonial brigandage?' 42

The Communists had indeed identified one of the apparent contradictions of Sangnier's pacifism. It was odd that pacifists like Sangnier who prated on endlessly about the 'last war' (1914-18) had apparently so little to say on real contemporary wars, small though bloody wars, in France's colonies. The context for this Communist attack on Sangnier is the party's opposition to the French military campaigns against the Rifs, Moroccan insurgents led by Abd-el-Krim, chief rebel of the Sahara. Comparable difficulties dogged the French army in Syria, a successor state of the Ottoman Empire administered by France as a mandate under the League of Nations. Sangnier, an admirer of the incipient Social Catholic reforms of General Lyautey in Morocco in 1913, was slow to abandon not so much the white man's burden as Marianne's burden of a 'civilising mission' in the colonies. (He was not alone. Ruyssen and the whole constellation of French liberal pacifists had championed tenaciously the national -i.e. colonial- interest in the Maghreb. This was demonstrably the case before 1914, however their position might have evolved in the 1920s.⁴³) Highly ambiguous on what self-determination meant for the French Empire, Sangnier, brave in his support for Irish self-determination, was obliged to face some of the seeming inconsistencies in his own position.

Earlier, in January 1926, a Communist heckler in Amiens had made him pronounce on the morality of the French military campaign in Morocco:

We are against colonial imperialism. If Abd-el-Krim represents a people avid for liberty, we cannot fight him. However, if Abd-el-Krim is only a gang leader, dreaming up massacre and pillage, the duty of France is to defend the nation to which she has accorded the status of protectorate.⁴⁴

In the event, the Jeune-République preferred to see the insurgents as seditious rebels, not freedom fighters. Morocco and Syria - 'where we steal, gore and blow their brains out,' as *L'Humanité* put it⁴⁵ - formed important qualifying cases for

⁴² ibid.

⁴³ Chickering, *Imperial Germany*, p. 350.

⁴⁴ Jeune République, 13.1.1926.

⁴⁵ L'Humanité, 20.8.1926.

Sangnier's pacifism in the sense that he saw some (French) colonial wars as defensive and thus morally licit.

The colonial question refused to die and the Würzburg Congress of 1927 was the first to include a Race Commission. This commission gave anti-colonial and nationalist delegates such as Van Giao of Indochina and the Indian socialist Pannikar the chance to draw the Congresses much further along the road of anti-colonialism than before. 46 Colonial delegates rejected as naïve and patronising Europe's mythical 'civilizing mission,' calling instead 'in the name of morality and democracy, for the peace of our consciences and for material peace, no more colonies!'⁴⁷ The Congress motion affirming that 'there are no superior or inferior races' was utterly universally supported.⁴⁸ However, the Marxist analysis of Pannikar linking imperialism with capitalism and war and calls for the abolition of League mandates after the unhappy fate of Syria under French 'mandate,' were contested by many French delegates for being 'extreme' and 'impractical.'⁴⁹ The Congress declared itself opposed to foreign domination per se and for colonial reform. Sangnier agreed that colonialism should be educational in its aims with political independence of the colony as its goal but would only agree to endorse the 'pacific liberation of all oppressed peoples,' as distinct from liberation by force of arms, as in Ireland.⁵⁰ For the Communists, then, Sangnier remained a *faux* pacifist, chief of the dim-witted dupes.

(iii) Sangnier versus Charles Maurras

Even more mordant than the Communist critique, albeit for diametrically opposed reasons, was the caricature of Sangnier's effort in *Action Française* which reached a regular readership of about 90,000 in 1925-26. ⁵¹ Opposition to the liberal spirit of Locarno and Geneva was the perfect vehicle to advance its ideas of the restoration of nationalist and authoritarian order. The paper chose to mock "Tartufe"

⁴⁶ VIIème Congrès démocratique international pour la Paix. Wurtzbourg, 3-7 Septembre 1927 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1927), p. 96.

⁴⁷ Würzburg 1927, p. 100.

⁴⁸ ibid., p. 116.

⁴⁹ ibid., p. 100.

⁵⁰ ibid., p. 117.

⁵¹ Claude Bellanger (ed.), *Histoire générale de la presse française*, vol.3, *De 1871-1940*, (Paris, 1972), p. 528.

(hypocrite) and his band of Boches' at Boissy-la-Rivière.⁵² Relating events at Bierville to the 'anti-patriotic campaign' of some *instituteurs* against bellicose school texts, the paper remarked that 'all these people are fools...but fools who circulate freely are the most dangerous, especially when they are invested with a public mandate.'⁵³ In a comparison with the American circus impresario (whose tours had become a household word in France in the 1890s), *Action Française* sneered relentlessly at 'Barnum-Sangnier.'⁵⁴ The three-ringed circus at 'Barnumville' concluded, 'as we might have known, with a Communist act of faith. If Cachin isn't chuffed after that!'⁵⁵

In this non-demobilized worldview, talking to the Germans was tantamount to treason. Throughout this period, the paper insisted on misspelling their opponent's name, Germanising Marc to Mark. Jean Sangnier recalls more than one occasion when the family home and newspaper premises at boulevard Raspail were daubed with sarcastic allusions to 'Herr Mark Sangnier.' The cartoon 'Les Adieux de Bierville' (see Appendix IV) reinforced the point. Against the familiar background of Bierville and the Peace Camp, Sangnier gives his Valentine, an enlarged heart, to a crudely stereotyped *Boche*: 'German delegate; "Farewell, Herr Sangnier. Until next year. Next time, you'll be Germany's guest..." Sangnier; "Bravo! In Berlin?" German; "Nein, ici." In Berlin?"

As has been noted, the Vatican had long suspected Maurras of heresy, of putting the crown before Christ and of subscribing to a pagan morality. Now that the papacy was supporting a peace policy vehemently opposed by the Action Française, the marriage of convenience between official Catholicism and vindictive monarchism had become inexpedient. As the last tents came down at Bierville, the singularly reluctant Cardinal Andrieu of Bordeaux was made to break the bad news from the Holy Office. In a reply to the written questions of young Catholics, the Cardinal

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⁵² Action Française, 18.8.1926.

⁵³ ibid., 16.8.1926.

⁵⁴ ibid., 19.8.1926.

⁵⁵ ibid., 24.8.1926. (Marcel Cachin, prominent Communist deputy, whose right to speak was defended by Sangnier in Chamber in 1923, see Chapter 2.).

⁵⁶ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 21.3.2001. (See Appendix).

⁵⁷ Action Française, 25.8.1926.

⁵⁸ Pope Pius XI's suspicion of the Action Française is explored in a new study; Jacques Prévotat, *Les catholiques et l'Action Française. Histoire d'une condamnation, 1899-1939* (Paris, 2001), pp. 212-13.

declared the anathema: 'Catholics by calculation, not by conviction, the men who lead the Action Française use the Church...but they do not serve it, since they reject the divine message which it is the Church's mission to propagate.' Membership of Maurras' movement was now incompatible with full communion with the Church, at a time when no fewer than eleven of France's seventeen cardinals were reputed to be Action Française sympathisers! Issued on 25 August, sixteen years to the day since the condemnation of the Sillon, Sangnier and his supporters felt a certain vindication. As Weber puts it, 'revenge is a dish that even Christians can eat cold.'

In the Maurrasian *Weltanschauung*, conspiracy was never far away. Soon, connections were drawn between the papacy's enthusiasm for events such as Bierville and the condemnation. Both aimed at facilitating Franco-German understanding and confirmed Pius XI as the new *pape boche* who had condemned Maurras as 'a sop to please the royalists' great enemy Briand.' In terms of timing, this view had a certain validity. More fundamentally, though, the Vatican was merely finishing the job begun in 1910. Maurras was suspected of compromising Catholicism with politics even in 1910 but, unlike Sangnier, was politically protected. Now the tables had turned, 'but these were not things that could be said out loud. Unlike the Action Française, which took pride in its Machiavellian opportunism, the Church could not admit its own.' 63

Before the war, as already mentioned, Sillon pacifists had scrupulously distanced themselves from the left-wing antimilitarism of Gustave Hervé. ⁶⁴ Having swapped integral pacifism for militarism in 1914, Hervé had unique insights into the peace movement. Now, in 1926, in *La Victoire*, Hervé wrote an intensely personal and indulgent analysis of Sangnier's efforts. If 1914 had been a 'cold shower' for pacifists like himself, 'it is still good that the apostles of peace are not discouraged.' ⁶⁵ He even agreed with Sangnier that a democratic, republican Germany was good for

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⁵⁹ Weber, Action Française, p. 231.

⁶⁰ Zeldin, France 1848-1945, vol.2, p. 1020.

⁶¹ Weber, Action Française, p. 67.

⁶² ibid., p. 252.

⁶³ ibid., p. 254.

⁶⁴ See Introduction.

⁶⁵ Victoire, 31.8.1926.

France. However, Hervé also felt that naïve love of neighbour was no substitute for military strength:

A good man like Marc Sangnier knows this well but, carried along by his apostolate, he sometimes loses sight of this...Let us be pacific, then, with Marc Sangnier...but, at the same time, let us be strong, armed to the teeth...Preserve the warlike virtues of our race if we do not wish to be cruelly grilled sometime for being pacific!⁶⁶

(iv) The Würzburg Congress

In September 1927, the Peace Congress returned to Germany for the first time since the Freiburg congress of 1923. However, it proved impossible to match the excitement of August 1926 with a mere ninety French youths travelling to Würzburg. Yet the visit did allow Marc Sangnier, by means of the Congress and the subsequent 'Peace Circuit' to southern German cities like Frankfurt and Mannheim, to have direct contact with a German audience. At the opening meeting, held on Saturday 3 September at the Plätzchen Garten meeting hall in Würzburg, Sangnier declared: 'Young French scouts, German Quickborn, republican socialists of many lands...we recognise them all as they are all part of the same spiritual family as ourselves.' The following day, Sunday 4 September, Sangnier delivered a speech from his perch atop an automobile at the Old Marketplace. His words were simultaneously translated into German. Back in Paris, *La Volonté* reported that the cortège associated with the mass meeting had snaked along for several kilometres, estimating the attendance at no less than 20,000. The Congress' deliberations continued in the city for four days until Wednesday 7 September.

Upon the conclusion of the Congress itself, delegates embarked on a 'Peace Circuit,' in answer to the Peace Pilgrimage of German delegates through northern France a year before. On Friday 9 September Sangnier visited Burg-Rothenfels, the mountaintop citadel where the *Quickborn* retreated from modernity to act out tableaux of rustic chivalry.⁷⁰ At Frankfurt on Saturday 10 September, the delegates paid

oo ibid.

⁶⁷ Peter Farrugia, 'French religious opposition to war, 1919-1939: the contribution of Henri Roser and Marc Sangnier,' *French History*, 6/3, 1992, p. 295.

⁶⁸ Würzburg 1927, p. 74.

⁶⁹ La Volonté, 7.9.1927.

⁷⁰ Würzburg 1927, p. 117. See chapter 5.

homage to the German republican tradition by visiting St. Paul's Church where the National Assembly met in 1848.⁷¹ In an open air evening meeting he declared that 'we are working to hasten the day when all peoples disarm, when to guarantee the security of states there won't be so many guns, canons or fortresses...as a real Society of Peoples will uphold right.'⁷² At another public meeting at Mannheim on Sunday 11 September, Paul Löbe, chairman of the Reichstag, made a startling declaration of respect for the Frenchman: 'If I have hastened to Mannheim, it is most of all to hail our dear master Marc Sangnier.'⁷³ The following day, the French and German delegates bade adieu at Heidelberg.

In pursuit of its high ideals, the Congress had spent several days discussing peace-related issues, including colonialism, as we saw earlier. There were heated discussions on Eastern Europe, the evacuation of the Rhineland and German disarmament. Both Wilhelm Heile and Maurice Lacroix agreed at the Political Commission that the evacuation of the Rhineland was 'necessary to the development of the Locarno spirit.' Heile, a German, also seriously raised the possibility of *Anschluss* with Austria. On disarmament, Sangnier would not countenance France being unarmed in the face of unjust attack, an eminently 'defencist' statement as defined by Ceadel. Defencism' is for the maintenance of strong defences as they offer the best chance of preventing war. Nevertheless, this 'defencism' was tempered by a liberal 'pacificist' faith in what Maurice Lacroix called a 'system of judicial guarantees resulting from free and honest agreement supervised by the League of Peoples(sic)' and backed up where necessary by real sanctions.

(v) Geneva-Bierville Congress, 1928

It was almost inevitable, as the twenties progressed, and the itinerant Congresses went from venue to venue, that Marc Sangnier and his supporters would

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⁷¹ ibid., p. 132.

⁷² ibid., p. 139.

⁷³ ibid., p. 150.

⁷⁴ ibid., p. 107.

⁷⁵ Martin Ceadel, *Thinking about peace and war* (Oxford, 1987), p. 72.

⁷⁶ Martin Ceadel, *Semi-detached idealists: the British peace movement and international relations,* 1854-1945 (Oxford, 2000), p. 5.

⁷⁷ Würzburg 1927, p. 91.

make a pilgrimage to Geneva, the 'city of God' that bore the millenarian promise of the new Jerusalem. Albert Thomas, at the International Labour Organisation, wrote to Sangnier again in 1927 to express regret at missing the Würzburg congress while lauding 'your vigour and tenacity in the cause of peace,' working through public opinion for 'the continuance of progress already realised.'78 Emboldened by such support, Sangnier and the Democratic International announced the 1928 congress as the Geneva-Bierville Congress dedicated to 'la paix des peuples par la SDN' or 'the peoples' peace through the League of Nations.' As the preface to the official account put it: 'Geneva-Bierville! The mere linking of these two names is wholly symbolic.'79 If Geneva was the political capital of internationalism, then Bierville was a moral one. The holding of the Congresses in August or September meant that they usually preceded slightly or coincided with the annual session of the League Assembly. One event complemented the other. This rhythmic, early autumn mobilisation of a segment of international civil society both supported and cajoled the diplomats and their governments: 'At the League of Nations, at the International Labour Organisation, we better understood what hopes were founded on our efforts. There we received anew proof that the true technicians of peace, faraway from disdaining an essentially moral effort like our own, attached to it the greatest value.'80

At an opening meeting at Victoria-Hall, Geneva, on Thursday 13 September 1928, the old English Liberal Sir Willoughby Dickinson congratulated the League of Nations on 'muzzling the dogs of war' and wished to enthrone Justice as 'sole arbiter of international affairs.' A speech by Mgr. Beaupin, General Secretary of the Ligue des Catholiques Français pour la Justice et la Paix Internationales specifically acknowledged the influence of Alfred Vanderpol in the Congress' work. In this spirit, delegates proceeded to guided tours of the institutions the following day. We have seen already the warm welcome extended by Thomas to Sangnier at the ILO in connection with the Jeune-République's attention to social issues. At the Palais des Nations, meanwhile, Émile Giraud, delegate of the League of Nations to the Congress and participant at Bierville, showed about one hundred delegates through the Council

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⁷⁸ ibid., p. 145.

⁷⁹ La paix des peuples par la Société des Nations. VIIIème Congrès démocratique international pour la paix, Genève-Bierville, 12-23 septembre 1928 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1928), p. 1.

⁸⁰ Genève-Bierville, p. 2.

⁸¹ ibid., p. 26.

⁸² ibid., p. 18.

and Assembly chambers.⁸³ At the ensuing reception, Avenol, Assistant Secretary-General, praised the Democratic International because the 'very first intimate Franco-German rapprochement happened in your meetings.'⁸⁴

The excitement of Geneva was followed by five days of study at Bierville from 18 to 22 September, where a Charter and Constitution for the *Action Internationale Démocratique pour la paix* –the movement's new generic title- was worked out. These confirmed the Congress' role as the body that fixed the 'general orientation of the movement' with decisions taken by ³/₄ majority. ⁸⁵ It also appointed an executive commission made up of the *bureau* from the International Committee and national secretaries to maintain links in event of war. ⁸⁶ At this point, Marc Sangnier was confirmed as president assisted by three vice-presidents, two Germans, Quidde and Joseph Joos, and one English, Ruth Fry. ⁸⁷

(vi) The Crusade of Youth, 1929.

Though not the last major public show of strength by the interwar Christian pacifist movement in France, the 'Croisade de la Jeunesse pour la Paix,' held from 16 August to 1 September 1929, was noteworthy for its ambition. Hoping to recapture some of the great *élan* of reconciliation of Bierville three years earlier, this 'Crusade' - the ninth Peace Congress - was an attempt to conquer the entire country for the cause of rapprochement, by means of a German pacifist 'invasion.' In its planning and execution, especially the nationwide mobilisation of a network of Jeune-Républicains and pro-Locarno sympathisers on the left, the whole exercise resembled a military operation. The organisation of the young 'crusaders' into self-conscious 'columns' reminds us of the increasing militarization of youth movements in the interwar period, including pacifist ones! As Mitterauer puts it: 'Youth groups were no longer wandering hordes; they were marching columns.' 88

⁸³ ibid., pp. 40-1.

⁸⁴ ibid.

⁸⁵ ibid., p. 60.

⁸⁶ ibid., p. 61.

⁸⁷ ibid., p. 103.

⁸⁸ Michael Mitterauer, A History of Youth (1986; English translation, Oxford, 1992), p. 219.

As was usual with those Congresses held on French soil, an Appeal in favour of it was posted throughout France. Noteworthy signatories of the appeal included Buisson, Herriot, René Cassin, Ernest Pezet and Paul Appel, honorary rector of the Academy of Paris. This ninth congress was to begin on Friday 16 August with the French *Volontaires de la paix* going to meet their German guests at various border crossings, except in the west and south. (See Appendix, Table and Map for itinerary.) The different columns were to meet up at Amiens and thence proceed to Paris on Saturday 31 August in time for lunch at the Quai d'Orsay, followed by the grand meeting and 'Fête de la Jeunesse et de la Paix' at the Palais du Trocadéro that evening.

Of all the columns it was the eastern one which best recalled the celebrated 'pilgrimage of peace' of early August 1926. Léon Dévisse, a French participant and chronicler of the trek, remembered meeting the Germans at Blanc-Misseron, on the Belgian border, on 17 September. On the following day, 18 September, Dévisse noted the illumination, against the night sky, of a statue of ND de la Paix on the summit of Récollets (near Cassel & Hazebrouck) erected by Mme. Armand Masson in memory of her son killed in the war. Once again, the Virgin's maternal gaze reigned over the Congresses. At Halluin, on the Monday evening, the local Jeune-République had organised a showing of the film: 'Verdun, vision d'histoire,' made in 1928 by Léon Poirier in an attempt to reconstruct the battle as an epic event that dwarfed its participants. Improvisation became a virtue as *Volontaires* made do with sleeping in a barn. Despite the language impediment, Jean Sangnier recalls an outdoor expedition full of good humour and the elixir of youth. His description of the passage through a town promoting that evening's meeting has a wistful, 'Pied Piper' feel to it:

The Germans who were there had their guitars. It was very congenial. The local population look sympathetically on us. There were even youngsters who mixed in a bit with the column and followed us for an hour or two or some little time. ⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Croisade de la Jeunesse, p. 130. ⁹¹ ibid., p. 133.

⁸⁹ Croisade de la Jeunesse(Août-Septembre 1929). IXè Congrès démocratique internationale pour la paix (Paris, La Démocratie, 1929), pp. 129-31.

⁹² ibid, p. 135. ⁹³ ibid.

⁹⁴ ibid, p.138.

At Hénin-Liétard, on Thursday 22, Jean Sangnier was master of ceremonies for an impromptu meeting where the main speaker was a 'German comrade' Paul Feltrin whose father had died at Verdun who 'protested his hatred of war.'96 Some of Feltrin's fellow pilgrims, those in the eastern column, were about to visit that battlefield to see the Douaumont ossuary and the famous Trench of the Bayonets monument, associated with the deaths in 1916 of men from the 137th French Infantry Regiment which were subsequently transfigured by myth. 97 Increasingly, from 1927-8, Douaumont was itself the focal point of 'silent marches' of many veterans' groups. 98 Feltrin's invocation of his dead father confirms Winter's observation that such pilgrimages 'drew upon and added to the kinship bonds already forged by war victims and their families.'99 The young German's symbolic embrace of Pierre Moreau of the Jeune République at the Hénin-Liétard meeting was the demobilization in action, the epitome of the mutual pardon the Crusaders postulated, bringing cries of 'Vive la paix, guerre à la guerre!' In interview, Jean Sangnier recalls the reception at the City Hall of Lille vividly where it fell to him to introduce the Crusaders to the socialist mayor Salengro. 100 Typically, Lille also had a local 'Cartel' or supportive coalition responsible for the welcoming of the Crusade. The Cartel in Lille went from the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme right through to the Christian Democrat PDP and the Compagnons de S. François. 101 As Jean Sangnier confirms, in town after town, the young Crusaders pointed to a ubiquitous message: 'peace, horror of the war, Franco-German rapprochement.'102

The Crusade itself, then, was part of the growing wave of battlefield tourism or, more accurately, pilgrimage, in the 1920s. As an act of closure and remembrance, French and German Crusaders of the northern column jointly visited the ossuary and

96 ibid., p. 140.

⁹⁷ ibid, p. 162; Jay Winter, Sites of memory, sites of mourning. The Great War in European cultural history (Cambridge, 1995), p. 99.

⁹⁸ Antoine Prost, 'Verdun' in Nora (ed.), Realms of Memory, vol. 3, Symbols (English translation, New York, 1998), pp. 389, 393; Croisade de la Jeunesse, pp.161-2. Visitor number at the provisional ossuary –completed in 1931- ran at half a million annually from the mid-1920s. ⁹⁹ Winter, *Sites of memory*, p. 52.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (See Appendix). Roger Salengro, member of Léon Blum's Popular Front cabinet in 1936. False accusations of wartime desertion, propagated with vigour by the Action Française and the far-right press, contributed to deterioration in his health and his ultimate death by suicide.

¹⁰¹ Croisade de la Jeunesse, p. 143.

¹⁰² Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (See Appendix).

war cemetery at Lorette. The ossuary and basilica built at Lorette by the local bishop, Mgr. Julien of Arras, hero of Bierville three years before, was the perfect site for such an act of *pietàs*. Lorette, Douaumont, Dormans and Hartmannswillerkopf (today known as Vieil Armand) were four national battlefield ossuaries that 'blended the cult of the dead with an affirmation of religious faith.' Barely a month before the Crusaders' visits to Lorette and Douaumont, in July 1932, the four as yet incomplete monuments were the beneficiaries of two fund-raising 'national days,' patronized by the state and all faiths. For Julien commemoration of the fallen went hand in hand with Franco-German rapprochement. He worked first to honour the dead and to "bury the war",' as a contemporary put it. This was equally true for Sangnier and the participants in the Crusade. Julien, unable to attend for all the political reasons outlined earlier, showed his undoubted sympathy by sending a senior cleric, the Vicar General of the diocese, to deputize for him.

Like Verdun, Lorette was a perfect example of how 'national memories are crystallised in historic sites.' As a participant in the pilgrimage to Lorette, Jean Sangnier agrees that it was initiated as a step towards reconciliation through shared grief: 'That was, of course, the deep meaning of these visits to the graves in the company of the enemies and adversaries of the Great War – a manifestation both of our abhorrence of war and above all that it should not begin once more.' Before a similar visit to the nearby German cemetery at Maison Blanche, Sangnier recalled how 'he, a veteran, had known the horror of war during the long months he had served in this sector of Lorette.' Arriving late in the evening of Saturday 24 August at Lorette, Eclaireurs de France briefly swelled the ranks of the Croisade, showing the collaboration of mainstream scouting movements with Sangnier's pacifist scouts, the Volontaires de la paix. Simultaneous religious and civil ceremonies concluded by 10 pm, allowing *Croisés* to make a 'pious pilgrimage amongst the tombs,' stopping before a sculpture of 'le Grand Mutilé de Lorette: le Christ de Carency,' at which they

¹⁰⁴ ibid., p. 127.

¹⁰⁹ Croisade de la Jeunesse, p. 149.

¹⁰³ Annette Becker, *War and faith. The religious imagination in France, 1914-30*, (1994; Oxford, 1998), p. 130.

¹⁰⁵ Nadine-Josette Chaline, 'Marc Sangnier. La Jeune République et la paix', 14-18, 1998, p. 91.

Edward Montier, 'Mgr. Eugène Julien,' Revue catholique de Normandie, May 1930, p. 134.
 Prost, 'Verdun,' p. 377.

Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (See Appendix).

prayed the Pater Noster. As Becker and Audoin-Rouzeau remind us, the ceremonies, liturgies and monuments that went to make up collective mourning were all part of the grieving process. The template of joint Franco-German vigil, such as that at Lorette just described, was used by other groups, on a much greater scale, at Douaumont on the twentieth anniversary of the battle in July 1936. Mgr. Julien's quatrain inscribed on the lantern tower made a deep impression on Sangnier's crusading pilgrims of 1929, a Christian variant on the demobilization theme:

You who pass as pilgrims near their tombs,

Climbing their calvary and its bloody roads,

Hear the clamour of the hecatombs:

'Be united people, be human.'113

The next morning Sangnier and the German and French youths pressed around the grave of another Sillon war hero, Amédée Guiard, a leading light from the high summer of the Sillon. His pre-war German friend Joseph Probst paid tribute to his 'sublime' self-sacrifice for his democratic ideals. 114 There were two further symbolic gestures at the graveside: firstly, German and French youths proffered their hands to one another while renewing the Volontaires de la Paix's oath to 'work for peace in union with all the world's youth.'115 Finally, to mark the solemn visit, 'a sheaf of wheat, bound in red, recalling the ardour of our friend's convictions, was placed on his tomb by one of our own.'116 The symbolism was pure Sillon. This visual motif featured consistently in Sillon publications and was depicted in stained glass at the offices of La Démocratie, a constant reminder, if one were needed, of the dolorist element in the movement's spirituality. The harvested wheat represented bounty, God's bounty, and organic growth. The red stood for sacrifice, the shedding of blood even for the sake of that rich harvest. This idea of regeneration through suffering was another part of the war culture of the Sillon subsumed into the new cause of demobilization. Sharing these emotionally charged experiences forged a spiritual bond between French and German, attested to by Joseph Probst's diary entry on the

110 ibid., p. 146.

¹¹¹ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau & Annette Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre (Paris, 2000), p. 212.

¹¹² Robert Gildea, *The past in French history* (New Haven & London, 1994), p. 127.

¹¹³ Becker, War and faith, p. 127.

¹¹⁴ Croisade de la Jeunesse, pp. 147-8. Probst at this time was General Secretary of Comité international démocratique for Germany.

¹¹⁵ Croisade de la Jeunesse, p. 148.

¹¹⁶ ibid., p. 148.

eastern column: 'We are already like members of the same family. Last night we read a page of the Gospels together.' 117

By Thursday 29 August, three columns, Northern, North-Western and Eastern had met up at Amiens so that by the morning of Saturday 31 August, all had arrived at La Démocratie in Paris. Again, official France gave its imprimatur to Sangnier's endeavour, with a luncheon in the sumptuous surroundings of the Quai d'Orsay's Salon de l'Horloge where a year before the U.S. and France had signed the Kellog-Briand Pact. The stuffy denizens of the Quai even waived protocol by allowing German youths to wear their trademark shorts, a minor triumph for the non-conformist Wandervogel. Briand, who had issued the invitation as President of the Council and Foreign Minister, was indisposed, preparing to leave for Geneva, and another cabinet sympathiser of the movement, the Agriculture Minister Jean Hennessy, took his place.

Hennessy was also the president of Fédération Française des Associations pour la SDN. Thus Sangnier hailed him as 'the great apostle of peace' and 'an older brother. Adding further official weight to the Crusade's Parisian finale, the senior politician also spoke at the Fête de la Jeunesse et de la Paix at the Palais du Trocadéro that evening, billed as 'the apotheosis of peace, the fusion of all the columns of the Crusade'. At the Trocadéro, Hennessy alluded to Briand's forthcoming appearance at the League of Nations where he would outline proposals for a putative federal Europe and concluded his speech by wondering if this transnational gathering was not 'a fine preface to the work of politicians who wish to bring the peoples of Europe together?' The most prominent German speaker was Ludwig Quidde, the anti-militarist of long standing, who spoke with the moral authority of the Nobel Peace Prize. As at Lorette, a 'peace oath' was renewed by youths of both

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¹¹⁷ ibid., p.180.

¹¹⁸ ibid., p.207.

¹¹⁹ Carlton J.H Hayes, *France: a nation of patriots* (1930; New York, 1974), p.328-9. The French Federation was a constituent part of the International Union of Associations for the League of Nations whose seat was in Brussels.

¹²⁰ Croisade de la Jeunesse, p. 213.

¹²¹ ibid., p. 208.

¹²² ibid., p. 221.

¹²³ ibid., p. 225.

nationalities at the Trocadéro, in front of the ubiquitous blue flags bearing the word PAX. 124 It declared:

Respectful of the will of our elders who fell, in such great numbers on the battlefields of the entire world;

Resolved that these many sacrifices should not be fruitless and conscious of the duties the future thrusts on us,

We, the young, swear by the dead of the world war, of whatever nationality, to place our activity and energy at the service of peace and international justice.

Without distinction of race or people and whatever our politics or religion, we all affirm our faith in peace.

We want to promote around the world a current of opinion capable of imposing, if the occasion requires, recourse to peaceful, legal solutions of problems which may arise.

Victims of the world war, sleep in peace. We will be faithful to our oath. A bas la guerre! Vive la paix! 125

The inauguration of the Foyer de la Paix at Bierville from 24 to 31 August 1930, which formed the first part of the tenth Congress, was the culmination of four years work and part of the same demobilizing effort of 'Peace through Youth' that had animated both Bierville in 1926 and the Crusade of Youth the previous year. The Epi d'Or hostel had opened in 1929. The costs of further additions such as the Ecole Internationale, or summer school, the Ecole d'agriculture, and accommodation at the Hotellerie were largely borne by Marc Sangnier himself. The formation in 1929 of a benevolent society of friends of the estate, Les Amis de Bierville, provided some pecuniary support with annual subscription rates of twenty-five francs for members and 100 francs for donor members. Sangnier, at the inauguration, referred to the Foyer as not just a house but also 'a community of life, thought, hope,' a concrete example of Sangnier's collaboration with other, non-Catholic pacifists. 126 instinctively anticlerical Dépêche de Toulouse reported the happiness of the liberal pacifist Jules Prudhommeaux of the APD, secretary of the International Union of League of Nations Associations, that 'on the common ground of peace a close collaboration could occur between all republicans of goodwill.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ ibid., p. 198.

¹²⁴ ibid., p. 220.

¹²⁶ Le Volontaire, 24.8.1930.

¹²⁷ Reported by Maurice Coquelin in la Dépêche de Toulouse, 31.8.1930, cited in Xe Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Innauguration du Foyer de la Paix de Bierville, 24-31 août 1930. Réunions d'Ostende, Bruxelles, Anvers et Liège sur les États-Unis d'Europe (Paris, La Démocratie, 1930), p. 60.

(vii) The idea of Europe

The first week of September 1930 saw the Congress proper open at Ostend and public meetings elsewhere in Belgium, specifically Brussels, Antwerp and Liège. 128 Through holding a study meeting at Ostend on the theme of the 'United States of Europe,' Sangnier and his supporters were in touch with the Zeitgeist, attempting to grasp what could be called a fleeting 'European moment' in the interwar period, no less significant for being so transient. Aristide Briand's memorandum on European union of May 1930 – with a parliament and a common market- was part of an increasingly forlorn attempt to tie Germany into peaceful co-existence with her neighbours. 129 Some of the fathers of the Congresses, old Radicals like Ferdinand Buisson, for example, had asserted their faith in a Kantian European organisation, as far back as the 1860s. 130 In these weeks, just before the Nazi breakthrough in the German parliamentary elections of September 1930, it was still possible, despite impending economic crisis, to believe in the ineluctable progress of international organization. Thus, Georges Hoog's rapport général to the Congress waxed lyrical about the Young Plan on the reparations issue, the Allied evacuation of the Rhineland ahead of schedule in March 1930, and the Briand-Kellog Pact of 1928, a pious declaration against sin 'not to be disdained for being exclusively moral.' 131

At Brussels, Sangnier declared that 'the United States of Europe is a must.' 132 Sangnier's Christian pacifist milieu shared in this vogue for 'Europe.' For them, national sovereignty was not absolutely inviolable but should be 'subordinated, through voluntarily agreed restrictions, to international public order, alone susceptible to ending European anarchy.' In July 1930, Sturzo, exiled leader of the *Popolari*, wrote to his long time comrade-in-arms Sangnier to state his enthusiasm for the theme of the tenth Congress:

One thing is worth affirming; that one cannot have a European federation with economic parameters, unless it is also and contemporaneously present in political and moral spheres. As

¹²⁸ Les États-Unis d'Europe (Paris, La Démocratie, 1930).

¹²⁹ Sally Marks, The illusion of peace. International relations in Europe, 1918-1933 (London, 1976), p.107
¹³⁰ Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, vol.1: *Ambition, Love, Politics* (Oxford, 1973), p. 794.

¹³¹ Les États-Unis d'Europe, p. 31.

¹³² ibid., p. 74.

¹³³ ibid., p. 50. (Resolutions of Congress.).

the free economy is better adapted to concentrating the interests of the various states, so too democratic politics are the best adapted to overcoming national egotisms while Christian morals are the best suited to the fraternity of peoples.¹³⁴

As Sturzo's declaration of faith shows, the older idea of Christendom coloured this European sensibility. Hoog, however, was against 'giving Europe a specifically European soul, of promoting a sort of European mystique' that might degenerate into a new nationalism. As Ruth Fry had intimated in 1926, far from undermining that same League, 'organising the United States of Europe is not retreating in disappointment from the League of Nations...on the contrary, it is adapting it to better fulfil its mission.' Integration should not mean a search for uniformity, ignorant of the 'happy fact' of Europe's social, cultural and political particularities. 137

The Congress also resolved that a minimum of conditions should be imposed on entrants. Some delegates, like the Hungarians, had wanted 'unfair' borders of 1919 revised as a precondition of union, an idea rejected out of hand by the Congress. Instead, it preferred to recommend to them Article 19 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which theoretically empowered the Assembly to conduct *ad hoc* 'reconsiderations' of the treaties. In actual fact, this remained a dead letter, conceivably another serious weakness of the League. Disarmament should be a cherished aim and priority, but not a precondition. The perceived crisis of capitalism of the early thirties prompted Betmale to say that 'capitalism can only be beaten by the democratic organisation of Europe.' 139

(viii) The Musée de la Paix, 1931

As the year 1930 drew to a close the international community finally agreed a draft disarmament convention. In January 1931, after over five years of wrangling, a date for the World Disarmament Conference was finally fixed for 2 February 1932. The year 1931, then, was one of anxious anticipation of this

¹³⁴ ILS (Rome), Fasc. 309, c. 21, Corresp. Sturzo-Sangnier, 12.7.1930.

¹³⁵ Les États-Unis d'Europe, p. 37.

¹³⁶ ibid., p. 33.

¹³⁷ ibid., p. 37.

¹³⁸ ibid., p. 51.

Georges Hoog (ed.), *IIIe Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Fribourg-en-Brisgau, 4-10 août 1923* (Paris, La Démocratie, 1923), p. 149.

¹⁴⁰ Ceadel, Semi-detached idealists, p. 243.

event. As ever, Sangnier felt it crucial to engage the populace with the disarmament issue so as to pressurize recalcitrant politicians. By means of the *Paix ou Guerre* exhibition, the Jeune-République pursued throughout France a populist campaign in this vein. As Ceadel points out, 'peace movements fare best when optimism is seasoned with a dash of pessimism.' The shock to the Locarno honeymooners of German, Italian and Japanese thunderbolts, especially in Manchuria, made the early thirties a highly intensive period for peace activism.

The role of Sangnier as an inspirational figure, motivating the initiatives of others, without having a determining role himself, is very much in evidence in relation to the Musée de la Paix. Jean Sangnier recalls this anti-war exhibition as the work, not of his father, but of Georges Lanfry and the Jeune-Républicains of Rouen: 'They reckoned that they had to communicate in a fashion accessible to all, even the plainest of men, and not alone the intellectuals, things that were not pleasant,' namely, the horror of war. 142 Edith Pye wrote of the exhibition and tour as a 'remarkable contribution to disarmament and peace...a travelling exhibition of cartoons designed by a member, fastened on screens which fold up and pack into a special motor van.¹⁴³ The Jeune-République's long tradition of collaboration with secular organisations also informed the means used. Outside Bierville, the Jeune-République had also been involved in localised semaines de la paix elsewhere in the country and centred on the armistice anniversary of 11 November. Their collaboration with the Masons and instituteurs had made them contribute to a documentary exhibition, at which it manned one of the five stands. Whereas the Jeune-République's section was devoted to the dangers of chemical and bacterial warfare, those of the other four - the Ligue des Droits de l'homme, the veterans, the League of Nations movement and the CGTcovered other topics such as the injustices leading to war and international security. 144 Inspired by an earlier exhibition in which the Jeune-République had collaborated with the Université populaire, Lanfry and his colleagues in Rouen set about devising the striking 'Musée "paix ou guerre" which opened in that city in early 1931. The six stands were didactic and made stark use of text and image to convey the pacific message and provoke an immediate emotional response.

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¹⁴¹ ibid., p. 281.

¹⁴² Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (See Appendix.).

¹⁴³ Edith M. Pye, *The Peace movement in France* (London, Friends' Peace Ctte., 1932), p. 5.

¹⁴⁴ Chaline, 'Marc Sangnier,' pp. 93-94.

Photographs of battle and of 'anonymous death without panache' were meant to arrest the viewers' attention. One can only imagine the horror of schoolchildren, in particular, at part of this stand, relating to facial disfigurements sustained during the war. The text beneath these truly shocking photographs asked rhetorically:

Do you dare incline towards these poor victims, towards this wreckage, to press your lips against their hideously deformed faces? No, you don't, you pull back, frightened, disgusted and you turn your head away so as not to see. They have mothers too, all the same, and wives and sisters, just like you. Don't run away so fast...Children, look at them, fill your gaze with this awful vision and when you read in your history books that war generates beauty and glory, you will remember their poor faces and you'll recall the truth that war, like hatred, is incapable of producing anything but ugliness, destruction and ruin.¹⁴⁶

The 'gueules cassées' haunted interwar society, a physical reminder of those from the last war who 'could never experience total demobilization.' However, as the Museum shows, their horrific example could be used as a powerful impetus for the demobilization of others.

Premonition of future war formed an important part of interwar pacifist propaganda. As Dennis Showalter shows, this literature of prediction took an apocalyptic turn in the twenties with especial reference to aerial war and gas. The Musée de la paix in 1931 was merely tapping into anxieties about air attacks on civilians such as had been used in French colonial wars of the 1920s. In the ominous section of the Museum entitled 'Demain,' Georges Hoog's commentary formed a particularly bleak futurology:

No more distinction between belligerents and non-belligerents. Death falling suddenly from the sky furrowed with squadrons of killer-planes or prowling treacherously at ground level in folds of poison gas, right to the most far-flung countryside, killing men, making the earth sterile, provoking "the great death of all" as Victor Hugo would have said. 149

Deploring this perversion of science and human progress, the Museum reproduced the iconic front cover of *Vu* magazine on 'the next war' where Rude's frieze of the *Marseillaise* at the Arc de Triomphe was subverted by placing gas masks on the

Paix ou guerre. Exposition documentaire. (Paris, la Jeune-République, 1931), p. 8.
 Paix ou guerre, p. 13.

Audoin-Rouzeau & Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre, p. 190.

¹⁴⁸ Dennis Showalter, ''Plus jamais'' du moins pas comme cela: imaginer la guerre après 1918,'*14-18 aujourd'hui*, 5, p. 152.

Paix ou guerre, p. 3. (Introduction by Georges Hoog.)

The kernel of the Museum's polemic then was the questionable principals. assumption that the mere presence of armaments was an independent cause of war. Moderate pacifists, including most in the Jeune-République, demurred at this, feeling, as Ceadel puts it, that while disarmament was important, it was 'complementary to other, more profound, strategies of war prevention.' 150

The exhibition really came to public attention though when, installed at La Démocratie, it formed the centrepiece of the peace movement's 'Semaine du désarmement,' from 14 to 22 March 1931. Georges Lanfry made a broadcast on Paris-PTT radio on 17 March explaining the venture's significance. A special issue of Jeune-République sold in the region of 90,000 copies. Pacifist figures of stature, including André Tolédano of the Institute for Intellectual Co-operation and René Cassin, came to La Démo to deliver speeches on the disarmament theme. The museum toured France at the end of 1931 receiving 200,000 visitors. ¹⁵¹ In Lyon, the well-disposed Radical mayor, ex-premier Herriot, eased its path. As before, local broad-based welcoming committees were formed in many French cities. However, unlike 1926, these ad hoc committees were now formalised into Cartels pour la paix, formally bringing together disparate secular and Catholic elements, united around a programme of peace and disarmament. Once again, in 1931, despite its small size, the Jeune-République was cast as catalyst to larger developments in French pacifism. Ingram points to the importance of these local 'Cartels de la paix,' formed explicitly in connection with the tour, in bringing about some semblance of coordination in the balkanised peace movement in the run up to the Geneva conference. 153 the Museum began its tour of the Somme region in September the local Cartel was made up of twenty-one such organisations.¹⁵⁴ Buoyed by this new found cohesion, Sangnier, at the twelfth national congress of his party in November 1931, denounced the idea that the peace policy had failed, a heresy to be fought with 'pacifism of action, As coalitions, the Cartels pour la paix belie the alleged fragmentation of

¹⁵⁰ Ceadel, Thinking about peace and war, p. 106.

152 Pye, The Peace movement in France, p. 3.

national congress of Jeune-République, 11.11.1930.)

¹⁵¹ Paix ou guerre, p. 2. (Introduction by Georges Hoog.)

¹⁵³ Norman Ingram, The politics of dissent. Pacifism in France, 1919-1939 (Oxford, 1991), p. 82. 154 Jeune-République, 11.9.1931. (The role of Louis Boinet in organising the event at Ameins should be noted as he had also been instrumental in organising the Amiens stage of the Pilgrimage of Peace in August 1926, showing a continuity of activists between Congresses.) 155 Sangnier, Le combat pour la paix (Paris, La Démocratie, 1937), p. 240. (Speech at close of 12th

French pacifism. However, their diversity was also their weakness with frequent outbreaks of 'sectarian hostility' due to the different Socialist, Radical and Catholic elements. ¹⁵⁶

(ix) The Fribourg-Constance Congress, 1931

The summer brought yet another congress and a return to the Swiss German border, to Freiburg and Constance between 5 and 9 August 1931. Disarmament was one of those millenarian themes that had recurred during the Congresses, with variable levels of intensity from year to year. 1931 represented a peak of interest. Like the Museum, the eleventh Congress attempted to anticipate the Disarmament Conference and the debate on disarmament then was central to the Freiburg-Constance meeting of 1931. In that same month, the Volontaires de la paix, although also busy popularising the Musée de la Paix, also relived some of the glory of 1929 by means of a miniature peace crusade through the long contested region of Alsace, with an equal number of young German 'crusaders.' Sangnier spoke at meetings held in Alsace in connection with the tour and some 2,000 signatures were collected for a Disarmament Declaration. Thus, when the Congress came to Constance soon after that, Dr. Hugo Baur, who had spoken so emotionally at Reims cathedral in 1926, welcomed Sangnier as 'the modern Bernard of Clairvaux who preaches today the great Crusade for Peace.'

At the outset of this eleventh Congress, the Quaker representative Edith Pye spoke of the 'necessary success of the [forthcoming] Disarmament Conference at Geneva' and of her wish to generalise the armaments restrictions of the peace treaties to the victors as well as to the vanquished. This she envisaged as a prelude to the total abolition of armies. A French cleric, abbé Pinson, meanwhile, argued that as human nature was flawed, depriving the League of Nations of a police force would be a mistake. Also from France, Colonel Lamouche declared himself for the maintenance of national service but with less numbers and for a shorter duration. He

¹⁵⁷ Pye, The Peace movement in France, p. 6.

¹⁵⁶ Chaline, 'Marc Sangnier,' p. 95.

¹⁵⁸ Deutsche Bodensee Zeitung, 7.8.1931 cited in Freiburg-Constance 1931, p. 141.

¹⁵⁹ Georges Hoog (ed.), *Le Congrès de Fribourg-Constance*, 5-9 août 1931 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1931), p. 152.

further insisted on the need for equality in the disarmament process, lest compliant countries be left defenceless against aggression. At the same meeting, Sangnier declared himself to be against the construction of the defensive Maginot line along France's eastern frontier and France's commissioning of new battleships as inconsistent with a policy of general disarmament: We cannot ask others to do what we don't do ourselves. Ludwig Quidde, the Grand Old Man of German pacifism, also reproved the defence ministers of both countries, Maginot and von Seeckt, for their recent hard-line speeches. By now, though, Quidde was something of a spent force, leading an isolated left-liberal Radical Democratic Party. 163

Treaty revision also arose. Here Sangnier revealed himself as increasingly revisionist. Speaking at the formal welcome to Constance he said: 'We do not want to say "no" to revision of the peace treaties...as long as there is a people that has the right to complain.'164 The final motions of the Congress asked that 'no principled objection should be put in the way of the revision of treaties.'165 Another contested part of the 1919 settlement was the ban on Austro-German union. Quidde remarked how 'there is no word that upsets the French so much as Anschluss.' 166 In the context of a desperate economic crisis, Germany had proposed a customs union in March 1931. 167 German delegates were prepared to countenance an Anschluss provided such a union was but as a prelude to European Union. 168 Conscious of the parlous economic situation in Germany, the Congress called for a prolongation for the duration of the crisis of the 'Hoover moratorium' on all reparations and inter-Allied debt payments beyond the one year proposed by US President Herbert Hoover. (In point of fact, the reparations clauses were quietly abandoned at the Lausanne conference in 1932. 169) On this issue, Quidde lambasted official French hesitancy about accepting Hoover's plan. The French, he conceded, were making a large

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¹⁶⁰ Fribourg-Constance 1931, p. 152.

¹⁶¹ ibid., p. 173. ¹⁶² ibid., pp. 187.

¹⁶³ Karl Holl, 'The peace movement in German politics 1890-1933' in Cosgrove, Art & McGuire, J.I., (eds.), *Parliament and Community: Historical Studies XIV* (Dublin, 1983), pp. 186-87.

¹⁶⁴ Deutsche Bodensee Zeitung, 7.8.1931 in Fribourg-Constance 1931, p. 146.

Fribourg-Constance 1931, p. 161.

¹⁶⁶ ibid., p. 169.

¹⁶⁷ James Joll, *Europe since 1870. An International History* (1973; 4th ed,. London, 1990), p. 328 *Fribourg-Constance 1931*, p. 149.

¹⁶⁹ Joll, Europe since 1870, p. 329.

financial sacrifice but their reluctance to make it had created an appalling political impression in Germany. 170

Significantly, this is the first congress where the name Hitler is mentioned. 'The Hitlerites and the "steel helmets," whose numbers have grown, have profoundly saddened your French friends,' Sangnier said at the opening session in Freiburg upon his return to Germany after an absence of four years.¹⁷¹ The 'steel helmets' or 'Stahlhelm: League of Front Soldiers' were a German right-wing veterans' association founded in November 1918 by Franz Seldte and Theodor Duesterberg, representing men 'incapable of adjusting to a world without the Kaiser.' 172 formidable militaristic presence with some 300,000 members by the mid-1920s, the Stahlhelm were indicative of the increasing militarization of German politics in the interwar period.¹⁷³ Even in 1931, though, some German pacifists, Quidde chief amongst them, were anxious to play down the threat, arguing that French public opinion had greatly inflated the significance of the results of the 1930 Reichstag elections where the Nazi party made its first significant gains along with the immense publicity its agitation against the Young Plan on reparations had gained. 174 However, on a boat trip around Lake Constance, vividly recalled by Jean Sangnier, then aged nineteen, some delegates had an eerie premonition of the impending storm:

I remember how, during that excursion on the lake, we saw a kayak pulling up not too faraway...in order to unfurl a Hitlerite flag. *Oh, là, là!* We said; 'what's that?'...And the Germans present said 'ha,ha! it's ridiculous, don't you see!' There were canoes and some handful of Hitlerite youths with the swastika...we were a bit concerned. All the same, it was in 1931. Nonetheless, from this very timid and modest demonstration and the reaction of those Germans with us on the trip who tried to minimise it, that proves that the problem already existed.¹⁷⁵

Quidde's minimising of the fascist threat and the nervous laughter of the Germans in the middle of Lake Constance tells us something about the psychology of the pacifist movement in Europe circa 1931. Ceadel argues that subsequently, in light of Munich, there was a 'subconscious rewriting of history' amongst pacifists about

¹⁷⁰ Fribourg-Constance 1931, p. 188.

Freiburger Tagespost, 6.8.1931 in Fribourg-Constance 1931, p. 136.

¹⁷² Richard J. Evans, The Coming of the Third Reich (London, 2003), p. 71.

ibid

¹⁷⁴ Fribourg-Constance 1931, p. 168.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (See Appendix.).

the date of their conversion to 'containment' of fascist foreign policy. The Despite post facto claims of having awoken very early on to the need for tenacious measures against Hitler and his warlike plans, this was largely self-deception. Talk of sanctions and enforcement measures against rogue states was virtually taboo in 1931-2 in left wing and pacifist circles lest it jeopardize the World Disarmament Conference that was about to take place.

(x) The 1932 election; defeat and consequences

Through all this time, Sangnier remained nominally a politician, contesting elections but with limited success. Having lost his seat in the 3rd sector of Paris in 1924, Sangnier returned to the southern working class suburbs for the 1928 elections. At Sceaux, in this same sector, he had been narrowly beaten in 1909. Now, in 1928, he stood in the district of Vanves. His candidacy aroused the usual mixture of enthusiasm and opposition. Madeleine Sangnier, aged eighteen and ever the loyal political daughter, wrote to her grandfather, old Félix Sangnier, to complain of Communist hecklers disturbing her father's meeting at Issy-les-Moulineaux by singing the Internationale! In the event, he suffered another defeat as Catholics preferred to vote for a conservative Freemason rather than for a progressive Catholic. The election of Louis Rolland in the Maine-et-Loire represented one of the party's few successes in the 1928 poll. This was the first parliamentary election in which the PDP had mounted a serious campaign and many cautious Social Catholics plumped for the less 'dangerous' of the two Christian Democratic parties.

Despite this, the party prevailed upon a reluctant Sangnier to stand again in 1932 on a platform that included a commitment to 'controlled simultaneous disarmament of all nations,' in keeping with the theme of the 1931 Congress and the Museum of Peace campaign. This time, in an act of daring, he was nominated for the Roche-sur-Yon seat, deep in the conservative Catholic heartland of the Vendée. Jean Sangnier recalls the suspicion of the Jeune-République he encountered cycling through the constituency during that election with posters and the difficulty he had in

¹⁷⁶ Ceadel, Semi-detached idealists, p. 282.

¹⁷⁷ IMS (Paris), M.S. 28, 'Député,' Corresp. Madeleine Sangnier-Félix Sangnier, 9.3.1928.

¹⁷⁸ Madeleine Barthelémy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, 1873-1950 (Paris, 1973), p. 263.

¹⁷⁹ Jeune-République, 25.3.1932.

acquiring venues for meetings in rural areas.¹⁸⁰ Performing creditably, Sangnier won in the towns but was beaten in the countryside, the seat remaining on the Right. Nationally, Jeune-République took six seats in comparison with the PDP's fifteen.¹⁸¹ His term as mayor of Boissy-la-Rivière having expired in 1929, Sangnier now held no elected public office and had little prospect of doing so in the near future. The Jeune-République was being perpetually crushed in elections between the right and the left, forcing Marc Sangnier into an 'examination of conscience.' After eight candidatures and only two successes – 1919 and 1925- Sangnier wanted to retire from the electoral fray. More than that, though never anti-parliamentarian in the demagogic sense, he was doubtful as to whether conventional politics was the most effective way to work for peace. He would like to bring his friends with him in a new direction, subordinating conventional politics to moral and psychological action. This would be an extension of his decision to found the Congresses, in reaction against the futility of his time in parliament in 1919-24.

His reaction to the 1932 election defeat, in an open letter to the party, was the somewhat precious observation that the Jeune-République had neither the necessary qualities nor faults to build up a political party. Nevertheless, 'now, more than ever, our work appears urgent and necessary. It surpasses and goes infinitely further than electoral campaigns.' The letter provoked a crisis within the movement and at a meeting of the party's Conseil national on 29 May, 112 delegates voted against the new orientation proposed by Sangnier, with a mere sixteen backing him. His policy repudiated, Sangnier duly resigned the presidency of the Jeune-République. The names of those who chose Sangnier over the movement were illustrious but comparatively few. The most prominent were men like Hénri Christophe, Marcel Lagrue, Georges Blanchot, Jacques Rodel, Etienne Baton, Gustave Salmon, Gaston Lestrat, Maurice Couqellin and Henri Guillemin. Thirty-two Sangnier loyalists signed a collective letter to the membership on 25 June 1932 explaining their decision

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¹⁸⁰ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2001. (see Appendix.).

¹⁸² Jeune-République, 20.5.1925.

<sup>Pezet, Chrétiens au service de la cité. De Léon XIII au Sillon et au MRP, 1891-1965 (Paris, 1965),
p. 122. Jeune-République's most notable success was Guy Menant, elected for the Mayenne, see
Helène & Simone Gaillot, Marc Sangnier 1873-1950 (Le Mans, 1960), p. 96.</sup>

¹⁸³ Le Volontaire, 22.5.1932. Reproduction of Sangnier's 'Lettre du 15 mai 1932 aux camarades de la Jeune République.'

¹⁸⁴ Françoise Gaspard, *La Jeune-République*, 1924-32, Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université de Paris, 1969, p. 67.

to leave. They were following the master who said that the *Jeune-République* was 'a ferment of life and activity,' not an embryonic party.'

Whether prepared for the repudiation or not, Sangnier exuded magnanimity in the last editorial he wrote for *Jeune-République* addressed simply 'à nos amis':

No disagreement, neither on the programme nor on the goals but only on the manner of attaining the goal...No one is infallible but each must try and discover the best route to follow and when he honestly believes he has found it he must try and get his friends to follow...a separation for practical work need not seem cruel as it does not affect our ideas or our friendship.¹⁸⁵

However, some daily contacts of over two decades' duration were being ended, most painfully that with Georges Hoog who departed, as secretary-general of the party *sans Sangnier*, for the political party's new headquarters at rue Las-Cases. Maurice Lacroix, veteran of many a heated Congress debate and a regular at *La Démo* since 1917, similarly left. 187

The death and national obsequies of Aristide Briand, Minister of Foreign Affairs and architect of the Locarno treaty, in July 1932, served to heighten this sense of the end of things for this stage in the Sangnier experiment. His death came as a great blow to the whole moderate pacifist milieu in France and to none more so than Sangnier, the *Jeune-République* and the *Volontaires de la paix*. The rapport between Briand, the great survivor and supreme pragmatist of the Third Republic, and Sangnier was real and led to a bond of fellow feeling, if not friendship, honoured by Briand repeatedly in the 1920s through his official support and encouragement of the Peace Congresses. In this, Briand was keeping faith with a certain strand of moderate Republican Catholic opinion with which he had made initial contact through the Chamber of Deputies in 1905 when he moderated the Separation of Church and State, stripping it of some of its more provocative elements. Nonetheless, by enacting a law whereby, in theory, the laity could outvote clergy in their parish administration, he had made 'the democratic transformation of the Church his ultimate aim.' 188

¹⁸⁵ Jeune-République, 3.6.1932.

¹⁸⁶ Helène & Simone Gaillot, *Marc Sangnier 1873-1950* (Le Mans, 1960), p. 95.

¹⁸⁷ Barthelémy-Madaule, *Marc Sangnier*, p. 266.

That this provision was never actually put into practice is almost irrelevant. Its thrust meant that an impeccably good Catholic and good democrat like Sangnier was, in Briand's eyes, a perfect vector for the winning over of Catholicism to the Republic. As Rémond reminds us, when Briand made the Gourdon speech of June 1931 where he pleaded for a policy of European reconciliation and was roundly criticized for it in the Chamber, it was Catholic democrats like Francisque Gay who sprung most vigorously to his defence and Georges Hoog who mourned the passing, the following year, of 'a great Frenchman and a great European.' Even *La Croix* joined the panegyric. Now, in July 1932, his remains lay in state in the vestibule inside the Quai d'Orsay. Sensing his impending demise, Briand had personally requested that Sangnier's Volontaires de la Paix stand guard at that lying-in-state. While Sangnier sat in the tribune d'honneur with the President of the Republic, Paul Doumer, and the political establishment, his son Jean was in one of the Volunteers' relays at the casket:

Bernard Rivière and I found ourselves on watch for the last hour before the funeral began. At a certain moment, they brought the coffin and the wreaths out in front of the railings of the Ministry on the Quai d'Orsay. But they made us advance through the *Cour d'honneur* too. They said 'come, come,' even though our presence in front of the Ministry was not planned. But nobody stopped us. So we stayed there, one on each side of the coffin whilst the cortège and military parade passed. For youngsters like us, it was impressive. There are photos! What memories, what emotion! ¹⁹⁰

The Briand funeral was truly a watershed in the history of Sangnier's demobilization project. His energy spent on another unsuccessful election campaign, and suddenly deprived of the support of Georges Hoog and the political movement (and newspaper) he had led since 1912, Sangnier faced the prospect of starting anew his campaign for peace. At the Freiburg-Constance congress of the previous September, there had been no intimation that it was to be the last serious congress. Spain was mooted as host to the 12th congress in 1932. Now, as the Geneva Disarmament Conference, in which Sangnier's movement had placed so much faith, floundered, the International Democratic Peace Congresses stuttered to a stop too. In the event, a much scaled-down twelfth Congress was held at Bierville in September

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¹⁸⁹ René Rémond, *Les catholiques dans la France des années trente* (1960; Paris, 1979), pp. 41, 46. ¹⁹⁰ Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2001. See Appendix. Bernard Rivière (1914-1992), activist nicknamed him 'P'tit Bern' by Marc Sangnier. See obituary, 'Bernard Rivière', *Âme commune*, no.79, 1992.

1932, instead of in Spain, a faint cadenza to the decade-long string of Congresses. This last one did not even yield an official account.¹⁹² Though amicable, the 1932 split left Marc Sangnier 'profoundly isolated,' according to Darricau.¹⁹³

(xi) L'Éveil des peuples, 1932

What Sangnier still had in 1932, though, and what Darricau fails to mention, was the *Volontaires de la paix* who were to form the nucleus of his new enterprise for grassroots pacifism - *l'Eveil des peuples*. Instructively, the new newspaper that gave its name to this new wave of youth propaganda appeared as a special edition of *Le Volontaire* in September 1932. This edition carried an editorial by Sangnier, summoning his followers to the task of evangelisation, free of party political constraints:

Yes, it is indeed the peoples who must be awakened, strong and united, to the work of love which alone gives value to life...We also wish to enlighten and draw in the all too inert mass of these good people held back by the habits of bias, by fear of thinking and by lassitude from action. ¹⁹⁴

However, the real launching pad for the *Éveil des peuples* was to be the Journées d'Espérance, held throughout France between 11 and 28 August 1932. These 'Days of Hope' were organised as a series of themed demonstrations aimed at highlighting how, in Sangnier's words, 'all the outpourings of social, moral and spiritual forces could create an atmosphere favourable to peace.'

Fellow organizers included Mme. Malaterre-Sellier, Colonel Picot, representative of the 'Gueules Cassées' and the artist Jean Carlu. As their prominence in the victory parade in Paris on 14 July 1919 had showed, mutilés de guerre had a unique moral authority in this period and in any movement such as Sangnier's. As at the Museum of Peace, the inclusion of the facially disfigured demonstrated the particular debt owed to this particular category of veteran, and shows a refusal to hide

¹⁹¹ Fribourg-Constance 1931, p. 158.

¹⁹² Jeune-République, 9.9.1932. (This edition covered the two-day gathering at Bierville.)

¹⁹³ Darricau, Marc Sangnier, p. 47.

¹⁹⁴ Le Volontaire, 11.9.1932.

¹⁹⁵ Gaillot, Marc Sangnier 1873-1950, p. 81.

them away, even though their injuries disturbed. The same can be said for the repeated appearance at the Congresses (not least Bierville) of a courageous mutilé such as René Cassin of the Union Fédérale, eschewing all jingoism. ¹⁹⁷ In the sense of being a series of large public demonstrations, the Journées d'Espérance were reminiscent of the congresses. However, their emphasis on attaining a popular audience in accessible terms pointed ahead to the resistance to fascism that would come to dominate in the 1930s. Sangnier and the Volontaires now concentrated even more than before on the battle for hearts and minds at the popular level.

The Journées d'Espérance went on pilgrimage to Rethondes, site of the In a day dedicated to literature (13 August), the movement honoured Lamartine, author of la Marseillaise de la Paix, at the monument of Tresserves near lake of Bourget. ¹⁹⁸ On 15 August, Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, the Pardon de la Paix, a variation on the traditional Breton Catholic devotion was enacted at Relec in Finistère. Once again, Catholic piety was modulated for the demobilization cause. On 21 August, as part of a day dedicated to labour, French and German miners met on the border at Forbach. Meanwhile, at the shrine of Vézelay, the Compagnons de Saint-François offered prayers in the name of Christian peace. French and German children shared a holiday camp on the île d'Oléron. Whereas the congresses had visited war graves, most notably at Lorette in 1929, in 1932 the peace pilgrims paid homage at the tombs of pioneers of the movement for reconciliation who had themselves succumbed to the march of time. Thus, on 24 August, Sangnier led a pilgrimage to Briand's grave in the little village of Cocherel, where barely a month before the Volontaires de la paix had been amongst those present for the hero's burial. The next day he stood over the tomb of Ferdinand Buisson at Thieuloy in the Oise. Here he praised the old stalwart of the secular tradition, who died in 1931, as 'righteous, proud, pure, loyal...rich in all the spiritual treasures of humanity.' 199 Religion and science were honoured with ceremonies at Port-Royal for the

¹⁹⁹ Noli, '"L'Eveil des Peuples", 'p. 47.

¹⁹⁶ Sophie Delaporte, Les Gueules cassées. Les blessés de la face de la Grande Guerre (Paris, 1996),

pp. 171-98.

197 Winter, Sites of memory, p. 46; These issues were poignantly explored in a recent feature film, La Chambre des officiers (2001), based on the novel by Marc Dugain. See interview with director; Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, 'Entretien avec François Dupeyron,' 14-18 aujourd'hui, 5, pp. 234-36. ¹⁹⁸ Mathieu Noli, "L'Eveil des Peuples" ou le combat pour la paix, Mémoire de Maîtrise, Université de Paris X, Nanterre, 1993, p. 46.

philosopher Blaise Pascal and a visit to the Institut Pasteur on 27 August where the keynote speaker was Justin Godart, minister for public health, a radical-socialist deputy for Lyon and admirer of Sangnier's social conscience from before the war. ²⁰⁰

The day dedicated to youth was organised at the Swiss border, on the summit of Salève, where Théodore Ruyssen, liberal 'pacificist' *par excellence*, summoned a diverse group of youths, many drawn from schools around Geneva, to hear Sangnier. The most memorable of the demonstrations was the 'festival of the Arts and Peace,' held at the summer residence of Germaine Malaterre-Sellier at Hossegor in the Landes. Germaine's coup in securing the coming man of French classical composition, Maurice Ravel, to give a piano recital for the occasion, reveals something of the prestige attaching to the Journées d'Espérance. A national and international audience joined the 800 guests at the outdoors concert at Hossegor by means of radio. Jean Sangnier recalls, in a characteristically self-effacing manner, his own involvement, as a young man of twenty, in the evening. He collected Ravel from his hotel in Biarritz in his 'modest motor': 'I who am absolutely not a musician!' ²⁰²

The finale of the fortnight came, of course, at Bierville. A crowd of almost 3,000, including 400 children, packed into the famous Théâtre de Verdure. Here, in a series of *témoignages d'espérance* or 'testimonies to hope,' speakers bore witness to their hopes for peace. Colonel Picot spoke, as did Adolphe Espiard, assistant chef de cabinet to Prime Minister Edouard Herriot, another mark of the high political patronage Sangnier enjoyed. Incredibly, persons unknown, who were subsequently praised for their actions by the *Action Française*, launched incendiary devices into the arena. Mercifully, only a handful of children were injured, none seriously. Even inveterate Catholic critics of Sangnier like Baudrillart who described as 'ridiculous' and 'odious' Sangnier's prayers at Briand and Buisson's graves joined the chorus of disapproval of the Action Française. Like the vision on the lake, the incident showed that soon more than just moral courage might be needed.

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²⁰⁰ ibid., p. 48; Gaillot, *Marc Sangnier 1873-1950*, p. 81.

²⁰¹ Gaillot, Marc Sangnier 1873-1950, p. 117.

²⁰² Interview with M. Jean Sangnier, 5.9.2002. (See Appendix.).

²⁰³ Gaillot, Marc Sangnier 1873-1950, p. 118.

²⁰⁴ Baudrillart, *Les Carnets du Cardinal Alfred Baudrillart. 13 février 1932-19 novembre 1935* ed. Paul Christophe, (Paris, 2003), p.271. (Entry for 30.8.1932).

Jean Sangnier's recollections link the Journées d'Espérance intimately to the launch of the paper and movement *Éveil des peuples*. His father wrote that

the magnificent success of the Journées d'Espérance is startling proof that we were not mistaken and that it was possible to unite many and diverse people of goodwill all fixed on the same goal, animated by the same spirit...Such a success demands a morrow. After the sowing comes the harvest.205

Buoyed by this enthusiasm, he set to preparing the first full issue of *Eveil des peuples*, as distinct from supplements to Le Volontaire, which appeared on 6 November 1932, selling 50,000 issues. Jean Carlu's art deco large format design and impressive blue masthead struck a thoroughly modern note. 206 Carlu, who had designed a striking poster for the Journées d'Espérance, was one of the foremost graphic designers of the time, having created advertisements for household name products such as Banania and Mon Savon. Not just oratory, newspapers, film and radio but even the most modern and sophisticated advertising techniques were to be mobilised in the cause of peace.

As for the message, Marc Sangnier spoke out against peace activists who used bellicose language. Peace too needs 'strength and violence, but not that of arms. It requires the force of reason and the violence of love. This was an implied criticism of integral pacifist organisations like the Ligue internationale des Combattants de la paix. Founded in 1931 by Victor Méric, it disseminated extreme pacifist views through its paper La patrie humaine. 208 By contrast, l'Éveil des peuples wanted to offer youth a 'dynamic pacifism' free of 'the décor of an outmoded parliamentarianism' but without dispensing with loyalty to the nation.²⁰⁹ Faced with an increasingly disorientating international, Sangnier completed the turn towards popular education and away from conventional politics, and in the process he redefined the very project of demobilizing the hatred of wartime.

²⁰⁵ Le Volontaire, 11.9.1932.

Noli, '"L'Éveil des Peuples", p. 51.
 Marc Sangnier, 'Notre effort,' L'Éveil des peuples, 6.11.1932.

²⁰⁸ Nicolas Offenstadt, 'Le pacifisme extrême à la conquête des masses: la Ligue internationale des Combattants de la Paix (1931-1939) et la propagande,' S'engager pour la paix dans la France de l'entre-deux-guerres, pp. 35-39.

²⁰⁹ L'Éveil des peuples, 6.5.1934.

CONCLUSION

Marc Sangnier declared to an audience of several thousand Parisians and German guests in December 1921 that it was imperative to 'disarm hatred.' It was a powerful phrase with far-reaching implications. Taken as an empirical statement, it was a brutally honest admission that his contemporaries, and his fellow French in particular, were filled with hate. Two years after the end of the Great War, despite their near universal return to civilian life, they were still armed to the teeth, not so much militarily, but morally and psychologically, against the 'enemy.' The 'nation in arms,' it seemed, was still mobilized, casting a wary eye to the east at the 'neighbour' – Germany – they had just expelled from the national territory after four years of bitter and bloody struggle. The ambitious task Sangnier set for himself and the nascent International Democratic Peace Congress movement in 1921 was nothing less than the reversal of that belligerent mindset and the 'demobilization' of that culture; in short, the 'disarmament of hatred.'

The Great War left a legacy of mass death, mourning and hatred to the interwar generation in Europe. As cultural phenomena, their history can be best analysed culturally. Hence, the emphasis on the twin concepts of cultural mobilization and cultural demobilization in this thesis. Far from being impersonal and mechanical processes, real people incarnated 'mobilization' and 'demobilization' through membership of social groups or as individuals. Even more than 'cultural mobilization,' 'demobilization' demanded a highly personalised moral, political and even religious commitment to radically changing the world. As such it had to begin at the individual level before proceeding to the social, national and international levels.

It follows from Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker's description of individuals' and societies' millenarian investment in the war that the process of demobilization required a similarly spiritual and eschatological pledge to the cause of peace.² Sangnier's own trajectory shows something of this shift in focus. However, for Sangnier, as for many others imbued with pre-1914 'rational' ideas on liberal international organization, his new course is indicative of movement from the head to

¹ Compte-rendu complet du Ier Congrès démocratique international de la paix, Paris, 4-11 décembre 1921, (Paris, La Démocratie, 1922), p. 235.

² Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau & Annette Becker, 14-18, Retrouver la guerre (Paris, 2000), p. 137.

the heart in his outlook on international affairs. Specifically, Sangnier began the 1920s as a pragmatic pacifist motivated, in the first instance, by enlightened self-interest in his search for national security. A peaceful, democratic Germany, reintegrated into the community of nations, was the surest way to achieve this. Until about 1923, Sangnier formulated his ideas in these practical terms as an appeal to rational egotism. His example also reminds us of the links between practical, rational internationalism and idealistic pacifism. In a speech at the French peace organizations' annual banquet in February 1923, he declared that 'if the spirit of violence, the German spirit, wins over the world despite our victory, it's us who will have been beaten. We French, especially considering our birth-rate, we'll be the dupes; we will have served the regenerated Germany, eager for revenge.'

From the beginning, Sangnier had also felt a Christian and philosophical impulse towards reconciliation, alongside the practical rationale for détente. The more idealistic side of his thought came more and more to the fore in the mid-1920s. An improved international climate, especially after the Locarno accords of 1925, catalysed developments in his thinking in this direction. The awakening of this latent missionary zeal for reconciliation as a moral imperative drew in particular on his experience at Freiburg in 1923 and the bond of friendship sealed there with part of the German youth movement, the Wandervögel and the Quickborn in particular.

As we have seen, the period of gestation in Sangnier's thought, from 1919-21, and the simultaneous international correspondence in *La Démocratie*, suggested International Democratic Congresses as a means of restoring contact across borders sundered by the cataclysm of 1914-18. The 'disarmament' this entailed had to begin at the individual, psychological level if it was to have any hope of success at the social, national and international level. That is why, within the Peace Congresses, in the early 1920s, Sangnier placed so much emphasis on the most basic elements of human interaction: meeting and speaking. This was a means of slowly building up a sense of community amongst like-minded men and women of formerly warring nationalities. However, for Sangnier, as a Catholic, this community would also form a communion of souls. He liked to refer to this as *l'âme commune*. The Congresses

³ Ère nouvelle, 23.2. 1923.

held at Paris (1921) and Vienna (1922) initiated the humanization of the former enemy. Mirroring (unconsciously) the triad of Cardinal Mercier quoted at the very beginning of this study on the process of reconciliation, Georges Hoog wrote in 1923 of the Congresses as a focal point for pacifists who 'in order to get on, had to know one another and, in order to know one another, had to talk.'

What were the alternative worldviews to one based on hatred and distrust? The antithesis of hatred was love, in this case Christian love. Religion, Sangnier postulated, should be a vector of reconciliation, not division. Another moral (and indeed Christian) imperative was forgiveness. The cycle of contrition and pardon could follow one of two paths. The first entailed honest examination of past faults, no matter how difficult, so as to validate the process. An alternative path involved amnesia, a glossing over of past unpleasantness. Such selective memory was often based on the assumption that war itself, rather than the behaviour of any particular belligerent nation, was the real atrocity.

Seeing as the mourning process for the dead of the war was simultaneously a private and collective one, the Peace Congresses represented both a community of individual mourners and a community in mourning. This is seen in the ceremonial of the Congresses, particularly the Fête de la Paix at Bierville in 1926 and the visits to the war cemeteries and monuments at Verdun and Lorette during the Crusade of Youth in 1929. Both allowed for individual reflection on loss within the context of collective commemoration. This raises the vexed question of memory of the war, an underlying and recurrent theme of this study. In the case of the First World War, the history of memory requires a subtle approach, stripping away the post facto reconstructions of actors and their children in order to isolate the mindsets of contemporaries in 1914-18.⁵ The need for such a 'double chronology' is seen time and again in the Congress accounts where veterans, Sangnier included, posit an eirenical understanding of the war they had fought in order to redeem the memory and the sacrifice. The one thing they cannot, or only very rarely, admit to themselves, is

⁴ Georges Hoog (ed.), Le IIIè Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Fribourg-en-Brisgau, 4-10 août 1923 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1923), p. 494.

⁵ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau & Annette Becker, 'Violence et consentement: la "culture de guerre" du premier conflit mondial' in Jean-Pierre Rioux & Jean-François Sirinelli (eds.), *Pour une histoire culturelle* (Paris, 1997), p. 252.

that it had been a sheer and bloody waste. Hence, the sacrifice was validated with reference to the millennium of peace that was about to dawn.

Sangnier's pacifist commitment in the interwar period was intimately bound up with his experience of the war as a witness to combat. Without this, his post-1918 zeal may have taken a very different form or may not have been particularly zealous on this issue at all. What is true for Sangnier is true for interwar pacifists generally; it was impossible to divorce personal experience and memory of the war from subsequent pacifist stances. Studies that fail to take this into account have a gaping hole at the centre.

The war's legacy posed a particular challenge for French Catholics. For them, France was engaged in a process of moral reconstruction after 1919. In part, this meant capitalizing on the renewed missionary spirit, if not quantifiable religious revival, that was born out of the camaraderie of the trenches. A critical political element of this process was the restoration of normal diplomatic relations between France and the Holy See which occurred in 1922. However, less palatably, if they were to be truly close to the papacy, French Catholics might well have to choose between their old 'national Catholicism' and the 'Catholic internationalism' promulgated by Popes Benedict and Pius, despite the Vatican's ambivalence about the Wilsonian (and vaguely Protestant) League of Nations. From the time of his second audience with Pope Benedict in 1920, Sangnier clearly chose Catholic internationalism which he viewed as perfectly consistent with his French republican patriotism. In doing so, he played a significant role in communicating the new orientation of papal foreign policy. As this coincided with the reassessment by the Church of the relationship between French Catholics and integral nationalism, specifically the condemnation of the Action Française in 1926, Sangnier's loyalty to Rome earned him the undying hostility of the royalists and of Catholic intransigents generally.

The moderate pacifism of the Jeune-République put it at odds with the nondemobilizers who attempted to perpetuate the 'war culture' at home and abroad. In the realm of foreign affairs, this meant supporting a strict application of the treaties and refusing to break down the categories of enemy, of 'them' and 'us.' At home, it meant no compromise with the internal enemy – Freemasons, Socialists or Communists – thus making the actions of Sangnier and Mgr. Julien in embracing the secular left at Bierville all the more shocking. Unfazed, Sangnier saw no danger of compromising the faith by means of such collaboration on the specific issue of peace. Disavowing blithe indifferentism, he told the women at St Joan's Social and Political Alliance in London in 1924, a Catholic suffragist movement, that Catholicism was the leaven of the movement. Contact with those who do not share the faith 'renders ever firmer our desire to remain, for our part, integrally Catholic.' This was openhearted but absolute conviction, not provincial militancy.

The invective to which Julien in particular was subjected thereafter showed a clear link between non-demobilization in relation to the war and hardline attitudes in domestic politics. Such views were not merely the preserve of a marginal right-wing fringe but were shared by sober and influential figures such as Mgr. Baudrillart. Reflecting on Bierville, the rector even privately admitted the inherent attractiveness of a world based on Sangnier-style reconciliation but, as a pessimist (or realist, in his own mind) about human nature, he believed the demobilization project just wouldn't work: 'Theoretically these men are in the right; in practice, they subject to great risks the nation [France] that is the most sincerely humanitarian.'⁷

What of the near obsession with youth in the process of demobilization, seen in all the Congresses, reaching fever pitch at Bierville and during the Crusade of Youth? Can this too be seen as part of the war's legacy? Certainly, in as much as this was the generation in whose name and for whose liberty the war had been fought on both sides. More to the point, this was the new generation that would be obliged to fight any future war. Sirinelli alludes to the existence of two generations in the 1920s. The first was *la génération du feu*, those who had been under fire in the war. This generation kept both the flame of the Unknown Soldier and that of pacifism aglow. The younger 'generation of 1905' shared the veterans' aversion to war, but did so out

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⁶ Hoog (ed.), IVè Congrès - Londres, Septembre 1924, p. 98.

⁷ Alfred Baudrillart, *Les Carnets du Cardinal Alfred Baudrillart. 13 avril 1925-25 décembre 1928* ed. Paul Christophe (Paris, 2002), p. 444. (Entry for 18.8.1926).

of rejection of a failed adult society rather than out of direct experience. This meant that many veterans feared their children's pacifism was fragile and lent a sense of urgency to their pacifist propaganda amongst the young. As the memory of the war receded, it became ever more necessary to communicate to the young its horrors, inculcating the message of 'never again.' This was seen particularly strikingly in the exhibits at the 'Peace or War' Museum that toured France in 1931 in conjunction with the Jeune-République's pro-disarmament campaign.

Despite the tensions caused by the generation gap, the Congresses elaborated very particular forms of cultural demobilization in which young people had a privileged role. At the congresses specifically dedicated to youth, namely Bierville (1926) and the 'Crusade of Peace' (1929), a new 'liturgy of peace' was inaugurated which, while drawing on artistic expertise and traditional Catholic ritual, put the young, children in particular, centre stage. As this was still a community of mourning, widowed mothers clad in black, the latter-day 'Mothers of Dolours,' symbolically accompanied the children.

Despite the war, the movement remained basically loyal to nineteenth-century ideas of 'patriotic pacifism,' defined by Cooper as secular internationalism motivated by humanist and religious ideals and reinforced by social science analysis. Sangnier and the leadership of the Peace Congresses consequently struck a note of moral ambiguity about war and the individual's attitude when faced with it. These moderate men and women, opposed to the radical new integral pacifism, wished to disarm hatred without disarming or destroying attachment to the nation itself. These potential contradictions crystallized into a controversy on the matter of national service and whether it could be legitimately refused. It was an issue with which the movement grappled but which it never fully resolved. Interviewed in 1993, Madeleine Barthelémy-Madaule recalled the words Sangnier had spoken to her in the

⁹ Cooper, Patriotic pacifism, p. 4.

⁸ Jean-François Sirinelli, 'La France de l'entre-deux-guerres: un "trend" pacifiste?' in Maurice Vaisse (ed.), Le pacifisme en Europe des années 1920 aux années 1950: Actes du colloque tenu à Reims du 3 au 5 décembre 1992 par le Centre ARPEGE (Brussels, 1993), p. 45.

early thirties: 'I want war to end. I will do all in my power to stop it. But, if it has to be fought, I will fight it.' 10

Sangnier reflected the moderate pacifism of most French veterans. However, how did his instincts in favour of cultural demobilization fare when faced with the crises of the 1930s? Deprived of many erstwhile Jeune-République colleagues after the summer of 1932, the Twelfth Congress at Bierville that September was an apologetic and anti-climactic affair. It led Sangnier to conclude that the Peace Congresses, in their 1920s form, were unsustainable. As the Weimar Republic he had attempted to nurture was beset with economic depression and the rise of extremism, Sangnier saw that the Locarno spirit had evaporated and that the very fabric of democracy itself would have to be defended domestically before international solidarity could have any solid foundations. Accordingly, the Action Internationale, the organizing body of the Congresses, had the desultory task of dissolving itself in March 1933, just as Hitler entered government in Germany.¹¹

By this time, the cultural demobilizers of the 1920s were faced with a disorientating and discomfiting world. The British pacifist Gilbert Murray wrote, in his preface to the biography of Sangnier's English interlocutor, Sir Willoughby Dickinson, that 'we thoroughgoing League of Nations enthusiasts did in our hearts believe that all the civilised nations after the lesson of 1914-18 had turned their back on war; we did not allow for the temptation offered to ... Japan or Germany or even Italy by a world in which all its neighbours were both weakened and pledged to peace.' Some pacifists reacted by retreating into self-delusion, wishing to believe that Franco-German entente was still possible. Sangnier, faced with the withdrawal of Germany by Hitler from both the League of Nations Disarmament Confrerence and the League itself, soon sensed the new purpose in German foreign policy. The flight into Parisian exile of some German associates such as the pacifist Helmuth von Gerlach from 1933 also alerted him to the persecution of dissidents in Germany. A life-long philo-Semite and an outspoken anti-fascist, Sangnier was happy to serve on

¹⁰ 'Entretien avec Madeleine Barthelémy-Madaule, 12.6.1993' in Jean-Claude Delbreil, *Marc Sangnier: Témoignages* (Paris, 1997), p. 26.

¹¹ IMS, M.S. 38, Peace Congresses, Folder on XIII Congress, 23.3.1933. Dissolution, 'procès-verbal de dissolution de l'Action Internationale.'

¹² Gilbert Murray, 'Preface' in Hope Costley White, Willoughby Hyett Dickinson, 1859-1943. A Memoir (Gloucester, 1956), p. 7.

the honorary committee of the Ligue Internationale contre le Racisme et l'Antisémitisme (LICRA), along with the socialists such as Henri Sellier. ¹³

His open support for the strikers of 1936 and welcome of the Popular Front government as 'a great wave of hope' only served to confirm his reputation as the enfant terrible of the Catholic bourgeoisie. 14 By opting early on for resistance to fascism at home and abroad, was Sangnier abandoning the 'disarmament of hatred?' Not necessarily. However, its form and rhetoric would have to adapt to the new circumstances to be relevant. In the 1930s, then, Sangnier's rhetoric changed emphasis from 'disarming hatred' to what he called 'the pacifism of action.' Antifascism meant resisting those who had obstructed the Congresses in the 1920s. They had now taken on a new and dangerous ideological mantle. Small wonder that he wrote in 1936 that 'the pacifist must be brave.' With the 'pacifism of action,' Bierville still provided the physical focus for the enterprise. While still stressing the importance of contact between different nationalities, Sangnier emphasised anew elements of the pacifist creed that had already been present in the 1920s - that of the individual examination of conscience and conversion to the cause. The Locarno-era faith in Geneva and liberal internationalism was no longer credible in the face of Nazi Germany. The only hope was to work through individuals. These individuals then co-operated with others in physical labour (on the Bierville estate) that was as symbolically-charged as it was physically demanding. As the Bierville estate filled with Catalan refugees from the Spanish Civil War in the mid-thirties, Sangnier sensed a contagion of violence in Europe which spurred him on to greater efforts at the level of individual conversion through the Éveil des peuples movement.

Like many others, Sangnier pragmatically supported the Munich accords of September 1938 rather than face immediate war. It was but a reprieve, he felt, but a necessary one. By early 1939, however, Sangnier accepted that only force could stop Nazism. After 1940, the active involvement of his son Jean and many from the Jeune-République milieu in the Resistance, along with his own month-long imprisonment in Ravensbruck in 1944, on account of the clandestine publications at

¹³ Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale, (Nanterre) [BDIC], F delta rés. 798/44. Réunions publiques (1924-36).

⁴ L'Éveil des peuples, 10.5.1936.

¹⁵ Marc Sangnier, Le pacifisme d'action (Paris, 1936), p. 9.

La Démocratie, shows, in Farrugia's words, that 'a deeply held aversion to violence based on religious principles did not necessarily entail submission before the Nazi juggernaut.' The importance of Sangnier as an inspiration to Christian Democrat resisters in the Vichy period is borne out by the personal testimonies contained in Kedward's study of motivations for resistance after 1940.¹⁷

Though the process was a qualitatively different one, there remains an open question as to the degree of influence the rhetoric and liturgy of reconciliation pioneered by Sangnier in the 1920s had on the Christian Democratic movement after 1945 and its central role in the movement for European integration. Writing in 1955, Joseph Folliet, whose Franco-German youth movement Les Compagnons de Saint-François sprang directly from the Congresses, was in no doubt on the existence of such links: 'I felt myself European from 1926, from the moment of meeting the youth of Europe at Bierville, presided over by Marc Sangnier, at the time when, under the orange trees of Locarno, Briand and Stresemann were trying to create Europe.' The full impact of Marc Sangnier's cultural demobilization of the hatred of wartime may only have been felt after a second European conflagration.

What is most memorable about the phrase 'disarming hatred' is its humanitarian import. Believing that human beings were basically made to love, Sangnier saw cultural demoblization as a moral imperative. The manner in which he pursued it raises questions as well as giving answers. For instance, would war in the name of some League of Nations 'police' action be morally licit? Any judgement on Sangnier's effectiveness as an activist is coloured by the broader failure of Locarno internationalism for which Sangnier was no more responsible than many others. In truth, he often preached to the converted whose adulation sometimes gave the movement an illusion of cohesion and strength that was deceptive. Nonetheless, as an initiation into politics of a segment of both French and German youth, the Congresses represented a noble attempt to turn the legacy of hatred of the enemy from the war into a force for reconciliation. That it was only a partial success does not mean that it

¹⁶ Farrugia, 'French religious opposition to war, 1919-1939,' p. 286.

¹⁷ H.R. Kedward, Resistance in Vichy France. A study of ideas and motivation in the southern zone, 1940-1942 (Oxford, 1978), pp. 253, 259.

¹⁸ Marc Dannenmuller, 'Joseph Folliet. Ami et admirateur de Marc Sangnier,' *L'Âme commune*, 43, (1983), p. 3.

failed the prophetic criteria set down for it when Sangnier first spoke of the 'disarmament of hatred.' Above all else, Sangnier invoked the common humanity of the formerly warring nationalities. As he told the assembled French and German youths at the Palais du Trocadéro in Paris in 1929, he, a witness, recalled vividly the 'poor German soldier' coming over the top into the wasteland of barbed wire. Yet, he added, 'we hadn't a word of hatred for him. The poor French *poilu* saw in him a victim of the same misery.' While idealizing his own position in retrospect, fundamentally Sangnier was right. Long before the 'Locarno honeymoon,' even when a combatant and a war propagandist, Sangnier had already posited the millenarian task of reconciliation with the foe whose resolution lay in the future.

¹⁹ Croisade de la Jeunesse(Août-Septembre 1929). IXè Congrès démocratique internationale pour la paix (Paris, La Démocratie, 1929), p. 238.

APPENDIX I – TABLES

Table 1: International Democratic Peace Congresses, 1921-32

Year	Venue	Dates	Venue	Specified Theme	Thematic Commissions
1921	Paris	4-11 Dec.	La Démocratie (7ème.) Closing meeting held at Manège du Panthéon, rue Lhomond, 5ème	None	Social, International, Moral & Political
1922	Vienna	26 Sept- 1Oct.	Chamber of Commerce. Closing meeting at Great Hall of Vienna City Hall.	None	Moral, Youth & Education, Women, Press, Trade Unions & Political
1923	Freiburg-im- Brisgau.	4-10 Aug.	Opening meeting and plenary sessions -Salle Paulus in suburb of Dreisam Commissions – Katholisches Vereinhaus Closing meeting at Municipal Festival Hall	None	Nationalism & Religion, Nationalism & Democracy, Disarmament
1924	London	16-19 Sept.	Govt. reception – Lancaster House. Deliberations - Central Hall, Westminster	None	Political, Moral, Economic & Organization
1925	Luxembourg	9-14 Sept.	Opening meeting and plenary sessions - Grande Salle, Palais municipal. Commissions – Cercle municipal	None	Education, Social & Political

1926	Bierville (Seine-et- Oise)	17-22 Aug.	Bierville - château & estate	Peace through Youth	Organization, Social & Moral
1927	Würzburg	3-7 Sept. ¹	Opening and main discussions-Hall at Plätzchen Garten. Closing meeting – Ludwigshalle	No specified theme	Race, Economic & Political
1928	Geneva & Bierville	12-23 Sept.	Victoria-Hall, Geneva. Bierville estate	Peace through the League of Nations	Political, Social & Education
1929	Throughout France with Paris & Bierville as focal points	16 Aug 5 Sept.	Lunch at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Quai d'Orsay, Main rally – Palais du Trocadéro, Paris	The Crusade of Youth	See other Table
1930	Bierville & Belgium	24 Aug- 9 Sept. ²	Bierville – Foyer de la Paix, Ostend – Salles Blanche, City Hall, Brussels- Palais Mondial, Antwerp- La Bourse, Liège- International Exposition Pavillion.	The United States of Europe	Political, Economic, Social & Education
1931	Freiburg- Constance	4-9 Sept.	Freiburg Constance – Salle des fêtes de Saint-Jean.	Disarmament	Disarmament, Economic
1932	Bierville	Sept.	Foyer de la Paix	None	

¹ Followed by the 'Circuit de la Paix' in Rothenburg, Rothenfels, Frankfurt and Mannheim, 8-11 September.

The 10th congress was divided in two parts;

I.Bierville, 24-31 Aug; Dedicated to inauguratation of the Foyer de la Paix, work of the commissions and a plenary session.

II. Conclusion of congress with meetings in Belgium on theme of the 'United States of Europe'; Study meeting at Ostend, 2 September. Public meetings; Brussels (Palais mondial), 5 September; Antwerp, 6 September; Liège, 9 September.

5th Congress at Luxembourg, 9-14 September 1925³ Table 2:

Sessions Date		Themes	President/ Rapporteur (Commissions)	Prominent speakers
Education Commission/ Plenary sessions I	10 Sept.	Peace and the education of children	Colonel Lamouche (France)/ Mlle. Swarts (France)	Ferdinand Buisson, Maurice Lacroix, Fr. Stratmann OP.
Social Commission/ Plenary II	11 Sept.	Peace and social justice	Dr. Hermann Platz (Germany)/ Joseph Betmale (France)	Dupong, Betmale, Prof. Charles Richet.
Political Commission/ Plenary III	12 Sept.	Peace and the security of peoples	Deputy Pierre Dupong (Luxembourg)/ Joseph Probst (Germany)	Prof. Quidde, Louis Rolland, Mme. Malaterre- Sellier, Ruth Fry.

Composition of Comité international d'action démocratique (Vienna, 1922)⁴ Table 3:

Country	No. of
Country	Representatives
Germany	6
France	5
Austria	5
Switzerland	3
Britain, Lithuania, Italy, Poland	2 ea. (8)
Belgium, Bulgaria, USA, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Ukraine, Yugoslavia	1 ea. (9)
Total	36
Women members = 4 (1 each for Germany, France, Au.	

 ³ Le Ve Congrès démocratique international pour la paix. Luxembourg, 9-14 septembre 1925 (Paris, La Démocratie, 1925), pp. 131-2.
 ⁴ Hoog, Le Ile Congrès démocratique - Vienne, 1922, p. 245.

Table 4: **German Representatives at First Congress, Paris** December 1921

Grouping	Name	Affiliation
Politicians I –	Carl Schirner	Deutsche Demokratische Partei (liberal), professor of international law at Marburg University ⁵
Members of Reichstag	Walter	
memoers of Receiving	Schücking	
	Hugo Baur	President of Baden Zentrum ⁶
Politicians (II) - Members of regional assemblies	Klara Siebert ⁷	Member, Landtag of Baden
Journalists	Carl Muth	Director of Catholic review, <i>Hochland</i>
Universities	Hermann Platz	Professor of French literature, Bonn
	Rottcher	General Secretary for Southern Germany, German Peace Association
Representatives of German pacifist movement	Fr. Magnus Jocham	Gen. Sec., Sth. Germany, Friedensbund Deutscher Katholiken (FDK ⁸)
	Fr. Franziscus	Dominican theologian &
	Strattmann,	Gen. Sec., Northern
	O.P.	Germany, FDK

⁵ Karl Holl, 'The role of the German peace movement in German parliamentary politics' in Art Cosgrove & J.I. Mc Guire (eds.), Parliament and Community: Historical Studies XIV (Dublin, 1983), p.183

6 *Ier Congrès démocratique international – Paris 1921*, p. 240-1.

7 Sole female delegate amongst official German cohort. Lost a son in the war.

8 Mainstream German Catholic peace league.

	Count Harry Kessler (present)	German diplomat and internationalist
Individuals or Organisations also present or indicating	Ludwig Quidde (letter of support ⁹)	Doyen of German pacifists, head of the German Peace Association.
support	League of German Pacifist Students League of	
	German Democratic Youth German Catholic Women's League	

⁹ Ier Congrès démocratique international – Paris 1921, p. 241.

Table 5: IXè Congres Démocratique International Pour La Paix

CROISADE DE LE JEUNESSE (16.8.1929-1.9.1929)			
Column	Point of Departure/border crossings and date	Itinerary (17.8 – 30.8.29)	
North	Blanc-Misseron (Belgian border,) Saturday 17 August.	Fresnes, Halluin, Casel, Hazebrouck, Valenciennes, Douai, Lens, Lille, Tourcoing, Lorette, Arras, Albert, Montdidier (part of column only) and Amiens to Paris.	
East (1 st Column)	Germans by train from Bingen to Verdun via Sarrebrucken, Sat.17 August.	Douaumont, Reims, Chemin des Dames, Laon, Amiens.	
East (2 nd Column)	German delegates meet at Colmar – coming from Germany and Austrian Tyrol. Trek through Vosges to meet French at Schlucht in Alsace, Sat. 17 August.	Bruyères, Épinal, Mirecourt, Domrémy, Troyes, Nangis, Paris.	
South- East	Nice, Thonon on Lake Geneva (Swiss border), Belfort, Sat. 17 August.	Valence, Lyon, Dijon(accommodation refused), Auxerre, Paris.	
South- West	St. Jean de Luz, Thursday 15 August.	Pessac, Bordeaux, Poitiers, Tours, Orléans, Paris.	
West	Brest, Sat. 18 August.	St. Brieuc, Rennes, Le Mans.	
North- West	Le Havre, Sat. 24 August.	Rouen, Neufchâtel, Aumale, Amiens.	
Thursday 29 August. Merging of Northern, North-Western and Eastern (1 st) Columns at AMIENS in advance of journey to Paris by Sat.31 August			

Columns at AMIENS in advance of journey to Paris by Sat.31 August

Table 6: Fête de la Jeunnesse et de la Paix, Palais du Trocadéro, evening of Sat. 31.8.1929

Speeches			
French speakers	German speakers		
	Professor Ludwig Quidde, Nobel		
Jean Hennessy, Minister of Agriculture,	Peace Laureate (1927).		
president of Fédération française des	Vice-President, Comité		
associations pour la SDN.	international d'action démocratique		
	pour la paix.		
M C	Albert Muench, Neudeutschen		
Marc Sangnier	movement, Mainz.		

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW WITH M. JEAN SANGNIER (SON OF MARC SANGNIER) 5 SEPTEMBER 2002.¹

Key; GB = Gearóid Barry

JS = M. Jean Sangnier.

- GB Alors, Monsieur Sangnier, merci de me rencontrer. Je voudrais avoir vos impressions de l'engagement de votre père, Marc Sangnier, pour la paix après la Grande Guerre. Commençons avec la *Croisade de la Jeunesse* de 1929. Voilà un document.
- JS Laissez-moi jeter un coup d'oeil.
- GB Allez-y. Prenez votre temps. Alors, comme vous voyez j'ai marqué là où est votre nom. C'est bien vous?
- JS Je ne me souviens pas du tout de ça. Où est-ce que vous l'avez eu ça?
- GB C'est le compte-rendu de la Croisade de la Jeunesse. (1929)²
- JS Que vous avez trouvé dans *la Démocratie*!

 Alors ça refraîchit bien mes souvenirs parce que j'ai beaucoup travaillé tout ça. Il y a une étape dont je me souviens très bien...

(Looking at page 141 of account)

¹ Conducted at M. Sangnier's home in Paris.

² Croisade de la Jeunesse(Août-Septembre 1929). IXè Congrès démocratique internationale pour la paix (Paris, La Démocratie, 1929).

GB C'était un allemand qui a parlé après vous? M. Paul Feltrin? JS Qui donc? GB M.Feltrin. JS Je ne me souviens pas. GB Est-ce que je peux vous poser une autre question? JS Je vous en prie. GB Je vous ai donné ça pour refraîchir les souvenirs... JS J'en ai vivement besoin! GB D'abord, quels sont les impressions et les souvenirs que vous avez de cette Croisade de la Jeunesse? JS C'était la présence des allemands que nous avions été attendre à la frontière... À la frontière belge? GB JS Oui, il y avait un grand nombre d'allemands, je crois. Et ces jeunes allemands, on se comprenait comme on pouvait parce qu'on parlait pas allemand et beaucoup d'entre eux ne parlaient pas français. Mais alors ce qui me frappe c'est le caractère très particulier qu'avaient ces jeunes allemands. Très musiciens. Ils avaient des guitares alors que les jeunes français de l'époque étaient beaucoup moins musicien, au moins parmi ceux des Volontaires de la Paix.

Alors, première chose dans ces colonnes de Croisés qui passaient une Hénin-

Liétard dans une étape. Nous allions traverser la ville en défilant...

- GB Quelle ville?
- JS Hénin-Liétard
- GB Bon. Celle qui est évoquée dans le texte.
- JS Je me souviens de la colonne qui traversait la ville pour annoncer le réunion du soir et les allemands qui étaient là avec leurs guitares et c'était très sympathique. Et la population nous regardait avec sympathie. Il y avait même des jeunes qui se mêlaient un petit peu à la colonne et nous suivaient pendant une heure ou deux ou un peu de temps.

Dans l'étape, quant à ceux qui ont pris la parole, écoutez, là je n'ai pas de souvenirs...

- GB Alors, une question d'ordre pratique. Vous l'étiez à pied dans la colonne?
- Une partie, une partie. Mon père est venu. Il m'a ammené très gentillement dans sa voiture avec un ou deux Volontaires de la Paix. Mais je n'ai pas le souvenir de très longues marches à travers la campagne. C'était dans les villes et alors là je vois Lens qui était une étape qui me rappelle des souvenirs et puis on a couché un peu ...
- GB À la belle étoile?
- JS À la belle étoile. Oui, je me souviens mais je ne sais plus où c'était. C'est un détail un peu inutile...
- GB Mais non. Allez-y!
- JS On a passé la nuit dans un patronage local et il y avait un petit terrain de sport.

 (RIRE) Excusez ces détails un peu ridicules. Donc, on campait un petit peu comme on pouvait. Mais vous savez exactement quelles étapes j'ai fait?

- GB Non.
- JS Je ne m'en souviens pas. Il y a très longtemps.
- GB Vous aviez 17 ans à peu près?
- JS Oui.
- GB Alors, dans le discours de Paul Feltrin qui parlait après vous à ce meeting là, il a évoqué la mort de son père à Verdun. Voilà. Là je me pose la question, quand la Colonne est passée dans la région du Nord de la France, est-ce que vous êtes passé par les endroits qui ont été envahis ou il y avait des batailles lors de la guerre de 1914?
- JS J'ai pas de souvenirs précis à propos de ça. Mais quel est l'itinéraire de cette Colonne à laquelle j'étais attaché? Alouin me dit quelque chose. Lens aussi...
- GB En bref, ça a commencé à la frontière belge, on passait par la région du Nord. Après on est allé à Lille. Il y avait un grand meeting à Lille pour faire de la propagande...
- Mais qui était le maire de Lille à l'époque? Je crois que c'était à Lille qu'il y avait ce maire qui était socialiste et qui était accusé par les milieux de droite l'Action française d'avoir déserté pendant la guerre. Il a été poursuivi pendant longtemps par l'hostilité, les fausses rumeurs. Il avait dit 'pas du tout', 'il avait été fait prisonier' en allant relever un blessé. Et l'Action française l'accusait en disant 'pas du tout': 'Il s'est enfui volontairement et s'est constitué prisonnier pour s'échapper.' Comment s'appelait-il? Je crois qu'il s'est tellement heurté, choqué, blessé pas ces accusations, qu'il s'est suicidé.
- GB C'est Salengro, n'est-ce pas?

- JS Oui. À Lille, je crois.
- GB Oui. Et par la suite il est devenu ministre.
- À Lille, je me souviens que nous avons arrêté notre petite colonne toujours avec les allemands qui jouaient de la musique et c'était une des militantes de la Jeune-République qui devait conduire la Colonne, la présenter au maire et faire le discours d'acceuil. Le maire nous attendait sur le parvis de la mairie, en haut des marches, mais Madame Malaterre-Sellier a été retenue et c'est moi qui me suis retrouvé à conduire et à nous présenter au maire et à faire le discours de présentation. C'était Salengro, le maire de Lille.

Je crois vraiment qu'il était gêné, usé, fatigué par ces accusations, il s'est donné la mort. Ce dont je me souviens c'est d'avoir conduit la petite colonne et je me vois gravissant les marches de la mairie.

- GB Vous avez serré la main du maire?
- JS Bah, oui! Mais il nous a accueilli. Et il y avait une petite réception dans une des salles de la mairie. Et un petit discours.
- GB Et qu'est-ce que vous avez dit?
- JS Ce qu'on disait à chaque étape. On parlait de la paix, l'horreur de la guerre, pour le rapprochement franco-allemand puisque c'était le fait principal de cette *Croisade* nous sommes allés accueillir nos voisins aux frontières et c'étaient les allemands.
- GB Tout à l'heure, j'au posé la question des champs de bataille et les cimetières de la guerre de 1914...
- JS Il y en a eu. Moi, j'ai un souvenir d'une cérémonie, en fait une petite manifestation dans un cimetière...

- GB C'était dix ans après la guerre. Alors, pourrais-je dire que la guerre était toujours très présente?
- JS Oui.
- GB Est-qu'on passait délibérément par les cimetières de la guerre pour qu'on puisse se recueillir ensemble?
- JS La manifestation dont je me souviens, je ne sais plus dans quel cimitière, c'était prévu et organisé qu'on allait se receuillir dans ce cimetière sur les lieux de la guerre...ce n'était pas par hasard. Alors quel est ce cimetière?
- GB Ne vous inquiétez pas! Mais je me demande si les visites aux cimetières étaient aussi des démarches de réconciliation.
- JS Bien entendu. C'était la signification profonde de ces visites aux cimetières accompagné par des ennemis et des adversaires de la Grande Guerre. Et c'était une manifestation à la fois d'horreur de la guerre et surtout que ça ne recommence pas.
- GB Mais les allemands qui sont venus. Comment ont-ils vécu ça?
- JS Bah! Avec beaucoup d'émotion et ils partagaient tout à fait les sentiments qui animaient les Volontaires de la Paix. Ceux qui venaient étaient des allemands pacifiques Quickborn, Wanderwoegel...
- GB Le Professeur Quidde?
- JS Le Professeur Quidde. Mais je ne sais pas qui d'autres étaient là exactemment!
- GB Alors, c'était une façon de faire le deuil ensemble, n'est-ce pas?

- Alors, je ne me souviens pas du tout si, dans ces cimetières, il y avait des tombes de soldats français et des tombes de soldats allemands, là je ne me souviens pas, mais je me souviens de l'état d'esprit qui animait les jeunes qui allaient partager ensemble le souvenir des horreurs de la guerre qui avait opposée la France et l'Allemagne.
- GB Ainsi que faire la fête avec eux, en voyageant avec les allemands, est-ce que vous avez discuté entre vous, ce qu'a été la guerre, dans la mésure du possible?
- JS Oui. Avec les difficultés de la langue parce que la plupart d'entre-nous ne parlions pas allemand et inversement beaucoup d'allemands ne parlaient pas français. Mais c'était la vie en commun.
- GB Vous faisiez la cuisine ensemble?
- Oui. On avait les repas en commun. C'était pas du tout les allemands d'un côté et les français d'un autre. Mais ne pensez pas que j'ai été à pied depuis la frontière allemande jusqu'à Bierville. Pas du tout. On avait été transporté par des voitures de militants! Il y avait quelques étapes où il y avait des manifestations organisées ou presque improvisées dans certains endroits. Presque improvisé en ce sens que je me souviens d'avoir traversé une petite ville ou un village en colonne (et alors les bourgades veillaient) et il y avait, je me repète, quelques enfants qui suivaient parce que cette musique des allemands, tout ça était surprenant. On n'avait pas l'habitude de voir une colonne de jeunes avec des guitares.
- GB Et bien dans toutes ces villes et dans toutes ces régions, les jeunes-républicains se sont mobilisés pour vous accueillir?
- JS Absolument.

- GB Mais en collaboration avec des sympathisants comme les Ligueurs des Droits de l'Homme, par exemple.
- JS Oui, mais vous savez, on était accueilli mais je ne connaissais pas tout le monde.
- GB Vous-vous souvenez des films qu'on a passé parce que dans les compte-rendu on évoque les films qui ont été passés le soir.
- JS Oui, oui. Là dans les pages que vous me donnez je vois ça. On parle de cette histoire. Mais je ne me souviens pas très bien.
- GB Mais les Congrès de la Paix utilisaient tous les nouveaux moyens de la propagande. À Bierville, par exemple.
- JS Vous me dîtes qu'il y avait des films au sujet de Bierville.
- GB Oui.
- Oui, on commencait à utiliser le cinéma et les films. Alors, il y a, je crois, quelques images de la Croisade de la Jeunesse pour la Paix. Il y a surtout un film important sur le Congrès de Bierville de 1926 avec les manifestations au Théâtre de la Verdure. Et à l'heure actuelle ma fille et un cinéaste, ils préparent un film à diffuser à la television. Dans ce film, il y aura quelques séquences empruntées aux archives et il y aura des entrevues de personnalités contemporaines.
- GB Vous venez de parler de votre père. Et bien, dans le cas de Marc Sangnier luimême, après la guerre, était-il allé souvent aux cimitières de la guerre ou bien aux endroits où il avait combattu lui-même pour se receuillir ou pour honorer le souvenir de ceux qui sont tombés?

- JS Il y a toujours eu des manifestations dans les cimitières mais je n'ai pas le souvenir qu'il ait cherché particulièrement à retrouver les lieux où il avait été stationné pendant ce temps-là, où il avait combattu pendant la guerre.
- GB Par contre, dans son agenda de 1920, j'ai vu quand même qu'en 1920 il est allé avec Paul Chatelat (votre beau-frère) là où il était pendant la guerre.
- JS Il a été à de nombreus endroits pendant la guerre.
- GB Oui.
- JS C'est tout à fait possible qu'il soit retourné à quelques endroits où il avait été pendant la guerre.
- GB Mais je sais par exemple qu'on a mis une plaque à la mémoire d'Henry du Roure dans la Crypte.
- JS Oui mais il n'y a pas qu'une plaque à Henry du Roure. Vous l'avez visitée?
- GB Jamais malheureusement.
- JS Elle n'est pas encore restaurée. Mais il y a beaucoup de plaques en souvenir de militants du Sillon ou de la Jeune République qui sont tombés lors de la première guerre mondiale. Et il y a même une plaque pour les collaborateurs de l'imprimerie de *la Démocratie* qui sont morts en déportation.
- GB Pendant la guerre de 1940?
- JS Oui. Mais de la Première Guerre Mondiale, il y a plusieurs plaques à la mémoire d'anciens militants du Sillon, militants de la Jeune République qui sont tombés lors de la première guerre mondiale.

- Dans les fonds Jean Guiraud, journaliste de *la Croix*, aux Archives nationales, j'ai trouvé des lettres addressées à Guiraud qui critiquaient vivement 'l'indécence' de la visite des allemand dans le nord de la France et à Bierville. Votre père, comment aurait-il réagi à une telle polémique?

 Et savait-il qu'il y en avait qui n'était pas d'accord avec ce qu'il faisait?
- JS Bien sûr. Il y avait une partie de la presse qui était opposée à l'esprit de l'Internationale Démocratique pour la Paix. Il y avait l'Action Française. Il y avait d'autres, il y avait des journaux qui était très hostiles à ce rapprochement avec les allemands. Je sais que mon père avait été très heureux d'acceuillir les correspondants de *la Croix*, dont Guiraud.
- GB Parlons du monument à Notre Dame de la Paix. On sait que même si les Congrès étaient ouverts à toutes les croyances et toutes les philosophies, tout en respectant la foi de chacun, il y avait en même temps des cérémonies religieuses.
- JS Oui.
- GB Alors je me demande si aux cérémonies catholiques, on priait la Sainte Vierge sous ce titre de Notre-Dame de la Paix ou bien Reine de la Paix?
- On honorait ND de la Paix parce qu'il y avait même une tour. Mon père adorait les tours. Partout les tours! Même ici à *la Démocratie*. À Bierville il y avait la Tour Saint-Paul à côté de la Croix, à côté du calvaire, une tour avec une cloche. À côté des Grottes de St.François il y a une tour qui s'appelait la tour de Catherine de Sienne.

Alors à Bierville, il y avait la tour S. Paul, la tour ND de la Paix, la tour Ste. Cathérine de Sienne et la tour de l'auberge de jeunesse (l'Épi d'Or), ça fait quatre tours.

La Démocratie avait une tour. Il y en a même eu deux. Il y en a une qui avait été édifiée au moment du Sillon et le bâtiment de la Démocratie était le maximum autorisé par la Ville de Paris. Elle existe encore au sommet du

bâtiment construit pour le quotidien La Démocratie après la condamnation du Sillon.

- GB Aux cérémonies, priait-on ND de la Paix?
- JS Oui.
- GB En fait, c'était un nouveau titre donné par Benoît XV.
- JS Cette tour de ND de la Paix a été édifiée bien après la guerre, après Benoît XV.
- GB Je vous montre un extrait d'un journal d'Orléans de 1933 qui porte sur l'objection de conscience. Rolland, le jeune objecteur de conscience, avait été sympathisant de la Jeune République avant de devenir pacifiste intégral et même anarchiste.

Au procès militaire votre père parle en sa faveur.

Alors, est-ce qu'il y avait une évolution dans la pensée de votre père à ce sujet entre Bierville (où il s'est opposé aux allemands qui prônaient le refus absolu du service militaire) et 1933?

JS Je ne peux vous répondre d'une façon precise. Il était ouvert à toutes les formes du pacifisme et il ne condamnait pas *a priori* les objecteurs de conscience mais lui-même ne se considérait pas comme un objecteur de conscience.

Parmi les militants de la Jeune République ou les Volontaires de la Paix, il n'y avait pas de prise de position pour l'objection de conscience. Mais, par contre, il y avait un respect pour ceux dont la pensée les avait conduit à l'objection. C'est ce qu'il doit dire à ce procès en fait.

Je cite 'Je crois que c'est un jeune homme moral...Rolland.' Voilà.

³ Archives Nationales (Paris), F7 13.352 'Objection de conscience'. *Journal du Loiret*, 11.5.1933. File on case of conscientious objector Armand Rolland, tried at Orléans, May 1933.

- GB Oui, et en plus il dit: 'Je ne suis pas un objecteur de conscience et je l'ai prouvé'. ⁴ Ça va dans le même sens. Vous vous souvenez de ce procès?
- JS Pas du tout.
- GB Mais ça ne vous étonne pas qu'il soit allé témoigner à Orléans.
- JS Non, ça ne m'étonne pas. Les propos qu'il a tenu ne me surprennent pas.
- GB Même si l'Église catholique Benoît XV et Pie XI, tous les deux se méfiaient de l'objection de conscience.
- Oui. La doctrine catholique n'admettait pas du tout l'objection de conscience. Et il [Marc Sangnier] considérait qu'il y avait des circonstances où il fallait lutter contre la violence malsaine et criminelle. Il n'a jamais été objecteur de conscience. D'ailleurs, on le voit dans ces quelques lignes là. Mais je crois au Congrès de Bierville qu'il avait sûrement été évoqué et qu'il avait certainement affirmé sa position.
- GB Mais ses sympathisants allemands; est-ce qu'il y en avaient qui en étaient deçus? Auraient-ils voulu que Marc Sangnier se prononce pour l'objection de conscience?.
- JS Bien sûr. Ceux qui étaient objecteurs de conscience auraient souhaité que Marc Sangnier soutienne. Et les congressistes, suivant Marc Sangnier, s'y sont refusé. Mais que l'on soit indulgent à leur égard, c'est tout à fait autre chose. Dire qu'ils ne sont pas des lâches. Mais ceci dit, il avait sa position.
- GB Bien sûr. Mais ce pacifisme intégral, ce refus absolu du service militaire, c'était plutôt du côté allemand que du côté français.
- JS Vraisemblablement, oui.

⁴ ibid.

- GB Chez les Quickborn, les Wanderwoegel et les Socialistes?
- JS Vraisemblablement.
- GB Alors, vous avez évoqué à toute à l'heure le maire socialiste de Lille, Salengro, qui vous a reçu lors de la Croisade.

 Peut-on dire qu'à cette époque, même s'il y avait des divergences philosophiques et religieuses, que les socialistes modérés, réformistes, comme Albert Thomas, avait une certaine sympathie pour Marc Sangnier que ce dernier réciproquait.
- Il y avait de tout. Dans les Congrès, il y avait des gens qui étaient plutôt proche du parti socialiste. D'ailleurs, le Congrès de Bierville avait été soutenu même matériellement puisqu'on avait prêté du matériel militaire, des tentes, des cuisines. Le ministre de la Guerre, c'était Painlevé, qui devait être radical, mais radical-socialiste. Oui, alors que la *Jeune République* coopérait aux Congrès démocratiques mais ne suivait pas les socialistes sur tout les points. Mais sur ce mouvement en faveur de la paix, en faveur de l'organisation internationale, la SDN et tout ça, rejoignait certains éléments radicaux et socialistes.
- GB Et pour votre père, l'organisation internationale de la paix allait de pair avec la réforme sociale à l'intérieur de la France?
- JS Ca allait de pair dans le sens que c'était deux idées qui lui étaient chères et qu'il défendait...
- GB Mais c'était plus que ça, je pense. Je crois que dans ses discours et dans les discours d'autres au Congrès, on fait un lien entre les deux. On dit qu'on ne peut pas avoir l'un sans l'autre.
- JS Oui. Il faudrait chercher dans les discours les formules qui étaient utilisées.
 Mais dans ses convictions personelles il partagait les deux orientations, à la

fois une évolution sur le plan social et une évolution sur le plan international. Et dans son esprit, c'était le combat qu'il fallait mener et alors est-ce que ça justifiait cette association des deux idées, et de cet idéal social et de cet idéal international, qu'il affichait, qu'il affirmait, qu'il défendait? Ça faisait partie de ses convictions profondes. Mais y-avait-il un lien intellectuel, philosphique, je ne sais pas. Non, mais pour lui ça allait de soi.

Oui. Mais puis-je donner un exemple pratique: son soutien de la législation internationale du travail dans les années vingt, son soutien pour le *Bureau international du travail*, dont le directeur était Albert Thomas, un socialiste réformiste. On voit dans les discours de Marc Sangnier, mais aussi dans ceux de Mme. Malaterre-Sellier, et Georges Hoog, et Maurice Lacroix même, on voit qu'on militait en même temps pour la paix internationale et la journée de huit heures comme si on ne pouvait pas avoir la paix internationale sans la paix sociale. En plus du fait que les guerres soient causées par le mauvais fonctionnement du capitalisme.

JS (Hésitant)

Oui, certainement. Il a dû exprimer ce que vous résumez là. Il l'a certainement exprimé dans plusieurs discours. Tout ça, me semble-t-il, allait dans le même sens.

- GB Bien sûr, ce n'est pas étonnant.
- JS Non, ce n'est pas étonnant. Et il se félicitait de l'existence des organisations internationales et comme celles-ci étaient en même temps un progrès, une évolution sur le plan social, démocratique, il ne pouvait que s'en féliciter.
- GB Aux Congrès, on était bien content d'avoir la SDN, tout en critiquant certains aspects...
- JS Oui, tout à fait. Je n'ai pas de souvenir précis...
- GB Non, mais vous vous souvenez des idées répandues à l'époque.

- JS Oui, mais tout ça était en germe dans les idées du Sillon.
- GB Voilà, l'internationalisme.
- Il faut remonter à la source de cette pensée, cette action dans le Sillon. Toute sa vie sous des formes différentes. Ça ne peut que confirmer ce que vous dîtes là.
- GB Faut-il même retourner à l'influence du Père Gratry?
- JS Certainement. Les influences qu'il a subis, dans sa jeunesse, l'ont marqué tout au long de sa vie. Pascal, le père Gratry, voilà. Mais il faut reprendre toutes ses actions, tous ses discours pour y voir la continuité mais aussi l'évolution en fonction de l'histoire.
- GB Tout à fait.
- JS Les conditions de vie, les relations internationales n'étaient pas les mêmes à telle ou telle époque mais au jour d'aujourd'hui, il apporterait toujours des réflexions, des suggestions aux problèmes posés par la mondialisation. Il aurait beaucoup de choses à dire.
- GB Certainement. Une dernière question sur l'attitude de votre père vis-à-vis de la SDN. Selon ses discours, il me semble que la SDN était vue comme un moyen pour construire le royaume de Dieu sur terre. Il y avait, dans la construction de la SDN, un devoir religieux presque.
- JS Je ne répondrai pas, à ce propos, qu'il y avait un devoir religieux mais ça rejoint ce que je viens de vous dire auparavant que toute son action, toute sa vie ont été marquées par l'engagement qu'il prenait à l'époque du Sillon. C'est à dire que pour lui, chrétien, catholique, le ressort, le profond, c'était la foi religieuse et qu'il manifestait à ceux qui avaient le respect des forces religieuses, puis plus largement encore des forces spirituelles. Ça animait son action. Oui, mais je le formulerais un peu différément.

- GB D'accord. Est-ce que vous avez des souvenirs du Musée de la paix (1931)?
- Oui. C'était une initiative qui a été prise par des jeunes-républicains, pour illustrer les idées qui animaient l'action démocratique pour la paix. Et vous en avez vu des images?
- GB Oui. Il y a des images choquantes, de gens qui ont été mutilés pendant la guerre.
- Oui, il y avait des images atroces. Ça [le musée] n'avait pas été directement fait par mon père. C'était fait par Georges Lanfry ou bien les jeune-républicains de Rouen. Ils se sont rendu compte qu'il fallait s'exprimer d'une façon accessible à tout le monde, aux gens les plus simples, et pas seulement aux intellectuels etc. et alors ça c'était une façon d'exprimer des choses qui n'étaient pas gaies. Elles étaient exposées dans les villes de province.
- GB Et à Paris aussi?
- JS À Paris, je sais pas où il a été exposé. Je ne me souviens pas du tout.
- GB Mais ça a été réussi. Beaucoup de monde est venu.
- Oui. Ça a réussi. Ça a survécu, si j'ose dire, mais ça n'a pas été une grande initiative. Ça n'a aucun rapport avec les Congrès de Bierville ou le Foyer de la Paix. Ça a été une initiative plus modeste mais qu'on ne reniat pas. C'était à l'époque de *l'Eveil des peuples*.
- GB Voilà. Alors c'était vers 1931 si je ne me trompe pas.
- JS Je crois.
- GB Alors là, en 1931, on arrive aux derniers Congrès de la Paix.

JS Le dernier était en Allemagne. C'était le Congrès de Fribourg-Constance. A la frontière suisse-allemande. GB JS Oui, il y a peut-être une rive qui est suisse et une rive qui est allemande. GB Alors, ça a été le dernier en 1931. Et après, en 1932, on a eu les Journées d'Espérance. JS Oui. GB Vous vous souvenez des Journées d'Espérance? JS Oui. GB Vous y avez participé, alors? JS Enfin, je ne sais pas si vous êtes intéressé par les anecdotes? Oui, je les aime bien. GB JS J'étais présent [à Fribourg-Constance en 1931]. Je me souviens qu'il y avait une promenade en bâteau organisée par la municipalité. Mais je vous l'ai raconté? GB Mais non. JS Une promenade sur le lac de Constance, sur un bateau. Où les personnalités qui participaient au Congrès avaient été invitées à une petite promenade sur le bateau-mouche. Et je me souviens qu'au cours de cette promenade on a vu arriver pas très loin du bateau, mais pas près, un kayak pour dépouiller un drapeau hitlérien. Oh, là, là! Et alors, on disait, 'qu'est-ce c'est?'

GB

C'était pour perturber les congressistes?

- JS Pour choquer les congressistes. Et les allemands qui étaient là disaient 'ha,ha', 'c'est ridicule, vous voyez'. Il y avait des canoës, avec quelques jeunes hitlériens avec la croix gamée.
- GB Incroyable!
- On était un peu ennuyés. Pourtant, c'était en 1931...Alors, de cette manifestation bien timide et bien modeste et la réaction des allemands qui étaient avec nous en cette promenade, ils avaient essayé de diminuer l'incident mais en fait ça prouve que le problème existait déjà. Ils l'avaient diminué en disant 'non,non', 'ce n'est pas grave', mais enfin, ça existait.
- GB Et bien, les Journées d'Espérance qui ont eu lieu en 1932. Est-ce que ça ressemblait à la Croisade de la Jeunnesse?.
- JS Ce n'était pas la même formule. C'étaient des manifestations de tout ce qui pourraient servir la paix contre les menaces de guerre la menace du fascisme, par exemple. C'était des manifestations pour tout ce qui pouvaient servir la paix. Il y en avait une à laquelle j'ai participé. Elle a été organise à Hossegor.
- GB Je ne connais pas. Où ça?
- Près de Biarritz. Dans une belle propriété qui appartenait à Mme. Malaterre-Sellier. C'était autout de la musique et des arts et en présence de Ravel. Et c'est moi qui avait été cherché Ravel dans son hotel à Biarritz et qui avait ammené Ravel à Hossegor. Moi qui ne suis absolument pas musicien! Ce n'est pas très loin. Il y avait tout un concert qui avait été donné à la propriété. Celle-là était sur la musique, l'art. À celle-là, j'ai présenté de quelque manière les Volontaires de la paix. Les Journées d'Espérance, vous devez en avoir des compte-rendus. Il y avait une manifestation à un des centres du Bureau International du Travail sur le bord de la mer...vous devez en trouver dans les compte-rendus. Tout ce qui pouvaient contribuer à la paix. Ca avait été

annoncé par une très belle affiche que l'on doit à un affichiste de l'époque qui était très connu qui s'appelait Jean Carlu. On n'a pas retrouvé cette affiche.

- GB Quel dommage!
- JS Jean Carlu était très connu. C'est celui qui a fait les affiches pour *Banania* et *Mon Savon*.
- GB Ah!, toutes les grandes marques commerciales de l'époque. Et Jean Carlu, votre père l'avait connu?.
- Non. C'était par l'intermédiaire de Mme. Malaterre-Sellier. Et c'était au moment de la creation de l'Eveil des Peuples...et alors j'en cite deux parce que celle de l'organisation du travail je n'ai pas pu y assister. Moi, je n'ai été qu'à celle de Ravel. Moi qui ai ammené Ravel dans ma voiture, ma modeste voiture. Mais il était très gentil, très sympathique. Et il y avait eu ce concert mais il n'y avait pas eu de discours. C'est une amie de Mme. Malaterre-Sellier qui avait organisé ça.
- GB Et Marc Sangnier, était-il là?
- JS Non, non. Les Journées d'Espérance, ce n'est pas la même manifestation que celle sur la tombe de Briand?
- GB Oui, je crois.
- JS Aux Journées d'Espérance, à la tombe de Briand. Oui, j'y étais. Ca correspondait en tout cas avec la naissance de *l'Eveil des Peuples* il doit y avoir des compte-rendus là-dessus. C'était tout ce qui rapprochait les peuples, les hommes, les arts, la musique. Il y en avait plusieurs.
- GB Je vais vous demander un détail anecdotique quand même. Qu'est-ce que vous conduisiez comme voiture à l'époque. Quelle voiture? Vous vous souvenez?

- JS J'étais un enfant gâté! La première voiture que j'ai eu, je l'ai eu le jour où on passait son permis de conduire. On passait son permis de conduire à dix-huit ans à l'époque. J'étais un enfant gâté mais c'était quand même pratique pour les déplacements des Volontaires de la Paix.
- GB Bien sûr. Et vous, vous étiez quand même une espèce de leader de scouts, au sein des *Volontaires de la Paix*, n'est-ce pas?
- JS Pas spécialement, j'étais volontaire comme les autres. Les Volontaires ont été reçu au cours d'une cérémonie tout à fait classique.
- GB Une cérémonie religieuse?
- Non. Pas du tout. C'était très respectueux des autres. Il y avait des chrétiens, des catholiques, mais certains ne l'étaient pas du tout alors que la Jeune Garde du Sillon était catholique essentiellement. La cérémonie était précédée par une veillée à Montmartre avant la cérémonie. Il y avait une conversation avec mon père, un examen intellectuel sur les idées du Sillon ou sur la paix. Il y avait un examen physique comme pour le service militaire. Et une conversation avec un des animateurs.
- GB Et les examens physiques et moraux existaient pour les Volontaires de la Paix aussi.
- JS Oui, oui.
- GB Comme pour la Jeune Garde avant la guerre.
- JS Oui mais avec la Jeune Garde il y avait en plus le côté religieux. Une veillée de prière à Montmartre avant.
- GB Bien.

- JS Il y avait même un uniforme.
- GB Pour les Volontaires de la Paix?
- JS Oui, avec un beret marron.
- GB J'ai vu des photos.
- JS Les Volontaires de la Paix...vous voulez parlez de Briand?
- GB Oui, je voudrais parler de Briand.
- Mais alors pour les obsèques de Briand...Je ne sais pas qui s'en est occupé mais on a demandé que deux Volontaires de la Paix veillent dans le Salon du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères. C'est là que le cercueil avait été déposé toute la journée qui précédait les obseques. Et il y avait deux Volontaires de la Paix qui veillaient et qui se ralliaient en uniforme.
- GB Vous étiez un des deux volontaires?
- JS Pas tout le temps.
- GB Ah bon, il y avait des relais.
- JS Je vous raconte des anecdotes! Et je me trouvais être de veille, de garde, le matin des obsèques. Les obsèques devaient avoir lieu à onze heures ou à dix heures ou quelquechose comme ça. Eh, bien Bernard Rivière⁵ et moi, nous nous sommes trouvés être de veille pour la dernière heure avant le début des funérailles. Et, à un moment donné, on a avancé le cercueil et les gerbes devant les grilles du Ministère sur le Quai d'Orsay. Et on nous a fait avancer aussi dans la Cour d'honneur. Ils disaient, 'venez, venez,' même si notre

⁵ Bernard Rivière (1914-1992) was active in the movement as a whole and was particularly close to Marc Sangnier who nicknamed him 'P'tit Bern'. Sangnier acted as witness at his marriage to Mme. Paulette Rivière in 1936. Mme. Rivière remains active in the Conseil d'administration of the Institut Marc Sangnier. See obituary, 'Bernard Rivière', *Âme commune*, no.79, 1992.

présence en dehors du Ministère n'était pas prévue. Mais personne ne nous a empêché! Et bien, nous sommes restés là, l'un et l'autre, des deux côté du cercueil lorsque le cortège, le défilé militaire passait. Pour des jeunes comme nous, c'était impressionant. Les photos existent! Les souvenirs et l'émotion! Et une autre chose, il y avait une tribune d'honneur. Mon père y était assis. Et sur une photographie, on le voit assis à côté de quelques grands hommes politiques. Il y avait Barthou. Mais aussi le Président de la République (ou bien du Conseil) qui a été par la suite assassiné en descendant d'un bateau à Marseilles. Je ne me souviens plus de son nom. Peu importe, il n'était pas un personnage de haute valeur en tout cas. Si je ne trompe pas, mon père était entouré par trois hommes politiques qui ont été assassinés plus tard! Ah! je me souviens bien de tout ça mais je commence à me fatiguer...

GB Sans doute. Nous avons parlé pendant deux heures presque! Ca a été fascinant! Alors, je vais terminer. Merci inifinimment de me recevoir chez vous et de partager vos souvenirs précieux.

JS Je vous en prie. Merci.

⁷ President Paul Doumer.

⁶ Louis Barthou (1862-1934). Deputy and, from 1922, senator. Moderate republican.

APPENDIX III

GENERAL REFERENCE TABLE FOR FRENCH PEACE SOCIETIES ACTIVE IN THE 1920s. 1

Fédération Française des Associations pour la Société des Nations.

Constituent of International Union of Associations for the League of Nations at Brussels. Secretary – Jules Prudhommeaux

Treasurer- Mme. Malaterre-Sellier

Affiliated organisations;

- L'Association Française pour la SDN
- Le Groupement Universitaire Français pour la SDN
- L'Union Fédérale des Mutilés et Anciens Combattants
- L'Association de la Paix par le Droit.
- L'Union Féminine pour la SDN
- Le Comité français de l'Alliance Universelle de la Paix par les Eglises
- Le Groupe français de la Fédération Maçonnique Internationale
- La Ligue des Catholiques Français pour la Justice Internationale
- Le Comité d'Action Démocratique Internationale (Jeune-République)

French Association for the League of Nations.

Founded 1918. General Secretary – Jules Prudhommeaux. Moderate pacifist.

Groupement Universitaire Français pour la Société des Nations.

Founded 1923. French exampled copied in 22 countries. Led to foundation in Prague of International University Federation for the League of Nations in 1924.

Union Fédérale des Associations Françaises. (UF)

Veterans organisation favourable to peace and the League.

Organ - La France Mutilée.

Association 'La Paix par le Droit.' (APD)

Founded 1887. Dedicated to 'juridicial settlements of international conflicts.'

Thirty-one provincial groups – frequent peace meetings

President – Théodore Ruyssen

General Secretary – Jules Prudhommeaux

Union Féminine pour la Société des Nations.

Close alliance with La Paix par le Droit, utilising their publications to reach French women. Prominent activists included Mme. Malaterre-Sellier Moderate pacifist. For the acceptance of decisions of League's World Court on all international disputes. Advocated political enfranchisement of women as women are specially devoted to peace

¹ J.H. Carlton Hayes, France: a nation of patriots (1930; New York, 1974), pp. 325-39; Jean-Claude Delbreil, Les catholiques français et les tentatives de rapprochement franco-allemand, 1920-1933 (Metz, 1972), pp. 58-66.

Alliance Universelle pour l'Amitié Internationale par les Églises.

This French branch was part of an international Protestant organization with twenty-eight participating countries.

Ligue des Catholiques Français pour la Justice Internationale.

Founded 1921 with backing of hierarchy. Produced a quarterly *Justice et Paix* Represented in the Semaines sociales, annual French Social Catholic gathering. Cautious in dealings with Germany. Saw itself as successor to pre-war Gratry Society and as Alfred Vanderpol's spiritual heirs.

International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation.

Set up under League auspices in 1921 to 'study in a broad way how existing international relations of in intellectual sort 'might be simplified, clarified, and amplified.' Occasional meetings in Geneva but primarily Paris-based.

French Committee for the European Customs Union.

Vice-president – Charles Gide. Jules Prudhommeaux an active member. Organ – L'Europe de Demain.

French Committee of European Cooperation.

Founded in 1927 by group of French MPs under the leadership of Emile Borel. Aimed at 'cooperation among the peoples of Europe in the framework and spirit of the League of Nations.'

Pan-Europa.

French committee founded in 1927. Movement founded by Count Coudenhove-Kalergi who favoured a United States of Europe. Honorary President – Aristide Briand.

Union Catholique d'Études Internationales (UCEI)

Founded in Paris by French and Swiss Catholics in 1920. Headquarters located at Freiburg. Purpose – 'to study international problems in the light of Christian principles and to instruct Catholics in the work undertaken by the LON and problems before it.' Concerned with intellectual exchanges. Conservative in outlook and in relations with Germany.

Pax Romana.

International Catholic students' organization based in Freiburg.

Christian Trade Union International.

Headquarters at Utrecht in Holland.

Institute of Christian International Law

Based at Louvain University.

IKA – Internationale catholique

Founded by Fr. Metzger, Graz, Austria in 1920. Includes 19 nations including Germany. Only French Catholics close to Marc Sangnier or abbé Demulier involved. Promoted knowledge of Esperanto.

APPENDIX IV - ILLUSTRATIONS

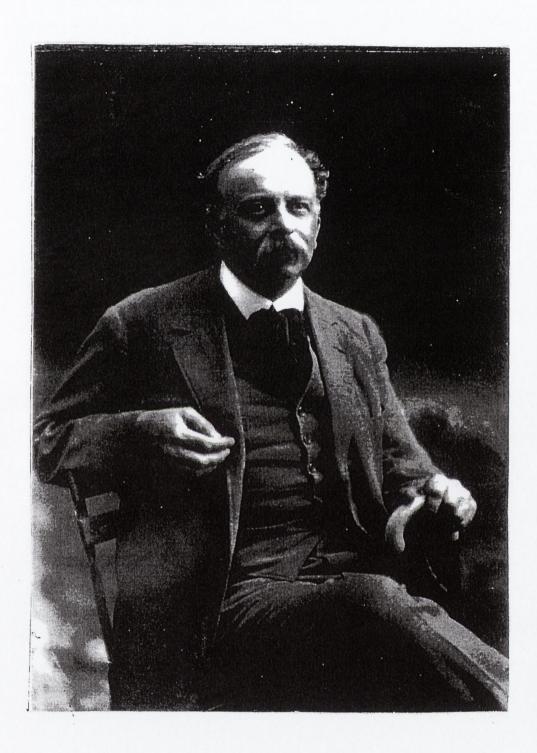


Figure 4.1 Marc Sangnier, 1873-1950.

- Source Institut Marc Sangnier, photographic collection.
- All subsequent illustrations from same source unless specified otherwise.





La France donne vraiment un grand et remarquable exemple.... ne serait-ce pas pitograble si, après avoir tout sacrifié à la défense de la patrie, on avait le honteux courage de la déchirer intérieurement, une fois la paix revenue?



Figure 4.2 Marc Sangnier, Army Captain c. 1915.

- Wartime postcard produced by Les Lettres d'un soldat.
- Source private collection of Mme. Dominique Laxague. Reproduced with kind permission.





Le suprême adieu du Capitaine Marc Sangnier à l'un de ses soldats



HENRY DU ROURE mort au champ d'honneur

Demain ou plus
tard, dans la paix
assurée ou rétablie
nous reprendrons le
combat noble entre
tous, l'éternel combat
pour la vérité
intégrale et dinne
Henry du Roure

Figure 4.3 On the western front, 1915: Sangnier leads men at frontline burials.

Same source as Fig. 4.2.



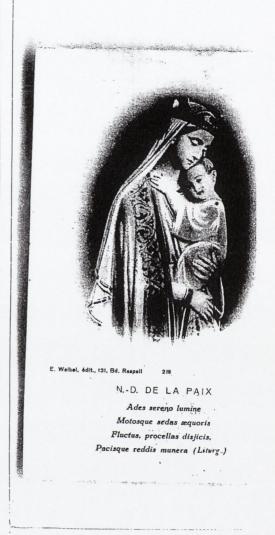


Figure 4.4 'Images pieuses' of Notre-Dame de la Paix.

- Source Dominican Archive, Bibliothèque du Saulchoir, (Paris), Iconographic material on Mary, Queen of Peace.
- References; Imprimerie franciscaine (Vanves) –170, 189, n.d.; Weibel (Paris) 219, n.d..

Marc Sangaier en caricature

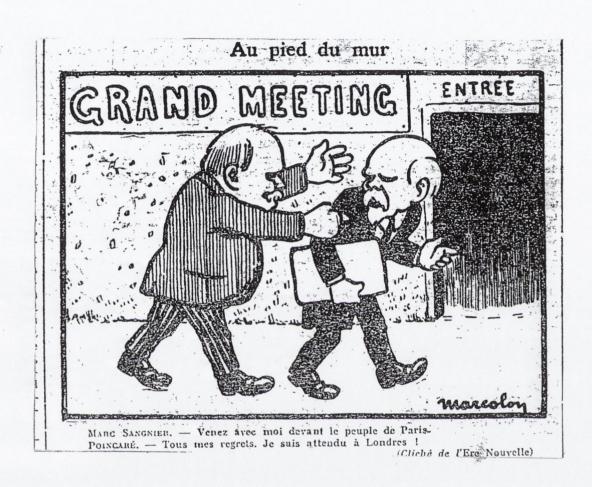
Le voyage de Mare Sanguier dans l'Europe centrale, son discours à la Chambre et notre meeting du Panthéen ont exercé la verve des journalistes. D'amusantes caricatures, sympathiques ou hostiles, ont illustré à ce sujet plusieurs quotidiens ou périodiques.

Nous croyons amuser nos lecteurs en en reproduisant deux ici: l'une de l'Erc Nouvelle, l'autre de l'Action française.



Figure 4.5 Marc Sangnier in caricature, June 1922.

- Contrasting views of Sangnier's pacifist engagement reproduced in Jeune-République, 22 June 1922.
- Above, Action française attacks Sangnier for his visit to Germany in May, depicting him in a German cuckoo clock, swapping places in Germany with Renaudel, a veterinary surgeon and representative of the anticlerical Ligue des Droits de l'Homme. The paper deduces from the latter's profession that Sangnier 'must have made the Boche sick. Did the apostle produce amongst these eaters his customary laxative effect?' (Action Française, 10.6.1922)



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Figure 4.6 Marc Sangnier in caricature, June 1922.

 On the political left, Ère nouvelle (June 1922) was more sympathetic to Sangnier, portraying Premier Raymond Poincaré as myopic for refusing Sangnier's invitation to address a large Parisian pacifist gathering. In the event the meeting at the Manège du Panthéon was the subject of an ambush by the Camelots du Roi.

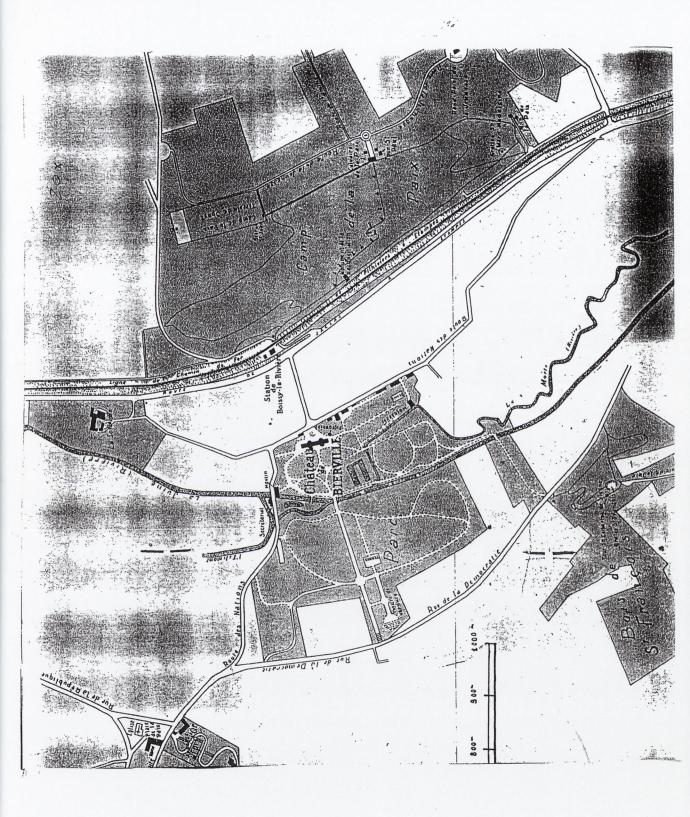


Figure 4.7 The topography of peace: map of the Bierville estate and the Camp de la Paix, 1926.

• Source - IMS, M.S. 32.2, dossier 3.

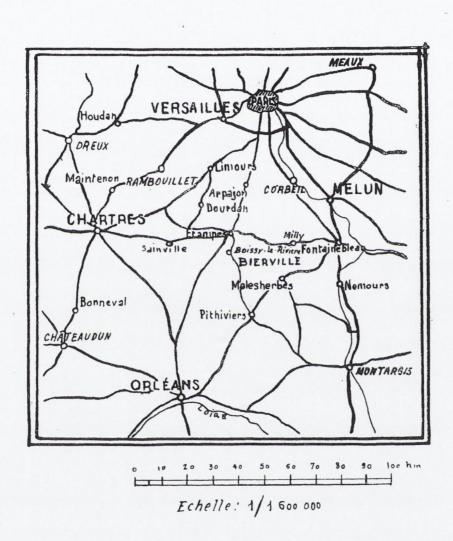


Figure 4.8 Bierville, Boissy-la-Rivière and the Ile de France region.

Map taken from brochure Bierville, terre de paix published by Les Amis de Bierville (1945),
 p. 12.



Figure 4.9 Bierville, August 1926: demobilizing the external and internal enemies.

- At the foot of the large PAX flag, and surrounded by enthusiastic youths, representatives of Germany and France co-mingle as do two prominent representatives of Catholic and secularist France, respectively, together forming a new 'sacred union' for peace.
- France, respectively, together forming a new 'sacred union' for peace.

 Sangnier in centre, holding hat aloft. To the left, Bishop Julien of Arras and Dr. Herman Platz of Germany. To the right of Sangnier (and slightly obscured) stands Ferdinand Buisson, President of the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme.



Figure 4.10 Plenary meeting of the Bierville Congress at the Théâtre de Verdure, August 1926.

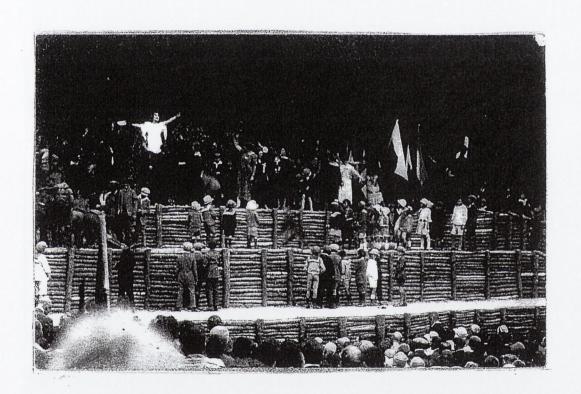


Figure 4.11 Behold the Angel of Peace: culmination of the liturgy of peace – Fête de la Paix – at the Théâtre de Verdure, Bierville, August 1926.

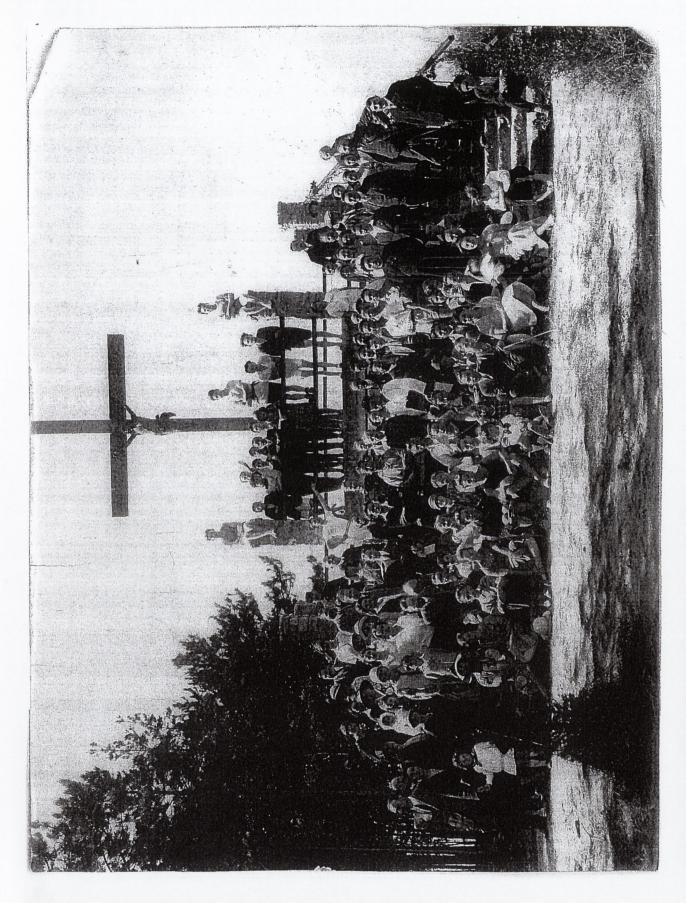


Figure 4.12 Sangnier, pater familias: family photograph at the Camp de la Paix, Bierville, August 1926.

• Sangnier standing in middle of lower tier of the Calvaire de la Paix, about three rows from the front. Note prominence of young people and women. Germaine Malaterre-Sellier, leading female delegate, is in the very front row, the last seated person on the left-hand side of the photograph, wearing a distinctive white-rimmed sun hat.



Kehrreim:

Volk, wache auf! Die Liebe siege, Hassesketten zerbreche nun, Und stell' dorthin des Friedens Wiege, Wo jetzt Opfer des Krieges ruh'n. Refrain.

Peuples debout! Brisons nos chaînes Que l'Amour triomphe à jamais! Dressons sur le tombeau des haines Le berceau joyeux de la Paix!

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Figure 4.13 Hénri Colas, apostle through song.

- 'Brisons nos chaînes' pacifist composition sung at Amiens during the Pilgrimage of Peace, August 1926.
- Source Joseph Probst (ed.), La paix par la chanson. La croisade de la jeunesse pour la paix.
 Chants de la nouvelle jeunesse allemande. Musique, paroles, traductions (Fenne-Sarre, Secrétariat allemand des Congrès internationaux démocratiques pour la paix, 1929), pp. 18-19.



- Bravo! A Berlin?...
- Nein! ici...

Figure 4.14 'Mark' Sangnier gives his heart to the Boche.

Source - Action Française, 25.8.1926.



Figure 4.15 The 'Crusade of Youth' at Hénin-Liétard (Nord), August 1929.

• Note presence of Volontaires de la Paix and German youths (including one with a guitar!)

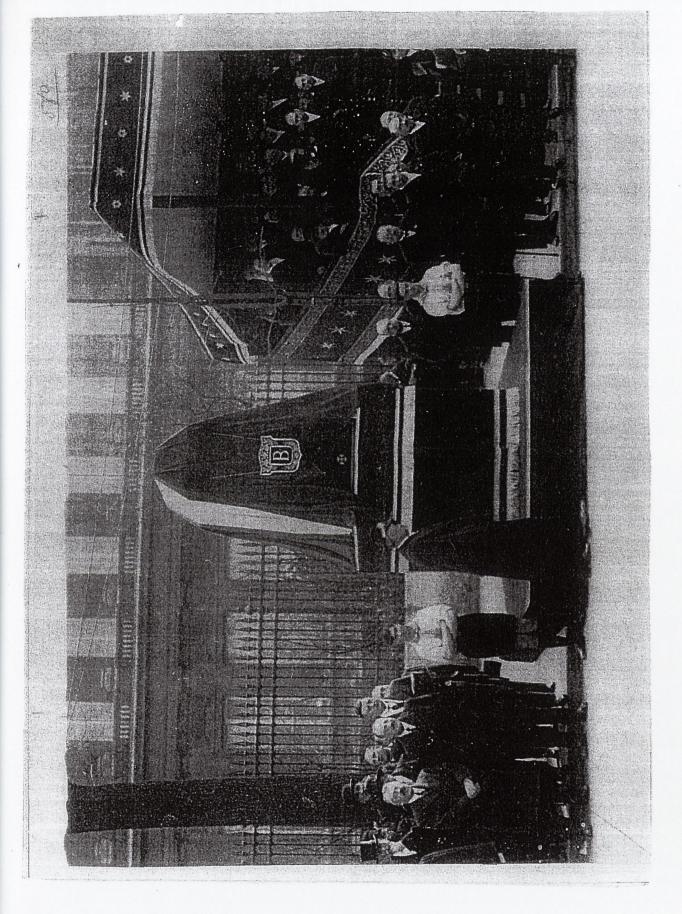


Figure 4.16 Standing guard for Locarno: Volontaires de la Paix on the Quai d'Orsay during state funeral of Aristide Briand, March 1932.

 On left of catafalque in photo is Volontaire Bernard Rivière and on right is Jean Sangnier, aged nineteen.

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The official accounts of the Congrès démocratiques internationales de la paix, held between 1921 and 1932, have been an invaluable source. These were published as specially extended issues of Sangnier's review La Démocratie. Given their freestanding nature as exceptional issues, they are listed separately as printed primary sources given their importance. Where applicable, the thematic title of each congress shall be used as the start of the long title and used thereafter as the short title. Where no thematic title is given, the number and location of the Congress will be used. For the sake of clarity, publisher (i.e. La Démocratie) will be cited for these and other sources, as appropriate and where it is relevant to the historical narrative. Particularly rich issues were those dealing with the Congresses of Paris (1921), Freiburg (1923) and Bierville (1926). These allowed an assessment of the public rhetoric of the Catholic 'demobilizers' as they attempted to reach out not alone to Germans, against the backdrop in 1923 of the French occupation of the Ruhr, but also to traditional adversaries within France, including anticlericalists and Socialists. This is seen especially at the Congress of Bierville. Many speakers, such as the Germans Joseph Probst and Nikolaus Ehlen and the French Marc Sangnier, Georges Hoog and Ferdinand Buisson, developed their ideas on reconciliation and the morality of 'war guilt' and reparations in the deliberations of the Congresses. At Bierville too we see the continued emergence of a ritual and rhetoric of peace to oppose those of war.

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