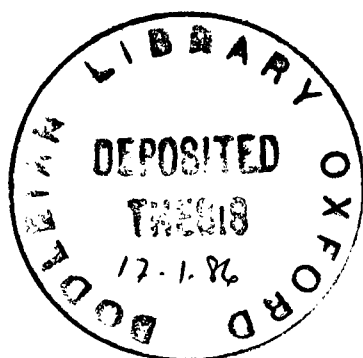


Factionalism in the French Parti Socialiste, 1971-1981



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ABSTRACT

This thesis concentrates on the cause, structure, location and context (rather than the function) of factions within the French Parti Socialiste, from the Congress of Epinay, in June 1971, until Mitterrand's election as Socialist President of the Republic, on May 10th, 1981. It argues that factionalism results from a complex, interrelated cleavage structure: groups are differentiated according to a number of salient variables, of which the most important are personality (accentuated by the presidentialised Fifth Republic); ideology/policy; strategy/tactics; organisational interests and different historical origins. Factional relations are a product both of the intra-party consequences of the party's external objectives, and the internal dynamic created by factional competition itself. The party is thus an evolutive, rather than a static entity.

No one definition of faction is acceptable to characterise the various groups operating within the PS. Groups are divided according to a number of ideal types: the organisation faction (whose power stems from its location within the party organisation - Mitterrand, Mauroy); the parallel faction - (which relies on its organisational

structures outside of the party itself to maintain a factional network and identity - CERES, to a lesser extent Rocard); the external faction (which attempts to impose itself on the party through its favourable external location. It is postulated that certain factions are placed in a strategically advantageous position for the exercise of political influence in the party's decision making machinery, and that others are strategically disadvantaged in consequence.

Part one of the thesis includes detailed analyses of the parties' 4 major factions (Mitterrand, Mauroy, CERES, Rocard) from their origins, until the left's defeat in the March 1978 legislative elections. Part two analyses the development of factional relations from March 1978, until May 1981, with special reference to the party's 1979 Metz Congress. The thesis concludes that the presidentialised nature of the French Fifth Republic is the major factor explaining factional rivalries within the PS, but that other cleavages are important in understanding the complexity of factional conflicts.

A list of major abbreviations

BE	- Bureau Executif
C/A	- Courant des Assises
CD	- Comité Directeur
CEDEP	- Centre National d'Études et de Promotion
CERES	- Centre d'Études, de Recherches et d'Éducation Socialistes
CFDT	- Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail
CFTC	- Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens
CGT	- Confédération Générale du Travail
CIR	- Convention des Institutions Républicains
CIRSA	- Centre d'Initiatives et de Recherches pour le Socialisme Autogestionnaire
ERIS	- Études, Recherches et Informations Socialistes
ES	- Étudiants Socialistes
FEN	- Fédération de l'Éducation Nationale
FGDS	- Fédération de la Gauche Démocratique et Socialiste
FNESR	- Fédération Nationale des Élus Socialistes et Républicains
FNLL	- Fédération Nationale des foyers Léo-Lagrange
FO	- Force Ouvrière
IFOP	- Institut Français d'Opinion Publique
JS	- Jeunesses Socialistes
LCR	- Ligue pour le Combat Républicain
MRG	- Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche
MRP	- Mouvement Républicain Populaire

Le N/O - Le Nouvel Observateur

NRS - La Nouvelle Revue Socialiste

PCF - Parti Communiste Français

PCG - Programme Commun de Gauche

POF - Parti Ouvrier de France

Le P/R - Le Poing et la Rose

Le PR/SR-Le Poing et la Rose - Special Responsables

PR - Proportional Representation

PS - Parti Socialiste

PSA - Parti Socialiste Autonome

PSU - Parti Socialiste Unifié

RPF - Rassemblement de Peuple Français

RPR - Rassemblement pour la République

SFIO - Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière

SN - Secrétariat Nationale

SOFRES - Société Française d'Enquêtes par Sondages

SPD - Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands

TDC - Tribune du Communisme

UCRG - Unions des Clubs pour le Renouveau de la Gauche

UDF - Union pour la Démocratie Française

UDSR - Union Démocratique et Socialiste de la Résistance

UGCS - Union des Groups et Clubs Socialistes

UGS - Union de la Gauche Socialiste

UGSD - Union de la Gauche Socialiste et Démocratique

UNEF - Union Nationale des Étudiants Français

UPA - Union pour l'Autogestion

(1)

Introduction

.

Underlying any study of factionalism is the recognition that political divisions can not be limited to competition between parties, but must take account of cleavages within parties themselves. The title of this thesis - factionalism in the French Parti Socialiste - is open to misinterpretation. It could be taken to suggest that there is one uniform definition of factionalism, applicable across the whole spectrum of political parties; or that there is uniform agreement over what the correct theoretical approach to the study of factions should be. In fact, there is agreement neither on what constitutes a faction - although divergences are often semantical - nor on the theoretical approaches to their study.

Before investigating the internal structure and politics of the PS, we need to firstly examine theoretical approaches to factionalism, to establish an appropriate conceptual framework. Secondly, we need to develop the notions of the 'orthodox centre', and the 'organisation faction', which are central to this thesis, through a brief analysis of the pre-1914 German SPD. Finally, we must set out the structure, rules, and composition of the French Socialist Party, without which any investigation of factionalism is necessarily partial. It will be argued that parties are not closed political systems, and react not only to internal stimuli, but also to the surrounding political environment. The

prominent political issues and stakes will be analysed in the ensuing chapters, rather than trying to summarise a complicated and changing situation in the Introduction.

Firstly, the analysis of factionalism. The dominant approach has been that of the American functionalist school. American political scientists first began to pay attention to the study of factions in the 1950's. Key argued that within one-party US states, factions within a dominant party may act as substitutes for partisan competition usually provided by parties (1). This analysis set the trend for subsequent theoretical approaches to the problem of factionalism. It tended to argue that parties were intrinsically legitimate - because they provided the main source of stability within democratic political regimes - but that factions derived legitimacy only to the extent that they helped parties achieve this stability for the regime. Key argued that parties were better performers than factions for this larger purpose. Ultimately, the important question was not primarily factionalism, but whether factions contributed to, or weakened stability. The problem of stability effectively served to disguise a normative, as a functional analysis.

The salient concerns of American political scientists have often been predicated upon a belief that, through patient

1. V.O. Key, Southern Politics in State and Nation, (New York, Vintage, 1949), pp. 298-311.

research, a model of factionalism will evolve, universally applicable across the spectrum of democratic political parties and systems. Sometimes the normative/functional standard has shifted from stability to competition, in the search for a universal model.

'Faction study requires the capacity to apply structural comparisons from the perspective of a single unified scheme, whose basis is the functional commonality of political competition'.(2)

Such analysis tends to abstract parties and factions from the concrete political, institutional, and cultural conditions in which they operate in different countries, in the name of developing political science. The underlying theme in this type of analysis is that the existence of factions is functional to the performance of parties, and indirectly for the wider political system. It enables the articulation of varied interests, and their existence within the same party structure. Beller and Belloni consider that factions perform a useful integrative function; they provide bridges for integrating these at the extremes into the political system and are therefore to be regarded as positive and contributing to political stability. In short, factionalism is functional in so far as it neutralises extremes.

2. F.D. Belloni and D.C. Beller, 'Party and Faction: modes of political competition', in F.D. Belloni, and D.C. Beller, Faction Politics: Political Parties and Factionalism in Comparative Perspective (Santa Barbara Clio Press, 1978). p 447.

Such ostensibly objective analysis describes factions according to whether they perform positive or negative functions for the political system. Yet the idea of positive and negative (even disguised as functional and dysfunctional) is fundamentally normative and removes any pretence to scientific objectivity. By reducing parties and factions to their functional capacities, the scope for the study of factionalism is unnecessarily limited and normatively predetermined. Moreover, to establish empirically whether the existence of factions has a beneficial effect or otherwise on the cohesion, membership or electorate of a party is difficult. On the one hand, it would require extensive polling data, which lies outside of the scope of this survey. On the other, the 'functional' role filled by the faction may not explain its causes and origins. The present survey will concentrate on an ostensibly narrower (but hopefully more rewarding) basis: the cause, structure, and context, rather than the function of faction.

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From the outset, it is also necessary to dismiss another series of writers on factionalism. These may be labelled as the developmentalists. Chambers establishes a model in which US political development has been characterised by the transformation of factions into parties; while Huntington refines this analysis by pointing to the

multiplicity of parties in contemporary third world societies, drawing parallels between this situation, and that experienced by Europe and the US at an earlier stage of development (3). These analyses help clarify the semi-visibility of factions and their frequently unstable and transitory character. Whatever their merits, however, they assume a linear development, a 'modernisation' of party systems, and they offer little scope for analysing contemporary intra-party cleavages.

Many writers have stressed the importance of the psychological aspect of the relationship between a leader and his followers, echoing Michel's classic analysis of the psychological dependence of party activists on leaders (4). Nicholas makes this relationship the central factor in his analysis of factional confrontation within political parties, as well as tribal societies (5). It will be argued that within the PS, the existence of clear leader/follower relationships owed less to the blind devotion of a passive base to charismatic leaders, than to a combination of past association, clientelism, self-interest, and ideology. Moreover, relations between leaders and followers were frequently conflictual rather

3. Chambers cited in Beller and Belloni, op cit, p.8;
S Huntingdon, Political Order in Changing Societies, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 403-8.

4. R. Michels, Political Parties, (London, Collier Books, 1962).

5. R.W. Nicholas, 'Factions: a comparative analysis',
in M. Banton, ed. Political Systems and the
Distribution of Power, (London, Tavistock publications,
1972). pp. 24-61.

than consensual, and rarely devotional despite presidentialism.

Are there any more acceptable frameworks to study factionalism than that which concentrates on function? One attempt to provide such a framework of analysis is provided by Hine (6). Hine attempts to evaluate the necessary variables to be considered in any study of factions, without presenting a watertight model of factionalism. He classifies these variables in relation to the dimensions and causes of conflict within parties. Hine poses two preliminary questions relating to the dimensions of conflict: 1. What divides groups? 2. What organisational forms do groups take once divided? As to causes of conflict, Hine establishes a comprehensive and less dogmatic panorama than that provided by most American theorists. Factional conflicts result from a complex, inter-active cleavage structure, varying according to political system and party. They are based around non-structural (policy/ideology; strategy; personality) and structural incentives to factionalism.

As to structural incentives, Hine (as Sartori) postulates that proportional representation in internal party elections is likely to lead to the development of organised factions, or at least to institutionalise existing factions (7).

6. D.Hine, 'Factionalism in West European Parties: a framework for analysis', West European Politics, 5, 1, (January 1982), pp. 36-52.

7. G. Sartori, Parties and Party Systems (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976) pp. 94-104.

Sartori expounded this analysis, a 'pure' PR system, including one with a weak 'exclusion' clause, as in the French PS, is likely to act as a structural incentive not merely for the proliferation of factions, but also for the emergence of 'factions of interest', at the expense of ideological factions, or 'factions of principle'. This hypothesis will be dealt with below. In addition, many authors have pointed (without agreeing) to the effects of the electoral system in helping to structure factionalism. The impact of the French Fifth Republic, and its electoral system - presidential and majoritarian - on the nature of factional cleavages within the PS will also be considered. Hine's framework is acceptable as a general guideline towards the study of factions, recognising as it does the complexity of internal party conflicts within different political parties and systems. However, within the specific context of the French Socialist Party, we must define more precisely our terms of reference, and how we intend to approach the study of factionalism.

Academic interest in factionalism, a relatively recent phenomenon, has not yet resulted in a commonly agreed definition of faction. Certain authors have argued in favour of a narrow definition, that would exclude most groups within political parties. Nathan, for instance, postulates that only those groups organised on the basis of a clear

patron/client model can qualify as factions; while Mitchell, at the other extreme, defines faction as 'any deep structural division' within a party (8). Rose draws a distinction between factions and tendencies; while Sartori rejects the term faction altogether for its pejorative overtones, and prefers that of 'fraction' (9). Factions are portrayed by Rose as organised, self-aware and disciplined groups; tendencies, by contrast, consist of 'stable sets of attitudes', not necessarily corresponding to any organised group. The difficulties involved in Rose's distinction underline the essential ambiguities of the concept of faction. When does a tendency become a faction, and vice versa? Does an intra-party group need a given degree of visible organisation to be called a faction, as Rose implies? If so, are only these groups with clearly visible organisational structures factions? How then do we classify those groups which, although clearly recognisable, as a stable, cohesive group, are bereft of visible forms of organisation distinct from the party apparatus itself?

To label the former category as factions, while denying that status to the latter, is likely to make a travesty of the reality of internal party competition, as will become clear in the following chapters. The most effective

8. Both authors cited in Beller and Belloni, 'Party and faction...', op cit, pp. 417-8.

9. R. Rose, 'Parties, factions, and tendencies in Britain', Political Studies, 12, (1964), pp. 33-46; Sartori, op cit, p. 74.

solution is to label any group within a party as an intra-party group - whatever its durability, organisational features, or motives - and to proceed to make classifications between groups within this conceptual category. This category can cover even those groups Hine has labelled as 'single issue groups' (10). Yet, in order to retain a sense of the reality of internal party rivalries, we will replace the definition of intra-party group with that of faction, and where necessary will make distinctions within this category between different types of faction, rather than attempting to distinguish between intra-party group, and faction.

Many writers on factionalism have argued that within a political party, factions are intra-party groups based around the charismatic personality of a given political leader, often on the basis of a patron/client relationship (11). This factional ideal type may be labelled as the leader/follower model. Alternatively, or additionally, factions are portrayed as groups of individuals sharing a common ideology, sociological background, or economic interest (12). While these two models must be central to any definition of what constitutes a faction, it is essential not to overlook

10. On single issue groups, see Hine, op cit, p. 39.

11. For a general summary of authors seeing factions as primarily factional cliques, and client-group factions, see Beller and Belloni, 'Party and faction...', op cit, pp. 422-7.

12. See R. Zariski, 'Party factions and comparative politics: some empirical findings', pp. 19-34, for a general summary.

the complexity of internal party cleavages and to accept that theoretical models always correspond only imperfectly with concrete political situations.

It is not proposed to analyse the sociological composition of the varying factions, partly because the empirical evidence is limited; but also because, on the basis of the available evidence, the three main factions (Mitterrand, CERES, Rocard) have comparable social bases, composed overwhelmingly of representatives of the intellectual and technical middle classes, a trait accentuated as one ascends the party hierarchy. If anything, these characteristics are most marked amongst CERES and the Rocardiens (13). In his study of delegates to the 1973 Grenoble Congress, R. Cayrol discovered a relative class homogeneity amongst delegates of the different motions (14). Certain distinguishing factors could, however, be noted in 1973: 59% of delegates belonging to the CFDT supported CERES (largely on account of autogestion), while CERES counted a higher number of practising Catholics amongst its delegates than the other factions. This is important,

13. See M. Dagnaul, and D. Mehl, 'Profil de la Nouvelle Gauche', RFSP, XXXI, 2, (April 1981), for the sociological composition of those reading Faire (close to Rocard); On the sociological composition of delegates to the CERES General Assembly, June 1974, see M. Charzat, Le CERES: Un combat pour le socialisme, (Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1975), pp. 263-5.

14. R. Cayrol, 'L'univers politique des militants socialistes', RFSP, XXV, 1, (Feb 1975), pp. 25-52.

for it laid the organisational basis for future rivalries with Rocard and the PSU: both CERES and Rocard were competing for the same base within the party, receptive to the theme of autogestion. Cayrol also found that FO delegates - largely ex-SFIO - aligned themselves mainly behind the central Mitterrand/Mauroy motion, although certain continued to support Mollet. To a lesser extent, this was also the case for the FEN. Other sources suggest that ex-CIR, Mitterrandist members of the CD, elected in 1973, were more prone to adhere to the CGT, than those of other factions. Of the ex-CIR representatives on the CD after Grenoble, 44% belonged to FEN (reflecting the weight of the teaching profession - as in all factions); 33% to the CGT; and only 11% to the CFDT (15). Despite these differences in sensibility, the idea that the interclass nature of party membership is a structural incentive to factionalism (with different factions recruiting amongst different social strata) has to be rejected in relation to the PS.

It will be argued that, within the PS, factions are composed of groups of individuals, with varying degrees of factional adhesion and consciousness, separated by a range of cleavages based around personality (accentuated by the presidentialised Fifth Republic); ideology/policy; strategy/tactics; organisation, and differing historical origins. These cleavages are neither compartmentalised,

15. M. Benassayag, 'Deux ou trois choses qu'on sait de lui', La NRS, 1, April 1974, pp. 17-24.

nor rigidly consistent, but evolve according to changes in external political circumstances, and the dynamics of internal party competition. The party is therefore a changing, rather than a static, entity. Correspondingly, the main factions emerging from these cleavages, while relatively durable over an extended period of time, are nonetheless constantly in the process of change. Despite these evolutions, each major faction (Mitterrand, Mauroy, CERES and Rocard) can be clearly distinguished one from the other, so that no one definition of what constitutes a faction can fulfill the criteria for all groups within the party.

This makes it necessary to classify the various intra-party groups along the lines of factional ideal types, to which each faction corresponds to a greater or lesser degree. These ideal types are the 'organisation faction' (Mitterrand, Mauroy); the 'parallel faction' (CERES); and the 'external faction' (Rocard). These concepts are developed in the relevant chapters. Despite the ambiguities, and insufficiencies associated with the word, it would be abusive to limit the appellation, faction, to the most obviously organised group within the party - CERES. This would risk implying that the activity of one intra-party group, labelled faction, was less legitimate than that of its less ostentatious rivals within the party.

Thus defined, we will concentrate broadly on structure, cause, and context, rather than function of factionalism. Within these parameters, a series of interrelated questions will be posed. What are the fundamental causes of factionalism in a given political and institutional situation? What are the conditions of operation of factions within a specific political party, and how does this affect their structure? In particular, we shall consider whether the use of PR in internal party elections acts as a structuring variable, encouraging factionalism. We shall also examine how internal party cleavages interact with external political circumstances, and what internal dynamic is thus created. In this context, we shall consider the relationship between factional cleavages, and the political, institutional, and electoral system of the French Fifth Republic. Finally, we shall see if any particular faction, through its location, enjoys a strategic advantage over its adversaries.

We must now investigate the problem of location, before analysing the general applicability of these variables to our case study - the PS. We shall briefly consider whether there are any general characteristics of Socialist and Marxist parties that must be borne in mind in any conceptual approach to factionalism. Certain writers have attempted to take the pre-1914 German Sozialdemokratische Partei

Deutschlands (SPD) - the first mass organised Socialist party in Europe - as a political model. Studies have concentrated on the SPD as an 'inheritor party', favouring the negative integration of the German working class into the ^{Second} Reich; on the nature of leadership elitism and bureaucracy in Socialist parties; on the effects of orthodox Marxism on the nature of factional competition in Socialist parties, and the exploitation of ideology for factional purposes. We shall concentrate here on the relationship between ideology and organisation (16).

According to Bon and Burnier, an analysis of factional competition within the pre-1914 SPD suggests that strategic advantages are associated with a central party location, particularly in defence of Socialist theoretical orthodoxy, called into question by both the party's right and left wings (17). Socialist orthodoxy was defined and defended by the SPD leadership in so far as it guaranteed the stability of the party bureaucracy, and the status quo, through the policy of political isolation which enabled the SPD to emerge as a state within a state. The authors postulate the existence of a triangular effect, whereby the

16. On the SPD as a protest 'inheritor party', See P. Nettl, 'The German Social Democratic Party 1890-1914 as a political model', Past and Present, 30, (April 1965); On the orthodox centre, ideology, and organisation, see F. Bon and M.A. Burnier, 'Qu'elle ose paraître ce qu'elle est', pp. 255-300, in E. Bernstein, Les Présupposés du socialisme, (Paris, Seuil, 1974).

17. Ibid, pp. 255-273.

orthodox centre is at the apex of a triangle, equidistant from both left and right. It can ally alternatively with the left to defeat the right's demands for theoretical revision and political alliances; or with the right to defeat the left's call for a harmonisation of party practice with party theory. If necessary, the leadership may declare a 'battle on two fronts' against both left and right, confident that these two contradictory actors will never overcome their political divergences sufficiently to join forces against the centre.

This model helps to explain the evolution of the SPD until 1914. In order to crush the threat to the leadership, to the state within a state, and to the party bureaucracy, posed by Bernstein's demands for a revision of Marxist party doctrine to take greater account of contemporary realities, the orthodox Marxist SPD leadership, under Kautsky, allied with Rosa Luxembourg and the radicals from 1898 - 1903. This alliance was in turn threatened from 1905 onwards (and effectively eclipsed after 1906) by the development of a cleavage separating the orthodox centre from the radicals. Under the impetus of the 1905 Russian uprising, the radicals, with Rosa Luxembourg in the forefront, sought to alter the party's strategy away from the historical inevitability of revolution as understood by Kautsky (leading in their view to party ossification and

immobility) and towards a greater willingness to oriente the working class movement in a revolutionary direction, through the mass strike (18).

Both revisionists and radicals were united in their demands for congruity between party theory and practice - although they drew diametrically differing conclusions from this. By contrast, the strength of the leadership's position was that it institutionalised the divergence between theory (the historical inevitability of revolution), and practice (progressive integration into society), and this gave it a strategic advantage in relation to challenges from either left or right. Both alternatives posed risks to the existing party apparatus, and leadership. The concept of the 'battle on two fronts' used ideology to justify the organisational status quo, calling for loyalty to party, and thus absolving the leadership from justifying the gap between theory and practice,

'Théorie du juste milieu, la lutte sur les deux fronts économise à l'orthodoxie un difficile exercice dialectique: la justification explicite de l'écart théorie - pratique'. (19)

Any collaboration between the left and right against the orthodox centre, itself backed by the party bureaucracy, was politically inconceivable; instead both sought the support of the centre against what it regarded as its real

18. Nettl, op cit, pp. 86-95.

19. Bon and Burnier, op cit, p. 273.

factional adversary. The left could only rejoice in Kautsky's theoretical denunciation of Bernstein, and developed its ideas on revolutionary organisation in reaction to revisionism. In turn, the revisionists opposed the strategy advocated by the radicals with heightening insistence from 1905, labelled by one prominent revisionist as 'impossibilism' - although there were superficial convergences between Bernstein and Luxembourg on the idea of the mass strike (20).

Bon and Burnier outline other historical precedents where they see the triangular mechanism in operation such as Stalin versus Trotsky, and Bukharin in the Soviet Union in the 1920's; or Blum, the SFIO left factions, and the neo-Socialists in the SFIO in the early 1930's (21). Certain conceptual criticisms can be levelled against the Bon/Burnier thesis. Taken to its logical conclusion, it freezes the positions of the actors concerned (left, centre, right) irrespective of time and context, along an arbitrary left/right simple positional cleavage structure, and excludes the possibility of political change. It accounts only with difficulty for those instances whereby an orthodox socialist leadership is defeated by a politically heterogeneous coalition - such as occurred at the PS Épinay Congress in June 1971 (see below). It probably overestimates the strength

20. Max Schnippel. Cited in Nettl, op cit, p. 91.

21. Bon and Burnier, op cit, pp. 278-294.

of socialist orthodoxy in such circumstances. Moreover, as with other political models, it necessarily abstracts any particular party from the precise conditions within which it operates.

Taking into account these reserves and ambiguities, there are great merits in the Bon/Burnier triangular thesis, and it provides one plausible framework (location), along with cause, structure, and context with which to consider the evolution of factional competition within the PS. It must however be recognised as a general tendency, rather than an iron law, and even then demands qualification: the leadership's centre of gravity will vary according to the historical, cultural, political and institutional conditions within which the party operates. It will vary over time in any given party. In general, however, leaders will try and find the centre ground within their parties, reduced at its minimum to the point of internal equilibrium - which, unfortunately for them, may change with time and circumstances.

This model does not commit us to accepting any left/right continuum as objectively valid. The reference to left, centre, right, is primarily of relevance in so far as intra-party groups are perceived in terms of these criteria by party activists. Whether any given policy stance is to the 'left' or to the 'right' of any other is largely a subjective judgement, depending on the political motives

of the interrogator, and on the political variables retained. For example, whether nationalisation is a 'left-wing' policy (collective appropriation of the means of production), or a bureaucratic distortion of socialism (the creation of a decentralised, self-managing society) depends on viewpoint and interest. In terms of the dynamics of intra-party rivalries, however, perceptions of left - centre - right have a crucial importance in influencing conditions for factional competition.

These questions will be applied to the French PS in the ensuing chapters. Finally, we must briefly outline the structures and organisation of the Socialist Party before commencing the main body of the thesis. Within the party's statutes adopted at Épinay in June 1971 and amended at Suresnes in March 1974 (see Chapter 4), there remains considerable ambiguity over what constitutes an acceptable level of internal party group organisation. At the Épinay Congress, J.P. Chevènement, leader of the minority left-wing CERES faction, forced the adoption of proportional representation (PR) as the mode of election to the party's executive organs at national level, as at departmental federation, and local section level as well (see Chapter 4). PR was to be based on the percentage vote at the biannual party Congress achieved by competing motions, supported by rival lists of candidates. These provisions - contained in

article 16 of the original statutes - were tempered only by a 5% minimum necessary to obtain representation (22).

The official party statutes draw a distinction between a courant de pensée, recognised as legitimate in a democratic party, and an organised tendency. It can be argued that the provisions relating to PR act as an incentive to factional organisation, and are thus in contradiction with article 4 of party statutes, which asserts that 'La liberté de discussion est entière au sein du Parti, mais nulle tendance organisée ne saurait y être tolérée' (23). The difficulties in distinguishing between what constitutes a courant, and what an organised tendency, was a source of constant dispute between the party's various factions and in particular between Mitterrand and CERES.

From the origins of the socialist movement, factionalism has characterised French Socialist parties. The old Socialist party, the SFIO was formed in 1905 as an organisation uniting six distinct parties (24). After the split at Tours in 1920, caused by the formation of the Parti Communiste Français (PCF), the interwar SFIO continued

22. Les statuts du Parti socialiste, PS archives, Lille.

23. Ibid, Articles 4, 21. For the post-1974 statutes, Article 4, 'Les statuts du Parti', in Guide de l'adhérent, Parti socialiste, Club Socialiste du livre, 1982. I do not necessarily agree with this view.

24. J.L. Breton, L'Unité Socialiste, (Paris, Marcel Rivière, 1912), pp. 36-54.

to be characterised as a factionalised party. The use of PR in internal party elections was generally taken as a contributory factor to this (25). Despite distinguishing between a tendance d'esprit and a fraction within party statutes, the SFIO leadership under L. Blum, and P. Faure, was unable to prevent the emergence of organised factions, both primarily on the left: Zyromski's Bataille Socialiste, formed in 1927, and Pivert's Gauche Révolutionnaire, formed in 1935 (26). By the 1938 Congress of Royan, these factions represented nearly half of party members, a factor later attenuated by the expulsion of Pivert's Gauche Révolutionnaire (27). With the reformation of the SFIO in the wartime resistance, 1940 - 1944, the new leadership, based around Blum and D. Mayer, attempted to prevent the reemergence of organised factions, and proposed thereby to suppress PR for the party's governing organs, to be replaced by majority rule (28). This was accepted at the SFIO's 1945 Congress, but worked better for their successors than for Blum and Mayer.

25. B. Graham, 'The play of tendencies: internal politics in the SFIO before and after the Second World War', p. 142, 'In D.S. Bell ed, Contemporary French Political Parties, (London, Croon Helm, 1982).

26. Ibid, pp. 142-146. See Also N. Greene, Crisis and Decline: the French Socialist Party in the Popular Front era. (Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1969).

27. See D.N. Baker, 'The politics of socialist protest in France: the left wing of the Socialist party 1921-1939', Journal of Modern History, 43, (March 1971).

28. Graham, op cit, p. 146.

In August 1946, the SFIO leadership was taken over by G. Mollet, a schoolteacher from Pas-de-Calais, advocating a defence of the party's traditional orthodoxy in opposition to Blum's attempts to revise party doctrine, in order to turn the SFIO into a larger 'Resistance' party, including other progressive elements on the non-Communist and Catholic left (29). From 1946 - 1969, Mollet profited from the suppression of PR to refuse the various minorities effective participation in the government of the party. The discipline thus established at the price of loss of members and expulsions helps explain in the SFIO's terminal decline in the Fourth and Fifth Republics (30). This brief historical resumé suggests the existence of a factional culture on the French socialist left and provides the context for an analysis of factionalism within the contemporary PS.

Before analysing in detail the various factions, it is necessary to consider the formal structure of the party organisation, the theatre of factional combat. This is outlined in Figure 1. The PS is the most democratic

29. Ibid, pp. 155 - 161 on the August 1946 Congress.

30. See, for instance, P.M. Williams, Crisis and Compromise: the politics of the Fourth Republic, (London, Longmans, 1964, for the SFIO in the 4th Republic. On the SFIO 1956 - 1967, see H.G. Simmons, French Socialists in Search of a Role, (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1970).

of the major French parties. Theoretical power ascends from the base to the summit, or from the section, through to the federation, and to the bi-annual party Congress, the party's supreme authority. The Comité Directeur (henceforth CD) is elected on a proportional basis according to the percentage proportion of mandates achieved by competing motions at Congress. On the same principle, the Bureau Exécutif is composed of representatives of all factions having achieved more than 5% of the mandates at Congress, and is responsible for precise functions delegated by the CD.

Real power, however, lies with the Secrétariat National (henceforth SN) composed only of the party majority, and with the Premier Secrétaire. The party majority consists of that faction, or combination of factions agreeing to the text receiving a majority of votes in the final vote at Congress, after the proponents of the various motions have attempted to reach a compromise in the Commission des Résolutions (Resolutions Committee). This considerably limits the impact of PR: the leader of the dominant faction can call the tune, and usually decide the contours of a future leadership alliance.

The above pattern is repeated throughout the organisation. In the départments if all factions are represented proportionately on the Federal Executive, only

the majority, as it emerges from the Federal Congress will participate in the Secretariat. It should be noted however that variations do exist at the federal level, and certain federal Secretariats have included representatives of the minority factions, such as Pas-de-Calais (31). A similar pattern exists at the level of the section, divided into geographical, workplace, and university sections. The creation of workplace sections at the Congress of Issy-les-Moulineaux, in 1969, represented an innovation with regard to the old SFIO, and marked an attempt to stress the party's ostensible transformation away from the electoralism of the older party, as well as to compete with the PCF (32). These sections have proved to be a relative growth area, as is illustrated by Figure 2. Such growth, however, has done little to dent the PCF's superior organisation within the working class: in 1981, the PS claimed 1,000 workplace sections, as opposed to 8,000 for the PCF (33). However, these members have been largely concentrated in the tertiary, white collar sector, rather than within the industrial working class (34).

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31. 'Dans le Pas de Calais, tous les courants participent à la direction de la fédération, y compris le CERES', D. Percheron, Premier Secrétaire fédéral of Pas-de-Calais. Cited in Le Monde, 7 July 1978.
 32. See R. Cayrol, 'Le Parti socialiste à l'entreprise', RFSP, XXVIII, 2, (April 1978), pp. 296 - 312.
 33. Cited in D.S. Bell and B. Criddle, The French Socialist Party: resurgence and victory, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 208.
 34. Cayrol, op cit, pp. 302-4. In 1976, these sections were heavily concentrated in the public and administrative sectors, while only 21% of party members in these sections were working class.

It will become clear that the official authority structure bears only a distant relationship with reality. PR has altered the structure of power within the party, by comparison with the SFIO, by securing a necessary minimum of minority representation. With Mollet's SFIO, power was increasingly concentrated in the hands of the bosses of a few large federations: Bouches-du-Rhône, Nord, Pas-de-Calais, Seine (see Chapter 3). Within the PS, this pattern has substantially altered: it is now the leaders of the national factions, rather than of the large federations who mainly determine the selection of political leaders. This is achieved by the power to determine the order of names on the lists to be submitted to the votes of the party members, tending thereby to concentrate power in the hands of the leaders of the major national factions (and especially the dominant faction or combination of factions). Further, although theoretically sovereign, the party Congress is usually presented with a composite motion, agreed by a majority of faction leaders, and which is merely ratified. Such a motion will invariably be opposed by at least one minority, with unanimity preceding Congress being realised only at Valence in October 1981.

It remains briefly to consider what the present thesis does not intend to encompass. It is not a study of the party's spectacular electoral growth (or of the sociological

factors underlying this), although we shall consider the impact of elections and electoral campaigns on conditions for factional competition within the party. Nor is it a study of the sociological characteristics of party activists: it will suffice here to portray the PS as heavily overrepresenting the intellectual, and technical middle classes amongst its members, at the expense of the virtual absence of working-class representatives in positions of authority (35). Both these areas are of great inherent interest, but lie outside the scope of this thesis, and have been adequately dealt with by other authors.

One final factor must be noted: party membership, outlined in Figure 3. By the Congress of Nantes, in June 1977, the PS had more than doubled its claimed membership, in comparison to Épinay, in 1971. In fact, there is limited evidence to suggest that membership renewal predated Épinay: one estimate places the nadir of SFIO membership at 70,000 in 1969, having risen to 90,000 by Épinay in June 1971. In the early years of the post-Épinay party's existence, significant membership increases followed from the party's electoral campaigns and successes, in the 1973 legislative, and 1974 presidential elections. The party

35. See, *inter alia*, Benassayag, op cit; P. Hardouin, 'Les caractéristiques sociologiques du Parti socialiste', RFSP, XXXVII, 2, (April 1978), pp. 220-256. P. Bacot, Les dirigeants du Parti socialiste, (Lyons, *Presses Universitaires de Lyons*, 1978); H. Portelli, Le socialisme français tel qu'il est, (Paris, PUF, 1980), pp.119-141. In English, see Bell and Criddle, op cit, chapter 8.

claimed to have recruited 25,000 new members in the course of the 1974 campaign. The most spectacular increases were in the party's virgin territories, where the SFIO had been moribund, or non-existent, and where new members were attracted overwhelmingly to Mitterrand or CERES. By the 1974 campaign, the PS had effectively nationalised its geographical implantation; if it remained strongest in its traditional bastions (Nord/Pas-de-Calais; central, and S.W. France), it was henceforth present in Catholic West and East France, as well as in Paris, and the Paris region - all areas where CERES played an important role in restoring a party organisation (see Chapter four). One immediate consequence of the rise in party membership was to diminish the weight of the largest federations, and therefore the influence of the old SFIO within the new party. From 36.43% of the mandates in 1971, the three largest federations together had declined to 26.69%, in 1975 (Bouches-du-Rhône, Nord, Pas-de-Calais)(36).

From 1975 - 1978, membership continued to increase, though in a less dramatic manner, reflecting the expectation that the left would achieve victory in March 1978.

Following the left's defeat in 1978, membership firstly

36. On membership from 1969-1971, see V. Wright, and H. Machin, 'The French Socialist Party and the problems of success', Political Quarterly, 46, 1, (Jan-March 1975), p.41; On the grandes fédérations, Bulletin Socialiste, 15 June 1971; Le P/R, 38, February 1975.

levelled off, then steadily declined during 1979 and 1980, with certain informed observers estimating membership to have fallen to 110 - 120,000, and official figures acknowledging a decline to just over 150,000 at the end of 1980. By contrast, after Mitterrand's election in May 1981, membership was estimated to have increased by a quarter (37). From this brief survey, it is apparent that membership varied according to the party's electoral fortunes, but that even in periods of relative decline, the PS could claim to be a genuinely national party, unlike its predecessor, the SFIO.

Finally, we must give a brief outline of the course the thesis intends to chart. Part 1 (chapters 1 - 6) will consider in turn the major factions within the PS after 1971: ^{expose leed 37} Mitterrand, Mauroy, CERES, and Rocard. It will trace these factions from their origins, but will concentrate on the period from the Congress of Épinay, in June 1971, until the left's defeat in the legislative elections of March 1978. Part two (chapters 7 - 9), will analyse the development of factional competition in the aftermath of March 1978, through to the Metz Congress of April 1979, and to the presidential elections of April and May 1981. It is to the main body of the thesis that we must now turn.

37. Official estimates placed membership at over 200,000 by the end of 1981. A. Laignel, Rapport Statutaire, Congress of Bourg en Bresse, Le P/R, 103, June 1983.

Figure 1: The party organisation

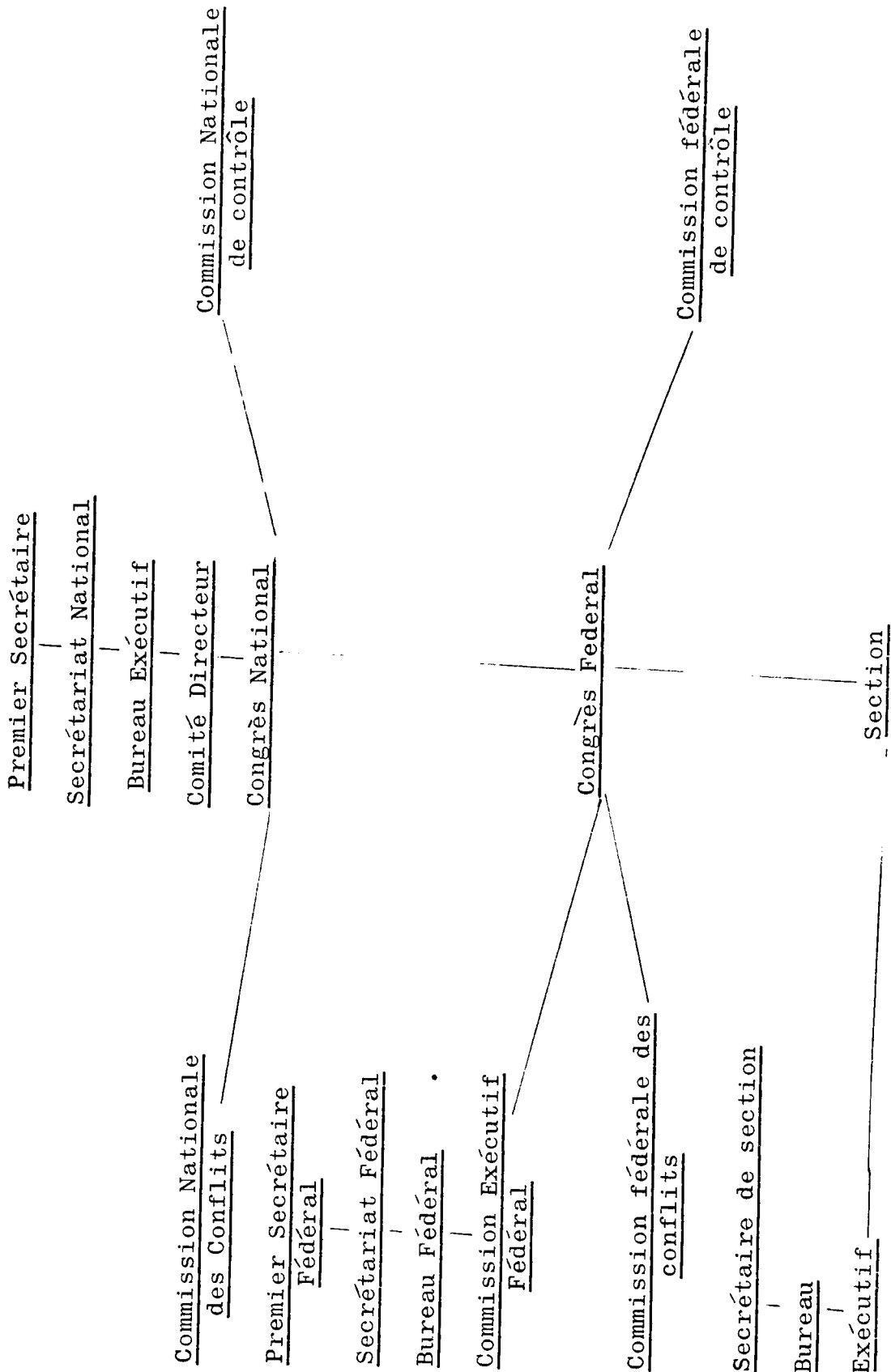


Figure 2: Workplace sections

<u>Date</u>	<u>Workplace Sections</u>
Epinay 1971	54
January 1973	195
May 1974	401
December 1974	812*(c.400)
April 1976	649
February 1977	1,000
March 1979	1,400

Source: 1971 - 1974, Charzat et al, Le CERES: un combat pour le socialisme, p.137.
 • 1976, L'Unité, 23-29 April 1976.
 1977, A. Rannou, Rapport statutaire, Le P/R, 61, May 1977.
 1979, A.Rannou et A. Tregouet, Rapport statutaire, Le P/R, 80, 1979.

*(It is difficult to chart any of these figures with accuracy. The December 1974 total, supplied by Sarre, the CERES leader with responsibility for workplace sections, 1971-5, was vehemently challenged by his successor, who placed the number of sections at less than 400. All totals include Sections d'Entree prise (fully independent workplace sections, with executive authority), and Sections Générales d'Entree prises (linking party members in the workplace - but reserving executive authority for the geographical section). Only the former - around a third of the total - could be seen as genuine workplace units.

Figure 3: Party membership 1971-1980

<u>Year</u>		<u>Members</u>
December 31st	1971	80,300
"	1972	92,232
"	1973	107,757
"	1974	137,300
"	1975	149,623
"	1976	159,548
"	1978	188,216
"	1980	157,750*

Source 1971 - 1976, Rapport Statutaire, C.E. Loo, Le P/R, 61, May 1977.
 1978, Rapport Statutaire, C.E. Loo, Le P/R, 80, March 1979.

1980 *The 1980 total is approximate, worked out on the basis of the number of mandates at the Congress of Valence, in October 1981. Le P/R, 96, November 1981. (Article 27 of party statutes stipulates that each federation has one mandate by right at Congress, and a further one for each 25 paid up party members.)

CHAPTER ONE

François Mitterrand: the origins of a presidential leader

It is customary to assume that age breeds conservatism. A cursory analysis of Mitterrand's political career, extending the length of the Fourth and Fifth Republics, would appear to suggest the contrary. After active service in the internal wartime Resistance, Mitterrand briefly served in De Gaulle's provisional government, formed in August 1944 (1). From 1947 - 1958, Mitterrand participated in 11 governments, as an anti-Communist, anti-Gaullist, non-socialist neo-Radical. Head of the Union Démocratique et Socialiste de la Résistance from 1953 - a marginal party with no significant base in the country - Mitterrand made his ~~fourth~~ Republic political career as a loner, in opposition to the anti-regime parties (PCF, RPF, Poujadists), but distrusted by the mainstream ~~fourth~~ Republic forces as a tactician without principle (SFIO, Radicals, MRP, Independents)(2).

As overseas Minister from 1950-1, Mitterrand developed a reformist reputation on account of his policies towards France's African colonies (3). After 1951, Mitterrand was closely associated with Mendès-France, and became Interior Minister under Mendès from 1954-5. As Interior Minister Mitterrand had to respond to the outbreak of the Algerian

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1. F.O. Giesbert, François Mitterrand ou la tentation de l'histoire, (Paris, Seuil, 1977).
 2. Ibid, Part two, Chapters four, five, six; Part Three, Chapters one, two, three. On the UDSR, see P.M. Williams, Crisis and Compromise. Politics in the Fourth Republic, (London, Longmans, 1964), pp. 174-6.
 3. Giesbert, op cit, pp. 108-117.

rebellion, November 1954. He responded with repression, his attitude being that 'L'Algérie, c'est la France' (1955), a sentiment with which the entire political class agreed, although his measures were opposed by the PCF (4).

Mitterrand was backed by Mendès over Algeria; yet, a reciprocal distrust existed between the two after the Affaire des fuites in 1954, when Mendès instituted an enquiry into allegations that Mitterrand had leaked government secrets to the PCF (5).

Mitterrand's UDSR fought the 1956 elections in the Republican Front alliance with the SFIO, and the Mendèsiste Radicals. Within Mollet's 1956 administration, Mitterrand, Justice Minister, was located on the government's liberal wing, opposing Mollet's pacification measures in Algeria, but rousing the ire of opponents of the Algerian war (6). In contrast to Mendès and Savary, however, Mitterrand did not resign from the Mollet government over Algeria (7). This further increased the distrust felt for Mitterrand by the anti-colonialist left, based around Martinet's UGS, UNEF and other smaller groups (8).

4. Ibid, p. 136.

5. See P.M. Williams, Wars, Plots, and Scandals in Post-war France, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970), chapter 4.

6. Giesbert, op cit, pp. 133-4. On the Mollet government, see H.G. Simmons, French Socialists in Search of a Role. (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1970), Chapters three, four, five.

7. H. Hamon and P. Rotman, L'Effet Rocard, (Paris, Stock, 1980), p.57.

8. On UGS, see Williams, Crisis and Compromise, pp. 171-3.

From the beginning of the *Fifth* Republic, Mitterrand opposed De Gaulle. This position differed markedly from that of a majority of *Fourth* Republic leaders, especially Mollet, who voted for De Gaulle's investiture, along with a large minority of SFIO deputies (9). This refusal helped to situate Mitterrand on the left: he was joined in opposing De Gaulle by the PCF, a majority of SFIO deputies, and Mendès and a minority of Radicals (10). This vote began a long process of rapprochement on the left, that would culminate in the signature of the Common Programme in 1972. After his vote against De Gaulle, Mitterrand rejected the Fifth Republic's constitution, along with the PCF and some mendèsistes, despite the SFIO's acceptance of it (11).

Opposition to De Gaulle temporarily united Mitterrand with the 'second left', based around the SFIO minority, the UGS, and the Mendèsiste Radicals: the UDSR joined with these groups in an electoral alliance for the 1958 elections within the Union des Forces Démocratiques. This appeared to presage the development of an alternative left to the SFIO, rather than a multitude of competing mini-parties. For the leaders of the Parti Socialiste Autonome, formed in September 1958 as a splinter party from the SFIO, however,

9. Giesbert, op cit, p. 177.

10. Ibid, pp. 175-7.

11. P.M. Williams and M. Harrison, French Politicians and Elections, 1951 - 1969, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 95, 155.

Mitterrand remained a discredited, non-Socialist ~~Fourth~~ Republic minister, who had refused to resign from Mollet's government over Algeria. In 1959, Savary and Depreux, PSA leaders, refused Mitterrand's application for entry into the PSA (12). This helps to account for Mitterrand's distrust of the Parti Socialiste Unifié, formed in April 1960, as a fusion of the PSA and UGS (see below p. 251).

In 1959, Mitterrand formed the Ligue pour le Combat Républicain, a political club regrouping the Mitterrandist leaders of the UDSR, that formation having irremediably split over De Gaulle (13). Those surrounding Mitterrand in the LCR had mainly been Mitterrandist in the UDSR and had remained loyal to Mitterrand, despite the 1959 Observatory affair - Dayan, Beauchamps, Mermaz, Dumas - which further increased opponents' suspicions of Mitterrand's character and integrity (14). If the LCR included Radicals, as well as Socialists, the links maintained between Hemu's Club des Jacobins, and the LCR, from 1959 onwards, gave a more pronounced Radical basis to Mitterrandism. The Jacobins had acted as a mendésiste pressure group within the Radical party in the ~~Fourth~~ Republic (15). It fully supported Mendès-

12. K. Evin, Michel Rocard ou l'art du possible, (Paris, Simeon, 1979), p. 152.

13. Giesbert, op cit, pp. 177, 202.

14. J. Mossuz, Les clubs et la politique en France, (Paris, Armand Colin, 1970), pp. 34-5. On the Observatory affair, see Williams, Wars, Plots and Scandals, chapter five.

15. Mossuz, op cit, pp. 31-3.

France as Premier, 1954-5, and his resignation from Mollet's government over Algeria in 1956. Initially, Hernu criticised Mitterrand's refusal to leave the Mollet government (16) From 1958 onwards, however, Hernu moved closer to Mitterrand: both LCR, and Jacobins were outside of the SFIO's orbit; both sought to create a modern political party to oppose Gaullism, that would surpass the SFIO, and embrace the entire non-Communist left. Neither considered the PSU to be such a party. The Jacobins thereby evolved from Mendesism in the *Fourth*, to Mitterrandism in the *Fifth* Republic. By first isolating himself politically after 1958 and then by continuing to refuse to accept presidentialisation after 1962, or to accept nomination as candidate for the presidency in 1965, Mendès-France enabled Mitterrand to take the leadership of the non-Communist left in the Fifth Republic (17).

In May 1963, Jacobins and LCR created a Centre d'Action Institutionnelle, with the tacit objective of preparing for the 1965 presidential election (18)*. The CAI was not alone, however, in hoping to use the coming presidential elections to restructure the non-Communist left. The temptation to exclude the PCF was still powerful, and certain

16. T. Pfister, Les socialistes, (Paris, Albin Michel, 1977), p. 143.

17. Giesbert, op cit, pp. 201-3.

18. See C. Nay, Le Noir et le Rouge, ou l'histoire d'une ambition, (Paris, Grasset, 1984), pp. 272-3.

modernist clubs - especially the Club Jean Moulin - also sought to use the presidential election to reform the left, by excluding the PCF (19). It was the Club, and those based around the weekly L'Express, who persuaded Defferre to impose his presidential candidacy on the SFIO, 1963-5, and to attempt to form a Grande Fédération of SFIO, MRP, Radicals, and Club (see below pp. 132-33).

Mitterrand, an outsider, had little choice but to develop an alternative strategy: the presidential election would be the means through which the non-Communist left would unite; it was the only election where it had a clear advantage over the PCF. It was an election through which the non-Communist's left's leadership could be wrested away from the SFIO by an outside presidential candidate, for Mollet was afraid a Socialist candidate would necessarily threaten his leadership of the party. It was the election through which a strategic commitment to left unity would be made which did not subordinate the left to the Communists, but rather disadvantaged the latter. Mitterrand thus illustrated a strategic awareness of the necessity of left unity, if presidentialisation was to favour the non-Communist left, and his position within it (20).

19. Mossuz, op cit, pp. 71-6.

20. See Williams, French Politicians and Elections, pp. 162-171 for Mollet's position; pp. 186-203 for the 1965 Presidential election.

The Convention des Institutions Républicain^{es} was formed on June 6-7th, 1964, from a fusion between the LCR, Jacobins, and around forty other clubs (21). These clubs were united on republican principles against Gaullism, rather than an explicit commitment to socialism; they were external to the SFIO and PSU; they were the most determined 'club' opponents of Gaullism who did not reject electoral cooperation with the PCF. Amongst these clubs there was a certain ideological oecumenicism, covering secular Radicals, Socialists, and some left Catholics. In general, however, the CIR's origins were Radical. Most important clubs could be traced either directly to Mitterrand (LCR) or to the Radical party, Jacobins, L'Atelier Républicain, Club Robespierre, Club Montaigne (22).

The formation of the CIR marked a move from 'republican' opposition to the presidential regime, and from its first Assises in 1964, it occupied itself with the 1965 presidential election. The CIR reluctantly agreed to support Defferre's candidacy, given the official backing of the SFIO (23). Yet, Mitterrand doubted the wisdom of Defferre's proposed Grande Fédération, and the exclusion of the PCF; his chance came when the SFIO rejected it, and Defferre withdrew his

21. D. Loschak, La Convention des Institutions Républicain^{es}. F. Mitterrand et le socialisme, (Paris, PUF, 1971), p.5; Giesbert, op cit, p. 203.

22. Loschak, op cit, pp. 13-14.

23. Ibid, p. 18.

candidacy in June 1965 (see below p. 155).

From the CIR's inception, the ~~nomination~~ 'Mitterrandist' represented a rallying to presidentialism, a means of unifying the non-Communist left from outside the SFIO, and of promoting a relatively equal alliance with the PCF, necessary to restore the credibility of, and rebuild the Socialist party. Mitterrand announced his candidacy for the 1965 presidential election on September 9th, 1965, after assuring himself of the PCF acquiescence (24). After sabotaging Defferre's federation, and presidential bid for 1965, Mollet had now to concede to Mitterrand, an outsider who appeared unable to threaten his control over the SFIO. For Mitterrand, the presidential election encouraged a preliminary unification of the non-Communist left behind his candidacy; while the leadership of any non-Communist left federation would fall to the presidential leader of the left, rather than to the head of the most powerful organisation in it, to Mitterrand, rather than to Mollet. Under Mitterrand's impetus, an important preliminary step to Socialist unification occurred with the formation of the Fédération de la Gauche Démocrate et Socialiste, on September 10th, 1965, which united the SFIO, Radicals, CIR, and various political clubs (25).

24. F. Mitterrand, Ma part de vérité, (Paris, Arthème Fayard, 1969), p. 47. See pp. 47-61 for Mitterrand's views on left unity, the non-Communist left, and the PCF.

25. Mossuz, op cit, p.83.

Mitterrand calculated that the presidential election would restore the left's credibility as the only serious opposition to Gaullism, and the strength of the non-Communist left, and its presidential candidate within that opposition. The presidentialisation of the party system would favour the non-Communist left, since only a non-Communist candidate could win centre left votes in a presidential election, without which there was no left majority in France. PCF support would be essential for the credibility of any non-Communist presidential candidate, as it had for parliamentary candidates in 1962. Steps towards a greater left unity must be taken after the election, with the aim of altering the balance of power between the PCF, and the rest of the left,

'Rendre son équilibre à la gauche, c'était à terme rendre son équilibre à la démocratie. Il convenait donc, dans un premier temps de créer une formation souple et moderne, et, dans un deuxième temps, d'établir un solide contrat entre cette formation nouvelle, et le Parti communiste' (26).

Pressure from a revived non-Communist left would constrain the PCF to liberalise, as the necessary price for alliance. As the PCF liberalised, the alliance would become more attractive to centrist voters. The strength of Mitterrand's candidacy was the support carried to it by the PCF. The PCF feared that its electorate would not support

26. Mitterrand, op cit, p. 60.

a Communist candidate, and wanted to lock the Socialists into an alliance, which they intended to dominate (27). They thus preferred to support a non-Communist left candidate - Mitterrand - which enabled them to declare themselves partisans of left unity, while not appearing directly to compromise themselves with the regime of pouvoir personnel. Mitterrand's candidacy equally depended on SFIO support (see Chapter 3). The reserved attitude adopted by the PSU to Mitterrand's candidacy increased his suspicions of that party (see Chapter 6).

Mitterrand's presidential candidacy subsequently defined the institutional conditions for socialist unity in the Fifth Republic, that is, the choice between cohabitation of competing groups within a common political structure - as achieved in the FGDS 1965-8, and the PS after 1971 - or the risk of political marginalisation - the PSU's fate. The presidential election enabled Mitterrand to impose his leadership on the non-Communist left in the FGDS, from outside of the SFIO. The 1965 campaign established Mitterrand's unitary credibility, and made him the obvious left unity candidate in a future presidential election. On an electoral level, 1965 suggested that a bipolarised presidential election was of potential benefit to the non-Communist left - the

27. On the PCF and 1965, see F. Hincker, Le Parti Communiste au carrefour, (Paris, Albin Michel, 1981), pp. 76-77. See also Williams and Harrison, French Politicians and elections, Chapter 20.

essence of Mitterrand's strategy. Mitterrand achieved 45.5% on the second ballot against De Gaulle, suggesting that, by comparison to the PCF's 1962 score (21.8%), the non-Communist fraction of Mitterrand's second ballot electorate outweighed the Communist element (28).

The CIR's importance as a presidential organisation, existing primarily to promote Mitterrand's political career, became clear during the 1965 campaign, with the CIR providing the mainstay of Mitterrand's campaign organisation. Most of the literature on factionalism has emphasised the importance of leader/follower relations in explaining the durability, or otherwise, of factions (see Introduction). The reciprocal ties between Mitterrand and his closest political supporters were of greater importance in explaining the cohesion of the Mitterrand courant, than were any references to ideology, or, ultimately, strategy. These leader/follower ties, developed initially in the ~~Fourth~~ Republic within the UDSR, and continued in the ~~5th~~ with the CIR, gradually took on the form of a patron/client relationship within the PS, as Mitterrand increasingly concentrated the selection of political leaders in his own hands (See Chapter 2). In terms of factional analysis, the term Mitterrandist now signified an acceptance of the 28. 1962 figures from R.W. Johnson, The Long March of the French Left, (London and Basingstoke, Macmillan Press Ltd., 1981), Table 8.1, p. 137. 1965 figures from Giesbert, op cit, p. 227.

role of the presidential leader at the head of the left, and the hierarchical relations this implied amongst his advisers.

Within Mitterrand's 1965 campaign team, a strict protocol could be observed. At the apex of the hierarchy were Mitterrand's Princes, or the UDSR clan: Beauchamp, Mermaz, Dumas, and Dayan. Next came the Barons, or Mitterrand's CIR leadership team: Estier, Hernu, and Eyquem. To these must be added Joxe, and Fillioud, not figuring in the 1965 team, but playing a prominent role in the CIR later (29). The CIR provided Mitterrand's organisational backing for his battle for control of the non-Communist left with the SFIO, played out within the FGDS.

Mitterrand remained at the head of the FGDS throughout its existence, 1965-8, underlining his claim to presidential leadership of the left. The FGDS comprised the SFIO, CIR, Radical party, and various political clubs, mainly composed of refugees from the PSU, grouped in Savary's Union des Clubs de Renouveau de Gauche, admitted to the FGDS in March 1966, and Poperen's Union des Groupes et Clubs Socialistes, admitted in February 1968 (30). The FGDS marked the first serious step towards the unification of the various families of the non-Communist left, excluding the PSU, in the ~~Fifth~~ Republic. Mitterrand saw the FGDS as a mechanism for the evolution of the non-Communist left

29. Giesbert, op cit, p. 214.

30. Mossuz, op cit, p. 84.

towards a modern, presidential party, committed to greater unity with the PCF, helping to give the Federation credentials as a genuine left-wing party. It was also a means of imposing his leadership on the non-Communist left, at Mollet's expense. From the FGDS's inception, the CIR was insistent on the need for it to evolve towards a genuine federation of equals, where they would enjoy parity of influence with the SFIO, on account of the weight of Mitterrand's leadership within the electorate, counter-balancing greater SFIO organisational might (31). Unsurprisingly, Mitterrand's position was opposed by Mollet.

Within the FGDS, the political struggle between CIR and SFIO took the form of organisational competition for the leadership of the non-Communist left, and for the FGDS label at elections. It was a confrontation of competing political styles and conceptions. Mollet continued to symbolise the SFIO, revolutionary in theory, opportunistic in practice, and remained attached to the parliamentary regime of the ~~Fourth~~ Republic, where the SFIO had enjoyed a pivotal position; Mitterrand condemned the SFIO in the name of presidentialism, and the left's necessary adaptation to it. This ought to have implied links with the 'second left', concentrated in the PSU; this alternative left, however, regarded Mitterrand as an integral part of the bad old unprincipled

31. Ibid, p. 85.

archaic left. (See below Chapter 6 for the Grenoble colloque, April 1966).

Despite Mitterrand's pressures from March 1966 onwards, for fusion of the FGDS families into a single party, Mollet was determined to sabotage any attempt to create a new party that he could not control (32). If Mitterrand represented the force of presidentialism, Mollet remained boss of the SFIO, the central organisational force on the non-Communist left. This was forcefully underlined in FGDS preparations for the 1967 legislative election. Under the agreement forced by Mollet, incumbents were automatically selected as candidates, favouring the SFIO and Radicals, with significant parliamentary representation, and leaving the CIR to fight the most difficult constituencies (33). The PCF, however, stood down for 15 FGDS candidates - mainly CIR - whom the Communists had outdistanced on the first round (34). Mitterrand appeared more likely to reach an agreement with them than Mollet. Misinterpreting presidentialism, the Communist leaders underrated the force of the relatively isolated Mitterrand, and overestimated the decaying organisational might of the SFIO.

Under Mitterrand's impetus, the FGDS made significant progress towards greater cooperation with the PCF. In

32. Ibid, pp. 84-5.

33. Ibid.

34. Williams and Harrison, op cit, p. 215.

December 1966, it concluded an agreement with the PCF for consistent withdrawal in favour of the best placed left candidate on the second ballot in the 1967 elections (35). After the elections, the parties signed a joint 'Common Platform', on February 28th, 1968 (36). This document was a catalogue of agreements and disagreements, rather than a Common Programme of Government, an idea rejected by Mitterrand until there had been a preliminary reequilibrium on the left, in favour of the non-Communist element. The FGDS, and the PCF alliance for second ballot withdrawals in 1967 paid dividends for Mitterrand: there were 15 Communist cadeaux, 16 Conventionnels elected, and a total of 28 seats gained by the FGDS, which received 18.7% on the first ballot. The PCF gained 32 seats, polling its best Fifth Republic score (22.5%), and electoral collaboration thus appeared beneficial to both parties (37).

The FGDS's success in 1967 gave the question of fusing its various families into a single party an increased acuity: it was considered by all concerned that the electoral impetus could be best maintained by a more rapid creation of a new party, with its sights on victory in the 1972 Presidential, and parliamentary elections (38). Yet, each organisation

35. B. Lazitch, L'Échec Permanent, (Paris, Robert Laffont, 1978), p. 77.

36. Ibid, pp. 82-3.

37. Williams and Harrison, op cit, pp. 215, 218-9; Johnson op cit, p. 137.

38. H. Sevin, 'La Coalition majoritaire du Parti socialiste de 1971 à 1975' Thèse du Doctorat d'État, (Paris, Institut d'Études Politiques, 1983), p. 34.

accepted fusion only to the extent that it could expect to control the process, or at least to benefit from it. In May, 1967, a system of weighting was established: the SFIO would dispose of a relative, but not absolute majority on the FGDS' governing organs, prior to any fusion (39). The principle of fusion, interpreted differently (as above), was finally accepted by all organisations in November 1967 (40). A new party would be created by January 1st, 1969. The weight of the respective families would be gauged by departmental assemblies, as demanded by Mitterrand, grouping the various organisations in the FGDS, and direct adherents to the new party (41). This method aimed at avoiding SFIO organisational dominance; yet the SFIO would have remained the predominant organisational factor, and Mollet expected to control any new party. Mitterrand probably counted on his presidential prestige to bring in new adherents, and to emerge as political leader of the new party. May '68 shattered these preparations.

The May '68 events rudely underlined the divorce that separated the FGDS from the student enragés, and in general from the new political generations. Instinctively, Mitterrand distrusted May. He was suspicious of any 'auto_nomous' popular movement, that could not be directly

39. Loschak, op cit, p. 24.

40. Ibid, p. 25.

41. Ibid.

channelled into institutional directions, and was open to manipulation. This helps to explain his distrust of Rocard's PSU, and later of CERES. Nonetheless, Mitterrand sought to benefit from what appeared as a power vacuum to provide a political solution to the crisis. On May 24th, 1968, at the height of the civil disorder, De Gaulle announced that a referendum would be held on participation, and implied that he would resign, should he be disowned by the electorate (42). On May 28th, Mitterrand asserted that should De Gaulle resign, a provisional government should be formed, headed by Mendès-France, and presidential elections should be organised, for which he posed his candidacy (43). This initiative - taken before De Gaulle had resigned - created the impression that Mitterrand intended to profit from, if not precipitate, a bloodless coup. Mitterrand clearly hoped to direct the May movement into normal political channels, and so to undercut the PCF, attempting precisely the same thing. However, De Gaulle recovered control of the situation, denounced Mitterrand's proposals as unconstitutional, and called an election in circumstances acutely unfavourable to the left.

In the June 1968 'elections of fear', the FGDS vote declined to 16.5%; its deputies from 118 to 57 (44).

42. See D.B. Goldey, 'A Precarious Regime : the Events of May '68', pp. 253-4. In Williams and Harrison, op cit.

43. Giesbert, op cit, pp. 243-246.

44. Mossuz, op cit, pp. 86-7; Johnson, op cit, p. 137.

All Conventionnels elected in 1967 save Mitterrand were defeated in 1968.(45). The May-June crisis took the initiative away from Mitterrand for the first time since 1965: both SFIO, and (especially) Radicals took their distance from the PCF, and used Mitterrand as a scapegoat for the election defeat. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, in August 1968, increased SFIO and Radical hostility to the Communists, and thus their reserves to Mitterrand's unitary strategy. While the PCF condemned the Soviet invasion, it eventually approved the 'normalisation' imposed by the USSR on Czechoslovakia; that put in doubt the extent of the party's own vaunted destalinisation, and independence from Moscow, and thus the attractiveness of Mitterrand's strategy (46). The Radicals now withdrew from the FGDS; while Mollet regained the ascendancy within the non-Communist left over Mitterrand. Isolated within the FGDS (except for the CIR), Mitterrand resigned as President on November 7th, 1968 (47). This effectively signalled the demise of the FGDS, although the fiction of creating a new Socialist party, now enthusiastically support by Mollet (who could control proceedings) was retained, and planned for 1969.

45. Mossuz, op cit, p. 87.

46. Sevin, op cit, pp. 38-40.

47. Ibid, p. 42.

After De Gaulle's defeat in the April 1969 referendum, and his subsequent resignation as President, Mitterrand again posed his candidacy for the presidency. The PCF declared itself willing to support a united left candidate, although they were hardly enthusiastic about backing Mitterrand (48). The PSU, anxious to canalise the May movement, ~~breached its autonomy~~ (49). Mollet was determined to foreclose any new presidential initiative that might threaten his renewed ascendancy on the Socialist left, and immediately vetoed Mitterrand. With the FGDS moribund, and the PCF and PSU suspicious, Mitterrand stood no chance once it became clear that he was unacceptable to the SFIO. In addition to vetoing Mitterrand's candidacy, the SFIO unilaterally forwarded the date of the constitutive Congress of the new party, while limiting its role to designating a presidential candidate (50). The CIR, and Poperen's UGCS refused to participate in the Alfortville Congress, May 4th, 1969, where the SFIO, and Savary's UCRG pronounced the 'new' party's formation (51). Amidst manoeuvring at Congress, Defferre was designated as presidential candidate, rather than Savary (52). The respective strategies of Mollet and Defferre are considered in detail below (pp. 139-40). It

48. Hincker, op cit, pp. 88-9.

49. See below chapter 6.

50. 'Comment la gauche s'est divisée', Dire, 7, (May 1969), p. 7.

51. Ibid, pp. 8-10.

52. Ibid, p. 10.

is sufficient here to note that Defferre achieved a derisory 5.1% of the first ballot vote in 1969, on the basis of a renewed - but hopeless - attempt to construct a 'third force' alternative to the united left strategy.

This electoral humiliation paved the way for Mitterrand's reemergence as the legitimate representative of the left alliance strategy, apparently the only alternative. The 1969 election restored Mitterrand as potential leader of the Socialist left; it made Socialist renovation paramount; it promoted left alliance with the PCF as the only means to that end.

From its inception, the CIR had located itself within the non-Communist left, rather than claiming a specifically Socialist vocation. From its Radical, neo-Mendèsiste origins, the CIR gradually evolved into a more recognisably Socialist organisation. This evolution was evident in its changing attitude to the Radical family. The CIR had consistently regarded the Radicals as an integral part of the non-Communist left. Underlying the formation of the FGDS was the assumption that the unity within a federal organisation of the entire non-Communist left was essential as a preliminary to any agreements with the PCF. In short, the non-Communist left could only negotiate with the PCF from a position of strength. This strategic orientation gradually changed, however, as Radical misgivings about the unitary

strategy became clearer, their suspicion of Mitterrand deeper, and their attachment to the centre more evident. At its December 1969 Assises, the CIR insisted that the boundaries of a new Socialist party had to be limited to those organisations expressly accepting a socialist ideology (53). For Mitterrand, by ^{the}end 1969, a new Socialist party could effectively compete with the PCF only if it challenged the Communists for the political space they had so far occupied. This necessitated a unitary strategy, without which the left had no hope of gaining power. A new Socialist party had to expand on its left at the expense of the PCF, and on its right, as the only plausible alternative to the Gaullo-conservative majority, with the independent centre increasingly a victim of bipolarisation. In November 1970, Mitterrand asserted,

'La création d'un grand mouvement démocrate socialiste, structuré autour d'un parti socialiste actif et rénové, qui pesera aussi lourd dans la politique française que le Parti communiste, constituera le facteur déterminant d'une union de gauche à vocation majoritaire'. (54).

The CIR's doctrinal evolution was in theory profound, complementing Mitterrand's evolving strategic conceptions. Its constitutive charter, adopted in 1964, contained no explicit reference to socialism, reflecting the CIR's presidential, and Radical origins (55). In March 1966,

53. Loschak, op cit, p. 81.

54. Cited in Ibid, p. 48.

55. Ibid, p. 42.

the CIR accepted a definition of a 'modern socialism', which incorporated certain classic socialist traits, such as nationalisations, and increased state control over the economy (56). By 1968, the CIR was insisting on its socialist nature. The final resolution accepted at the CIR's October 1968 Assises proclaimed,

'Le socialisme se fixe pour objectif le bien commun et non le profit privé. La socialisation des moyens essentiels d'investissement, de production, et d'échange en constitue la base indispensable' (57).

This evolution culminated with the adoption of the Contrat Socialiste, in May 1970. The Contrat declared that the CIR's ultimate aim, in alliance with other socialist forces, was,

'À remplacer ce système capitaliste, à lui substituer un autre système, un autre modèle de société, fondé sur un certain nombre de principes clairs et non équivoques qui définissent à nos yeux le socialisme'. (58).

It called, for example, for the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy; accepted the principles of democratic planning and autogestion; demanded a socialist Europe, and came close to advocating neutrality vis-a-vis the superpowers (59). One left-wing CIR leader, Joxe, claimed that this represented 'un ralliement conscient et méthodique au socialisme' (60). This claim was at least

56. Ibid, pp. 42-3.

57. Ibid, p. 45.

58. Ibid, p. 48.

59. Ibid, pp. 49-55.

60. P. Joxe, 'La Convention et le socialisme', Dire, (November 1970), p. 15.

partly dubious. The CIR's discovery of socialism was concentrated after May '68, when it had lost the presidential leadership of the left. The tactical advantages for the CIR in 'falling to the left' cannot be overestimated. It had to compete with the 'new' PS that had emerged at Alfortville and Issy-les-Moulineaux, in 1969, and to provide itself with unchallengable credentials - the Contrat - to prepare the ground for its entry into the new party. What characterised Mitterrand's activity after 1965 was a consistent attitude towards strategy, rather than a coherent ideological development.

The ideological evolution attempted to follow the changing necessities of the left unity strategy, and 'falling to the left' was a necessary prerequisite for preparing to take the leadership of a PS deprived of the Radicals. This new party, under a presidential leader like Mitterrand, would then be able to compete with the PCF on the left.

Mitterrand's use of ideology was therefore primarily tactical. The CIR's evolution only partially masked its continuing ideological diversity stemming from the explicitly marxist left, based around Joxe, Estier, and the association Démocratie et Université, to the Hernu wing, arguing for the closer collaboration with the Radicals (61). Mitterrand

61. Loschak, op cit, p. 33. Démocratie et Université was formed in July 1968. P. Ory, G. Delfau, M. Berson, Les chemins de l'unité, (Paris, Tema, 1974), pp. 104-5.

continued to recognise the importance of the Radicals, in retaining centrist votes on the left, but he sought their cooperation henceforth on the basis of a clear socialist orientation.

The Radicals had backed away from him out of the FGDS in 1968, and supported Poher or Pompidou in 1969. Servan Schreiber - Defferre's promoter in 1963-5 - took control of the moribund Radical party in 1969, and was seeking to attract Socialist votes for a Radical led left centre alternative to the Gaullists, excluding the PCF (62). This initiative was in direct competition with Mitterrand for a credible non-Communist opposition to Gaullism. Unsurprisingly, it was bitterly opposed by Mitterrand, although finding more favourable echoes from Mauroy and Defferre within the PS (see below p. 144), and from Hernu within the CIR. At the CIR's final Assises, December 1970, Hernu continued to argue for the creation of a new party that would include the entire Radical party. He was opposed by Mitterrand, and finally withdrew his motion (63).

The CIR refused to participate in the 2nd constitutive Congress of the Parti Socialiste, held at Issy-les-Moulineaux, July 1969. Despite Defferre's humiliation in 1969

62. P.M. Williams and M. Harrison, Politics and Society in De Gaulle's Republic, (London, Longmans, 1971), p. 355.

63. Loschak, op cit, p. 33.

Mitterrand had little hope of immediately acceding to the leadership of such a formation. Any alliance with Defferre, and the anti-unitary anti-Mollet wing of the SFIO would have been impossible immediately after the 1969 presidential ^{elections}, for the CIR had firmly condemned any centrist initiatives of the Defferre type at its Assises on May 4th, 1969 (64). Similarly, an alliance with Mauroy would have been difficult, since he expected to take over the PS leadership at Issy, with Mollet's support (see chapter 3). For most of 1969, and until Mitterrand's Chateâu-Chinon appeal in November 1970, the CIR remained a marginal force on the left. In March 1969, Rocard had praised certain developments within the CIR as positive (65). In turn, Mitterrand commended Rocard's 'belle campagne' in the 1969 presidential election (66). Both in fact were worried that a revived new PS would condemn them to marginal roles. Yet, the PSU's continuing isolationism and the strategic divergences separating CIR and PSU overrode a common antipathy towards the new PS. In December 1969, and May 1970, the CIR reiterated its commitment to the unity of all socialists, but made no concrete propositions to this end (67). In December 1969, the CIR also proposed common actions with the PSU. This received no response, and prompted Estier to complain that

64. F. Mitterrand, 'Discours du 4 Mai', Dire, 7, (May 1969), pp. 14-6.

65. M. Rocard, Le PSU et l'avenir socialiste de la France, (Paris, Seuil, 1969), p. 112.

66. Mitterrand, Ma part de vérité, p. 162.

67. Loschak, op cit, p. 55.

the PSU was 'fort peu pressé de voir la gauche se regrouper' (68).

Mitterrand's crucial initiative to relaunch the socialist unification process came in a speech to the CIR on November 11th, 1970 at Chateau Chinon. Mitterrand advocated the creation of a Délégation Nationale pour l'unité des socialistes, to prepare a unification Congress (69). This body, representative of both formations, as well as new adherents, would attempt to secure an impartial organisation of Congress, refusing to leave the PS with the sole responsibility for this. Mitterrand's call was justified in terms of a wider unitary strategy,

'L'équilibre interne de la gauche tient essentiellement à un seul point: l'unité organique des socialistes... Seule l'unité organique des socialistes équilibrera la gauche, permettra une union de la gauche fructueuse et donc rendra la gauche majoritaire'. (70)

By calling for rapid unification, Mitterrand took the initiative for the process leading to his accession at the head of the PS at Epinay, in June 1971. The idea of a fusion with the PS was accepted at the CIR Assises of December 1970, despite the opposition of a significant minority, around Paris-based Gisèle Halimi (71). It was also

68. Editorial, Dire, 15 December 1969.

69. Loschak, op cit, pp. 34-5.

70. Ibid, p. 34.

71. Ibid, p. 33.

accepted by Savary, who agreed to the demand for a Délégation Nationale (DN) to be composed of 10 PS, 7 CIR (Baboulène, Bachy, Delfau, Dayan, Eyquem, Joxe, Fillioud), and 4 'unorganised'. (72). For Savary, the credibility of the new PS demanded Mitterrand's adhesion, leader of the united left in 1965 (73). Unaware of any serious threat to his leadership, especially after the agreement reached with Mauroy and Defferre over strategy for the 1971 municipal elections, Savary agreed to Mitterrand's terms for entry: that the CIR can be credited with (an exaggerated) 10,000 members (74). The DN agreed over the respective weight of the formations (CIR 10,000; PS 70,000); launched a call in February 1971 for socialist unity; and fixed the date of the unification Congress for June 11-13th, 1971, to be held at Épinay-sur-Seine (75).

The opening votes at the Congress of Epinay, June 11-13th, 1971 left no one motion with an overall majority, as outlined in Table 1.1.

72. Ibid, p. 34.

73. A. Salomon, PS: la mise à nu, (Paris, Robert Laffont, 1980), p. 26.

74. Sevin, op cit, pp. 69-70.

75. 'Pour le Congrès de l'unité socialiste', Dire, (February 1971), pp. 13-18.

Table 1.1 The opening vote at the Congress of Épinay*

<u>Motion</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>%</u>
Mollet-Savary (O)	30,394	34
Mauroy-De ^f erre (R)	25,915	30
Mermaz-Pontillon (L)	14,375	15
Poperen (M)	10,850	12
CERES (P)	7,775	8.5
Objectif '72/Vie Nouvelle	542	0.5

*Source: Le Monde, June 13th, 1971

At Épinay, an 'alliance against nature' was concluded between the CIR (Mermaz-Pontillon), the SFIO moderate minority, (Mauroy-De^ferre), and the left-wing CERES (76). This alliance was the fruit of an extended period of secret backstage manoeuvring. There had been several contacts between Mitterrand and CERES, and more regular, but still secret, meetings between the SFIO minority, and Mitter^rand (77). A general, loosely defined agreement bound the Épinay alliance partners prior to Congress itself. Mitterrand would assume political leadership, while Mauroy would take charge of the party organisation (78).

76. Le Monde, 15 June 1971.

77. See, e.g., Salomon, op cit, pp. 25-6. See chapter three, footnote 58.

78. Giesbert, op cit, p. 266.

A series of mutual enmities, rather than political affinities, accounted for this contradictory alliance. The CIR had boycotted the Issy Congress, partly on account of Defferre's 1969 campaign; but Mitterrand held Mollet, rather than Defferre, responsible for sabotaging his candidacy (79). There were clear strategic differences between Mitterrand and Defferre, but both had realised the importance of the presidential election for reviving the left's fortunes and rebuilding the Socialist party; Mollet had consistently refused to recognise the legitimacy of presidentialism, or its potential utility for the left, and as regularly resisted reforming his party. Moreover, if Mitterrand and Defferre had disagreed over means, they agreed over ends: the creation of a dominant PS. This aim, and a common sense of betrayal by Mollet, also served to bring together Mauroy and Defferre within the PS (see chapter 3). Both Mitterrand, and Mauroy/Defferre regarded the preservation of a discredited Mollet's influence within the PS apparatus as the last barrier to a thoroughgoing party renovation. Savary was dependent on Mollet's support for his leadership, had opposed Defferre at Alfortville, and had defeated Mauroy at Issy.

Mitterrand had maintained an uneasy relationship with Savary. Ministers together in Mollet's 1956 administration,

79. Sevin, op cit, p. 99.

Savary alone had refused to support Mitterrand in 1965 (80). Savary's UCRG had allowed the participation of the 'modernist' clubs within the FGDS from March 1966 onwards (once Savary had left the PSU). Many of these clubs - such as Cercle Tocqueville - had attended the Vichy Assises in 1964, and the Grenoble colloque in 1966, from which Mitterrand's CIR had been excluded (see chapter 6). The UCRG represented that element of the club movement which reluctantly rallied to the FGDS, but which had taken an equivocal stance towards Mitterrand's 1965 campaign. Then, after the 1969 Issy Congress, Savary had succeeded in almost taking over the SFIO with his UCRG, as Mitterrand hoped to do with the CIR. Without support from Mauroy, however, Savary remained Mollet's prisoner, dependent on his support for the leadership. He thus appeared as a symbol of Mollet's continuing control of the PS. On policy, however, he was cautious, close to Mauroy/Defferre, and anathema to CERES.

Mauroy and Defferre aligned themselves behind Savary in October 1970 over strategy to be adopted at the 1971 municipal elections, which sanctioned socialist-centrist alliances, opposed by CERES (see chapter 3). Lille and Marseilles, with some 30 other large towns, were won in March 1971 on the basis of socialist-centrist alliances (81).

80. Mitterrand, op cit, p. 48.

81. Bulletin socialiste, 16, 23 March 1971.

Savary must have underestimated the possibility of a coalition against his leadership at Epinay including CERES, and Mauroy/Defferre, who were also criticised by the CIR left, around Joxe, as impossible allies (82). The first sign of the crystallisation of the Mauroy/Defferre - CIR alliance came with the publication of the Mermaz-Pontillon motion for Épinay: essentially a CIR motion, it was also signed by certain Mauroyites (led by Pontillon)(83). Mitterrand himself declined to sign any motion for Epinay, in an attempt to position himself as future leader above faction. He was not, however, inactive. There is evidence that both the CIR, and Mauroy/Defferre motions were drawn up by the same authors - Jacquet, Fajardie, Mitterrand - in order to attract different constituencies within the party (84).

The CIR motion advocated the creation of a 'Democratic socialist front', allying the PS with that proportion of the Radicals that would accept left unity(85). This implied that a preliminary rebuilding on the non-Communist left was a necessary precondition for any unity agreement with the PCF, a theme echoed in the Mauroy/Defferre motion. Neither motion foresaw an immediate common programme with the PCF,

82. P. Joxe, 'Un Congrès, trois choix', Dire, 23, (April-June 1971).

83. Motion L, Pour le socialisme, un Parti uni et puissant, Supplement to Documentation socialiste, 18, (1971).

84. Notably from Giesbert, op cit, p.260. Difficult to verify.

85. Motion L op cit.

alone advocated by CERES (see chapter 3 for further comparisons between these motions). The Mermaz-Pontillon motion arrived ahead in 19 federations. Its support was strongest where CIR leaders had a strong local implantation: Nièvre (Mitterrand), Isère (Mermaz), Drôme (Fillioud) (86). In these federations, the CIR encountered little opposition from either Mauroy/Defferre, concentrated in the old SFIO bastions, or CERES, strongest in areas of weak Socialist implantation. There was, then, a geographical complementarity between the three Épinay alliance partners.

The Savary-Mollet motion advocated a continuation of the 'ideological debate' with the PCF, and made any unity agreement dependent on a prior clarification of issues between the parties (see chapter 3 for PS/PCF debate, 1969-71)(87). The commitment to continue the ideological debate with the PCF was criticised by the anti-unitary current led by Defferre: it was also rigidly condemned as a recipe for inaction by CERES (88). This policy was Mollet's from at least 1963, and thus Savary's for want of alternative allies. By criticising the Mollet-Savary left unity policy, Mitterrand provided common ground for an alliance with both the 'right' (Mauroy/Defferre), and the 'left' (CERES), who opposed it for opposite reasons. The

underlying rationale for the apparently contradictory Épinay
86. Sevin, op cit, p. 220.

87. Motion 0, Pour un Parti socialiste fort, et pour la recherche de l'union de la gauche, Supplement to Documentation socialiste, 18, (1971).

88. Sevin, op cit, p.114.

alliance was, the conquest of the party organisation; the defeat of the Mollet/Savary leadership; and party renovation. Each actor interpreted these factors differently. Together, they explain why the Mollet/Savary leadership, hitherto the 'centrist' element within the party, fell victim to an unholy alliance. These objectives gave a minimum of political cohesion to the Épinay coalition. In the politically heterogeneous Épinay leadership, Mitterrand occupied the strategically advantageous centrist position, flanked by CERES on the left, and Mauroy/Defferre on the right. He needed both of them for his majority; they could not join together without him. His potential leverage was thus increased. The advantage of this centrist position would become increasingly evident, with Mitterrand able alternatively to rely on the left to counteract the right (as over the programme) and vice versa.

The balance of power between the various motions ensured that CERES' support was essential for the initial success of the anti-Mollet coalition.' Congress votes over the mode of election to the party's governing organs - adopting PR - have been dealt with elsewhere (see chapter 4). Agreement was reached in the Resolutions Committee at Congress between Mitterrand, Mauroy/Defferre, and CERES over Mitterrand's general policy motion. This text received

43,929 votes on the final vote, against 41,757 for Savary, supported by Mollet and Poperen, with 3,925 abstentions (89). The Épinay coalition thus took control of the party organisation with a minority of the whole Congress. To oust the Mollet-Savary leadership, Mitterrand had to make considerable concessions to CERES, whilst reassuring Mauroy/Defferre. For CERES, the final motion contained an explicit commitment to start negotiations with the PCF over a common programme of government; as a counterpart, democratic guarantees would have to be agreed by the PCF before any Common Programme was signed. The motion also announced that the party would draw up its own programme, before negotiating with the PCF (90).

Due to the need to ally with CERES, Mitterrand had for the first time agreed to a joint programme with the PCF. In his speech to Congress, he attempted to turn the concession to CERES into a challenge to the PCF,

'Le Parti socialiste, dans son entier, accepte l'accord électoral avec le Parti communiste. Il n'y aura pas d'alliance électorale, il n'y aura pas de programme électoral, il n'y aura pas de gouvernement de gauche, s'il n'y a pas de contrat de gouvernement'. (91).

Within the new leadership, there was parity between

89. Bulletin socialiste. 15 June 1971.

90. Motion d'orientation du Congrès d'Épinay. Reprinted in Le P/R, Supplement to 73, August 1978.

91. Le Monde, 15 June 1971.

Mitterrand and Mauroy/Defferre, with each of the major victorious factions counting 4 representatives in the 10 member SN. This was despite the fact that Mauroy/Defferre won nearly double the number of votes of Mermaz-Pontillon. Most importantly, it was Mitterrand, rather than Mauroy who was elected as Premier Secrétaire by the June 16th CD. (92). Mauroy's decision to allow Mitterrand to assume control of the party organisation was precipitated by his boss, Laurent, making it clear that he would not inherit the Lille Mairie if he became First Secretary (93). Mitterrand carried off the top party post despite initial agreements to the contrary; there was thus no distinction made between the head of the party organisation, and the political leader, such as had existed in the inter-war SFIO between Faure and Blum, but not later under Mollet. Leadership was to be concentrated in the hands of the First Secretary, simultaneously political leader, and head of the party organisation. As befitted the presidentialised Fifth Republic, however, Mitterrand did not become leader of the Socialist parliamentary group, as Blum had been in the Third. That now less important post was assumed by Defferre (94). The initial checks and balances foreseen to prevent control of the organisation leading to bureaucratic ossification - as

92. Bulletin Socialiste. 17, June 1971.

93. Giesbert, op cit, p. 266. Laurent wanted Mauroy in Lille to look after federal affairs - as he had done so when Mollet was leader.

94. See chapter 5.

it had developed under Mollet - were thus discarded, although the change in title from General Secretary, to First Secretary was meant to symbolise the reduced importance of that post. Mitterrand's election as First Secretary gave him a progressively decisive advantage within the organisation. Aside from Mitterrand, the CIR clan counted Estier (Press), Fillioud (Organisation and Propaganda) and Joxe (Formation) (95).

Having argued at Epinay that socialist renovation required a Common Programme, Mitterrand was obliged to rely on Chevènement, leader of the CERES faction, and original partisan of the programmatic alliance, to draw up the programme. Mitterrand thus intended to compete on the 'left' with the PCF, in particular by introducing the theme of autogestion. Despite initial tensions within the Epinay leadership, its relative solidarity was assured by attempts to overturn it by the minority. In 1972, Mollet formed Bataille socialiste, in an attempt to situate himself ideologically 'to the left' of Mitterrand, and to make himself champion of doctrinal orthodoxy, his old stock in trade (96). Equally, Poperen relied on Études, Recherches et Informations Socialistes, (ERIS), a relatively well developed parallel faction, to support his activities (97). In contrast,

95. Bulletin socialiste, 17 June 1971.

96. Le Nouvel Observateur, 21 February 1972.

97. Ibid.

Savary refused to create any factional structure presaging his rallying to Mitterrand in 1973.

Mitterrand was constrained to allow Chevènement a relatively free hand in drawing up the first draft of the party's programme, accepted by the CD in December 1971; he was equally determined that the party's governmental ambitions be underlined by modifying Chevènement's text. On each of the five major policy amendments submitted to the votes of the party activists, where no agreement had been reached by the CD, Mitterrand and Mauroy were united: Economic democracy, Institutions, Europe, Atlantic alliance, Nuclear deterrent (98). By the Suresnes CN in March 1972, called to adopt the party's programme, a Mitterrand/Mauroy leadership axis had been created, representing a 'majority of the majority', opposed to CERES (see chapter 4). Moreover, Mitterrand saw Changer la Vie, the party's programme, as a means of lessening the tensions between the Épinay majority and minority, and of basing his leadership on a wider party base, making him less dependent on CERES support. Thus, in February 1972, Mitterrand proclaimed in relation to the party's programme that 'il faut que la synthèse l'emporte, et que la majorité issue d'Épinay se maintienne, et s'élargisse' (99). At the March Suresnes CN, the Épinay

98. Bulletin socialiste, 6 March 1972.

99. Ibid, 5, February 1972.

majority appeared to have increased its weight within the party from the relative majority it had obtained at Épinay, to between 55 and 70% of the mandates (100). Evidence suggested that this increase could be mainly attributed to CERES. On the one occasion when CERES sided with the united minority (Savary, Mollet, Poperen) against Mitterrand and Mauroy, it secured the success of the minority's amendment, the so-called 'nationalisation on demand' clause (see chapter 4). Moreover, despite receiving an absolute majority (53%) for the Joxe-Mauroy motion on economic democracy, the Mitterrand/Mauroy axis was in a minority on the opening vote for its amendments over institutions, and the Atlantic alliance (101).

Increased support therefore benefitted largely CERES, initiator of the programme, and Mitterrand continued to depend on both CERES and Mauroy for his majority (102). Although his majority remained fragile, the Suresnes CN strengthened Mitterrand's leadership. There was evidence of some lessening of tension between Mitterrand/Mauroy, and Savary/Mollet. Both Savary and Mollet rallied to Mitterrand at the CN over the Atlantic alliance; while Mitterrand supported Savary ^{supporter} Bérégovoy's text, committing a future

100. L'Unité, 10 March 1972.

101. Bulletin socialiste, 6 March 1972.

102. Sevin, op cit, p. 282, concludes that the majority's progression was largely due to CERES, estimating its audience at 15%.

left-wing government to halt construction of the independent nuclear deterrent (103). Meanwhile, Mitterrand and Mollet reached a compromise over institutional reform, committing the party to respecting a contrat de législature, while refusing an automatic dissolution of the National Assembly, if the government was censured by a majority of deputies (104). Agreement was also temporarily achieved over Europe; and a compromise reached over the preface to the Socialist programme (105). These votes enabled Mitterrand to lessen his dependence on CERES, to position himself as a leader above faction, and to strengthen party unity in the run up to negotiations with the PCF. His conciliatory attitude towards elements of the Épinay minority was confirmed in the discussions with the PCF, started in April 1972. In the 4 inter-party Commissions, established by the first PS/PCF meeting, April 27th, PS representatives were: Joxe (Mitterrandist), and Boulloche (Savary^{supporter}) for Institutions; Chevènement (CERES) and Piette (Molletist) for the Economy; Mauroy and Bérégovoy (Savary^{supporter}) for Social Affairs; Jacquet (Mauroy^{supporter}) and Enock (Savary^{supporter}) for International Affairs (106). Thus, if CERES was allowed responsibility for the Economy, Mitterrand and Mauroy (and Savary) controlled

103. Bulletin socialiste, 6, March 1972.

104. Ibid, The contrat was to be a binding agreement between parties to support a government through a legislature.

105. Ibid,

106. Ibid, 8, May - June 1972.

dealings in Social affairs, International affairs, and Institutions. These latter planks were what concerned Mitterrand most, and might serve as a bridge with the centre, over the abyss of the economic programme that Chevènement and the PCF were hoping to create between the left and right of the PS, and between the PS and their former centrist allies. By associating the minority in the PS/PCF negotiations, especially Savary, Mitterrand strengthened his own hand against CERES, while committing the whole party to the alliance behind his leadership, so breaking the resistance of the Épinay minority.

The Programme Commun de Gouvernement (PCG) was signed between PS and PCF on June 27th, 1972, after exactly two months of negotiations (107). It represented a broad compromise between the parties' respective programmes. The PS ultimately agreed to a far more extensive list of nationalisations than originally foreseen in its programme. Nonetheless, it obtained satisfactory, if ambiguous compromises over Europe, foreign policy, defence, institutions - all elements necessary to reassure a potential centrist electorate (108). Most importantly, the PCG contained a clear commitment from the ~~left~~ to quit office if

107. Ibid.

108. See O. Duhamel, La gauche et la Vème République, (Paris, PUF, 1980), pp. 313-359 for a thorough treatment of PS, and PCF approaches to the Common Programme, and analysis of the content of the programme itself.

disavowed by the electorate, and to universal suffrage.

Our main interest however lies not in the content, but in the strategic implications of the PCG. Its appeared to represent a change in direction of Mitterrand's unitary strategy. In 1965, Mitterrand was candidate of the united left without the constraints of a programmatic agreement. Preceding Épinay, Mitterrand had refused any notion of a common programme until the non-Communist left had reestablished the balance of power on the left in its favour. By accepting a common programme with an organisationally, and electorally more powerful PCF, Mitterrand laid himself open to the charge of allowing the PS to become a hostage of the PCF in any future government.

There were cogent reasons, however, why Mitterrand considered a programmatic agreement to be consistent with his strategy. Mitterrand's decision to endorse a common programme partly reflected the need for CERES support at Epinay; it was also a means of underlining the break with the old Molletist party leadership, and of testifying to party renovation. It gave substance to the PS claim for radical credentials, and while victory in the 1973 parliamentary elections was unlikely, important gains for the new PS were not. The PCG must be seen in terms of Mitterrand's primary concern with the institutional, and strategic conditions for

the left's accession to power. It was one weapon in a strategy that sought to lead to an eventual socialist domination on the left, the essential condition for the left's conquest of power. His presidential unity strategy was to counterbalance the weight of the PCF on the left by increased support for a Socialist candidate from the centre; the PCG was a means of competing with the PCF on the left, amongst that party's own base. A future Socialist presidential candidate - Mitterrand - would be able to free himself from electorally damaging programmatic constraints, while binding the PCF to support a unitary candidature. Mitterrand now sought simultaneously to maintain a two pronged presidential, and programmatic left unity attack, both intended to create a dominant Socialist party,

'Notre objectif fondamental , c'est de refaire un grand Parti socialiste sur le terrain occupé par le PC lui-même, afin de faire la démonstration que, sur cinq millions d'électeurs communistes, trois millions peuvent voter socialiste'. (109).

Despite their differing appreciations of the presidential election, PS and PCF views on left unity were symmetrical. Both parties - excepting CERES - saw unity in terms of their own domination on the left. For the PCF, a common programme had been a constant demand since its 17th Congress, in 1963 (110). The common programme was seen as

109. Cited in Giesbert, op cit, p. 267. Speech to the Socialist International, June 1972.

110. Lazitch, op cit, p. 73.

an essential first step leading to the accession to power of a democratic front. This front would be dominated by the PCF, 'party of the working class', in alliance with a Socialist party which, if constrained by a programme to accept a socialist orientation, remained by its nature a weak and subordinate representative of the middle classes, prone to social democratic deviations. The delayed publication in 1975 of Marchais' report to the Central Committee, in June 1972, preceding the signature of the PCF, illustrated well this view,

'Le Parti socialiste représente, dans sa forme organisée, le courant social-démocrate réformiste tel que l'histoire l'a fait dans notre pays'. (111).

The general theme underpinning this report was that left unity was in PCF interests only if 'the internal and external conjuncture' was favourable to PCF development, and to the accession to power of a Communist-dominated democratic alliance. The PCG was seen as a guarantee that the PCF would be able to control the actions of its Socialist partners, and to split the PS should it again try to desert the PCF for the centre.

The PCG was accepted unanimously, minus two abstentions, at the CN of July 9th, 1972 (112). This vote did not imply

111. Reprinted in E. Fajon, L'Union est un combat, (Paris, PUF, Éditions Sociales, 1975), pp. 75-127, p. 117.

112. L'Unité. 14 July 1972.

that all misgivings over the left alliance had disappeared, especially amongst the ex-SFIO élus. Yet, it did represent an attempt to rally the party behind Mitterrand, in preparation for the 1973 legislative elections and both Savary and Mollet supported it. The CN also ratified the alliance with the Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche (MRG), the minority of Left Radicals who depended on PS votes and who split from the Radical party in July 1972, to support the PS alliance, and thus the PCG (113). That only a minority of Radicals rallied to the PS was a setback for Mitterrand and a relief for CERES. The Radicals had historically been regarded as an integral part of the left, and had participated in the FGDS. Their absence threatened to weaken the non-Communist left vis-a-vis the PCF, and so to deprive the left of a bridge to the centrist electorate. Nonetheless, Mitterrand refused any cooperation with the Radicals, except on the basis of support for the PCG, underlining his strategic commitment to left unity.

Henceforth, two readings existed of the PCG. The minimal interpretation was shared by Mitterrand, Mauroy, Defferre, Savary. It placed a primacy on the symbolic value of the PCG as binding the left alliance, but hoped that the Programme would make the PS into /e premier Parti de France (114). It attempted to underplay the programmatic

113. Ibid.

114. This expression was employed in Motion 1 for the Grenoble Congress, June 1973. Le P/R, 15, May '73; 16, June 1973.

commitments of the PCG, treating it more as a presidential platform, than as a manifesto. By contrast, the maximal interpretation saw the PCG as only the first step towards greater cooperation, and ideological convergence between the two parties. This reading was subscribed to by CERES, and to a lesser extent, by Popperen, and Joxe. At Grenoble in 1973, no faction sought to renege on the PCG: henceforth, all made reference to the PCG an obligation, and differed on its interpretation, rather than its ~~existence~~ .

This ambivalence towards the PCG was first openly manifested in the preparations for the 1973 elections. Mitterrand intended to use these elections to increase the party's weight within the left alliance, to consolidate his leadership over the PS; and to reassure both the ex-SFIO, and centrist electorates ^{which would have} , required an autonomous Socialist campaign.

Mitterrand and Mauroy rejected a joint campaign with the Communists, calling for 'Le plus possible du programme commun, Le moins possible d'actions communes' (115). This decision increased the developing cleavage with the majority between Mitterrand/Mauroy, and CERES.

In the 1973 elections, the working of the left alliance bore out Mitterrand's analysis, rather than the hopes of the PCF leadership. The PS/MRG alliance (UGSD) obtained 20.8%.

115. Le Monde, 21 October 1972.

as opposed to 18.9% for the FGDS in 1967 and 16.5% in 1968 (116). It only marginally failed to outdistance the PCF, whose 21.4% was certainly an increase on the 20% achieved in 1968, but a decline on its 22.5% in 1967, a better comparison (117). The PS/MRG alliance counted 102 élus (89 PS, 13 MRG) in 1973, to 44 Socialists prior to the election (118). In addition to a number of ex-CIR deputies, from the short 1967-8 legislature, returned in 1973, 41 sabras were elected. The sabras were so called after the first generation of native Israelis: they had come to the PS as their first conventional political engagement, with the renewal of the PS under Mitterrand. Mitterrand regarded them as loyal to his leadership, and helped to promote this new generation of politician at all levels of the organisation. They had not participated in the factional battles of the 1960's, and were largely dependent on Mitterrand's leadership for their authority within the party. They owed their seats in the Assembly to the restoration of PS electoral fortunes under Mitterrand. • It was through this new generation of leaders that Mitterrand intended progressively to dominate the PS, and mark it indelibly with his authority. It is to Mitterrand's increased stature, and authority at the 2nd PS Congress, held at Grenoble in June 1973, that we must now turn.

116. Johnson, op cit, p. 137.

117. Ibid.

118. L'Unité, 16-22 March 1973.

CHAPTER TWO

François Mitterrand and the Parti Socialiste, 1973-1978:

an absolute monarch?

The Congress of Grenoble, June 25-25th, 1975, provided a salutary example of the pattern whereby changes in external political circumstances - the signing of the PCG; PS electoral success in 1973 - heavily influenced conditions of internal party competition. Motion 1 (Mitterrand, Mauroy, Savary), obtained 65.5% on the opening vote, compared with 44% for Mermaz/Pontillon, and Mauroy/Defferre at Epinay (1). Mollet's Bataille socialiste was reduced to 8%, from 34% for Mollet/Savary at Epinay. By contrast, CERES increased its score from 8.5% to 21%; while Poperen's ERIS declined from 12% to 5% (2). The implications of this vote were clear. Those factions that formed the Epinay leadership were associated with the party's electoral success, and organisational renewal; those continuing to oppose Mitterrand were associated with the defence of an archaic, discredited, pre-Epinay party.

The minimal Epinay alliance linking three distinct partners opposed to a minority of almost equal weight, was succeeded at Grenoble by a heterogeneous majority, grouping Mitterrand, Mauroy/Defferre, and Savary around a single motion. Savary was co-opted onto the majority list by Mitterrand before ^{the} Congress (3). This suggested that in conditions of past electoral success, and the future prospect

1. L'Unité, 22-28 June 1973.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., 1-7 June 1973.

of power, there existed a tendency towards convergence between what we may classify as governing factions(courants gestionnaires), who sought to participate in the leadership (as later in power), and were willing to subordinate political disagreements to this end. It also weakened the effect of PR: any faction which feared extinction if it presented an independent motion could hope to preserve a measure of authority by negotiating for itself a position within the leadership list before Congress. As a counterpart, Savary in 1973 (as Poperen, and Rocard in 1975) recognised that the Mitterrand/Mauroy axis henceforth was the dominant element within the leadership.

Savary's participation in the majority strengthened Mitterrand's position as the central element within the majority, and in this capacity as 'leader above faction', flanked by CERES on the left; Savary/Mauroy on the right. In contrast to his accommodation with Savary, Mitterrand refused an agreement with Poperen preceding ^{the} Congress (4). Through ERIS, Poperen had attempted to structure a well organised parallel faction. By refusing an initial agreement with Poperen, Mitterrand underlined that participation in the majority was incompatible with the retention of specific factional structures, and despite rallying to Mitterrand at Congress, Poperen was refused entry to the SN until 1975.

4. Ibid, 22-28 June 1973.

The anti-faction rule would be applied to CERES only in 1975 (see chapter 4 for CERES at Grenoble). With Poperen rallying to Mitterrand at ^{the} Congress, only Mollet remained in opposition. Mitterrand's actions at Grenoble must be seen in the context of the preparation for the presidential candidacy in 1976. By widening his party base, and by constraining the leaders of the other factions to recognise him as a leader above faction, Mitterrand positioned himself to be the party's only plausible presidential candidate in 1976, both within the party, and with public opinion.

Within the SN elected after Grenoble, parity between Mitterrand and Mauroy was maintained: both Mitterrandists, and Mauroy's ^{supporters} counted 4 posts in the SN, increased from 10 - 13 members, along with 3 CERES, and 2 Savary ^{supporters} (5). Mitterrand remained top of the hierarchy, while the other Mitterrandists, all in key posts, were Delisle (Federations); Estier (Press), Jospin (Formation)(6). Only one CIR Baron - Estier - remained in the SN, while two sabras, Delisle and Jospin, were promoted to take over from Joxe, and Fillioud. After Grenoble, the CD approved Mitterrand's proposed creation of a new strata of leaders, the Délégués, ostensibly necessary to improve organisational efficiency (7).

5. Le P/R, 18, July 1973.

6. Ibid.

7. Nord-Demain, 17, May-June 1973.

These délegués were appointed by Mitterrand, and were responsible to him alone. Their influence will be considered below.

Mitterrand further consolidated his leadership at the Extraordinary Congress of Bagnolet, December 1973. At the CD of November 17th, 1973, a proposed Convention on Europe was transformed into a full scale Congress at Mitterrand's demand, and he threatened to resign the leadership unless he achieved firm party backing over Europe (8). Despite his determination to silence divergences within the majority over Europe, separating CERES and the left CIR from Mauroy, the main purpose of Mitterrand's initiative was to enable him to hold a plebiscite over his leadership, and to appeal to the base for support over the heads of the leaders of the various factions. He thus intended to underline his indispensability as leader, and to make his eventual presidential candidacy a mere formality. Mitterrand's stance opened a breach with Mauroy (see chapter 3).

Neither Mauroy, nor CERES tabled motions, and Mitterrand's motion was approved by 92% of Congress mandates (9). By preventing Mauroy from presenting a distinct motion to Congress - as he had threatened to - Mitterrand equally ensured that the agreement reached between the majority, and Mollet's Bataille socialiste was on the basis

8. L'Unité, 23-29 Nov. 1973.

9. Le P/R, 23, December 1973.

of a text that he, rather than Mauroy had *drawn up* : that prevented Mauroy from absorbing Mollet's support, and enabled Mitterrand to challenge Mauroy for the SFIO's European heritage. Finally, Mitterrand imposed his policy on the party on what he regarded as a critical issue. He was its undisputed leader. Mitterrand's control was reinforced at the Congress of Suresnes, March 1974 (see chapter 3).

President Pompidou's death brought forward the date of the presidential election from 1976, to May 1974. Since the 1973 elections, Mitterrand was the only plausible united left presidential candidate. He declared his candidacy at a special PS conference on April 8th, 1974, as a response to orchestrated calls for a unitary candidate from a variety of political organisations: PS, PCF, MRG, CGT, CFDT (10). Mitterrand did not negotiate directly with any of these organisations. This was consistent with his 1965 strategy; a presidential candidate, potential representative of all French people must not be tied to a particular political organisation. .

As presidential candidate, Mitterrand elevated himself above all parties on the left, including his own. In a bipolarised presidential election, such campaign autonomy was necessary to extend Mitterrand's constituency beyond the left, and to attract the vital centrist vote. To achieve

10. L'Unité, 12-18 April 1974.

this, Mitterrand adopted a minimal interpretation of the PCG. The PCG was a parliamentary contrat de législature, and did not concern the presidential election; Mitterrand refused to be tied by its programmatic constraints.

References to the PCG were kept to a minimum during the campaign, and Mitterrand relied on a small brains trust of economic advisers, often from outside the PS, to help define the economic programme (notably Rocard), while CERES was excluded from significant influence over the campaign (see chapter 4) (11). The prime objective of Mitterrand's economic programme was defence of the Franc; and the structural reforms envisaged in the PCG (nationalisation, immediate relaunch of popular consumption) were ^{to be} postponed until the later stages of a Mitterrand presidency (12).

The primary condition for the credibility of Mitterrand's challenge was that he showed himself independent of the PCF in a way that the PS could not in legislative elections. In 1974, PCF collaboration on Mitterrand's terms ensured this: the party decided to work for Mitterrand's election, rather than present its own candidate, and risk appearing marginalised in a presidential contest ~~in which~~ its candidate had no chance of ^{being} elected (13). Marchais refused to be drawn on which ministries the party would demand if Mitterrand

11. Giesbert, op cit, pp. 280-282.

12. L'Unité, 12-18 April 1974.

13. Hincker, op cit, p. 121 denies that this was a major reason, and claims support simply followed from the strategy of the PCG.

won, and did not seek to embarrass Mitterrand, as in 1978-1981 (14). Clearly, in 1974, the PCF still considered that its interests would be better served by Mitterrand's election reinforcing the PCF/PS alliance, and by its participation in government. The PCF concentrated its first ballot campaign on the PCG, rather than on Mitterrand. If left-wing voters could support Mitterrand because of the PCG, Mitterrand would have difficulty escaping its promises if elected, and would find it harder to ignore the PCF (15).

The 1974 election results confirmed Mitterrand's analysis of presidentialism. In the second ballot duel, between competing left and right candidates, a representative of the Socialist left could unite a variety of forces extending beyond traditional left voters, and compete for support on the centre. This was given substance by the significant increase in support for Mitterrand on the second ballot (49.3%) compared with his first ballot total (45.24%) (16). Clearly, there was a potential reservoir of centrist support that could be canalised by a more autonomous, and presidential Socialist party, even one supported from the first ballot by the PCF. Communist support for a socialist

14. Giesbert, op cit, p. 281.

15. Hincker, op cit, pp. 121-4.

16. M.T. and A. Lancelot, 'A cartographic approach to the presidential election May 1974'. In H.R. Penniman et al, France at the Polls: the Presidential Election of May 1974, (Washington, AEI Studies, 1975), p. 151.

candidate could no longer be taboo - at least in circumstances like those of 1974. The 1974 election may also have suggested, however, the Mitterrand would have benefitted from Communist opposition on the first ballot, to convince centrist waverers of his independence on the second (17).

Relations between the PS and PCF abruptly became more conflictual in the autumn of 1974. This related partly to the results of a series of legislative bye-elections, in September-October 1974: PS candidates increased their support on the first ballot of these six by-elections by 3 - 13%, compared with 1973; while the PCF stagnated or declined in all but one (18). This pattern remained steady from 1974 - 1977, with the PS/MRG alliance establishing a 28-31% norm in the polls, to 20% for the PCF (19). To this electoral evolution was added the PS' Assises of socialism, October 12-13th, 1974. The PCF interpreted the Assises as a further attempt to marginalise their influence within the left alliance (20).

Mitterrand's attitude towards the Assises was ambiguous.

During the presidential campaign, Mitterrand posed as the

-
17. See D. Lindon and P. Weill, 'Pourquoi M. Giscard d'Estaing a-t-il gagné?' Le Monde, 22 May 1974.
 18. L'Unité, 4-10, 11-17 October 1974.
 19. J. Jaffré, 'The French electorate in March 1978', p. 44. In H.R. Penniman et al, France at the Polls: the National Assembly elections of March 1978, (Washington, AEI Studies, 1980).
 20. Hincker, op cit, pp. 130-1.

unifier of various distinct sensibilities on the left, and as the point of confluence for those supporting the PCG (PCF, PS), and those opposing it in the name of autogestion (PSU, CFDT)(21). It was subsequently difficult to refuse Mauroy's initiative in calling the Assises. Mitterrand could argue that Rocard's *joining*, coupled with an official acceptance of the PCG, was an historical vindication of his strategy, both with regard to the Common Programme, and to his concentration on restoring the mainstream socialist left, rather than seeking to replace it, as had the PSU. Nonetheless, Mitterrand profoundly distrusted the 'New Left' and he must have considered the possibility of an eventual Mauroy/Rocard alliance being directed against his leadership. Moreover Rocard, presidential candidate in 1969, *might* emerge as an alternative PS nominee for the Presidency, where before Mitterrand had reigned unchallenged. Mitterrand thus insisted that any *membership* *proposals* to the PS be on an individual basis, thereby rejecting PSU calls for organisational fusion (22). Further, he forwarded the date of Congress to January 1975, to prevent the courant des Assises from effectively organising for it (23). Once inside the PS,

21. Mitterrand made this claim in his acceptance speech, April 8th. Le P/R, 27, April 1974.

22. Politique Hebdo, 20-26 June 1974.

23. Ibid.

Mitterrand allowed a limited role for the new arrivals from the PSU, and CFDT: that of providing ideological competition with CERES and the PCF, and of replacing CERES within the leadership, at a minimal organisational cost to Mitterrand.

Mitterrand thus allowed the 15 thèses sur l'autogestion, adopted in June 1975, to be largely by the courant des Assises (24). This ran into opposition from elements of Mitterrand's own base. From the Assises onwards, an anti-autogestionnaire wing within the leadership grouped those based around Joxe and Démocratie et Université (the 'Marxist Mitterrandists'), with Popere's ERIS. At a party Convention in June 1975, Popere presented an amendment attempting to limit official attachment to autogestion (25). In 1976, Joxe formed a review, Pour l'Union, with a similar aim (26). This was an attempt to counteract the formation of Faire in October 1975 by those close to Rocard (see chapter 6). Numerous factors explained the Mitterrandists' hostility to Rocard. Rocard's membership risked lessening the importance of the organisational role played by Mitterrand's supporters; it also gave the party another potential presidential candidate, and thus an alternative future leadership team. Further, the Assises brought the Mitterrandists into conflict with Mauroy, responsible for

24. Interview with P. Viveret, 5 July 1984.

25. Le Monde, 22-23 June 1975.

26. F. Lecuyer, 'D'où viennent les courants?', Faire, 19, May 1977, p. 9.

drafting Rocard into the PS. On a strategic level, the PSU's stance over the Common Programme was criticised, as was the danger of creating a PS/CFDT axis, risking a serious deterioration of relations with the PCF, and ^{the} CGT (27).

After the Assises, Mitterrand rapidly reasserted his authority at the Congress of Pau, January 31 - February 2nd, 1975 (28). At the December 1974 CD, the leaders of the party's major factions, save CERES, Mollet, and Notebart, signed motion 1 (29). On the opening vote at Congress, this motion won 68.04%, to 25.4% for CERES, while Mollet and Notebart each failed to reach the 5% necessary for representation (30). The new arrivals from the PSU and CFDT ~~reached~~ mainly (but not entirely) to motion 1, via Martinet's amendment to it, thereby accentuating the leadership cooption system, which had begun at Grenoble when Savary signed the majority text. This practice was extended at Pau with the cooption not only of Rocard, but also of Poperen, perhaps his bitterest critic (31). Mollet's motion declined to 3%: what remained of the SFIO had rallied to the dominant Mitterrand/Mauroy leadership. Henceforth, until Metz, the leaders of all factions represented in the secretariat signed a single text, and had to bargain with Mitterrand over their influence within the leadership.

27. See, inter alia, C. Germon, 'Des ambiguïtés à lever', L'Unité, 12-18 July 1974.

28. Ibid, 7-13 February 1975.

29. Ibid, 10-16 January 1976.

30. Ibid, 7-13 February 1975.

31. Poperen no. 7, Rocard no. 8 on the majority list. Le P/R, 36, January 1975.

The Pau Congress showed that the exercise of influence within the hierarchy stemmed from a recognition of the predominance of the Mitterrand/Mauroy leadership, and a more general recognition of Mitterrand's status as leader above faction after the 1974 presidential election. As the party progressed away from its factional beginnings, a heritage of its composite origins, there was a partly artificial tendency towards convergence by a variety of competing political leaders. The common foundation of this convergence was a desire to participate in the party leadership, as a preliminary to participation in government, regardless of personal rivalries, and differences over policy. The essential condition for such participation was a recognition of Mitterrand's presidential authority, and his elevation above a collective form of leadership after 1974. To continue to oppose Mitterrand risked political marginalisation. Savary accepted this logic in 1973, Poperen in 1975. Rocard too preferred to sign motion 1 directly, rather than to present his own motion, or even to rally through the intermediary of Martinet's amendment.

The imperative of majority rassemblement was not simply a consequence of the party's internal dynamics. The salient objective of the leadership alliance formed at Pau was preparation for the exercise of power in 1978. The proximity of power, made plausible by the 1974 presidential election,

encouraged each leader to maximise his chances of future participation in government. That meant accepting constraints on his freedom of internal party action, to preserve a position of influence within the leadership, made conditional by Mitterrand on renouncing parallel factional structures. These constraints equally affected Mitterrand, not entirely a free agent himself. Rather than attempting to maximise his immediate influence within the organisation, by relegating all superfluous factions into the minority (only Mauroy being essential for his authority), Mitterrand had to widen the composition of the leadership to represent a broad cross section of the party, conceived of as a future government team. In particular, he had to accept Rocard's presence.

This reality questions an axiom developed by Sartori: that PR in internal party elections leads to a proliferation of organised factions (32). It may be a necessary condition; it is not a sufficient one. On the contrary, the prevailing political circumstances - as outlined above - promoted convergence between leaders of potentially competing factions; these leaders considered it to be in their interests not to appeal separately to the party, or to structure factions, and risk marginalisation in the minority. Above all, these leaders - Rocard, Savary, Poperen, even

32. Sartori, Parties and Party systems, pp. 94-104.

Mauroy at this stage - sought to avoid the accusation of factionalism, virtually inevitable once a motion had been tabled against Mitterrand at Congress. In these circumstances, PR actually restrained open manifestations of factionalism.

Only CERES refused Mitterrand's method of leadership cooption, and this helps explain Mitterrand's determination to break the alliance with CERES at Pau (see chapter 4). By 1975, Mitterrand could define the criteria of what constituted a faction - and constrain other party leaders to accept his definition, or else risk relegation into the minority. By claiming to speak with a party legitimacy* and by opposing party to factional interest, Mitterrand could successfully cloak his own factional activity in the name of developing the party organisation. This may be seen most clearly in relation to the 'unofficial' organisation ^{the 1975-76} that developed between Pau, and Nantes (1977).

As both political leader, and head of the party's national organisation, Mitterrand headed the most powerful organisation faction, whose power was based on positions occupied within the party apparatus itself, rather than through parallel factional structures. Since Épinay, the dominant Mitterrand/Mauroy leadership had been in a commanding position at the level of party hierarchy, (SN, BE, CD) and federal executives. Mitterrand increased his

*As 'leader above faction',

influence within the hierarchy at ^{the congresses of} Pau, and Nantes (1977). Through his position as First Secretary, Mitterrand was in regular contact with the federal leaderships, and, along with Mauroy, was in a position to influence the composition of these. By its nature, this is difficult to quantify: by ~~the Congress~~ of Pau, one observer estimates that 42 ex-CIR occupied the post of Federal First Secretary - a clear indication of Mitterrand's interference in the promotion of these lesser party officials (33). With the party's electoral success in 1973, Mitterrand could also count on the support of most sabras within the Socialist parliamentary group, and could expect to benefit from the 1977 municipal elections to strengthen his support amongst Socialists in local government, until then ~~represented~~ by Mauroy.

Through its organisational control, and political centrality, the organisation faction could claim a party legitimacy which it could deny to the parallel faction, through its ability to define the criteria of factionalism. This gave it a definite long term strategic advantage, an advantage increased for Mitterrand (as opposed to Mauroy) by his central location within the party leadership (able to ally with 'left' against 'right' and vice versa), and by his status as the party's most plausible presidential candidate. This strategic advantage extended down to the

33. J.F. Bizot et al, Au Parti des socialistes, (Paris, Grasset, 1976), p. 72.

party base, where the majority motion, usually supported by the local organisation, was perceived not as a 'factional' motion, but as that of the party leadership itself, thereby securing the support of a majority of 'legitimist' party members. Mitterrand and Mauroy provided examples of unequal importance of the advantages enjoyed by organisation factions; CERES - and to some extent Rocard - suffered from being conceived of by themselves, and designated by the leadership as parallel factions.

~~Apart~~ from the accusation of factionalism, Mitterrand necessarily also justified the split with CERES on external grounds (see chapter 4). Mitterrand eliminated CERES from the leadership at ^{the Congress of} Pau to the advantage of his own men, not to share the spoils with Mauroy, much less Rocard.

Apart from Mitterrand as First Secretary, the promotion of Mermaz to the joint charge of federations, and of workplace sections symbolised the shifting balance of power within the leadership: Mitterrand would no longer tolerate the party's workplace ~~organisation~~ being left in the hands of a factional adversary, as it had with CERES from 1971-1975.

The other Mitterrandists were: Estier (Press); Jospin (Formation, and Third World); Eyquem (Associated organisations); Cresson (Youth and Students). Poperen (Propaganda), and Bérégovoy (External relations) had also to be counted as part of Mitterrand's faction (34).

34. Le P/R, 38, February 1975.

Excluding Mitterrand, there were 4 ex-CIR in the leadership (Estier, Cresson, Mermaz, Eyquem), and only one sabra (Jospin), apparently reversing the trend established ^{the Congress of} at Grenoble. In reality, however, the sabras were well represented in the 'unofficial' organisation - the Délégués. The parity at Épinay and Grenoble between Mitterrand and Mauroy no longer existed: Mitterrand's supporters (including Poperen and Bérégovoy) henceforth occupied 8 posts in the 13 member SN, to only 4 for Mauroy, and one for the 'assises'. Mitterrand might still have to share the party's official government, but less the increasingly important unofficial structure, his own parallel faction in disguise. Mitterrand had first created Délégués after Grenoble, although this new strata of party official had no statutory authority. The number of Délégués increased steadily after the 1974 presidential election, and their functions became increasingly important. After Grenoble, there had been 15 such Délégués; by January 1976, there were 14 Délégués Généraux (with responsibilities within the organisation), 22 Délégués Nationaux (party spokesmen) and 9 Rapporteurs Spéciaux (ad hoc officials nominated by Mitterrand) (35).

35. 'L'organigramme du Parti', Le P/R, 46, January 1976.
1973 figure from La Nouvelle Revue Socialiste, 1, April 1974.

The Délegues Généraux, appointed by Mitterrand alone, were responsible for shadowing the work of the official Secretariat, or of substituting for it in areas where Mitterrand intended personally to supervise the party's action (workplace sections, formation). (36). Mitterrand thus received competing sources of information before reaching any decision on policy. Mitterrand also appointed Délégués Nationaux, initially limited to being party spokesmen. Increasingly, however, the Délégués Nationaux drew up party policy in areas not covered by the Secretariat: for example, in Agriculture (Joxe), Housing (Michel), Environment (Mora) (37). They worked in close collaboration with the party commissions, first established under Chevènement's authority in 1971, to draw up the party programme.

In his official report preceding ^{the Congress of} Pau, Chevènement alluded to 12 Commissions (38). By Nantes, in June 1977, there were 17 such Commissions, divided into 107 working groups (39). This increasingly complex organisation testified to the party's preparations for exercising power after March 1978. These commissions were manned by a variety of experts, often top civil servants, leading to

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Rapport Statutaire, Le P/R, 37, December 1974.

39. G. Martinet, Rapport Statutaire, Ibid, 61, May 1977.

a frequently resented distinction between technocrats, and activists. Their most important official - the Secretary of the collectif - was designated by Mitterrand (40). Coordinating the work of the Commissions was in theory the responsibility of the National Secretary for Études; but both Chevènement, (1971 - 1975), and Martinet (1975 - 1979) complained of exercising little control, and of being unable to prevent the duplication of their work (41). In reality, effective coordination of the Commissions fell to Mitterrand's advisers, and particularly to Fabius, head of Mitterrand's Cabinet (42).

According to one well informed observer,

'Si les Commissions, les groupes de travail, les cellules de réflexion animées par les Secrétaires Nationaux ou leurs assistants, fournissent de nombreux rapports, ce sont souvent en définitive, les conseillers personnels du Premier Secrétaire qui coordonnent ces travaux, et rédigent les indispensables notes de synthèse'. (43)

Mitterrand's personal Cabinet was responsible for vetting the reports produced by the Commissions, selecting information for Mitterrand's attention, generally providing specialised advice, and transmitting dossiers on urgent and sensitive issues (44). Within the Cabinet, the work of

40. R. Cayrol, 'La direction du Parti socialiste', La Revue Française de Science Politique (RFSP), XXVIII, 2, (April 1978), p. 210.

41. Chevènement's 1974, and Martinet's 1977 reports as above. Martinet's 1979 Rapport Statutaire, Le P/R, 80, March 1979.

42. Le Monde, 25 January 1977.

43. Cayrol, op cit, p. 211.

44. Ibid, pp. 206, 211-2.

the various Secretariats was paralleled by Mitterrand's selected advisers. Mitterrand used this unofficial organisation to promote leaders whose loyalty he could assume was absolute. These were mostly sabras, divided between technocrats, and protégés. The most important technocrats served in Mitterrand's Cabinet: Attali, Fabius, Goux; while Jospin provided the archetype of the protégé (45). In addition to the sabras, heavily in evidence amongst the Délégués, Mitterrand promoted young ex-CIR activists, especially within his Cabinet: Colliard, Benassayag, Machefer, Bichat (46). This provided further evidence of Mitterrand's increased control over the PS organisation.

Mitterrand's elevation above official governing structures, and the development of his own staffs were a function of his presidential rule over the PS. Given the factionalised nature of the PS, the development of such mechanisms may have been an inevitable by-product of the party's preparations for the exercise of power. In so far as the various extra-statutory strata relied directly on Mitterrand for their authority, the notion of a patron/client relationship appears suitable to explain the ties linking Mitterrand and his protégés. In return for their position, these officials generally, although not always, demonstrated a blind loyalty

45. 'L'organigramme du Parti', op cit.

46. Ibid.

to Mitterrand's leadership. This became of greater importance after March 1978.

The presidentialisation of the PS was paralleled by a presidential interpretation of left unity after 1974, accentuating the divergences between the minimal and maximal interpretations of the PCG. With its exclusion from the majority at Pau, CERES attempted to act as the arbiter of left unity, and to give a maximal interpretation to the PCG (see chapter 5). This was opposed by Mitterrand and Mauroy, who stressed the need to develop the PS within the alliance, and the responsibility of the PS as a governing party. The term 'presidential' signifies the manner in which Mitterrand sought an increasingly autonomous definition of party policies with regard to the PCG, and the development of the PS as a potentially majoritarian party that could retain, and expand upon Mitterrand's 1974 electorate, by incorporating vital centrist support.

The PCF made a determined attempt from 1974 - 1977 to reverse the growing electoral disequilibrium on the left. This took the form of emphasising contradictory alternatives. There was a vituperative anti-Socialist campaign to win back Communist voters to the PCF, suspended only to prepare for *mutual withdrawal* at the 1976 Cantonal, and joint lists for the 1977 Municipal elections. There was also an attempt to compete with the PS for new voters by stressing the party's

commitment to liberties. The 21st Congress in October 1974 emphasised the sectarian attack on the PS; the 22nd Congress, in February 1976 marked the apogée of the PCF's pseudo liberalisation, when the party abruptly abandoned the dictatorship of the proletariat, and adopted the strategy of the 'Union of the French people' (47).

Faced with the PCF's anti-Socialist campaign, Mitterrand refused to respond in kind to Communist attacks; to do so risked alienating PCF and apolitical voters. In so far as PCF attacks positively benefitted the PS amongst centre voters Mitterrand was determined to make no concessions to the PCF (48). It was clear from opinion poll evidence that the PS had benefitted not only from Mitterrand's second ballot vote in 1974, but also from the transfer of a proportion of Giscard's 1974 electorate. According to SOFRES polls in September and November 1976, 19% of those announcing an intention to vote for the PS in 1978, had supported Giscard on the second ballot in 1974 (49). This potential new electorate was relatively hostile to the PCF even before the breakdown of the left alliance in September 1977, and its hostility increased thereafter. It was markedly more hostile than Mitterrand's second ballot 1974 electorate to the idea that an eventual left government should nationalise more companies than foreseen in the PCG,

47. See Hincker, op cit, Chapter Five.

48. Politique Hebdo, 7-14 May 1975.

49. R. Cayrol, J. Jaffré, 'Y a-t-il plusieurs électorats socialistes?' Le Monde, 22 March 1977.

55% considering that such a move would endanger democracy, a view shared by only 30% of Mitterrand's 1974 electorate (50). Moreover, the potential new PS electorate classified itself as being in the centre, rather than on the left: 49% said they were on the centre, or centre-right of the political spectrum, a position accepted by only 11% of the 1974 Mitterrand voters (51). To retain its *potential* electorate, the PS leadership had to continue to stress Socialist ascendancy on the left, and to avoid giving the public image of being beholden to the PCF. This helps explain Mitterrand's determination not to renegotiate the PCF.

It also explains why CERES was retained in opposition. The artificial dichotomy between the majority and CERES masked the very real divergences existing within the Pau majority, and gave it a negative cohesion, in reaction against CERES, and its apparent echoing of PCF attacks on the PS. CERES' exclusion coincided with the retention in the majority of critics of the Common Programme (Rocard), and in the party's ranks of a centrist electorate hostile to the PCF. For Mitterrand the CERES alliance was incompatible with the party's preparations for exercising power.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

This concern was early manifested. In April 1976, Mitterrand ordered the chairmen of the Commissions, and the national secretaries to prepare policy dossiers in the expectation of a left victory in 1978 (52). These concerns were again explicit in the 1976 Expansion Forum, when PS economic experts attempted to reassure businessmen over a future left government's intentions (53). Mitterrand relied on Rocard to stress the party's commitment to the overall regulatory role of the market in the economy. Meanwhile, there was little attempt to update the Common Programme after May 1974, despite the fact that the first oil crisis, 1973, had made its growth predictions appear wildly optimistic. At a left summit meeting in June 1975, three inter-party Commissions were established, to seek greater agreement on: the crisis of capitalism; Europe and collective security; and the extension of liberties (54). This scarcely amounted to a revision of the programme: no mandate was given to amend the 1972 document. In reality, each party was busy staking out its ground at the expense of the other, as the PS developed its Commissions, and the PCF readjusted its sights at the 22nd Congress.

The PS leadership was under few illusions with regard to PCF sentiments, as became clear in a series of reports

52. Le N/O, 29 March - 4 April, 12 April 1976.

53. Politique Hebdo, 18-24 December 1976.

54. Le N/O, 25-29 June 1975.

by Jospin, 1974-6, on PS/PCF relations. In May 1975, Jospin argued that the PCF's anti-Socialist campaign, dating from its 21st Congress, reflected its view of a profound dichotomy between the revolutionary (PCF), and the reformist (PS) party. The PCF's refusal to envisage unity other than in terms of its own domination at the head of a democratic front alliance followed from that view (55). In another report, presented to the BE in January 1976 (immediately preceding the PCF's 22nd Congress) Jospin argued that the PCF's 'Union of the French People' directly threatened left unity, and was a possible alternative strategy to it,

'L'ouverture plus grande du Parti communiste n'a pas notre parti comme destinataire privilégie, bien au contraire. Le PC n'est guère tenté de relancer la dynamique unitaire... la compatabilité de la stratégie d'union du peuple de France avec celle de l'union de la gauche est loin d'être évidente'. (56).

In both reports, however, Jospin judged that the PCF still maintained a power perspective, and that an imminent break^{up} of the left alliance was unlikely. The PS leadership

55. 'Les relations PS/PCF', Le P/R, 40, April 1975.

56. Jospin, 'Rapport sur le XXIIème Congrès du PCF, l'évolution du mouvement communiste international, et les relations PS/PCF', Circulaire Nationale, 481, 26 January 1976, PS archives, Lille.

remained optimistic that its own strategy of controlling the PCF through the Common Programme would prevent any breakdown of the alliance, mainly because of the strong left unity sentiment of the PCF electorate itself. It clearly believed that it could hold the PCF to an alliance that was no longer in its interests, until after the 1978 elections.

The next important electoral test for the alliance was the 1977 municipal elections (dealt with more fully in chapter five).

At the Congress of Dijon in May 1976, the majority and CERES agreed to a joint motion, calling on sections and federations to begin negotiations with the PCF and MRG, with a view to establishing joint lists in all communes. (57). This motion signified that Mitterrand had ended his previous ambiguity on municipal alliances, and had agreed to a demand consistently voiced by CERES and the PCF. To have refused alliance with the PCF would have made a mockery of the symbolic value of the PCG. It would have confirmed PCF accusations that the PS had undergone a 'rightward swing'; it would have risked giving the PCF plausible grounds with withdrawing from the alliance. Mitterrand may also have calculated that sharing power with the PS locally would further tie the PCF into the alliance.

57. Le P/R, supplement to 49, April 1976.

The widespread acceptance of joint PCF/PS lists in large towns in the 1977 municipal elections, and their electoral success, appeared to make the left union a strategically irreversible choice for both parties. Left unity lists were negotiated in 202 out of 221 towns of over 30,000, and from the first ballot in 80% of towns of between 9-30,000 inhabitants, where the electoral law allowed lists to be merged at the 2nd ballot. (58).

Before the 1977 contest, the PS governed 46 large towns; this increased to 81 after the elections (59). The PCF increased the number of large towns it held from 50 to 72. The PS's impressive performance won widespread municipal power for itself, and Socialist coat tails gave the PCF access to numerous councils from which it had previously been excluded. It entered 25 large town councils previously governed by the PS alone, or by PS-Centre coalitions, as against only 9 where the PS entered into a previously homogeneous PCF municipality. Thanks to the unity agreement, the PCF doubled the number of its local councillors in the large towns, outnumbering the PS. Local office enabled the PCF to strengthen its organisation, and to arm itself more effectively in its struggle to impose a renegotiation of the Common Programme on the PS.

58. Lazitch, L'Échec Permanent, p. 246. For the circumstances and results of the 1977 elections, see D.B. Goldey, and D.S. Bell, 'The French Municipal Election of March 1977', Parliamentary Affairs, vol. 30, (Winter 1977), pp. 408-426.

59. Le Monde, 22 March 1977, for various details.

Since 1974, Mitterrand had adopted a presidential interpretation of unity. Yet, the next crucial electoral battle would be the 1978 legislatives, where the Socialist advantage over the PCF was less marked than in presidential elections. The original PCG had been for one legislature; it had either to be renegotiated, or reaffirmed. The PCF and CERES, and the CFDT and Rocard wanted renegotiation, for opposing reasons. Mitterrand was determined that there be as little discussion of content as possible. The parliamentary road to power demanded that the PS be clearly dominant on the left, to attract the vital centre electorate, which took at best an equivocal view towards the left alliance and the PCG. As PS strength grew, so did its popularity amongst centrist voters. This presented an acute danger for the PCF: if the PS continued at 30% in the polls, a significant proportion of Communist electors were in danger of voting for the PS, as the best placed party of the left, from the first ballot.

From the PCF's viewpoint, a reaffirmation of its own maximal interpretation of the Common Programme could restore the balance of power on the left in its favour, and alienate the centrist electorate from the PS. If the PS acceded to PCF demands, it would lose the 1978 elections, and Mitterrand would be discredited as a possible presidential candidate for 1981. If it resisted, the PCF would claim its attacks since 1974 had been justified; the

controversy would cost the PS support not only on the left, but also from the centre. Socialists would be reminded, as in 1969, how much they depended on the PCF for electoral success (60). After 1974, Mitterrand's strategy relied on the calculation that the PCF could not risk breaking the alliance, for fear of being sanctioned by its own, highly unitary, electorate. In a sequence of events leading up to the breakdown of left unity in September 1977, the PCF challenged this assumption. It did this because the PCG threatened to work to the party's considerable disadvantage, and because it considered it had obtained the major benefits it could expect from left unity: a substantial representation in local government, and a weapon - the PCG - with which it could attack the PS. Finally, Mitterrand had miscalculated in believing he could control the apparatus and leadership of the PCF through its electorate.

Barely had the dust settled on the municipal ballot when Marchais called for a 'renegotiation' of the PCG (61). Mitterrand could not merely refuse such a demand, at the risk of appearing responsible himself for the breakdown of left unity. In response to Marchais, Mitterrand made it clear, on April 7th, that the 'updating' of the PCG had to be strictly limited to raising ^{perceived} benefits in line with inflation (62).

60. See Hincker, op cit, pp. 189-193.

61. Le Monde, 1 April 1977. At the Central Committee, 30 March 1977.

62. L'Unité, 15-21 April 1977.

Mitterrand was determined to refuse any amendments likely to alienate centrist voters and to increase the PCF's margins of manoeuvre vis-a-vis a future government.

By emphasising a maximalist interpretation of the 1972 Programme, Marchais exposed Mitterrand's evident anxiety to avoid being tied once in government. The PCF's short term aim was to liberate itself from the socialist incubus before the 1978 elections; the longer term objective was to destroy Mitterrand as an effective presidential candidate in 1981, and to provoke dissension within the PS (63). In contradiction with its entire strategy since 1962, the PCF organised a strategy for defeat, to restore its preeminence on the left after 1978 and 1981. In April 1977, the PCF published its propositions for renegotiating the PCG (64). On May 10th, the party made public an extravagant 'costing' of its version of the Common Programme, timed to coincide with a televised debate between Mitterrand, and Prime Minister Barre, on economic policy (65). Negotiations over the PCG were initiated at a left summit meeting held on May 17th, and an inter-party Commission was established to rule on points of contention between the parties (66). It was against this background of internecine rivalry that preparations began for the PS Congress of Nantes, scheduled for June 1977.

63. Hincker, op cit, pp. 189-193.

64. Le Monde, 21 April 1977.

65. Ibid, 11 May 1977.

66. Ibid, 8 May 1977. (The groupe des 15 was headed by Bérégovoy. Other PS negotiators changed according to meeting. Rocard was initially responsible for the Economy).

The preparations for Nantes were largely dominated by Mitterrand's disciplinary campaign against organised factions. This campaign was directed mainly against CERES, but also against Rocard. The campaign against factionalism served several purposes for Mitterrand. Mitterrand was determined to control the negotiations with the PCF, and the 1978 election campaign. As a preliminary, he intended to emphasise that he continued to define the criteria of what constituted an organised faction, and, therefore, the conditions for participation in his leadership, and after March 1978, in government.

'Les militants sollicités à tout instant, par des groupes rivaux... savent de quoi je parle. Ils constatent avec moi que ces groupes disposent de locaux, de moyens de financement, d'une presse extérieure au Parti, qu'ils s'adressent sans mandat à l'opinion, qu'ils prélevent sur nos adhérents des cotisations indues, qu'ils organisent des réunions, des séminaires, des colloques, des stages de formation... Est-il besoin d'autres critères pour définir une 'fraction organisée?' (67)

By ^{juxta}posing party and faction, Mitterrand once again underlined his position as head of the most powerful organisation faction, claiming a party legitimacy to which no other leader (even Mauroy) could aspire. Mitterrand's campaign opened up a subtle organisational cleavage with Mauroy (see next chapter). On an external level, the campaign against factionalism prevented the PS from engaging in a debate over the Common Programme - demanded for diametrically

67. 'Lettre aux militants', Le P/R, 60, April 1977.

opposing reasons by Rocard and CERES and which Mitterrand considered would lessen the margin of manoeuvre of the Socialist negotiators. By concentrating the debate on internal party behaviour, Mitterrand forced CERES onto the defensive, while effectively silencing Rocard until ~~the~~ Congress itself.

Mitterrand was determined to use Nantes to demonstrate to the centrist electorate his domination over the PS, majority and CERES combined; his unwillingness to accede to PCF demands over the Common Programme; and his refusal to accept any notion of the party controlling the actions of a future left government, as advocated by CERES. The dispute with CERES over the PCG, and the role of the party after March 1978 were the essential reasons for Mitterrand's refusal to restore CERES to the leadership at Nantes (see chapter 5). This was despite the favouring of an agreement by Mauroy and Defferre, ^{who were} anxious to preserve party unity before the elections (68). In the Resolutions Committee at Congress, CERES accepted Mauroy's compromise motion over acceptable levels of factional organisation. This agreement was rejected by Mitterrand, who ensured that the artificial dichotomy between CERES and the majority would be retained, when he declared regally that 'Le problème de la synthèse n'est ni intéressant, ni sérieux' (69).

68. Politique Hebdo, 27 June - 3 July 1977.

69. '1977: Congrès de Nantes', NRS, 28, 1977, p. 84.

The real importance of Nantes for Mitterrand was ~~that it was~~ the last occasion before the March 1978 elections to demonstrate his absolute control over the PS, and to place himself in a position of strength vis-a-vis the PCF. He meant to lead a relatively homogeneous party into the 1978 campaign, ~~in which~~ the PS would face competition not only from the right, but also from the PCF. This may explain why Mitterrand chose to subordinate not only CERES, but, in varying degrees, Mauroy, Defferre, and Rocard as well (70).

At the tribune of ^{the} Congress, Mitterrand attempted to reassure the centrist electorate, by reiterating his call for a rapid conclusion to negotiations with the PCF;

'J'invite très fermement nos négociateurs socialistes à faire comprendre à nos partenaires... que la France n'est pas en mesure d'attendre des débats interminables, .. il faut que le mois de juillet voie la fin de ce débat, d'autant plus que nous avons autre chose à faire'. (71).

And by reaffirming PS intentions to lead a future left government,

'Le Parti socialiste... devrait normalement prétendre à conduire le gouvernement de la gauche' (72).

On the final vote at Nantes, Motion 1 progressed from 68.04% at Pau, to 75.78%; while CERES marginally declined from 25.4% to 24.21% (73). This appeared to justify

70. See below, chapters 3 and 6.

71. '1977: Congrès de Nantes', NRS, 28, 1977, p.84.

72. Ibid, p. 71.

73. Ibid, p. 98.

Mitterrand's decision to exclude CERES at Pau: deprived of control over any key posts in the organisation, CERES had been unable further to extend its influence. This result undoubtedly reflected Mitterrand's prestige after the 1977 municipal elections, and a desire to strengthen the leadership faced with the PCF's onslaught. With the symbolic rallying of the ex-Molletists to Motion 1 (Notebart, Piette, Delehedde - although not Fuzier in Seine-St-Denis, who sided with CERES), the pattern of majority rassemblement, started at Grenoble, 1973, and prolonged at Pau, 1975, was complete (74).

Within the leadership elected after Nantes, there was a decisive shift away from Mauroy, and towards Mitterrand. Mitterrand's supporters occupied 10 of 17 posts in the SN (Mauroy - 4; Rocard - 2; and Taddei) (75).

Furthermore, Mitterrand attempted to legitimise the position of his technocratic advisers by securing their election to the CD: Attali, Fabius, and Goux were all promoted to the CD at Nantes (76). Mitterrand also attempted to promote certain new mayors, elected in March 1977, attempting to associate them with his leadership. Over 60% of new mayors were sabras, a priori more likely to associate with Mitterrand - to whom they indirectly owed their election - than with Mauroy (although Metz was partly to *disappoint*

74. Le Monde, 14 June 1977; Le P/R, 63, July 1977.

75. Le P/R, 64, October 1977.

76. Le P/R, 63, July 1977.

Mitterrand on this point). Gaspard, mayor of Dreux, was the most prominent example (77).

Mitterrand had declared at Nantes that the PS/PCF/MRG negotiations must terminate by the end of July. The inter-party Commission suspended its operations on July 28th, and declared that its work had been 'mainly positive' (78). The remaining areas of disagreement would be resolved at a left summit meeting in September. PS anxieties were revived, however, at the last meeting of the inter-party Commission in July, when the PCF produced a document entitled 'structures and means of governmental action' (79). This advocated dividing the existing Interior and Economics Ministries. The PCF would take control of the new ministries of local government, and economic planning, the PS retaining the ministries of police and finance. Taken together, these measures would have installed a de facto control over economic planning, and thus the new nationalised industries, and local government by the PCF, a totally unacceptable condition for Mitterrand, who simply ignored PCF demands.

On August 3rd, Marchais publicly rejected the compromise formula agreed by PCF negotiators over defence, and accused

77. On the new mayors, see M. Benassayag, 'La sociologie des dirigeants', p. 28. In Regards sur... le Parti socialiste, 2nd Trimestre, 1977.

78. A. du Roy, and R. Schneider, Le Roman de la Rose, (Paris, Seuil, 1982), pp. 198, 201.

79. Ibid, p. 201.

the PS of abandoning the PCG over nationalisations (80). The breakdown of left unity was confirmed at the second left summit, September 21-22nd, after the parties failed to reach agreement on a number of issues. Mitterrand had no choice but to refuse the PCF's demands on the various issues in contention, if the credibility of a future left government was to be preserved: over ^{the} nationalisation of ^{the} subsidiaries of the groups named in the PCG; over the ~~distribution~~ of ministries; over defence (81). By this act alone, Marchais appeared as the 'best defender' of the programme, and established the conditions for competition between the parties in the election campaign.

The programme had initially been seen by Mitterrand as the means to secure Socialist ascendancy; it now became what it had always potentially been for the PCF: a trap for the PS, a means of frustrating Socialist ascendancy, and poaching their electorate. If the PS rejected the PCF's maximalist reading of the programme, it would be accused of a 'rightward swing', with potentially damaging consequences both electorally, amongst the 'left' electorate, and for party unity. If Mitterrand competed with the PCF over the programme, he risked alienating the vital centrist electorate (not to mention the CFDT and Rocard); and of making demagogic promises impossible to fulfil once in

80. Ibid, p. 202.

81. For a short summary, see Johnson, op cit, pp. 183-187.

government. By moving to the left, the PCF shook the pillars of Mitterrand's strategy: that is, ambiguity over the future actions of a left government; the greatest possible freedom from programmatic constraints; and the belief that the PCF would not dare to break the union, even when it worked against its interests.

By proving the contrary, the PCF was temporarily able to define the agenda of inter-party competition after the split - attention was again focused on the Common Programme - and to ensure that it competed in an area perceived to be most damaging to the PS. The PS was thus constrained to proclaim its fidelity to the PCG, with the risk of appearing to its potential centrist electorate as insufficiently independent from the PCF. From the breakdown of left unity, to the March 1978 elections, the PS leadership adopted a dual approach, to preserve its own unity, and to guard its potential electorates on the left and centre. For the centre electorate, Mitterrand insisted that the PS' refusal simply to give way to the PCF underlined the party's sense of governmental responsibility, and its determination not to cede to PCF pressure (82). To PCF voters, Mitterrand claimed the Socialists had remained faithful to the PCG. He called for a 'useful vote': the PCG could only be applied if Socialist progress was sufficient to ensure the

82. Attitude adopted at the SN meeting of September 28th. Le P/R, 64, October 1977.

victory of the left as a whole. In either case, confidence had to be placed in the PS;

'Fort de son unité et de sa cohésion, le Parti socialiste appelle les Françaises, et les Français à se rassembler autour de lui et à l'aider dans ses efforts pour que la gauche retrouve sans délai le chemin de son union' (83).

The PS leadership's official reaction to the breakdown of left unity was established at the CD of October 8-9th, and the CN November 5-6th (84). This was to call for the immediate resumption of negotiations, and to place the responsibility for the break with the PCF. Further, the PS made an unambiguous declaration of its intent to practice 2nd ballot ~~with the PCF~~ in 1978, which Marchais had declared to be anachronistic. Faced with the breakdown of left unity, the mass of PS activists closed ranks around the leadership, in a surge of party patriotism - contrary to PCF expectations. This accounted for the unanimous agreements reached between the majority and CERES at the October CD, and November CN (85). If this unanimity was partly artificial, it served notice to the PCF that PS internal cohesion was greater than it had expected. The reality of party patriotism thus had a limiting effect on the freedom of factional expression for both CERES, and Rocard.

83. Unanimous resolution adopted by the October CD. Ibid.

84. Ibid., 64, October 1977; 65, November 1977.

85. Ibid., 64, October 1977; 65, November 1977.

The PS call for the resumption of negotiations at the October CD was partly a tactic to throw responsibility for the split onto the PCF, and to compete for the unitary ground within the left - and especially the PCF - electorate. To appear as 'unitary for two', the PS had to maintain the possibility of a resumption of negotiations before the first ballot; from October onwards, however, Mitterrand did not reject an eventual homogeneous Socialist government, although continuing to insist that the party's aim was to accede to power with the PCF (86). The official call to resume negotiations was retained at the November CN and the final resolution called for a meeting of the Liaison Committee, a forum through which the parties had periodically maintained contact since 1973 (87). On November 9th, 1977, the Liaison Committee met for less than one hour, and was terminated by Fiterman, PCF negotiator, declaring that 'nous avons l'histoire devant nous' (88). It was the last contact between the parties until after the first ballot.

By securing CERES agreement to a unanimous text at the November CN, Mitterrand strengthened his immediate position within the PS, and could hope to lead a publicly more united party into the election campaign than at Nantes. More generally, the official unanimity reached at the

86. Le N/O, 17 October 1977.

87. Le P/R, 65, November 1977.

88. Le Monde, 10 November 1977.

October CD, and November CN was important for Mitterrand, since the resolutions adopted commended the PS negotiating team, and stressed that the PCF bore entire responsibility for the left's disarray. In the event of electoral defeat, it would be more difficult for any leader to denounce Mitterrand's handling of the situation. It was clear, however, that the tendency towards intra-party convergence was artificial, and that the breakdown of left unity led to the lines of factional cleavage being redrawn, with Rocard taking an increasingly critical stance towards Mitterrand, and positioning himself for an onslaught on his authority, if the party was defeated; and with CERES likely to side with Mitterrand in defence of a past strategy - the PCG - against Rocard. (On Rocard, see chapter six).

In December 1977, the CFDT harshly criticised the PS' insufficient capacity to demarcate itself from the Common Programme, for fear of being accused of a 'rightward swing' (89). In its place, the CFDT made a series of propositions to both PS and PCF on which to relaunch unity. They were considered seriously by neither party, both of which were resigned to opposing ^{each other} ~~each~~ on the first ballot, although the PCF now declared itself in favour of autogestion, in an attempt to outmanoeuvre the PS (90). By ~~contrasting~~ a call for a realistic economic policy ~~with~~ the profligacy of the PCG, Maire renewed the CFDT's older criticisms of the Common

89. Le N/O, 28 November - 4 December 1977.

90. Hincker, op cit, pp. 183-4; 190-1.

Programme, while presaging Rocard's assault after the election defeat.

By January 1978, it had become clear that the ^{left wing} parties would contest the first ballot in a situation not merely of competition, but of opposition. On January 4th, the PS published its own version of the Common Programme as its election manifesto (91). On January 7th, at the PCF's National Conference, Marchais set the party's objective as 25% on the first ballot, and declared that 'republican discipline' would be impossible unless the PCF achieved 21% (92). The PS manifesto included a series of new proposals - that went beyond the policy stances ^{backed}

by the party's negotiators in the September left summit meetings. The most important of these was the decision to raise the monthly minimum wage to 2,400 Francs, from March 1978 - a position first advanced by the PCF, and which PS economic experts, including Rocard, and Attali, had declared to be unrealistic (93). These proposals ^{were designed to} appeal for support amongst the PCF's electorate. To reassure the party's potential centrist electorate that he would not cede on the essentials to the PCF, Mitterrand stressed that the PS manifesto alone would act as a future government's legislative programme (94).

91. Le Programme Commun de Gauche: propositions socialistes pour l'actualisation, (Paris, Flammarion, 1978).

92. Le Monde, 8-9 January 1978.

93. Ibid, 6 January 1978.

94. Ibid, 28 January 1978.

With the launching of the PS manifesto, and the resolution adopted by the CD on January 13th - with the slogan 'Pour un gouvernement d'Union, voter socialiste' - Mitterrand had clearly relegated considerations of a programmatic agreement until after the second ballot (95). The final resolution adopted at the CD of February 8th, dropped the call for the resumption of negotiations preceding the first ballot, established in October and November 1977. It postponed any negotiations over the programme, over Communist ministers, or over an eventual government contract, until after the 2nd ballot, thereby incurring the wrath of CERES (96). On Mauroy's insistence, however, it left open the possibility of a meeting after the first ballot to agree on a mutual withdrawal pact (see next chapter), although not on a government programme. (97). Tying discussions over the programme with an agreement over mutual withdrawal risked allowing the PCF to make any agreement dependent on the adoption of a maximalist programme, something Mitterrand was determined to avoid.

The final preparation in the party's electoral campaign was the 'costing' of its programme, presented on February 14th, 1978 (98). The plan was widely condemned

95. Le P/R, 67, January 1978.

96. Reprinted in Le P/R - Responsables, 30, February 1978.

97. Le Monde, 10 February 1978.

98. L'Unité, 17-23 February 1978.

as demagogic by the party's adversaries, and unofficially by Rocard (99). On the eve of the first ballot, there were clearly serious divisions within the PS leadership. There were those who argued that the immediate priorities of electoral victory justified the measures adopted in the party's manifesto, and who elevated immediate political expediencies above recognition of constraints likely to be faced by a future left government. This position was shared by Mitterrand and Mauroy (100). It was privately opposed by those ^{such as Rocard} who condemned the demogogy of the party's campaign, and the irresponsibility of its economic propositions.

Despite the party's campaign, its centrist support appeared to hold steady until the eve of the first ballot. In November 1977, the PS/MRG had been credited with 26% of the first ballot vote, a figure reflecting the disruptive immediate effects of the *left split* (101). In the last polls published before the first ballot, however, the PS/MRG alliance claimed 28% (SOFRES), and 31% (IFOP) respectively (102). These percentages indicated a recovery of centrist support coinciding with the duration of the PCF's campaign: PCF attacks appeared to heighten PS popularity with the centre. Notwithstanding this, on the first ballot, March

99. See below p. 296 on Rocard/Le Monde, 15 February 1978.

100. See the interview with Mauroy, Politique Hebdo, 16-22 January 1978.

101. Figures from Johnson, op cit, p. 212.

102. Ibid.

12th, 1978, the PS/MRG alliance had to settle for 24.9%, and the PS alone for 22.78% (103). The PCF, with 20.6%, was outdistanced by the PS for the first time since the war; but it had temporarily succeeded in ~~maintaining~~ ^{challenging} the Socialist's ascendancy (104).

It seems that, despite contradictory poll findings, the PS suffered last minute desertions from amongst 3-4% of its potential centrist electorate, on account of its perceived lack of independence from the PCF (105). The left's internecine rivalries led a small, but crucial proportion of the PS' potential electorate, to conclude that the left was unfit to govern. This represented a partial success for the PCF, and a partial defeat for the PS. However, the PCF had not split the PS, ^{which had} registered its best Fifth Republic score, and ~~attained~~ ^{achieved} the status of the 'first party of France'.

At the February CD, Mitterrand had refused the prospect of negotiations with the PCF in between ballots over a government programme. This stand was predicated on the belief that the PS would achieve a bond en avant on the first ballot, constraining the PCF to accept 'republican discipline' for the second ^(i.e. mutual withdrawals) in order to preserve a reduced number of deputies, as eventually occurred in 1981). The PS would then be in a position to impose its manifesto as

103. Le Monde, 14 March 1978.

104. Ibid.

105. For detailed analysis, see Johnson, op cit, pp. 211-218.

the basis of a future government programme.

Manifestly, Mitterrand's objective had not been achieved. On March 12th, ^{evening} evening of the first ballot, Marchais called for a left summit meeting for the following day (106). This was agreed to by Mitterrand. At a meeting of the CD on March 13th, preceding the summit, the lines of battle were drawn for after the second ballot. Rocard was critical of the PCG, as of the party's campaign in general, and argued that the PS must make no concessions to the PCF at the summit (107). Chevènement and Joxe urged Mitterrand to make concessions to the PCF, to secure a ^{second} ballot agreement (108). In the event, such a debate was superfluous. At the left summit, the PCF withdrew the various issues of contention over which it had forced a split in September 1977, and substantially agreed to the PS version of the programme (109). Having achieved short term success with its strategy for defeat, it now sought to win a maximum number of its own deputies, in exchange for the smallest number of Socialists, conscious that the left's first ballot total was insufficient to secure victory on the second. After the second ballot, March 19th, the PS counted 102 deputies, an increase of only 13 on 1973, out of the left's total of 201 (110). Given the expectations

106. Le N/O, 16 March 1978.

107. Ibid, 20 March 1978.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid, 16 March 1978.

110. Le P/R, 69, March 1978.

that had accompanied Mitterrand's strategy since 1974, the left's defeat in March 1978 was bound to have repercussions within the PS, in particular in the run up to the 1981 presidential election. Mitterrand was no longer the party's automatic nominee. That presented opportunities not only for Rocard, but also Mauroy. We shall return to these repercussions in part two.

CHAPTER THREE

Pierre Mauroy: Homme de synthèse?

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The sources of the courant Mauroy extend back to the formation of the SFIO, in 1905, or organisationally even beyond, to Guesde's Parti Ouvrier Français of 1879. Mauroy's activity has been guided by a strong sense of historical continuity: the party led by Guesde, Jaurès, and Blum was the legitimate Socialist party. In contrast to those progressively repelled by the SFIO in the *Fourth and Fifth* Republics, Mauroy remained faithful to the SFIO's heritage: he drew from its legacy the idea of rassemblement, socialist unity, qua Jaures, or Blum, rather than the mere perpetuation of an organisational entity, qua Mollet, or some of the Guesdists. This made Mauroy a force for renewal within the SFIO.

For Mauroy, the SFIO's socialist legitimacy stemmed partly from the historical role of the Fédération du Nord, a genuine workers' federation. The first Socialist party - the POF - was formed by Guesde in the Nord/Pas-de-Calais region, from where it recruited half of its members (1). By 1914, municipal socialism in the Nord was well established, with Socialists having won the Lille and Roubaix mairies (2). At Tours in 1920, the Nord leadership remained largely faithful to the SFIO (3). The Nord's anti-Communist tradition stemmed from Tours, and endured

1. B. Vaneste, Augustin Laurent ou toute une vie pour le socialisme, (Dunkerque, Westhoeck, 1983), p. 11.

2. J.F. Bizot, Au Parti des socialistes, p. 104.

3. Ibid, p. 105.

throughout the history of the SFIO. From 1946 - 1969, Nord and Pas-de-Calais remained two of the three largest federations, both with a real working-class base. The third was Defferre's Bouches-du-Rhône. The Nord/Pas-de-Calais alliance solidly supported Mollet's leadership. A. Laurent, Mayor of Lille, and Fédération du Nord leader, (called the 'pope'), solidly backed Mollet, on condition that the national leadership stayed out of Nord's affairs (4). Within Nord, unanimity reigned supreme, seen as an expression of party unity, working-class solidarity, and organisational strength. In the SFIO, the weight of the Nord/Pas-de-Calais bloc increased steadily - along with that of Bouches du Rhône - as party membership declined. In 1949, a majority of Congress mandates was held by 15 federations; in 1952 by 10; in 1956 by 8; and in 1966-7, by only 5: Bouches-du-Rhône, Nord, Pas de Calais, Seine and Aude (5). Mauroy felt a regional pride for the Nord, a workers' federation, and for its 'unitary' traditions.

Mauroy, a party member since 1945, became national leader of the Jeunesses Socialistes (JS) in 1950, selected by Mollet (6). He held this post until 1955, where he earned the reputation of being Mollet's protégé. The JS leadership

4. H.G. Simmons, French Socialists in Search of a Role, (Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1970), p. 171. Nord voted with Mollet 39 times between 1946 - 1969, opposing or abstaining just twice.

5. Ibid.

6. P. Mauroy, Héritiers de l'avenir, (Paris, Stock, 1977), pp. 35, 64.

hierarchy acted as the core of a future Mauroy clan within the PS: Mauroy, Fajardie, Blanca, Marty, Vailliant, Mitrani (7). In 1951, this group formed the Fédération Nationale des Foyers Léo-Lagrange, of which Mauroy became president in 1958 (8). The FNLL was formed as a cultural wing of the JS. It defined its aim as broadly socialist: it attempted to provide leisure activities for the underprivileged. It was thus an associative, rather than a directly political structure annexed to the SFIO, and this accounted for its success. By 1965, the FNLL counted 40,000 members, and 350 clubs throughout France (9). FNLL clubs eventually grew up wherever socialists were well *established*

in local government: from 1961, communes could apply for government aid to develop youth organisations, and FNLL clubs prospered in SFIO municipalities. By 1968, 39 major SFIO controlled towns had established FNLL clubs, and this brought Mauroy into direct contact with Socialist Mayors from the early 1960's (10). From its inception, there was an overlap of personnel between the FNLL, the JS, and CEDEP (see below) forming the basis of a future courant Mauroy. In the mid-1970's, the FNLL counted 400 regional groups, and continued to be run by established Mauroy ^{supporters}: Mitrani, Blanca, Sainte-Marie (11). These

7. Ibid, p. 88.

8. Ibid, p. 91.

9. Simmons, op cit, p. 193.

10. Guide Léo-Lagrange, C.E.D.E.P., 12, June-July 1968.

11. Jeunesse 2000, 46, December 1976 - January 1977.

and others had ceased to be active in the SFIO, but reemerged after Epinay, where they aligned themselves behind Mauroy (12).

From 1955-8, Mauroy, a schoolteacher by profession, was General Secretary of the Syndicat National des Instituteurs, affiliated to the largest teachers' federation, the FEN (13). The FEN was linked with the SFIO but also with traditional laïcism, and its organisations. These activities (JS, SNI, FNLL) partly reflected a reaction against the Mollet government's colonial policy in Algeria. Yet Mauroy stayed within the SFIO - unlike Rocard. While remaining within, for party patriotic reasons, Mauroy withdrew from active political involvement in the early years of the Fifth Republic.

He reemerged at the 1963 SFIO Congress. A Contribution signed by Mauroy and Fajardie outlined the salient themes to be associated with Mauroy in the SFIO. It condemned any initiative seeking to transform the SFIO into an American style Democratic party; that set him in opposition to Servan-Schreiber, and his group around L'Express, who had urged that model first on Mendès, and then on Defferre. But Mauroy also rejected a 'closed party' (Mollet), and called for socialist unity (14). Mauroy thus sought to

12. Interview with G. Allouche, Premier Secrétaire, Fédération du Nord, 20 May 1984.

13. Mauroy, op cit, p. 159.

14. Ibid.

act as a bridge between the SFIO, and those seeking socialist unity, and renewal outside of the SFIO, in the PSU and political clubs, many of whom had passed through the SFIO. Mauroy also proposed 'an adaptation of the methods, the programme, and the structure of the party', rather as Léon Blum had done in 1946. Mollet used Mauroy in 1963 to attempt to underline the SFIO's capacity to revive the socialist left, and produce new blood. The final text called for socialist unity, and accepted the principle of a dialogue with the PCF, following on the second ballot cooperation with the PCF in the 1962 legislative elections - both demanded by Mauroy. Moreover, there was a limited renewal of the party leadership; Mauroy, Fajardie and several other Mauroy ^{sympathisers} entered the CD (15).

From 1963 onwards, Mauroy was in the forefront of those seeking to revive the SFIO, and to open it to outside socialists. He was hostile, however, to Defferre's proposed creation of a grande fédération, to which he linked his bid for the SFIO presidential candidacy, (1964-5) (16). Defferre's proposed federation would have linked the SFIO with the MRP (catholic centrist party), the Radicals, and the clubs, before any negotiation with the PCF (17).

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., pp. 163-167.

17. See J. Mossuz, Les clubs et la politique en France, pp. 73-7; C. Hurtig, De la SFIO au nouveau Parti socialiste, (Paris, Armand Colin, 1970), p. 40.

His presidential candidacy, announced over Mollet's head in 1965 (and encountering stiff resistance from him) represented an attempt to rejuvenate the non-Communist left and centre, by presidentialising the SFIO to combat Gaullism. Defferre judged that the PCF would be constrained either to support his candidacy, or to bear public responsibility for sabotaging it. The PCF however, had made it clear that they would not tolerate a candidature aimed primarily at their own marginalisation, and without initial PCF support, Defferre's candidacy was always likely to fail.

Defferre's proposal for a grande fédération was finally dropped after Mollet's SFIO and the Catholic MRP failed to agree over the church schools issue, underlining continuing anti-clerical feeling within the SFIO. Defeated over the federation, Defferre withdrew his candidacy in June 1965. Defferre had sought to infuse the left with a new political style, using the presidential election to lever open the SFIO to reform, to override Mollet's control of the party organisation, and to marginalise the PCF. In reacting against SFIO archaism, this initiative was supported by elements of the gauche nouvelle outside the SFIO, and in particular by the Club Jean Moulin,^{which was} largely responsible for persuading Defferre to stand. However, it was firmly rejected by the PSU (see chapter 6)(18).

18. Mossuz, op cit, pp. 75-4.

Mollet, supported by Laurent and Mauroy, opposed Defferre's proposed federation. Mauroy feared that it would dilute the SFIO's heritage, and end moves towards a dialogue with the PCF started by the 1963 Congress (19). Mollet's defence of left unity at the 1965 Congress, at which Defferre's proposed federation was effectively defeated, contrasted with the generalised practice of socialist-centrist electoral alliance in the 1965 municipal elections.

Once Defferre had withdrawn his candidacy, Mollet no longer faced a direct threat to his control of the SFIO; but he badly needed a plausible candidate to support in the election and was willing to back Mitterrand for want of an alternative (20). Mitterrand proposed his candidacy in 1965 almost immediately after Defferre had withdrawn his (see above). Mitterrand had assured himself of Communist support, but he also relied on Mollet's acquiescence, and SFIO blessing. Mollet credited the presidential election with little importance, ostensibly out of opposition to pouvoir personnel, but also because it risked redistributing power in the SFIO to the benefit of the party's candidate. He agreed to support Mitterrand as an outsider, apparently unable to challenge his authority in the SFIO. Mollet had little understanding of the

19. Vaneste, op cit, p. 128; Mauroy, op cit, p. 164.

20. See P.M. Williams, French Politicians and Elections, pp. 186-9.

presidential regime, and was unable to realise that Mitterrand, ^{the} head merely of the CIR, could take over leadership of the left through the mechanism of the presidential election. Mauroy supported Mitterrand's candidacy, since, he claimed, it offered hope for a greater degree of unity within the socialist left, and participated in Mitterrand's campaign team (21).

After the presidential election, to cement his alliance with Nord, Mollet offered Mauroy the post of Secrétaire Général Adjoint, thus tending to confirm the public impression that Mauroy was Mollet's protégé, and candidate for the succession. According to Mauroy, however,

'Si je m'étais interrogé avant d'accepter, c'est que dans le Parti, j'étais à la fois pour et contre Guy Mollet'. (22).

The Centre National d'Études et de Promotion (CEDEP) was formed by Mauroy in March 1966, and claimed 2,000 members by 1968 (23). Mollet was 'un peu réticent au départ', but he allowed CEDEP's formation as a means of competing with the political clubs outside the SFIO, and as another pro-SFIO voice in the FGDS (24). CEDEP sought to make the SFIO the axis of a rassemblement of the non-Communist left, including the Radicals, that refused national centrist electoral strategies. It aimed to

21. Mauroy, op cit, pp. 173-4.

22. Ibid, p. 179.

23. Mossuz, op cit, pp. 41-2.

24. Mauroy, op cit, p. 185.

transform the SFIO's organisation and language to take into account a changing society, and to attract 'des représentants des nouvelles couches techniciennes' (25). It equally showed itself anxious to attract youth to the SFIO, whose leadership remained dominated by the immediate post-war generation.

In its concern to widen the left's social base, and to attract youth, CEDEP could be seen as an element of the modernist, new left, operating within the SFIO. Yet, it rejected any centre-left alternative, differentiating Mauroy from Defferre. Mauroy summarised CEDEP's philosophy as a belief in a socialism of the possible, 'un socialisme qui dise ce qu'il fera, et qui fasse ce qu'il disait' (26). CEDEP's formation enabled Mauroy to establish a national network, through which a relatively well developed factional structure could be maintained; it also made him less dependent on Nord as his sole power base. CEDEP enjoyed a separate organisational existence within the FGDS, and Mauroy participated in Mitterrand's contre-gouvernement as spokesman on Youth, and Sport, as a representative of CEDEP (27). CEDEP had an established communications network, from national leadership, to federal level; published a regular bulletin - CEDEP mensuel - and had its own sources of finance (28). CEDEP's leaders had

25. Mossuz, op cit, p. 41.

26. Mauroy, op cit, p. 184.

27. Mossuz, op cit, p. 89.

28. Ibid, pp. 41-42.

usually a shared political experience with Mauroy in the JS, and FNLL; they formed the core of a Mauroy wing within the SFIO, and later the PS. The central leadership was composed of Fajardie, Blanca, Marty, Mitrani - leaders of the FNLL - and others close to Mauroy (29).

CEDEP's formation and organisational development increased Mollet's reservations towards Mauroy. Within the FGDS, Mauroy tried to avoid choosing between Mollet and Mitterrand, and to act as a bridging point between the SFIO, and the CIR. He was not yet willing openly to support Mitterrand against Mollet. As did the CIR, Mauroy sought to transform the FGDS into a new Socialist party, by fusing its component elements. This led him to distance himself from Mollet. Yet, he retained a powerful sense of the SFIO's socialist heritage, and opposed CIR pretensions to equality with the SFIO. At the 1967 SFIO Congress, Mauroy's declaration in favour of the fusion of the FGDS into a single party, on the basis of the proportional representation of the constituent elements - ensuring SFIO pre-eminence - was rejected by Mitterrand (30). Meanwhile, Mollet refused any rapid dissolution of the SFIO in favour of a new party, whose leadership might escape him. By 1967, Mauroy's weight in the SFIO had increased markedly, as a member of the

29. Mauroy, op cit, p. 183.

30. Le Monde, 3 July 1967.

triumvirate succeeding Laurent as head of the Nord federation (along with Notebart, and Debesson)(31). At the 1967 Congress, several Mauroy^{supporters} took their place in the CD (amongst whom Barel, Blanca, Marty)(32).

The May '68 crisis, followed by the June 1968 elections (see above), effectively signalled the FGDS' demise, and enabled Mollet to reestablish his authority over a deliquescent SFIO. This was accompanied by a resurgence of party patriotism, favouring Mollet, and further discrediting Mitterrand. At the December 1968 SFIO Congress the final resolution emphasised that any new negotiations over fusion into a new party were useless; that the SFIO would not dissolve itself before any unification Congress (demanded by Mitterrand); and that the SFIO intended to create the 'new' party in May 1969, whatever the actions of its erstwhile partners (33). Mauroy appeared to share this mood of resurgent party patriotism: he made no effort at the 1968 Congress to secure guarantees for adequate CIR representation in a new party, without which the operation appeared as a mere annexation of the CIR by the SFIO (34). Mauroy had probably realigned himself behind Mollet in the expectation of taking over the leadership of the 'new' party.

31. Vaneste, op cit, p. 129.

32. Le Populaire de Paris, 4 July 1967.

33. Le Monde, 24 December 1968.

34. Ibid, 22-23 December 1968.

De Gaulle's resignation after the 1969 referendum provoked an early presidential election. On Mollet's proposition, the SFIO leadership unilaterally advanced the date of the constitutive Congress of the new party to May 4th, 1969, and limited its competence to selecting a presidential candidate, and adopting a declaration of principles (35). This was intended to ensure Mollet greater control over proceedings, and to foreclose a Mitterrand candidacy, or indeed any common candidate with the PCF. This procedure was unacceptable to the CIR. The new Parti socialiste was officially formed at Alfortville, on May 4th 1969, out of the old SFIO, and Savary's UCRG, despite the refusal of the CIR, and Popere's UGCS to participate (36).

Mollet attempted to rally the SFIO to support merely a symbolic Socialist candidate on the first ballot (Pineau), to hold the non-Communist left vote, and to deliver it on the 2nd ballot to Poher, centrist President of the Senate, against Pompidou. Mollet thus hoped to undo the presidentialisation, and bipolarisation of the Fifth Republic, reconstituting the 'third force', and SFIO influence, at Communist and Gaullist expense (37). This strategy threatened Socialist deputies elected with Communist support. Meanwhile, Defferre declared himself as candidate, and the

35. 'Comment la gauche s'est divisée, Dire, 7, (May 1969), p. 7.

36. Ibid, p.8.

37. See Williams and Harrison, French Politicians and Elections, pp. 282-7.

alternative to splitting the party, constraining Mollet to incline to Defferre's candidacy, but with the same strategic aim of restoring the third force, and rallying to Poher on the second ballot. At Alfortville, Defferre defeated Savary for the party's nomination (38). As in 1964-5, Defferre attempted to attract the centre, and centre-right electorates and excluded any first ballot deals with the PCF. This strategy was destined to failure in 1969, since the centre and centre right had rallied to Pompidou, or Poher, and despite Mendès' support, Defferre's candidacy suffered a fatal blow accordingly (39). Defferre achieved a derisory 5.1%, rivalled by Rocard's 3.7% (PSU), and far outdistanced by Communist Duclos' 21.5% (40).

The 1969 election destroyed not only Defferre and his Socialist led centre alliance; it finally discredited Mollet and his third force alternative. Mollet's unswerving opposition to presidentialism finally proved his undoing; his strategy was a nonsense. It totally abandoned the left to the PCF, while provoking centrist inclined Socialists to support Poher from the first ballot, and removed Socialist bargaining power for the second ballot. It facilitated Mitterrand's subsequent reemergence.

38. Mossuz, op cit, p. 106.

39. Williams and Harrison, op cit, p. 285.

40. Ibid, p. 287.

Mauroy's position in 1969 reflected the contradictory pressures he faced as a member of the Nord triumvirate ~~which~~ ^{was} aware of its anti-Communist traditions, as expected successor to Mollet, but also as a leader previously excluding centrist national electoral strategies. In April 1969, Mauroy had again declared the need for a Union of the left (41). But his national line was at variance with his local base, where he faced a ferociously anti-Communist competitor in Notebart. Notebart incarnated SFIO ouvriériste traditions, and represented the virulently anti-Communist, party patriotic sensibility within Nord, making him politically closer to Mollet than to Mauroy. On Notebart's proposition, Nord forwarded Defferre's candidacy for 1969. Mauroy could ill afford to oppose this proposition, supported by Laurent, if he hoped to take over full control of Nord later. Mauroy was thus associated by Mitterrand with support for Defferre (42).

Nonetheless, after Alfortville, Mauroy appeared in a strong position. He took over the party leadership as part of a triumvirate with Cazelles, and Herbaut (hard line Molletists), and appeared poised to take full control after the second constitutive Congress, July 1969 (43). He had shown sufficient independence from Mollet to appear to

41. Le Monde, 4 April 1969.

42. 'Comment la gauche s'est divisée', pp. 7-9.

43. Mauroy, op cit, p. 209.

represent change with continuity. Moreover, Defferre's failure had restored the prestige of left unity, making CIR participation in the new party more likely. At the Congress of Issy-les-Moulineaux, July 1969, Poperen's UGCS joined the new party, although Mitterrand still refused to participate (44). It was Savary, however, rather than Mauroy who became leader (45). Mollet backed Savary, since Savary needed Mollet for his majority, and Mollet would continue to dominate the party organisation; Mauroy, with Nord as his base, might eventually have done without him. As a consequence, however, the leaders of the two largest federations - Mauroy and Defferre - now both declared their opposition to Mollet, and their determination to rid him and Savary from the party leadership.

^{Issy-Moulineaux}
 Issy marked an important step towards Socialist unification; the party was now freed of the incubus of Mollet's discredited leadership. From 1969-1971, Savary presided over a limited renewal of party structures, at local, if not at national level, and encouraged the first upturn in the party's electorate and membership (46). For the party

44. Mossuz, op cit, p. 107.

45. Bizot, op cit, p. 132.

46. Between 1969-1971, 70% of Federal leaders had been replaced and their average age fell by 20 years. See V. Wright, and H. Machin, 'The French Socialist Party in 1973: Performance and Prospects', Government and Opposition, 9, 2, (Spring 1974), pp. 123-146; p. 127. See above Introduction for party membership 1969-71.

seemed to have abandoned its search for discredited centrist alliances, and again to point itself in a clearly leftward direction. The final resolution at Issy^{-les-Moulineaux} announced 'L'union de la gauche est l'axe normale de notre stratégie', and called for an ideological debate with the PCF (47). The end result of this unitary orientation, started by Mollet in 1963, was limited; Mollet remained hostile, and Savary cautious. In December 1970, PS and PCF published a 'Bilan des convergences et des divergences', after one year of negotiations (48). Divergences between the parties, especially over democratic guarantees, were sufficiently important to preclude any agreement.

Mauroy headed the Issy^{-les-Moulineaux} minority and rapidly established closer links with Defferre and Bouches-du-Rhône, in an anti-Mollet coalition. But with his home base still uncertain, Mauroy had to act carefully in his attempts to dislodge Mollet. His activity from 1969 to 1971 was thus often clouded in secrecy and intrigue, as for example the discreet contacts made with the CIR from 1969 onwards (49).

Contacts between Mauroy/Defferre, and Mitterrand were retained throughout 1970, and intensified after Mitterrand's November 1970 appeal. Overriding past political divergences was the common determination to rid the PS of Mollet's

47. Le Populaire, 15-16 July 1969.

48. Bulletin Socialiste, 23 December 1970.

49. Mauroy, op cit, p. 215.

leadership. Nonetheless, Mauroy/Defferre and Mitterrand continued to be divided on important issues, such as Servan - Schreiber, and the Radical manifesto, 'Ciel et terre'. For Mitterrand, collaboration with the Radicals was essential to strengthen the non-Communist left vis-a-vis the PCF; but Socialists had to differentiate themselves from Radicals, and defeat Servan Schreiber's bid for the leadership of the non-Communist left.(50). Mitterrand's position paralleled the CIR's public commitment to socialism, 1968 - 1970 (despite the Hernu wing, favouring closer collaboration with the Radicals)(51). For the SFIO minority, there was no question of the Radicals joining the PS, but the Radical manifesto provided an opportunity for closer collaboration (52).

One further obstacle to the eventual Epinay alliance was the divergence between Mauroy/Defferre, and CERES/left CIR over election strategy for the 1971 municipals. On the eve of the 1971 contest, Socialists controlled 46 towns of over 30,000 inhabitants, 32 in alliance with the centre (including Lille and Marseilles); 11 in alliance with the PCF; and 3 by socialists alone (53). At the Bondy CN, October 1970, Mauroy and Defferre eventually sided with Mollet/Savary to reject CERES' demand for an end to all

50. Sevin, op cit, p. 132.

51. D. Loschak, op cit, p. 33.

52. Sevin, op cit, p. 133.

53. Figures given in Démocratie socialiste, 10, November 1970.

centre alliances in 1971 (54).

Socialist-centrist alliances were therefore officially *allowed* in 1971. This was nowhere more true than in Nord. All five large towns won by Socialists in Nord were on the basis of alliances with the centre. Laurent, reelected Mayor of Lille thanks to ^{second} ballot PCF support, protested.

'Il n'est pas question de collaborer avec les communistes. Le désistement est une tactique électorale appliquée un peu partout. Je ne vois pas la raison pour laquelle il y'aurait une collaboration qui découlerait de cette tactique'. (55).

Mauroy could not move faster, or further than his base would allow. Once the federation's municipal base was secure, Mauroy had greater leeway nationally. Savary's agreement with Mauroy/Defferre over municipal election strategy probably led him to dismiss any prospect of alliance between the party's various minorities, and to lessen the significance of Mitterrand/Mauroy contacts. For the Mauroy/Defferre stance was severely criticised not only by CERES, but also by the left-CIR, based around Joxe/Estier (56).

Contacts between Mitterrand, and Mauroy/Defferre intensified after Mitterrand's Chateau Chinon appeal, November 1970; while there are conflicting testimonies

54. Volonté socialiste, 15, November 1970; Bulletin socialiste, 20 October 1970.

55. Nord-Matin, 22 March 1971.

56. P. Joxe, 'Un Congrès, trois choix', Dire, 23, April-June 1971.

over the nature of contacts between CERES, and the SFIO minority. Nonetheless, it appears as if a general, loosely defined agreement linked all three Épinay alliance partners (Mitterrand; Mauroy/Defferre, CERES) preceding Épinay itself (57). Mauroy would take over control of the party organisation, while Mitterrand would become political leader (58). Both the Mauroy/Defferre (SFIO minority), and Mermaz/Pontillon (CIR) motions concentrated on the reequilibrium of the left, and the need for a powerful majoritarian PS. Neither explicitly envisaged a Common Programme (59). The Mauroy/Defferre motion demanded 'clear responses' from the PCF on various issues, before any public dialogue could be resumed between the parties (60). It called for a preliminary reinforcement of the non-Communist left before any negotiations with the PCF, and for increased cooperation with the Radicals, and 'other democrats'. It affirmed its modernist vocation, asserting that 'Un parti moderne doit adapter son visage, son style, et ses méthodes au monde actuel', and called for the party to appeal to the new tertiary classes.

57. Reports given by A. Salomon, PS: la mise à nu, (Paris, Robert Laffont, 1980), pp. 25-6; Mauroy, op cit, pp.215-6; J. Poperen, 'L'unité de la gauche', (Paris, Fayard, 1975), p. 332. All concur on this. By contrast, Chevènement argues that only sporadic meetings took place, and no precise agreements were reached (see chapter four).

58. Giesbert, Francois Mitterrand ou la tentation de l'histoire, p. 26.

59. Printed in Motions pour le Congrès de l'unité socialiste, Supplement to Documentation socialiste, 18, (1971).

60. Ibid.

Both Mauroy and Defferre had sought to revive the left by reforming the SFIO, and by adapting the party to a changing society. They had differed over left unity, and over the effects of presidentialism. The restrictive approach towards left unity in the Mauroy/Defferre motion, was partly tactical, to secure the support of an anti-Communist sentiment in Nord, Bouches-du-Rhône, and in numerous other traditional SFIO federations, suspicious of the Issy ^{Cer-Moulineaux} leadership for resuming negotiations with the PCF. The motion carried those federations where there were long SFIO anti-Communist traditions, or a generalised practise of socialist-centrist municipal alliances: Nord; Bouches-du-Rhône; Creuse; Loire; Loire-Atlantique; Meurthe-et-Moselle; Pyrénées-Orientales; Yvelines; Var (61). In addition, those based around Chandernagor, and Démocratie socialiste, which had refused any alliance with the Communists, rallied to Mauroy and Defferre (62).

Undoubtedly, Mauroy and Defferre were supported by those most hostile to left unity. Did Mauroy and Defferre thus head an anti-Communist courant within the party? The conclusion is overdrawn. Since 1963, Mauroy had supported resumed negotiations with the PCF; had enthusiastically endorsed Mitterrand's 1965 campaign; had withdrawn in favour of a better placed PCF candidate on the

61. Sevin, op cit, p. 220.

62. Démocratie socialiste, 18, July 1971.

second ballot in 1967, unlike many SFIO candidates; and had favoured moves towards unity between FGDS and PCF (63).

Mauroy's position was as a bridge between old and new, between those seeking to preserve the SFIO's heritage, while determined to rid themselves of Mollet, and those seeking a fundamental transformation of the SFIO. In retrospect, Mauroy's most important historical role was to have enabled Mitterrand's succession as head of the PS, while providing an indispensable element of continuity with the old SFIO. Henceforth, he claimed to speak as head of a courant de synthèse.

On the opening vote at Épinay, Mauroy/Defferre won 30%, almost double that achieved by Mermaz-Pontillon. Within the SN, however, both Mauroy/Defferre, and CIR counted four posts, with two for CERES (64). The underrepresentation of Mauroy's supporters suggests that, from the inception, Mauroy sought to establish an equal partnership with Mitterrand, for a collegial leadership of the party. Thus, it is necessary to speak of a Mitterrand/Mauroy axis as central to the leadership after Epinay. Mauroy's ^{supporters} were: Mauroy, Coordination, (no. 2 in the hierarchy); Loo, Organisation and Budget; Jacquet, External relations; Pontillon, International

63. For the 1967 reference, F.O. Giesbert, L. Roux, Preface to Mauroy, op cit, p. 9.

64. Bulletin Socialiste, 15 June 1971.

relations. (65). The final Épinay motion implied that, despite the commitment to negotiations with the PCF, a common programme would not be signed until guarantees had been obtained from the Communists over national sovereignty; democratic liberties, and alternation in power (66).

From Épinay onwards, Mauroy condemned CERES' factionalism. Through opposition to factionalism Mauroy and Mitterrand increasingly cooperated in the majority, at the expense of CERES. This may explain why Mauroy dissolved CEDEP after Épinay (67). Mauroy's role in the *drafting* of the party programme, Changer la Vie, was one of attempting to moderate Chevènement's proposals, to make the programme acceptable to his party base. This aim was only partly successful, and Changer la Vie bore CERES' unmistakable imprint. However, on each of the five major policy alternatives voted on by the sections, where the various factions had been unable to reach agreement, Mitterrand and Mauroy were united, presaging a closer collaboration, and the progressive exclusion of CERES from influence (see chapter one). Mauroy's moderating role was illustrated by the Joxe-Mauroy text on economic democracy. This amendment limited autogestion to a number of pilot experiences in the public sector, and refused to specify which firms would

65. Ibid.

66. Reprinted in Textes de Référence, Le P/R, Supplement to 73, (August 1978).

67. Mauroy, op cit, p. 186.

be nationalised by a future left government. It secured an absolute majority, but CERES amendments were accepted in the Resolutions Committee at the CN of Suresnes in March 1972 (see chapter four).

The most important bridging function performed by Mauroy after Épinay was to secure the *support* of the most traditional socialist élus to Mitterrand's leadership, and the acceptance of the PCG. At the July 1972 CN, the PCG was accepted unanimously; by the 1973 elections, only a handful of élus refused to accept it, and they were expelled from the party as a result. Amongst them were Lejeune, Guille and Vinatier (68). Most of those previously supporting Chandernagor, and Démocratie socialiste, opposing any alliance with the PCF, remained in the party: 10 of the 42 sortants in the 1973 election had been on the Démocratie Socialiste support committee, but only one - Lejeune - was expelled for refusing the PCG (69). Within Nord, the PCG was accepted unanimously by the Federal convention of July 8th, 1972, despite a deeply ingrained anti-Communist tradition (70). Mauroy's prestige must have accounted for this. This decision coincided with Nord's 10,000th member in July 1972, an increase of 1,550 since Épinay (71).

68. L'Unité, 14 July 1972; 16-22 March 1973.

69. Démocratie socialiste, 10, November 1970.

70. Nord-Demain, 9, June - July 1972.

71. Ibid.

Clearly, Mauroy's national strategy was producing local results. The acceptance of the PCG by Mauroy's anti-Communist base was aided by concrete signs of membership revival since Épinay, and high expectations for the 1973 elections.

Mauroy's prestige amongst the élus after Épinay was incontestable. At the first National Congress of the Fédération Nationale des Elus Socialistes et Républicains (FNESR), July 1972, Mauroy was elected as Vice-President of the Bureau of the federation (72). He received more votes from the élus than any other Socialist, other than M. Pic (73). Yet, Mitterrand and Mauroy still had to struggle to convince all élus of the benefits of the PCG; it took the electoral success of 1973 fully to achieve this. Mauroy placed a high value on the élus for developing the party, and proclaimed in September 1972,

'Les élus socialistes représentent^{ent} une force extraordinaire, qui, organisée, fera du Parti socialiste, premier parti des municipalités, le premier parti de notre pays' (74).

The ex-SFIO élus constituted a natural base for Mauroy, mayor of a big city, head of a large federation, and symbol for many of the anti-Mollet SFIO heritage. Mauroy's cultivation of the élus reflected a distrust of CERES'

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid., 10, September-October 1972.

74. Ibid., Mauroy press conference, 7 October 1972.

ideological approach, suspected of leading to permanent impotent opposition. It echoed a belief in a socialism of the possible, most concretely expressed by the actions of socialists in local government. The PCG was accepted by Mauroy and the ex-SFIO élus because it provided a concrete sign of party renovation. Moreover, the reservations emitted at Épinay were justified because the PCG was regarded as a victory over the PCF; for the first time, the Communists had accepted democratic alternation, Europe, and the Atlantic Alliance (75). For Mauroy, as for Mitterrand, the PCG was to be the means through which the PS would restore the balance on the left in its favour; on all other counts, it was to be given a minimal interpretation. At Épinay, Mauroy/Defferre had sought an agreement with the entire Radical party, before beginning negotiations with the PCF. In July 1972, only a minority of Radicals - the Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche (MRG) - decided to join the left alliance, and sign the PCG; while a majority, based around Servan Schreiber continued with the creation of a Mouvement Réformateur, as a centrist alternative to the left in 1973 (76). This was a bitter disappointment for Mauroy, for whom the Radicals would help to balance the weight of the PCF, and make the PCG more acceptable to his base.

75. Ibid.

76. Le N/O, 17 July 1972.

The consolidation of the Mitterrand/Mauroy axis was underlined by the 1973 election campaign (see chapter one). The first major renewal in the Socialist élus came with the 1973 legislative elections. The PS/MRG alliance counted 102 deputies, of whom 89 belonged to the PS (77). Of the 44 sortants from the 1968 legislature (42 ex-SFIO), 30 were reelected. Of the 59 new arrivals, only 18 had previously been deputies (mostly CIR, 1967-8), while 41 were entirely new (78). The Socialist group's changed composition, noticeable in terms of social base, geographical distribution, and age, marked a realignment away from the SFIO^{which was} prone to support Mauroy, and towards the new PS, and Mitterrand.

The second PS Congress was held at Grenoble, June 22-24th, 1973. It confirmed that the rise in party membership, and the upturn in electoral fortunes had been instrumental in securing the realignment behind Mitterrand/Mauroy of a majority of those supporting Mollet/Savary in 1971 (largely ex-SFIO legitimists). . Partly, this reflected Savary's decision to rally to the majority (see chapter two); and partly the decline in Mollet's standing. At Épinay, Mollet/Savary had won 34%; by Grenoble, Mollet received only 8%, in 37 federations (79). Mollet's motion

77. J. Edouard, 'Le groupe parlementaire à l'assemblée nationale: renouvellement et continuité'. La NRS, 1, April 1974, pp. 34-5.

78. Ibid.

79. Le P/R, 18, July 1973.

was in a minority even in Pas-de-Calais, and only in Seine St Denis did it form a federal majority. This was easily explicable. Mollet's attempt to structure Bataille Socialiste as an ideological faction had no credibility with new party members, hitherto alienated precisely by the opportunism of Mollet's SFIO.

Given the decline of Mollet (8%), and Poperen (5%), it seems certain that new members sided overwhelmingly with the Épinay courants: Mitterrand/Mauroy/Defferre, and CERES. There were no longer any visible signs of difference to distinguish between Mitterrand and Mauroy at Congress. Both signed the same text, and neither tabled a contribution. Indeed, Grenoble sealed the emergence of the dominant Mitterrand/Mauroy leadership axis, and the pattern of majority rassemblement (see chapter two). From Grenoble onwards, however, Mauroy sought to appear as the legitimate inheritor of the SFIO's socialist tradition; with Mollet's effacement, Mauroy became the representative of the continuity of the SFIO within the PS. It was impossible to measure the actual weight of Mauroy and Mitterrand, since neither had tabled a distinct motion. The declining weight of ex-SFIO activists, and of the large federations suggested, however, that the leadership's centre of gravity had shifted towards Mitterrand since Épinay.

Moreover, it was unclear whether the large federations were as united as they had once been. After the 1973 elections, Defferre had been elected as president of the Socialist parliamentary group, and he henceforth divided his energies between that task and his Mairie of Marseilles. From 1973 onwards, Defferre made it clear that he unconditionally supported Mitterrand's leadership, in exchange for a free hand in Bouches-du-Rhône, and had henceforth to be classed as [^]Mitterrandist, rather than a supporter of Mauroy. Shortly after Grenoble, Defferre asserted 'Francois Mitterrand avait fait le pari de ré-équilibre de la gauche'. Il a reussi' (80). Defferre would not be willing to follow Mauroy in any attempt to construct the large, SFIO federations into a courant in the party. Defferre's new position was reached just as Mauroy finally healed the 1969-71 breach between Nord and Pas-de-Calais. The reestablishment of the Nord/Pas de Calais axis became one of Mauroy's salient concerns after Épinay. By Grenoble, the axis had been reestablished on new bases. Motion 1 arrived ahead of Mollet's motion within Pas-de-Calais, and Percheron took over as its head. If Percheron originated from the CIR, his accession was the sign for a closer collaboration between Nord and Pas-de-Calais (81).

It was unclear whether Savary's support for the majority strengthened Mitterrand or Mauroy. By temperament,

80. Cited in Sevin, op cit, p. 438.

81. Interview with G. Allouche, 20 May 1984.

and political affinity Savary had to be ranged alongside Mauroy, rather than Mitterrand. Nonetheless, the essential point was that Savary had joined Mitterrand's majority, and to preserve any influence, had to clearly subordinate himself to the PS leader. There was a further indication of the limits of Mauroy's influence in CERES' position. Since Épinay, Mauroy had regarded the CERES alliance as a conflictual one, but he did not exclude it from his ecumenical conception of the majority. At Grenoble, Mauroy professed the will to 'continue to work with CERES, despite our divergences' (82). For Mitterrand, however, the CERES alliance was a means of occupying the centre of leadership gravity, flanked by CERES on the 'left', and Savary/Mauroy on the 'right'.

Within the leadership elected after Grenoble, there was a rough parity between Mitterrand and Mauroy, but the Mitterrandists took the crucial Federations post, and benefitted most from the creation of extra-statutory délégués. Mauroy accepted this imbalance because Mitterrand had confirmed his own public position as PS spokesman and leader after the 1973 elections. This constraint was essentially political. Within the secretariat, ^{which was} increased from 10 to 13 members, Mitterrandists and Mauroys ^{supporters} each received four posts. Mauroy, (Coordination), continued as

the party's no. 2; accompanied by Jacquet (External relations); Pontillon (International relations), and Loo (Budget)(83).

The extraordinary Congress of Bagnolet, December 1973, (largely analysed in chapter 2) further strengthened Mitterrand's position vis-a-vis Mauroy. Prior to Bagnolet, Mauroy attempted to underline the specificity of his position, by taking the leadership of the party's ultra-European wing, largely ex-SFIO. He initially hinted that he might table a motion, and attempted to align ex-SFIO activists clearly behind his leadership. This plan was dropped when it became clear it would bring him into conflict with Mitterrand. Subsequently, Mauroy proposed that an agreement between the majority (Mitterrand/Mauroy, CERES, Savary, Poperen), and Mollet be reached before Congress (84). This ran contrary to Mitterrand's intentions, determined further to marginalise Mollet, and to ensure that any final agreement would be on the basis of his text. Mitterrand thereby attempted to win for himself the SFIO's European heritage, coveted by Mauroy. That Mauroy complied with Mitterrand, and dropped his call for an agreement with Mollet before Congress, underlined Mitterrand's de facto control within the majority.

The developing conflict between Mauroy and CERES

83. Le P/R, 18, July 1973.

84. Nord Matin, 10 December 1973.

alluded to at Grenoble, resurfaced at the Suresnes Congress on party structures, March 1974 (85). This conflict reflected largely diverging conceptions of party between CERES, seeking to create a mass, militant Socialist party by destroying the municipal socialists, represented primarily by Mauroy; and Mauroy, for whom the élus, especially in local government, provided the backbone of party organisation, and achievement. The conflict over PR in internal party elections (see chapter 4) reflected Mauroy's fear that PR would lead to the development of organised factions, detrimental to party unity, and to the dominance of the larger federations. In particular, Mauroy claimed that it had provided an impetus for CERES to organise itself as a party within a party (86). Secure in Nord, Mauroy continued to work to enlarge the PS, and confirm its potential majoritarian, governmental character. Mauroy retained a powerful sense of the SFIO's heritage, which, like Blum, he interpreted as one of larger socialist unity, including the christian socialist tradition.

Mauroy's status as second in command was confirmed with the 1974 presidential election campaign. Once Mitterrand had been selected as presidential candidate, by the PS Extraordinary Congress of April 8th, 1974, Mauroy took over control of the PS for the duration of the

85. Le P/R, Supp. 1 to 24, January 1974; Supp. 2 to 24, February 1974; 26, April 1974.

86. Le Monde, 19 March 1974.

para-political associative groups). Mitterrand remained unenthusiastic. Nonetheless, pressurised by Mauroy, Mitterrand launched an appeal at the CD of May 25th, 1974, for the unification within the PS of those supporting his presidential campaign, and for a meeting to be held in October 1974, the Assises of Socialism (91). The spirit animating the Assises was one of rassemblement, the long delayed unity of the ^{secular} and christian socialist traditions. Mauroy saw himself as the juncture between these diverse traditions, and therefore as a potential future leader. His roles at Épinay and the Assises enabled him to claim to head a courant de synthèse, an obligatory reference for all other courants save CERES.

Opponents suspected Mauroy of seeking to create an alternative Mauroy/Rocard leadership to Mitterrand (92). This analysis was oversimplified. Why should Mauroy hasten Mitterrand's departure, when the PS had been governed by a dominant Mitterrand/Mauroy alliance since Épinay? It is plausible, however, that Mauroy considered Rocard's entry as a means of strengthening his own weight, and counterbalancing that of Mitterrand's 'Barons'. The Assises would thus serve as a reminder to Mitterrand that he retained the leadership partly thanks to Mauroy's loyal support.

The Assises further gave Mauroy the possibility of widening

91. Le P/R, Supplement to 29, May 1974.

92. H. Hamon and P. Rotman, L'Effet Rocard, pp. 232-7.

and rejuvenating his following within the party. Ironically, the Assises led to a cleavage developing between Mauroy, and his proper base within the party, largely composed of ex-SFIO élus strongly imbued with a ^{secular}-reformist tradition, and inherently distrusting Rocard, seen as representative of a christian left tradition hostile to the PS. Mauroy's base was often associated with the ultra-laïc FEN, or FO, whose suspicion was equally directed against the CFDT (93).

Mauroy envisaged the Assises as the return of the PSU to the 'vieille maison'; he categorically rejected any idea that the Assises would be used to create a 'Parti des Socialistes', a theme dear to the PSU (94). At the party's CN, June 1974, Mauroy demanded that 'sufficient place' be left in the leadership for the new arrivals - an invitation to Mitterrand to coopt Rocard. He also warned the PSU against constituting itself into a new PS faction. The implicit aim of the Assises was to redefine the nature of left unity after the presidential election, and to substitute a specifically PS projet de société for the exclusive reference to the PCG. Mauroy and Rocard shared this aim; Mitterrand's position was more ambiguous. At the June 1974 CN, Mauroy proclaimed,

'Le programme commun de gouvernement détermine l'orientation des cinq années d'un éventuel mandat législatif... Il reste qu'à partir du programme commun, la vision de l'avenir, demeure trop vague à cause même de l'imprécision de projet final de société' (95).

93. Politique Hebdo, 13-19 June 1974.

94. Mauroy's report to the CN, PS archives, Lille.

95. Ibid.

campaign (87). Moreover, it was Mauroy who negotiated with the PCF over the campaign's organisation (88). During the campaign, Rocard endorsed Mitterrand, and joined campaign headquarters at the Tour Montparnasse. There had already been contacts between PSU and PS for the 1973 elections. Parallel to these were a series of discussions since 1973 between Mauroy, Maire, and Rocard (89). These meetings were called on Mauroy's initiative. Their initial purpose was to establish whether any ideological convergences existed between PS, PSU, and CFDT. A coordinating committee was established in early 1974 and the idea of launching a joint review was raised (90). The nature of Mitterrand's 1974 campaign gave an added impetus to the idea of further socialist unification, as Rocard manoeuvred a PSU majority behind Mitterrand (see chapter 6).

Once the 1974 campaign had ended, it would have been difficult for Mitterrand, ostensible rassembleur of the whole left, to have resisted pressures from Rocard, and especially Mauroy to attempt to achieve a more concrete organisational expression ~~of~~ the various forces that had supported him, and to open the PS to forces hitherto outside of the party (essentially, the PSU, and activists from the CFDT, and other

87. Le P/R, 27, April 1974.

88. Giesbert, op cit, p. 278.

89. The fullest account of these is given in Salomon, op cit, pp. 40-49.

90. Ibid, p. 43.

The Assises were only a relative success for Mauroy; Rocard was able to bring less than half the small PSU over with him. Moreover, elements of Mauroy's reluctant base sought to distinguish themselves from Mauroy after the Assises. At the Pau Congress, a motion tabled by Notebart, Mauroy's main rival within Nord, denounced autogestion and questioned the unitary strategy (96). Notebart's motion received 23% within Nord, underlining the continuing existence of a traditional SFIO,^{secular} anti-Communist sensibility chez Mauroy (97). Further, at Pau, CERES received 17% within Nord, and these figures suggested that Mauroy's control over his federation was less solid than customarily supposed, a conclusion Mitterrand was to draw ^{at Congress of} in the campaign for Metz, 1979 (98).

Mitterrand exacted his revenge at the Congress of Pau, in January 1975. The Pau Congress occurred in a new political context. The PCF had launched a bitter anti-socialist campaign in Autumn 1974, after the Assises, and after a series of bye-elections that markedly favoured the PS, while the PCF's vote fell (see chapter 1). Mauroy firmly aligned himself behind Mitterrand in ~~adding~~ ^{adding} the PCF with entire responsibility for the ~~worsening~~ ^{worsening} of relations on the left (99). Further, he firmly supported Mitterrand's

96. 'Crise du pouvoir ou crise de civilisation?' Le P/R, 36, January 1975.

97. PS archives, Lille.

98. Nord-Demain, February 1975.

99. Mauroy, Rapport Statutaire, Le P/R, 35, December 1974.

campaign against CERES' factional organisation; one of Mauroy's reasons for organising the Assises was to replace CERES with Rocard in the leadership. The primary conflict at Pau, then, was that opposing Mitterrand and CERES, not that more subtly separating Mauroy/Rocard from Mitterrand. Nonetheless, Mitterrand was determined to counteract the Assises by strengthening his position within the leadership.

The Mitterrand/Mauroy axis remained the dominant element of the Pau leadership, but the centre of gravity within it shifted markedly in favour of Mitterrand. Within the Secretariat, Mauroy's ^{supporters} counted 4 posts out of 14: Mauroy (Coordination), Pontillon (International Relations), Loo (Budget), Fajardie (Elections and disputes - but only from October 1975 onwards)(100). This compared with 8 Mitterrandists, and marked the end of the parity observed at Epinay and Grenoble. CERES' withdrawal from the majority, and the entry of the courant des Assises benefitted almost uniquely Mitterrand, rather than Mauroy: only Martinet, and Rocard (from October 1975) sat in the Secretariat, despite Mauroy's June 1974 demand that 'sufficient place' be left for the new arrivals.

The majority rassemblement behind Mitterrand at Pau has been explained elsewhere (chapter 1). Pau, following on the Assises, marked the first significant divergence

100. Ibid, 38, February 1975; 44, October 1975.

between the two men since Épinay, especially over Mitterrand's treatment of Rocard. Mauroy accepted the growing leadership imbalance for essentially political reasons. Since the 1974 presidential election, Mitterrand had imposed himself on the party as politically indispensable. To oppose Mitterrand openly after 1974 risked eventual demotion into the minority, and Mauroy had no interest directly in confronting Mitterrand. This political constraint largely overrode any hypothetical organisational equality between Mitterrand and Mauroy, and enabled Mitterrand increasingly to dominate the organisation. In the absence of primaries within the leadership, it was difficult to test Mitterrand and Mauroy's respective strengths. The decline in the relative strength of the large federations, Defferre's de facto alignment behind Mitterrand, and the increased membership under the impetus of Mitterrand's 1974 campaign, suggested that the centre of political gravity had shifted further away from Mauroy, and towards Mitterrand (101).

After Pau, Mauroy sought to act as the indispensable point of contact within a leadership including Mitterrand and Rocard. During 1975-6, a significant number of ex-PSU

leaders openly declared their support for Mauroy: Le Garrec, 101. The 'grandes fédérations' (Bouches-du-Rhône, Nord, and Pas-de-Calais) declined from 39.5% of mandates at Épinay, to 36.43% at Grenoble, and 26.59% at Pau. Bulletin Socialiste, 15 June 1971; Le P/R, 18, July 1973; 38, February 1975.

Rannou, Huchet (102). They had come to distrust Rocard, for his perceived presidential ambitions. Moreover, clear ideological bridges existed between Mauroy and the courant autogestion, in relation to a 'socialisme of the possible'. There was a similar emphasis on the associative movement, and civil society against the State; and on social experimentation, especially through Socialists in local government. According to Mauroy,

« Contrairement à certains camarades plus marqués par la pensée marxiste-leniniste, et sans renier Marx, nous nous sentons plutôt porteurs d'un socialisme à la française, issu de Proudhon, de Jaurès, et des socialistes du XIX^e... nous sommes surtout le grand courant des autogestionnaires, auquel se sont joints des syndicalistes chrétiens, les amis de Michel Rocard, ou même de nombreux CERES qui, au fond, se sentent proches de nous' (103).

The ideological bridge with Rocard, if not with CERES, was evident, and this gave a certain plausibility to an eventual Mauroy/Rocard axis, helping to explain the hostility to Mauroy from leading Mitterrandists after the Assises.

Mauroy's bridging role between the remnants of the SFIO, and PS unitary strategy was evident in the preparations for the 1977 municipal elections. A majority of Socialist mayors elected in 1971 had either formed joint lists with the centre, or had been elected on an homogeneous Socialist basis (104). At Grenoble in 1973, Mauroy proposed a

102. K. Evin, Michel Rocard ou l'art du possible, p. 172.

103. Cited in Bizot, op cit, p. 130.

104. Bulletin Socialiste, 16, 23 March 1971.

compromise with CERES over municipal alliances: this demanded that Socialist councillors cease to support 'reactionary' municipalities, ~~and~~ the PS provided support for local conservative mayors, attached nationally to the presidential majority (105). This was the case notably at Nice, Nantes, Nancy, and Châtellerauld. The motion was adopted, and those councillors who refused to withdraw from centre-run authorities were expelled from the party in 1973 (Nice), and 1974 (Châtellerauld and Nantes)(106).

At Pau, Mitterrand and Mauroy were united in refusing CERES' demands for the PS to commit itself to left unity municipal lists everywhere in 1977 from the first ballot, but the principle of an end to alliances with opponents of the PCG was accepted (107). This left open the possibility of running homogeneous socialist lists. Mauroy's position in the approach to the Dijon Congress was ambiguous. At the CD of April 3-4th, 1976, Mauroy asserted, 'Il faut faire l'union partout, mais au premier tour, notre parti doit pouvoir se compter' (108). Mauroy implied that there should be PS/PCF primaries on the first ballot in towns of under 30,000 where lists could be merged for the second. Initially, Mauroy argued that in certain towns

105. Sevin, op cit, p. 395.

106. Lazitch, L'échec permanent, p. 243; L'Unité, 4-17 February 1977.

107. Motion 1, Le P/R, 36, January 1975.

108. Le N/O, 29 March - 4th April 1976.

the PS stood a better chance of victory, if it refused any alliance with the PCF, and continued to ally with the centre - Pau and Besançon (both governed by Mauroy's supporters) in particular (109). Mauroy's ambiguous position reflected the tensions within his courant de synthèse. Left unity at local level was necessary, in preparation for 1978. However, he sought to limit the extent of left unity alliances on the first ballot, to underline PS electoral strength, and to reassure and preserve elements of his own old SFIO base; and not to make the PS too dependent on the PCF for its municipal power, source of its organisational strength.

The 1977 elections threatened to weaken Mauroy's position within the party, and he may have feared that certain Mayors, from amongst his own supporters, would leave the PS, rather than ally with the PCF (110). Hitherto, those leaving the PS in opposition to its unitary strategy had mostly supported Mauroy and Defferre: Lejeune, Guille, Vinatier (111). After the 1976 Cantonal ^{elections}, the SN excluded those who had refused to apply the left unity rule in these elections; notably, Alduy, Mayor of Perpignan, Mauroy supporter (112). A major renovation in local government would weaken the ex-SFIO within the party, and create a new

109. Ibid.

110. Reported by J. Carat, Mauroyite Sénateur-Maire of Cachan. In Bizot, op cit, pp. 142-3.

111. See above. p. 150

112. Le N/O, 29 March - 4 April 1976.

generation of sabراس, more likely to associate with Mitterrand than Mauroy.

Nonetheless, Mauroy had to avoid remaining simply a hostage of the old SFIO. That was one point of the Assises. Mauroy's acceptance of the Dijon motion (see chapter 2), making left unity the general rule, suggested that he sought to tie his future to Mitterrand's, and avoid accusations of defending a strategy, and interests at local level condemned at national. It would have been suicidal for Mauroy - or for Defferre - openly to oppose Mitterrand prior to the 1978 elections. Mauroy's support for the Dijon motion probably helped to explain the extent of unity realised in 1977 (see chapter 2). This could be seen in Nord. While in 1971, the five towns of over 30,000 won by the PS had all been on the basis of centrist alliances, the five towns conquered in 1977 were all taken on left unity lists: Lille, Roubaix, Tourcoing, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Wattrelos (113).

After the victorious municipal elections, the PS prepared for the June 1977 Nantes Congress, the last preceding the left's expected victory at the 1978 legislative elections. This was dominated by Mitterrand's disciplinary campaign against factionalism, and the PCF's call for an updating of the PCG (see chapter 2). Since Épinay,

113. Le Monde, 22 March 1977.

Mauroy had consistently associated himself with Mitterrand, in setting the interests of the party above those of organised faction, with the implication that they were mutually exclusive. In this sense, factions whose power was based within the organisation itself (Mitterrand, Mauroy) - or organisation factions - claimed a party legitimacy that it was more difficult for those maintaining parallel factional structures to proclaim (CERES, to a lesser extent Rocard). The organisation faction, with its strongholds in the party organisation itself, benefitted from the strategically important, and advantageous position of being able to define what constituted a faction.

Having dissolved CEDEP after Épinay, Mauroy disposed of no visible parallel factional structures. Since Épinay, power had been exercised through a dominant Mitterrand/Mauroy axis, based on formal parity within the SN (until Pau) and in a commanding position at the level of the hierarchy.

— To uphold their claim to a party, rather than factional legitimacy, neither Mauroy, nor Mitterrand retained visible parallel factional structures. Mauroy's authority was concentrated in certain visible areas of what can loosely be defined as the organisation. Firstly, there were the élus. At FNESR Congresses, from 1972-77, Mauroy regularly secured more support from socialist élus than any prominent

Mitterrandist (114). Prior to the 1977 municipals, socialists in local government were largely ex-SFIO, and looked to Mauroy to protect their interests in the leadership. Where socialists were well *présentés* in local government, the élus usually tended to be the most important factor in the local organisation, a source of potential strength for Mauroy. After 1977, the influx of sabaras into local government, on left unity lists, probably favoured Mitterrand, but Mauroy retained a powerful audience (see chapter 8).

Mauroy's other organisational strongholds were as National Secretary for Coordination, leader of Nord, and head of the Léo-Lagrange network (FNLL). As Coordination Secretary, he was theoretically responsible for coordinating national and federal activities, and in a position to influence the composition of federal leaderships. By its nature, this is difficult to quantify. One informed observer estimates that at Pau, 42 Federal First Secretaries were ex-CIR loyal to Mitterrand, presumably leaving a lesser - indeterminate - number of ex-SFIO loyal to Mauroy, alongside others of uncertain loyalty (115). As head of Nord since 1969, (and mayor of Lille since 1975), Mauroy

114. 1972, Congress of Marseilles. Nord-Demain, 9, June-July 1972.

1974, Congress of Cachan. C. Hernu, Rapport Statutaire, Le P/R, 35, December 1974.

1977, Congress of Villeurbanne. A. Blanca, Rapport Statutaire, Le P/R, 80, March 1979; Nord-Demain, 41, December 1979.

115. Bizot, op cit, p. 72.

exercised not only a significant regional influence, but also represented the organisational continuity of the SFIO in the PS, and saw himself as spokesman for the old SFIO federations, and Socialist local authorities. The closest thing Mauroy ran to a parallel factional network, enabling him to organise support in the federations, was the FNLL (see above).

Taken together, these various strongholds well merit the label of organisation faction. It was only at Metz, in 1979, that the reality of Mauroy's organisational might was tested.

Through his location as head of an organisation faction, Mauroy (as Mitterrand), benefitted from a potential strategic advantage, that of being able to define faction, and juxtapose party and faction. In other areas, Mauroy's advantages were less marked. He was not an obvious presidential candidate. Moreover, he was widely perceived to represent the party's right wing, a perception founded largely on the traditional nature of his party base, and on his public admiration for North European Social Democratic parties. This perception was important, whatever its objective justification: it limited his margin of manoeuvre, and range of possible alliance partners. Mauroy's claim to be an homme de synthèse made sense only if he acted as the pivotal element of a leadership alliance including

Mitterrand and Rocard, a solution not currently on the agenda, on account of the pattern of majority rassemblement behind Mitterrand - and one refused by Mitterrand at Metz.

Mauroy's self projection as the homme de synthèse represented an attempt to occupy the centre of leadership gravity, perhaps with an ultimate aim of displacing Mitterrand from his central leadership position. However, Mitterrand was strategically better placed to perform this central role than Mauroy, widely perceived of as representative of the party's traditional right. If necessary, Mitterrand could ally with CERES against Mauroy/Rocard, while CERES would exclude any alliance including Mauroy, but excluding Mitterrand. Nonetheless, Mauroy's leverage was increased by the hypothetical possibility of a Mauroy/Rocard alternative leadership to Mitterrand, a factor restraining Mitterrand's will to dominate the official organisation. In 1977, this hypothesis was politically implausible, and few would conjecture on the strength of such an alternative in the party as a whole.

If Mitterrand and Mauroy represented different examples of an organisation faction, by Nantes in 1977, Mitterrand had come to represent the more recognisable example. Mauroy broadly aligned himself behind Mitterrand over factionalism, but drew differing conclusions from the disciplinary debate, and this covered an organisational

rivalry between the two leaders. Mauroy was determined to suppress 'la volonté délibérée de certains camarades de constituer un parti dans le parti' (116). He also attempted to situate himself as head of a courant de synthèse, and as an indispensable bridge between Mitterrand, and Rocard, but also CERES. At Nord's Federal Congress, preceding Nantes, Mauroy proposed to reintegrate CERES into the leadership, in return for disbanding its factional structures (117). This involved CERES renouncing its separate offices, finances, colloques, in return for holding meetings in party offices and for a right of regular expression in the party's internal bulletin (118). This agreement was accepted by CERES - Nord. Owing to its local unitary traditions, cleavages separating CERES and the majority nationally were frequently underplayed in Nord. Neither Mauroy, nor Wolf, the local CERES leader, had consulted Paris before reaching agreement (119).

If Mauroy distrusted CERES' ideological nature, and factional organisation, a clear organisational bridge existed between them. Both had consistently attempted to strengthen the party organisation; both were survivors of the old SFIO; both had begun under Mollet's wing and then

116. 'Unité, Responsabilité', Nord-Demain, supplement to 37, May 1977.

117. Federal Congress, 12 June 1977. Procès Verbal, PS archives, Lille.

118. Ibid.

119. Interviews with Allouche, 20 May 1984; M. Wolf, 22 May 1983. See also Le N/O, 20-26 June 1977.

turned against him; both now opposed the unrepresentative weight of the Mitterrandists (120). Mauroy considered party unity to be indispensable to defeat the right, and strengthen the PS vis-a-vis the PCF. The obstacle to this unity was the retention of CERES as an organised faction. For Mitterrand, the anti-factional campaign served a double purpose: to prevent internal debate over updating of the PCG; to keep CERES in the minority. For Mauroy, by contrast, agreement over factional organisation could lead to unity at Congress, essential prior to the 1978 elections.

Underlying this divergence lay an organisational rivalry between Mitterrand and Mauroy. This rivalry came out into the open only after the March 1978 defeat. Mitterrand refused an agreement with CERES, partly to consolidate the organisational position of the Mitterrandists. Meanwhile, Mauroy calculated that an agreement at Congress would ensure that a collective leadership, widened to include CERES, continued to govern the PS, and that the Mitterrandists would be restrained in their attempts to dominate the leadership (121). That Mitterrand refused to consider agreement, despite Mauroy and Defferre's efforts,

120. For CERES, see below, chapter 5. At Nantes, Mauroy argued that there must be more involvement from the base in the selection of party leaders, and an end to the cooption system as it had so far existed. La Nouvelle Revue Socialiste, 27, 1977, p. 34.

121. Politique Hebdo, 26 June - 3 July 1977.

marked a clear short term defeat for Mauroy (122). Clearly, Mitterrand no longer considered Mauroy to be essential for his majority, and this was the first step towards an homogenisation of the leadership. There was to be no immediate split, and Mauroy had to allow Mitterrand a free hand in establishing the Nantes leadership. Within the new leadership, there was a decisive shift towards Mitterrand, and away from Mauroy. The Mitterrandists now occupied 10 out of 17 posts in the secretariat (8 at Pau); while Mauroy's ^{supporters} counted only 4 (as at Pau, despite the SN increasing from 13-17 members). These were Mauroy (Coordination); Fajardie (Elections); Loo (Budget); Pontillon (International relations) (123).

At Nantes, then, Mitterrand imposed his undisputed authority on the PS, after the 1976 Cantonal, and 1977 municipal elections. The PCF, however, was now determined either to hold the PS hostage, or to break the left alliance (see chapter 2). Mauroy's reactions to the breakdown of left unity, after the second left summit meeting, on September 21-22nd 1977 were like those of most of the PS. The immediate effect within the PS was a surge of internal party patriotism, largely contrary to the PCF's expectations of what would happen (124). This party patriotic fervour strengthened Mitterrand's short term

122. Ibid.

123. Le P/R, 63, July 1977.

124. See above, chapter 2.

position. Mitterrand and Mauroy were united in laying the entire responsibility for the split with the PCF, illustrated by the unanimous resolutions adopted by the October CD, and November CN. The official line established by the CD, and repeated by the CN was to call for the immediate resumption of negotiations with the PCF. There were signs to suggest, however, that neither Mitterrand nor Mauroy seriously believed that any negotiations would take place until after the first ballot, if at all. From October onwards, Mauroy exhorted the PS to follow his own often pronounced preference: to prepare for an autonomous campaign, and to develop its own propositions, while respecting the overall orientations of the PCG (125). From October 1977, Mitterrand and Mauroy were united in not rejecting the idea of an homogeneous socialist government, although continuing to insist that the party's aim was to accede to power with the PCF (126).

Since Epinay, Mauroy had consistently sought to create Un Parti socialiste fort; he had eventually accepted the PCG as one means of creating such a party. Yet, he had scarcely concealed his opposition to those seeking to tie the PS to an exclusive reference to the PCG (the unitarian pole, concentrated around Joxe/Poperen in the leadership; CERES in the minority) and had wilfully made a minimalist

125. Mauroy Editorial, Le P/R, 64, October 1964.

126. Le N/O, 17 October 1977.

interpretation of that document. However, in the period from the breakdown of left unity to the left's defeat in March 1978, Mauroy appeared to range himself alongside Mitterrand, rather than Rocard, in elevating political expediency above future economic constraints. Thus, he supported Mitterrand's proposition to increase the minimum wage, in the PS manifesto (127). The primacy placed by Mauroy on the political above the economic made it premature to speak of a Mauroy/Rocard axis until the preparations for Metz, April 1979.

On the eve of the first ballot, Mauroy gave further signs of independence from Mitterrand. At the CD, February 8th, 1978, Mauroy argued that there should be a meeting with the PCF on March 13th (after the first ballot), to sign a mutual withdrawal agreement, a position initially opposed by Mitterrand (128). Mauroy's initiative reflected the fear that in the absence of any agreement, the Socialist parliamentary group risked being decimated. These élus continued to form a part of Mauroy's power base within the party. By March 1978, Mauroy had shown clear signs of independence from Mitterrand and Rocard, and had consistently attempted to situate himself as head of a courant de synthèse. Prior to March 1978, Mauroy had performed an integrative, bridging role between the SFIO, and the post-

127. Interview with Mauroy, Politique Hebdo, 16-22 January 1978.

128. Le Monde, 10 February 1978.

Épinay PS; and latterly between Mitterrand and Rocard.

This role had been largely reactive, and Mauroy had rarely occupied the political limelight. With the left's defeat in March 1978, and the presidential bipolarisation around Mitterrand and Rocard, Mauroy was to become a more exposed, altogether more controversial figure, as we shall see

in part two.

CHAPTER FOUR

CERES as the avant garde of left unity, 1966 - 1975

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The Centre d'Études, de Recherches, et d'Education

Socialistes (CERES) was formed in early 1966 by Chevènement and Motchane, as a Paris based political club within the SFIO, to provide new, but orthodox ideas for the party (1). It was given Mollet's initial blessing, who saw it as a counter-balance to Mauroy's CEDEP. By February 1968, however, Mollet openly envisaged excluding CERES: its organisational tactics were remarkably similar to his own, and aimed against his leadership (2). By 1968, the founding fathers had been joined by Sarre, leader of the postal workers in Paris, and Guidoni, from the old Socialist bastion of Narbonne. These 'historical chiefs' dominated CERES. From its inception, CERES defined its aim as the 'socialist conquest of social-democracy': by contrast to those in the PSU, and political clubs, it sought to transform the SFIO from within (3). This gave CERES a clearly stated organisational rationale: it had to capture the party for socialism. 'Already, ideological and organisational interest were virtually inseparable. Its originality was to link party renovation with left unity:

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1. 'Les mousquetaires du CERES', Le N/O, 6-12 June 1977.
 2. B. Lazitch, 'Le CERES ou les singes de Lénine', Commentaire, 1, Été, (1978), p. 40.
 3. CERES early philosophy is exposed in Jacques Mandrin (Pseudonym for Chevènement and Motchane), Socialisme ou social-médiocratie, (Paris, Seuil, 1969).

as early as the 1967 SFIO Congress, it called for a common programme with the PCF, asserting that 'L'unité de la gauche est irréversible' (4).

Certain stages can be traced in CERES' political development preceding Epinay. It clearly distrusted the cultural nature of the themes emerging in May '68, and the lack of an institutional political perspective. According to Chevènement, 'Un mouvement qui n'est pas politique n'est qu'un mouvement d'humeur' (5). This analysis matched that of the PCF, which CERES hoped to reform from within the Union of the Left. Yet, CERES did not underestimate the strength of May, and attempted to associate itself with its most powerful themes - autogestion, changer la vie - and to harness them to the construction of a genuine Socialist party out of the SFIO. This rationale was opposed by Rocard's PSU (see chapter 6). After May '68, the historical chiefs attempted to transform CERES into a more structured faction, and to establish a network of supporters outside of Paris (6). Nonetheless, CERES evaluated itself as a courant ultra-minoritaire after May '68. At Issy-les-Moulineaux, in July 1969 (where Savary took over the party leadership), Chevènement presented an amendment calling

4. Vers une politique socialiste. Reprinted as Annex 2, p. 259, in J.P. Chevènement, Le vieux, la crise, le neuf, (Paris, Flammarion, 1974).

5. Ibid, p. 16.

6. Ibid, p. 47.

for a common programme with the PCF: it achieved 8%, a figure including not only CERES, but also Poperen and the UGCS, who had *joined* the party at Congress (7).

Nationally marginal, CERES took control of the skeletal Paris federation from Mollet, in October 1969, in alliance with Poperen's UGCS - and thanks to Sarre's postmen (8). CERES would use Paris as the bastion of its future assault on the party. From 1969 - 1971, CERES' attitude towards Savary's leadership changed from prudent reserve to declared hostility. This tension related to the conclusions to be drawn from the final motion at Issy, ^{-(cf. Moulinet)} which had declared 'l'union de la gauche est l'axe normale de notre stratégie' (9). At the June 1970 Épinay Congress, Savary presented a 'Socialist action plan', in which any idea of a common programme was postponed until after the PCF had given assurances over its respect for democratic alternation in power (10). The definitive split with Savary occurred over the party's attitude towards the 1971 municipal elections. In September 1970, CERES demanded the constitution of left unity lists in all communes, also a persistent PCF demand (11). Nonetheless, it was isolated at the Bondy CN in October 1970.

A joint text *drawn up* by CERES and Poperen's ERIS,

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7. M. Charzat and G. Toutain, Le CERES: un combat pour le socialisme, (Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1975), p. 74.
 8. Chevènement, op cit, p. 52.
 9. Le Populaire, 15-16 July 1969.
 10. Volonté Socialiste, 11-12, June 1970.
 11. Charzat and Toutain, op cit, p. 82.

demanding an end to all centrist alliances in 1971, received 16%, but CERES alone opposed Savary's compromise text, which declared,

'Le Parti n'a aucune raison de se separer des démocrates qui se sont opposes sans équivoque au pouvoir actuel' (12).

CERES' isolation was compounded by the Paris federation's refusal of any centrist alliances in 1971; and by the absence of any CERES representatives on the National delegation preparing the unification Congress of 1971. It regarded Savary's commitment to left unity as purely verbal, and the 'ideological debate' with the PCF - a first account of which was published in December 1970 - as a recipe for inaction, as indeed for Mollet it had been. CERES was ready to participate in the formation of a new leadership that would overturn Savary, and the control still exercised by Mollet. The price would be the conclusion of a common programme with the PCF, and its inclusion in the party leadership. After Poperen's desertion over the municipal elections, the rivalry between CERES and Poperen for the party's left wing title was accentuated. In April 1971, a series of meetings was held between CERES and Poperen; Poperen insisted that any joint text should attempt to merge with that presented by Savary/Mollet preceding ^{the} Congress (13). CERES rejected Poperen's conditions, ^{since they were} actively involved in

12. Bulletin socialiste, 20 October 1970.

13. Volonté socialiste, 19, May 1971.

secret negotiations with Mitterrand to overturn Savary.

The CERES Épinay motion was the only one openly to call for a Common Programme of Government with the PCF; to establish a calendar for negotiations, and specifically to link party renovation with ^{the} conclusion of a programmatic agreement (14). Even Poperen called for 'necessary guarantees' to be secured from the PCF before signature of a PCG (15). While all other motions subordinated an eventual unity agreement to the preliminary reequilibrium of the left, CERES argued that a precondition of any renovation was the signing of a PCG, to underline how genuine the party's unitary orientation was, and to guarantee that the party was anchored to the left. Renovation and unity were inseparable.

'Loin de cristalliser notre infériorité actuelle par rapport au Parti Communiste, l'union est elle un moyen, et sans doute le seul, de rétablir en notre faveur l'équilibre au sein de la gauche' (16).

On the opening vote at Épinay, CERES obtained 8.5%, to 12% for Poperen (17). The split between CERES and Poperen at Épinay, supporting respectively Mitterrand and Savary on the final vote, ensured that these rival 'left wings' would now be consumed by a mutual animosity. Poperen considered

14. 'Unité et Rénovation: pour une victoire des socialistes en 1973', in 'Motions pour le Congrès de l'unité socialiste', Spp. to Documentation socialiste, 18, (1971).

15. Ibid, 'Pour un puissant Parti socialiste orienté à gauche'.

16. Unité et Rénovation.

17. Le Monde, 12 June 1971.

the continuation of the Savary/Mollet leadership as less of a threat than any alliance resting on the Nord/Bouches-du-Rhône block vote, leading to 'une nébuleuse politique et structurelle qui rappellera bien plus la Grande federation que la FGDS' (18). Popere's decision to side with Savary/Mollet deprived him of any opportunity such as that opened for CERES, of appearing as the dynamic left wing of a renovated party. At Épinay, the CERES motion carried 7 federations, concentrated in eastern and western France, Paris, and the Paris region: Ille-et-Vilaine, Marne, Meuse, Savoie, Paris, Territoire de Belfort, Essonne - all areas of traditional weak socialist organisation and electoral strength, and where CERES was not confronted by a strong incumbent party organisation (19).

With 8.5%, CERES' strength at Épinay was primarily arithmetical. It could arbitrate between two competing leadership alliances of roughly equal proportions: Mitterrand - Mauroy/Defferre; Savary/Mollet - Popere. Prior to Épinay, Chevènement claims that there were only sporadic CERES/CIR meetings, with no agreement on party structures, on power sharing in the leadership, or on political orientation (20). This is denied by other authors, notably, Mauroy and Popere (21). Sections of

18. Synthèse Flash, 4 June 1971.

19. Sevin, op cit, p. 221.

20. Chevènement, op cit, p. 57.

21. Mauroy, 'Les héritiers de l'avenir', p. 215-6; J. Popere, 'L'Unité de la Gauche', (Paris, Fayard, 1974), p. 332.

CERES' base were clearly reticent about any alliance including Mauroy and Defferre, incarnations of municipal socialism (22). For CERES, however, considerations of party renovation had become entwined with those of its own survival: Savary had threatened to dissolve the Paris federation, after CERES' negotiation of left unity lists in the March 1971 municipals, without referring to the party leadership (23).

Thus, the 'alliance against nature' with Mitterrand and Mauroy/Defferre (grouping those elements traditionally most hostile to left unity), appeared to bear little relation to political principle, and more to pragmatic self-interest. The avowed object of the alliance was PS renovation - which Savary had indeed begun (24). Yet, this alliance was not devoid of political coherence. For the major obstacle to further, and substantial revival was the perpetuation of the leadership elected at Issy^(ex-Maillaneux), still controlled indirectly by a thoroughly discredited Mollet. CERES gambled that once the new leadership alliance had taken over the party from Mollet, the anti-unity elements in the new majority (around Mauroy/Defferre) would be constrained to accept a PCG, as the concrete sign of party

22. A. Salomon, PS: la mise à nu, (Paris, Robert Laffont, 1980), p. 28.

23. Charzat and Toutain, op cit, p. 84.

24. See V. Wright and H. Machin, 'The French Socialist Party in 1973...', p. 121. 70% of Federal leaders had been replaced, 1969-71. On membership renewal 1969-71, see above, Introduction.

renovation, and because CERES was necessary for the new leadership's survival.

At ^{the} Congress, CERES exploited its pivotal position to the full. On the means of election to the party's governing organs, CERES sided with Savary/Mollet - Popereen, to defeat Joxe's proposition, made on behalf of Mitterrand, and Mauroy/Defferre (25). This envisaged retaining a system of majority election with protection for minorities. It would have prevented CERES forcing through PR, the method of election likely to guarantee it a permanent existence. Joxe's proposition was defeated by 53,806 mandates to 35,407 (26). This demonstrated that Mitterrand needed CERES' support to oust Savary. In turn, CERES allied with Mitterrand, and Mauroy/Defferre to defeat the Mollet-Taddei proposition (weighted PR, with a majority for the motion arriving in head) which would have left the Mollet/Savary leadership intact (27). To overturn the existing leadership, Mitterrand and Mauroy/Defferre had to accept Chevènement's proposal: that of proportional representation of competing motions presented to Congress, on the party's governing organs (28).

Having secured PR, CERES sought the highest policy price it could obtain for its support. Agreement was reached in the Resolutions Committee between CERES and Mitterrand,

25. Le Monde, 15 June 1971.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

supported by Mauroy/Defferre at Congress, and the final general policy motion presented by Mitterrand resumed CERES' main demands. It committed the PS to open negotiations over a PCG with the PCF, although it altered the timetable for these negotiations (to begin after March 1972, rather than - as CERES proposed - in December 1971), and satisfied Mauroy/Defferre over guarantees before the signature of any common programme (see p. 67). Nonetheless, Mitterrand had now agreed in principle to a common programme. It can then be argued that CERES achieved a large measure of satisfaction and could legitimately claim that the 'line of Épinay' had been partly of its own making.

After Épinay, CERES occupied a strategically indispensable position for the perpetuation of the new leadership, that bound the 'left' and 'right' within the party, to the newcomer, Mitterrand (the centrist cement within the majority). CERES retained its strategic indispensability until Grenoble, in 1973 (see below). It allowed CERES to exercise an influence on party policy disproportionate to its percentage weight, for Mitterrand depended on CERES' support to retain his position. CERES secured the appointment of 2 SN's out of 10, both occupying key positions: Chevènement, at Programme et Études, charged with drawing up the party programme; and Sarre, at Fédérations et Entreprises, with responsibility for

aspects of party organisation, and the party's workplace sections (29). Mitterrand had argued at Epinay that socialist renovation required a common programme with the PCF. The best public advertisement for such renovation was to charge Chevenement, the original *supporter* of the alliance, to draw up the party's programme, the necessary basis for negotiations with the PCF. Mitterrand thereby used CERES to stress that the new leadership's commitment to left unity was more than verbal.

By participating in the majority, CERES had to recognise certain constraints on its freedom of action within the party, and to assume some responsibility for leadership decisions. However, the ambition of its leaders, and its self-image as a socialist pole within social-democracy ensured that its leadership participation was seen not as excluding, but being complementary to *drawing up* its specific analyses. This was underlined by CERES' 6th colloque, in January 1972, on autogestion. According to CERES, its strategy responded to the dilemma of a 'revolutionary' minority in a reformist party leadership,

'À l'intérieur, il faut trouver la juste mesure entre la solidarité majoritaire, et une autonomie d'action qui permet d'engager aussi loin que possible le processus de transformation de la social-démocratie, sans être rejeté par elle'.(30).

This justified factional organisation from within the majority. The originality of CERES' contribution to the

29. Bulletin socialiste, 17 June 1971.

30. Charzat and Toutain, op cit, p. 96.

party's programme, drawn up largely by Chevènement - Changer la Vie - was the introduction of the theme of autogestion. Through autogestion, CERES appeared to be the only group within the party directly to claim the heritage of May '68, and to claim a monopoly on radicalism. (Its interpretation of autogestion, however, had to be sharply contrasted with that of Rocard's PSU)(see chapter 6). The political heterogeneity of the Épinay majority was illustrated by conflicts over the party's programme. Chevènement's first draft was referred back by the October 1971 CD, before being accepted in modified form by the CD in December 1971 (31). Prior to this, a joint meeting of the BE, and Socialist parliamentary group (December 15th, 1971) unanimously rejected Chevènement's proposed introduction to the programme. Clearly, CERES pivotal position was dependent on a continuing division between the Épinay majority and minority: where they combined, CERES influence was much reduced (32).

Where no agreement had been reached by the various courants the text emerging from the December 1971 CD carried a series of policy options, to be voted on by the party activists. Compared to Épinay, the Suresnes CN of March 1972 marked an increase in CERES' weight within the

31. Bulletin socialiste, 26 October, 12 December 1971.

32. Poperen, op cit, p. 369.

party (33).

CERES presented its own options on economic democracy, the Atlantic alliance, and national defence. Its support ranged from 22.5% for the Chevènement-Sarre motion on economic democracy, to marginally over 10% for the Guidoni motion on national defence (34). The joint text *drawn up* by CERES, and Poperen's ERIS, calling for withdrawal from the Atlantic alliance secured 36%, as opposed to 20% in the debate on the Socialist action plan, in June 1970 (35). This contributed to the image of PS radicalisation. These various issues underlined CERES' divergences with the 'majority of the majority', based around Mitterrand and Mauroy/^{who were}Defferre, united on all five amendments (see chapter one).

It was unclear whether CERES retained its position as the pivotal member of the Épinay alliance. While the Joxe-Mauroy text on economic democracy secured an absolute majority (53.80%), CERES' support ensured the success of the Cépède amendment. This amendment, supported by an unholy alliance of the Épinay minority (Popperen, Savary, Mollet), and CERES committed the party to giving workers in any industry the right to demand nationalisation. It suggested that Mitterrand and Mauroy continued to depend

33. Sevin, op cit, p. 282, estimates CERES' real audience at around 15% at Suresnes.

34. Bulletin socialiste, 6, March 1972.

35. Le N/O, 20 March 1972.

on CERES' support for their majority (36).

Despite the defeat of its various options (as above), Changer la Vie was marked unmistakably by CERES' influence. Chevènement had largely drawn up the programme, the bulk of which was accepted unanimously by the CN, and had introduced autogestion, accepted in a watered down form in the final text. Within the Resolutions Committee, CERES passed certain amendments to the Joxe-Mauroy text on economic democracy: notably, on control to be exercised by workers' committees over employment, and on the cost of groups to be nationalised by a future government (37). Finally, CERES' support had ensured the success of the 'nationalisation on demand' clause. Changer la Vie marked the apogée of CERES' influence over party policy. Even at its height, however, this influence was attenuated by evidence of a Mitterrand/Mauroy axis within the majority. CERES appeared already as the minority of the majority.

CERES' continuing influence over party policy was emphasised by the responsibility given to Chevènement for negotiations over the economic chapter of the common programme. However, Mitterrand ensured that all courants were associated in the negotiations with the PCF (see chapter one). In his capacity as chief PS economic negotiator, Chevènement

36. Bulletin socialiste, 6, March 1972.

37. Ibid.

stressed CERES' responsibility by opposing the PCF's demands for an extended list of nationalisations, at the CD of June 24th, 1972 (38). Chevènement could not endanger the realisation of a common programme by siding too openly with the PCF. However, he insisted on including the 'Nationalisation on demand' amendment in the Common Programme, tending thereby to undo the limited list of nationalisations. The final programme thus bore CERES' specific imprint. In the Programme Commun de Gouvernement, signed on June 27th, 1972, a compromise was reached over nationalisations: the left would nationalise the entire banking and finance sector; 9 major industrial groups, and there would be a limited number of state majority *secteurs* (39).

CERES could draw legitimate satisfaction from the PCG. It could not be accused of suivism, when autogestion, to which it had attached his name, was formally rejected by the PCF, which preferred the phrase 'the permanent development of democratic management' (40). CERES had acted as the avant garde of left unity, in that it had consistently urged a common programme with the PCF since the 1967 SFIO Congress, and had linked unity and renovation. Its strategy had been given a concrete expression in the Épinay motion, by Chevènement's role in elaborating the party programme, and by the signature of the PCG. Once the

38. Cited in Sevin, op cit, p. 301.

39. L'Unité, 30 June 1972.

40. Programme Commun de Gouvernement (Paris, Flammarion, 1972), p. 48.

success of the PCG had largely benefitted Mitterrand, the utility of the CERES alliance declined. The signing of the PCG itself led to a cleavage developing between those adopting a minimal and a maximal interpretation of the left alliance. The minimal interpretation has been analysed above (chapter one); CERES' reading will be analysed below (see next chapter).

At the CN of July 9th, 1972, there was unanimous acceptance of the PCG, strengthening Mitterrand's leadership, and largely effacing the Épinay cleavage. Both Mollet and Savary accepted the PCG (41). CERES was then isolated in its opposition to reserving a limited number of constituencies in the 1973 legislative elections for the left Radicals (MRG), the minority of the Radical party which had split to support the PCG (42). CERES feared that Mitterrand would now shift the party's political gravity away from its anchorage to the left since Épinay, to reassure a potential centrist electorate in 1973. Any such move would necessarily lessen CERES' influence.

The party's campaign for the 1973 legislative elections gave another example of the distance between Mitterrand's minimalist, and CERES' maximalist readings of the PCG.

CERES advocated joint local campaigns, in favour of the Common Programme, ^{thus backing the line of} the PCF, and opposed by

41. L'Unité, 14 July 1972.

42. Volonté socialiste, 29, July-August 1972; Le N/O, 17 July 1972.

Mitterrand/Mauroy. It sought thereby to act as arbiter on the left, but appeared to side with the PCF against its own party (43). In the 1973 legislative ^{elections}, CERES fielded 50 candidates, mainly in hopeless areas, where the SFIO had been virtually inexistent, where party renovation had been largely due to CERES. After the second ballot, CERES counted 4 deputies: Chevènement (Belfort-Ville); Forni (Belfort-campagne); Bernard (Bar-le-Duc); and Vaccant (Puy-de-Dôme)(44).

CERES' preparation for the Congress of Grenoble, June 23-25th, 1975, established a pattern to be repeated in all subsequent Congresses. By presenting its own motion, despite its participation in the leadership, CERES continued to situate itself as an ideologically offensive faction, the socialist pole within social democracy, attempting to exercise an hegemony over the leadership's ideological orientation. The CERES motion was at its 7th colloque, prior to ^{the} Congress. Such parallelism was intended to enable CERES to strengthen its network in the party, in preparation for ^{the} Congress, and illustrated an ^{high} degree of factional consciousness. 400 regional CERES leaders from 70 départements attended this colloque (45).

The opening vote at Grenoble revealed that CERES had increased its percentage strength from 8.5% at Épinay, to

43. Charzat and Toutain, op cit, p. 104.

44. Ibid, p. 105.

45. Ibid, p. 108.

21%; while Poperen's ERIS had declined from 12% to 5% (46). CERES could thus credibly claim to represent the party's left wing, and take credit along with Mitterrand for party renovation since Épinay. By Grenoble, CERES had effectively *spread its support nationally*, although its *strength* remained concentrated in east and west France, Paris, and the Paris region. It was absent only in Aisne, faithful to Poperen. The CERES text arrived in head in twelve federations (7 at Épinay). The extent of CERES' growth was illustrated by observing that it arrived *first* in four federations where it had been absent at Épinay (Corrèze, Maine-et-Loire, Moselle, Haute-Saône)(47). It *was* strongest where there was no significant incumbent party organisation, presence in local government, or electoral strength. Aside from Paris, each federation where CERES' motion led represented less than 1% of total Congress mandates (48). By contrast, Poperen's ERIS could no longer claim to represent a mainstream left faction: at Épinay, Poperen's text *came first* in 16 federations, and was represented in 76; at Grenoble, these figures were two, and 44 respectively.

Despite CERES' increased strength, the opening vote revealed that its support was no longer essential for Mitterrand's majority (see chapter 2 for the *reshuffles*

46. L'Unité, 22-28 June 1973.

47. Le P/R, 18, July 1973.

48. Ibid.

between majority and minority taking place between Epinay and Grenoble). CERES could be distinguished from the other elements in the majority (Mitterrand, Mauroy/Defferre, now Savary) in that it felt compelled to present a motion to Congress, even at the risk of relegation into the minority. This was the necessary minimum of its self-conception as the party's left wing, and its situation as an ideological faction. There was evidence to suggest that CERES' retention of its own forms of factional organisation and expression was seen already by Mitterrand as incompatible with its durable participation in the leadership. In 1973, however, factionalism was considered as less of a threat than the dangers of stagnation, and CERES continued to be valued for the proof it provided of party renovation (49).

Nonetheless, Mitterrand criticised CERES at Grenoble for its pretention to act as the party's left wing, and to take exclusive credit for the left unity process. Pointing out that 'Ce qui a été fait l'a été par les trois groupes majoritaires', Mitterrand argued that 'a group could not participate in the SN, while simultaneously developing its own analyses, directed mainly against the other components of the leadership. Further, he criticised CERES' conceptions of the avant garde role of the party as foreign to democratic

49. See Mitterrand's 'Lettre aux militants', L'Unité, 8-14 June 1973.

socialist traditions,

'Je considère qu'un certain nombre de fractions au sein du Parti socialiste se comportent théoriquement et *pr*atiquement comme s'il s'agissait de faire un faux Parti communiste avec des vrais petits-bourgeois...' (50).

Despite these criticisms, the Mitterrand-CERES alliance was resumed at Grenoble. Clearly, Mitterrand considered the symbolic value of the CERES alliance as more important than the inconveniences it caused in the leadership: it appeared to represent the continuity of party renovation started at Épinay. Moreover, to have split with CERES would have been taken by the PCF as a sign of a diminishing commitment to left unity, when the alliance had started to benefit the PS, rather than the PCF. Internally, the inclusion of CERES in the majority allowed Mitterrand to appear as the central element in the leadership, flanked by CERES on the left; ^{and of} Savary/Mauroy on the right. It was also a means of neutralising a potential opponent, while depriving it of significant influence over policy.

In the new leadership, CERES counted three SN's: Chevènement at Programme; Sarre, at Propaganda, action campaigns, and enterprises; Motchane at Third World (51). These posts were less important than those occupied after Épinay. Motchane's post was largely symbolic; Chevènement's had lessened in significance since Changer la vie. Only

50. Le P/R, 18, July 1973.

51. Ibid.

Sarre, at Entreprises retained a post through which CERES could hope to increase its weight in the party as a whole, and even Sarre had lost control over the federations. In the final compromise motion, CERES claimed to have gained satisfaction over the five conditions it had outlined as the basis of an agreement (52). It would become increasingly clear, however, that the price for CERES' continuing leadership participation was an involuntary public self-effacement.

After Grenoble, CERES was faced with a stark choice. It had either to assume collective responsibility for decisions (at the risk of alienating its base), or continue to develop its independent analyses, and risk taking responsibility for a leadership split. A series of events after Grenoble underlined CERES' marginalisation within the majority. The first of these was the extraordinary Congress of Bagnolet on Europe, in December 1973. Europe had constituted one of the most distinctive areas of CERES' analyses since its formation, but to have tabled a motion ~~on the~~ risk of ratifying the divergences separating CERES and Mitterrand on this issue (and hastening its departure from the leadership). CERES limited itself to proposing amendments to Mitterrand's text, and accepting a self-effacing compromise, endorsing the principle of direct

52. Charzat and Toutain, op cit, p. 109.

election to the European Parliament. This was harshly criticised by elements of ^{the} CERES base (53).

The Congress of Suresnes on party structures, March 1974, gave further evidence of CERES' marginalisation. The issues raised at Suresnes revealed diverging conceptions of ~~the~~ party held by CERES, aiming to create a 'genuine' socialist party firmly ~~rooted~~ in the working class, and Mitterrand/Mauroy, seeking an 'electoral' party, receptive to a changing modern society. CERES proposed a series of measures to control the élus, and decrease the power of ~~locally elected~~ municipal socialists: limitation of cumul des mandats; development of workplace, youth, and student sections (where it dominated); greater accountability of élus to party sections (54). These proposals brought CERES into conflict especially with Mauroy, representative of the traditional authority of the party's élus. On a range of issues, CERES was defeated, ^{even} ~~opposed~~ by Mitterrand/Mauroy: these included cumul des mandats, and proposals over the party's workplace, student, and youth sections. Amongst other factors, this reflected Mitterrand's, and Mauroy's reactions against CERES' attempts to transform the workplace sections into strongholds (55).

The other area of contention was over PR. Against CERES' opposition, ^{the} Congress altered the operation of PR in

53. Ibid, p.14.

54. Le P/R, Supplement to 24, January 1974.

55. Ibid, 26, April 1974.

internal party elections. Henceforth, PR was to be used only after attempts to reach a compromise in the Resolutions Committee had failed, rather than at the opening of Congress, as established at Épinay (56). Mitterrand intended to make it more difficult for a faction to table a motion, secure representation on the party's organs, and then bargain over a compromise, and enter the secretariat. Any faction presenting a motion against his leadership^{now} risked isolation. *This was* clearly aimed against CERES. Logically, this increased the pressure for leadership cooption by Mitterrand preceding a Congress. In fact, such cooption had been in operation since Grenoble, and this limited the significance of PR; but the new rules changed the balance in Mitterrand's favour.

The final proof of CERES' marginalisation was provided by the 1974 presidential election campaign. Given his conduct of the campaign (see chapter two), it was inevitable that Mitterrand would exclude CERES from effective influence. Only Guidoni figured amongst Mitterrand's national advisers, while only 5 out of 95 departmental delegates were ^{members of} CERES (57). Such isolation presaged a move into the minority at the next party Congress. After the presidential election, and Mitterrand's call for the Assises of socialism, in May 1974, CERES 8th colloque in June 1974 marked the occasion on which it sought to reassert its originality within the PS.

56. Ibid.

57. Sevin, op cit, p. 503.

CERES' increased weight since Grenoble had lessened its internal cohesion, and there had been criticisms from CERES activists over the leadership's stance at Bagnolet, Suresnes, and during the 1974 presidential campaign (58). According to Pfister, in Le Monde,

'L'équipe dirigeante donne l'impression de se raidir, de vouloir maintenir à tout prix une discipline de tendance, d'où le développement au sein du mouvement de tensions de plus ou moins vives'. (59).

The 8th colloque witnessed the first open split within CERES, with Martinet announcing that he would no longer participate in the CERES secretariat. Martinet had collaborated with CERES since his departure from the PSU in 1972 (see chapter 6). The manner of Martinet's departure from CERES illustrated its internal functioning. At the colloque, no votes were taken on competing motions by rival leaders; rather, there was a constat de désaccord between Martinet, and CERES' 'historical chiefs' (60). CERES claimed to represent a 'political line', rather than a 'party within a party', and would not subject itself to the normal processes of internal party democracy. Any leader disagreeing with this 'political line' (defined in substance by the 'historical chiefs') was free to table his own Congress motion, or else to silence his divergences (61). Ideology

58. Charzat and Toutain, op cit, pp. 114-119.

59. 2 July 1974.

60. Le Monde, 2 July, 30 June 1974 (Pfister).

61. Ibid, Interview with Marc Wolf, 20 May 1983.

was used to justify CERES' hierarchical decision making structures; and CERES leaders perpetuated their power by defining that ideology. Martinet argued that CERES should seek agreement with those likely to join the PS at the Assises, and form an enlarged courant de gauche, not limited to CERES' existing audience. This position was rejected by the CERES leadership, who sought to increase CERES' influence, while retaining intact its structures - and existing patterns of authority.

The 8th colloque thus led CERES to distinguish itself from the mainstream PSU. The political report presented to the colloque distinguished the CERES slogan - lutter aujourd'hui pour contrôler demain - from that of the PSU - contrôler aujourd'hui pour décider demain - arguing that they were fundamentally different as far as their political significance is concerned' (62). This veiled attack marked the beginning of a defensive reaction against Rocard, ^{who was} in competition with CERES over autogestion. In turn, autogestion itself became progressively erased from CERES' political vocabulary, as the courant des Assises claimed to be the only genuine autogestionnaires. The development by CERES of the pejorative theme of néo-travailleurs from 1974 onwards, was another aspect of this defensive reaction.

62. La lutte pour le contrôle, Cited in Le CERES par lui-même, (Paris, Christian Bourgois, 1978), p. 152.

Faced with competition from Rocard over autogestion, CERES was determined to assert its identity as the socialist pole within social democracy. Rivalry was partly organisational: Rocard might attract support from activists and left Catholics attracted to autogestion, and hitherto siding with CERES. Ideologically, there were clear divergences over autogestion between CERES and the PSU (see chapter 6). For the PSU, autogestion was inseparable from everyday socialism, and an alternative to state control. For CERES, autogestion constituted the finality of socialism itself, and could not be opposed to the PCG, as the PSU believed; instead, the PCG was an essential preliminary for the transition to autogestion (63). CERES criticised the PSU for believing that workers' control could exist prior to a break with capitalism, and the conquest of state machinery. CERES was clearly anxious to demarcate itself from Rocard, even if this meant gradually abandoning autogestion, and redefining its specifically socialist role. Rocard was thus accused of seeking to transform the PS into a modern social-democracy (64).

Yet, CERES attempted to play a double game over the Assises, vigorously opposing Rocard, but hoping to swell its ranks with PSU and CFDT activists. After the presidential

63. Ibid. This theme is further developed in the CERES motion for Pau, Approfondir l'unité pour ouvrir la voie au socialisme autogestionnaire, Le P/R, 36, January 1975.

64. Editorial, Frontière, 20, (November-December 1974).

election, CERES initially took an ambiguous view to Mitterrand's appeal for the Assises of socialism. The proposed fusion, of the PSU and the PS, along with CFTD *supporters*, was regarded as positive if it represented the realignment of those previously hostile to the PCG, to the idea of left unity (65). CERES' initial conditions, then, were fusion on PS terms, with total acceptance of the PCG. It clearly hoped that the *backing* of the whole PSU would strengthen it within the PS, and ^{it} also expected to be reinforced by the gauche syndicale of the CFTD (66).

CERES' attitude towards the PSU could be largely explained in terms of organisational interest. If it considered that closer collaboration - or even fusion - with the PSU would serve its organisational interests, it declared itself favourable to such initiatives - as prior to the 1973 Grenoble Congress (67). It could reasonably expect that PSU *supporters* in 1973 would swell its own ranks. Rocard's participation in Mitterrand's campaign and his espousal of economic realism made it clear that the Rocard wing would oppose CERES in the PS. CERES' opposition to his entry then became more marked, as in the 8th colloque. Yet CERES still hoped to benefit from PSU *supporters*, whatever Rocard's action. With Rocard's defeat at Orleans (cf) it was clear that only the Rocardien minority would join the

65. See 'Une ère nouvelle pour la bourgeoisie... ou pour le socialisme', Frontière, 18, (July-August 1974), pp.4-9.

66. Ibid, p. 8.

67. Ibid.

PS, and CERES' attitude changed into one of more open hostility - it could now hope to rally only a limited number of PSU activists, while facing competition for its own base. These organisational rivalries overlapped with political ones. CERES criticised Rocard for refusing openly to support the PCG at the Assises. Ultimately, CERES argued that the Assises had deviated from their original purpose: to get the PSU/CFDT into the PS on CERES' terms (68).

Despite these setbacks, the Congress of Pau, January 31st - February 2nd, 1975, appeared to mark the apogée of CERES' power within the PS. From 8.5% at Epinay, CERES now represented one quarter - 25.4% - of party activists. This signified that around 40,000 members now supported CERES (69). At Pau, CERES led in 12 federations, broadly repeating the pattern established at Grenoble: its areas of geographical strength were again in the West, Paris, ~~the~~ Paris region, and, above all, the East. Moreover, this score was realised despite competition from Martinet's amendment to motion 1, which most new arrivals from the Assises signed (70).

CERES was joined at Pau by many ~~of~~ the PS at the Assises, in particular by members of the CFDT gauche syndicale, in opposition to Maire: Héritier, leader of the

68. See 'Un Congrès dans la crise', Frontière, 20, (November-December 1974), pp. 4-11.

69. L'Unité, 31 January 1975.

70. Le P/R, 38, February 1975.

Rhône-Alpes region; and the heads of the Postal workers, and construction federations (71). To these were added those signing the Manifeste du 20 Décembre, a further group from the gauche syndicale, who had refused to participate in the Assises, but joined the PS nonetheless (72). This group announced its intention to ally with CERES to construct the PS into a genuine mass party. Moreover, in certain traditional socialist départements, ex-PSU members preferred to side with CERES, than with Mitterrand/Mauroy, with whom Rocard had allied on a national level; the local party often represented all they had detested in the SFIO. Such was the case in Loire-Atlantique and Loire - although difficult to quantify elsewhere (73). These had a radicalising effect on CERES.

CERES' position at Congress had to take account of the changes that had taken place within the majority since Grenoble (see chapter 2), and the extension of Mitterrand's practice of leadership cooption. Only CERES refused Mitterrand's methods of cooption, and survived: its position as an ideological faction ensured that it tabled a motion ^{de} for Congress, even if this led to accusations of factionalism. CERES harshly criticised the cooption system as contrary to the spirit of PR, and it refused to be reduced to a situation

71. Hamon and Rotman La deuxième gauche, (Paris, Ramsay, 1982), pp.279-80.

72. Ibid, p. 279.

73. Le Monde, 11 February 1979.

analogous to that of the other factions in relation to Mitterrand: self-effacement, and renunciation of factional identity (74). Since Grenoble, CERES' influence over party policy had been insignificant, while its leadership participation had blurred its identity. Its will for an agreement with Mitterrand had considerably weakened;

with a quarter of the mandates, CERES felt that any compromise would have to respect its real strength within the party,

'Encore faut-il que la participation au secrétariat se traduise par une participation réelle aux responsabilités. Dans l'hypothèse inverse, un courant peut peser d'un poids plus lourd s'il n'est pas l'otage d'une majorité fictive, mais un centre d'impulsion et de proposition' (75).

Where the benefits of leadership participation appeared illusory, CERES preferred to move into opposition as the best means of preserving its identity and its new following. In the Congress Resolutions Committee, CERES refused to accept Mitterrand's restrictive conditions for an agreement, in particular, that it sacrifice its control over the workplace sections (76). Moving into the minority, CERES claimed that it would eschew sectarian behaviour, but would continue to propose a political orientation for the whole party. In reality the move into the minority was the signal for CERES

74. 'Un Congrès dans la crise', op cit, p. 10.

75. Ibid.

76. Resolutions committee report, Le P/R, 38, February 1975.

to assume a more overt role as the arbiter of left unity, and as a de facto oppositional faction.

Mitterrand finally determined to break with CERES for internal and external reasons. Its prior indispensability (Épinay), and utility (Grenoble) had been transformed into a liability after the presidential election. The Assises coincided with a relaunch of the PCF's anti-socialist campaign in September 1974. In its Pau motion, CERES attempted to act as an arbiter on the left, calling for the PS to be 'unitary for two', and for a more precise content to be given to the PCG. Moreover, it echoed PCF themes over the need to end centrist alliances, and for the development of unitary campaigns (77).

Given Mitterrand's salient concerns after the 1974 presidential election, he had little interest in renewing the CERES alliance. In the final resort, to accept an agreement with CERES, which held PS and PCF equally responsible for left disunity, would have appeared to justify the PCF's anti-socialist campaign. These external factors were coupled with criticisms of CERES' behaviour within the party, particularly the party leadership. Mitterrand accused CERES of using its position within the SN to promote its own factional interests, particularly in relation to the party's workplace sections, and youth movement (controlled by CERES),

77. Approfondir l'Unité... op cit.

'Le problème est celui du secrétariat...
aucun d'entre vous ni aucun courant ne
s'installera dans des places fortes, et
il n'aura pas de partage de pouvoir,
chacun fabriquant son Parti contre
l'autre' (78).

Mitterrand further criticised CERES' refusal to accept leadership collective responsibility, and its pretention to act as the party's 'left wing'. In the Resolutions Committee, only 500 out of 2,500 motion 1 delegates favoured a continuation of the alliance with CERES, reflecting widespread alienation in the sections and federations against CERES' methods and ^{as}implied criticism of Mitterrand (79). The ease with which Mitterrand portrayed CERES as an organised faction suggests that the model of an intra-party group most nearly approximating an organised faction - CERES - was strategically badly placed to exercise a long term influence in the leadership. It could too easily be depicted as a party within a party, and was too open to the accusation of treason, particularly when it had made itself so unpopular through its tactics in the sections. CERES' weak long term strategic location also related to its identity as the party's left wing: despite its attempts to conquer a majority for socialism, its insistence on its role as the party's left in practice limited its constituency, and its range of possible alliances within the PS. As such, CERES appeared as an oppositional faction even within the leadership.

78. Le P/R, 38, February 1975.

79. Ibid, Resolutions committee report.

By its own terms of reference, CERES preferred to retain its purity in opposition, rather than to succumb to Mitterrand. In the last resort, CERES remained distinguished from all other factions both by its clearly visible organisational structure (see below), and by its position as a faction referring more or less consistently to ideology as its *raison d'être*.

CHAPTER FIVE

CERES as the arbiter of left unity, 1975 - 1978

CERES' identity was integrally bound up with the conception of left unity as a dynamic, evolving process, likely to lead to a strategic, and then structural convergence between PS and PCF (1). The Union, the necessary means for the transition to socialism, was greater than its constituent parts, and would have a transforming effect on both left parties. This dialectical effect meant that steps towards unity taken by one party would lead to a symmetrical development within the other; while any attempt to dominate the Union by one party would be copied by the other. The future of socialism objectively demanded that each party situate its action within a unitary perspective, as defined by CERES. Given that the natural bent of each party was to deviate from this objective, and to relapse into its respective ideological dogma - Stalinism for the PCF, Social democracy for the PS - it was only through recognising a role of arbiter on the left for CERES that the Union would succeed (2).

This conception relied on a schematisation of left unity as an evolving process involving a number of concrete

1. This analysis is based on the following articles, appearing in Repères, 1975-7.

- 'Le CERES fait le point', 24, (July-August 1975), pp. 40-7.
 - 'La gauche en panne', 26, (October 1975), pp. 6-12.
 - 'Le CERES: un autoportrait', 28, (December 1975), pp. 21-5.
 - 'Le PS dans les entreprises', 29, (January 1976), pp. 6-11.
 - 'L'Unité de la gauche', 30, (February 1976), pp. 5-7.
 - D. Motchane, 'Peuple de gauche ou peuple de France', 46, (October 1977), pp. 36-40.
2. 'Le CERES: un autoportrait', p. 24.

stages. The first stage was the PS/PCF electoral pact since 1962, the basis of the reconstruction of the Left in the Fifth Republic (3). The second stage was the programmatic agreement, the Common Programme of 1972 (4). Here, the contradictions in CERES' ideology become apparent. Occasionally, CERES implied that there must be an equilibrium on the left, in both electoral, and terms :

'Plus que jamais, il apparaît bien qu'aucun des deux grands partis du mouvement ouvrier ne peut parvenir seul au pouvoir, ni assurer seul la transition au socialisme. De même aucun des deux grands partis ne peut espérer assurer seul la direction du processus, l'autre jouant le rôle de strapontin'. (5)

This led its party adversaries to accuse CERES of *pro-Communism*, and of being willing to limit the progression of its own party, supposedly in the higher interest of the Union. Alternatively, CERES argued that this formulation gave the PS a leading role in the Union, and disputed opponents' claims about the *pro-Communism* of its analyses (6).

CERES' formulation of unity as a dialectical, and relatively autonomous process implied that the future evolution of the PCF depended on PS behaviour. If necessary, the PS had to act as unitaire pour deux (7). If the PS

3. Ibid, p. 21.

4. J.P. Chevènement, Les socialistes, les communistes et les autres, (Paris, Aubier Montaigne, 1977), pp. 229-235.

5. 'La gauche en panne', p. 11.

6. Motchane, op cit, p. 39.

7. Être unitaire pour deux was a central theme in CERES' Pau motion, op. cit.

occupied the unitary ground, in particular by actively competing with the PCF in constructing a militant, mass party, it would constrain the PCF to act in a unitary manner, or else risk discredit in the eyes of its own social base (8). Alternatively, the PS could continue its 'political regression', marked by the leadership's increasingly autonomous stance after the 1974 presidential election, and confirmed by CERES' move into the minority at Pau (9). The PCF would develop in a symmetrical manner, and the higher interests of the Union would be damaged. Developments in one party provoked reciprocal developments in the other.

The third stage in the unitary process was that of a strategic convergence between the left parties: that is, in CERES' language, the political expression of working-class hegemony (the core of the front de classes), during the transition to socialism (10). The substance of this convergence is defined by CERES as the dépassement of the parties' respective Stalinist (PCF), and Social Democratic (PS) deviations, and the triumph of a 'socialist line' (11). By definition, this line was that advocated by CERES, and any strategy of dépassement had to allow CERES a role as the dynamic force of left unity, through which both parties would

8. Ibid.

9. The phrase 'political regression' is employed by Motchane, op cit.

10. Chevènement, op cit., pp. 229-235.

11. 'Le CERES: un autoportrait', op cit., p. 21.

be transformed. It is therefore plausible to speak of CERES' self-conception as being that of a third force on the left, although firmly situated within the PS. It was perhaps in realisation of the incongruity of CERES' vision with the actual situation existing on the left that Chevènement qualified this idea of dépassement as an 'optimistic strategy' (12).

CERES continued to insist during 1975-8 that autogestion would act as the substance of the strategic convergence. Autogestion had originally been one factor enabling a distinction to be drawn between CERES and the PCF. However, in reaction to Rocard, CERES stressed that autogestion was the finality of socialism itself, and that the exercise of control through autogestion in existing society was an illusion. Once CERES had reduced autogestion to being a 'pedagogic exercise', which coincided with PCF attempts from 1974-7 to claim autogestion for itself, the ideological differentiation between CERES and the PCF steadily decreased (13). The ideological bridge between CERES and the PCF stemmed from a common assertion that there had been a 'rightward swing' at Pau, and from a common definition of the PS as essentially a social democratic party (14). Yet,

12. Chevènement, op cit, p. 233.

13. The phrase 'pedagogic exercise' is from 'Le PS dans les entreprises', op cit, p.10. On the PCF and autogestion, see P. Rosanvallon, 'Les communistes et l'autogestion', Faire, 25, (November-December 1977).

14. B. Lazitch, 'Le CERES ou les singes de Lénine', Commentaire, 1, Été (1978), pp. 39-51.

the PCF had no desire or intention to be transformed as CERES wished. For the PCF, the PS was irremediably social democratic, and the Union had to be dominated by a stronger PCF (15).

During 1975-8, CERES increasingly aligned its analyses with those of the PCF, the proximity being occasionally extreme, as over foreign policy. Its apparent led CERES to regard the PCF, the traditional party of the working class, as the central factor by which to judge PS radicalisation. This is what led its critics to accuse CERES of reducing socialist identity to the party's capacity to imitate the PCF (16). For CERES, socialist identity was inseparable from left unity, and any increased socialist autonomy with regard to the PCF - such as advocated by Rocard - could only threaten the party of Épinay itself (17). Underlying the line of Épinay argument was the presupposition that the PS would betray itself unless CERES was in a position to exercise direction over its political orientation. Left unity⁷ therefore demanded that CERES be restored to its avant garde role.

CERES also attempted to arbitrate against the PCF, when it considered that party to have failed in its duty, especially when it refused joint unitary actions. Moreover,

15. Hincker, op cit, pp. 105-6.

16. See notably P. Viveret, 'Le CERES entre le vieux et le neuf', Faire, 30, (April 1978), pp. 37-40.

17. Motchane, op cit, pp. 39-40.

CERES' conception of left unity was clearly opposed to the PCF's: it rejected the idea of a dichotomy between an ostensibly revolutionary, and a reformist party, and replaced it with that of two competing revolutionary parties,

'C'est en pratiquant l'unité que le PS et le PCF sont devenus des partis unitaires; c'est en pratiquant une stratégie révolutionnaire qu'ils deviendront des partis révolutionnaires'. (18).

To the extent that a mass militant PS would challenge the PCF's conception of its role within the Union, it would be regarded with hostility by the latter. Notwithstanding this, if the PS is consistently occupied the unitary ground, the PCF would be constrained to evolve in spite of itself (19). Thus, despite accusations of crypto-communism, CERES saw itself as locked in competition with the PCF over the 'unitary' ground, and judged that 'Un Parti socialiste fidèle à l'Union ne peut donc qu'être infidèle au schéma communiste de l'Union (20).

The unreality in CERES' formulation of left unity was that it attempted to situate the whole left around the role it aspired to perform. If the PS persisted in its 'political regression', this was because it had refused to impose unity on the PCF by retaining CERES in the majority. When the PS

18. Political report presented to CERES 9th colloque, 1975.

Cited in Le CERES par lui-même, (Paris, Christian Bourgois, 1978), p. 203.

19. Chevènement, op cit, p. 233.

20. Motchane, op cit, p. 39.

had *drawn up* a common programme, 1971-2, this was because it accepted the 'line of Épinay' defined by CERES. CERES' continuing credibility depended at least on the continuing existence of the PCG. The breakdown of left unity in September 1977, and the election defeat of March 1978 transformed CERES' situation in the party, since it had now to defend a strategy that no longer existed, even in attenuated form.

It was in the field of foreign policy that CERES appeared most openly to share a community of views with the PCF, and to arbitrate against the Pau majority. The issue chosen was the Portuguese revolution, weak ground for both PCF and CERES. This issue gave rise to an open confrontation between CERES and Mitterrand in 1975-6. CERES consistently aligned itself against the PS leadership's position, and designated Soares, leader of the Portuguese Socialist Party (PSP), as its *main* adversary (21). CERES justified its opposition to Soares by its struggle against reformist social democracy: Soares had been supported by all major ^{West} European social democratic parties, and in particular the German SPD (22). Having compromised over ^{it was argued} socialism, these parties [^]were instruments of US imperialism.

21. Confrontation occurred, e.g., at the CD of October 5-6th, 1975. Le P/R, 44, October 1975.

22. Editorial, Repères, 26, (October 1975).

Therefore, Soares was equally a tool in US imperialist hands. CERES echoed PCF support for the efforts of the Portuguese Communist Party, and the Armed Forces Movement (MFA) to install a 'popular democracy' (23). Mitterrand was particularly incensed by Chevènement's refusal to distinguish between Soares' Portugal, and Pinochet's Chile (24).

CERES' position on Portugal illustrated its appreciation of what constituted a revolutionary situation. In such a situation, any action that opposed the 'resolute march to socialism' had to be regarded as counter-revolutionary. Thus, CERES argued at the CD, October 5-6th, 1975,

'Il est absurde d'opposer socialisme et démocratie, et de faire comme si la mise en place de l'édifice institutionnelle était une préalable à la construction du socialisme' (25).

CERES thus considered that the imperatives of a revolutionary situation demanded support for active minorities, despite elections showing the PSP to be the most popular political force (38%, April 1975), while underlining the PCP's weakness (15%) outside of a section of the armed forces (26). The Portuguese revolution revealed the existence of fundamentally differing conceptions of the left alliance, and of the party in France. At Pau, CERES asserted that the

23. In particular, at the CN, 3-4 May 1975. Le P/R, 41, May 1975.

24. Notably at the CN, 21 June 1975. Le Monde, 22-23 June 1975.

25. Resolution presented to the October CD. Attached to a Circulaire Nationale, 25 October 1975, PS archives, Lille.

26. 'Le point de vue du CERES', Repères, 25 (September 1975).

role of the party was to articulate the 'mouvement d'en haut et le mouvement d'en bas' in a situation of transition to socialism (27). Did this imply that once the left government had started to apply the PCG, the resulting popular mobilisation would find its own forms of expression that could be directed against bourgeois democratic institutions? CERES' opponents accused it - like the PCF - of favouring a débordement of the popular movement against a left government, and of allowing the party, in the Leninist tradition, to manipulate the mass movement, and to control the actions of a future left government (28).

In its amendment to the 15 thèses sur l'autogestion, June 1975, CERES refused to limit the political expression of the mass movement to Fifth Republic institutions, and envisaged the creation of 'new forms of power', along the lines of the workers councils in Portugal (29). In Leninist fashion, CERES asserted the primacy of the party as the political expression of the mass movement, in any process of transition to socialism,

'L'outil qui permet d'agir à la fois en haut et en bas, au sommet de l'État, et au sein des masses, et qui garantit l'articulation de ces deux formes de lutte, c'est le Parti'. (30).

27. CERES' Pau motion, op cit, Section 5.

28. Politique Hebdo, 26 June - 7 July 1975.

29. CERES amendment, Le P/R, Supplement to 41, May 1975.

30. Ibid.

There were also substantial areas of organisational conflict between CERES and Mitterrand, ^{from} 1975-7. Mitterrand accused Sarre, the CERES leader in charge of the party's workplace sections until 1975, of artificially inflating the number of these sections to increase CERES' weight. He also disputed CERES' control of the party's Youth and Student movements, where CERES was in a numerical majority, and for which it had responsibility within the SN until Pau (Mitterrand forced their dissolution and reconstitution on the bases of the Pau percentages, thereby expelling CERES from the leadership). Finally, Mitterrand, (with Mauroy and Rocard) criticised CERES' attempts to ~~establish~~ itself in the FEN and CFDT (31).

In other areas CERES appeared willing to follow every twist in the Communist line. Since Bagnolet, in December 1973, CERES had opposed the principle of the direct election of the European parliament (32). This position was reaffirmed at the CD of January 31 - February 1st, 1976 (33). Chevènement justified this by arguing that the PS should not publicly disagree with the PCF (34). Yet, CERES performed a prompt volte face by accepting the principle of direct election in its Nantes motion, following Marchais'

31. Politique Hebdo, 5-11 June 1975; Lazitch, op cit, pp.41-2.

32. See CERES' Contribution for Bagnolet. Le P/R, 22, December 1973.

33. Le P/R, 47, February 1976.

34. Le Monde, 3 February 1976.

declaration in April 1977 that the PCF was no longer opposed to it (35). Another example of such suivism was over the question of class alliances. In launching the 22nd Congress, Marchais had called for an alliance of the party of the working class (PCF), with the national bourgeoisie (dissident Gaullists, and elements of the RPR electorate). Shortly after this, Chevènement proclaimed,

'La troisième famille (of the Union), je l'aurais plus volontiers cherché du côté de ce que j'appellerais la bourgeoisie nationale' (36).

Chevènement's appeal to the Gaullists in 1976 may be cited as the beginning of a more overtly nationalist ideological development within CERES. The emphasis laid by CERES on the national content of socialism; on national economic independence, on anti-imperialism, and the need to resist France's integration into the international division of labour, had always been marked characteristics of its thought. This logic underpinned CERES' reading of the PCG since 1972, and was shared by the PCF. It was echoed in its analyses of US imperialism, made at Bagnolet in 1973 (37). Such analyses justified CERES' implacable opposition to any strengthening of EEC institutions, and its hostility to the pro-European Social Democratic parties - especially the

35. Lazitch, op cit, pp. 49-50.

36. Interview with L'Appel, Gaullist review, 1976. Cited in Ibid, p. 52.

37. See CERES' amendments for Bagnolet, printed in Le P/R, 22, December 1973.

German - accused of complicity with US imperialism for abandoning all revolutionary perspective. From around 1976 onwards, CERES' nationalism was pushed more to the forefront of its analyses, and was paralled by a gradual abandoning of autogestion, and the May '68 legacy.

The preparations for the 1977 municipal elections provided another area of confrontation between CERES and Mitterrand. CERES had always sought to link the programmatic agreement at a national level with the existence of left alliances in the municipalities, seen as a test of the party's commitment to left unity, and to a break with older SFIO practices of centrist alliances, to exclude the PCF from local government. It thus hoped to undo the organisational base and power of the *locally elected* socialists, CERES' traditional opponents in the party. At the Congresses of Grenoble (1973), and Pau (1975), CERES had called for the immediate application of left unity in the municipalities and an end to all alliances with the centre (as in Marseilles, Lille), and to those anomalous situations where Socialists supported Right-wing dominated councils (38). This latter demand was partially acceded to at Grenoble in 1973, as a concession to CERES, and the final motion proclaimed that 'Le Parti socialiste s'interdit toute alliance électorale qui serait contraire à l'union de la gauche'. Socialist

38. CERES' motions for Grenoble and Pau, op cit.

councillors who refused to withdraw their support for councils led by majorities favourable to the Presidential majorité were excluded from the party at Nice (1973), Chatêllerault (1974) and Nantes (1974) (39).

At Pau, CERES called for negotiations over joint lists for 1977 to begin by Autumn 1975 (40). However, the majority motion refused immediately to terminate socialist-centrist alliances, arguing that these had been constructed before Épinay, and would not be reconstituted in 1977 (41). Meanwhile, it refused to tie its hands in advance. From Pau, until the Congress of Dijon, May 1976, CERES on numerous occasions demanded a commitment from the leadership to make left unity the rule in all communes in 1977. This position echoed that adopted by the PCF. At the CN, June 21st, 1975, Mitterrand asserted that he favoured the PS testing its electoral progress at the 1977 municipal ^{elections}, which translated implied that certain homogeneous socialist lists should be presented (42).

Confrontation between CERES and Mitterrand culminated at the CD, April 3-4th, 1976. CERES had organised a colloque at Reims, April 10-11th, 1976, to determine its line on municipal election strategy. This meeting would have been held shortly after the PCF had called for left unity lists

39. Lazitch, L'échec permanent, p. 243; L'Unité, 11-17 February 1977; Sevin, op cit, p. 395.

40. CERES' Pau motion, section 2.

41. Motion 1, Le P/R, 36, January 1975.

42. Le Monde, 22-23 June 1975.

in all communes (April 1st), and only one month before the PS Dijon Congress, to determine the party's municipal election strategy (43). Mitterrand considered this initiative as an unacceptable manifestation of factional organisation, likely to weaken the party's bargaining position vis-a-vis the PCF. The CD carried a resolution forbidding the CERES colloque, and CERES complied, having achieved its major objectives at the CD. Clearly, Mitterrand was no longer willing to tolerate CERES' manoeuvrings which appeared to give the PCF an objective ally within the PS.

CERES' position over municipal election strategy could be summarised as follows,

'L'union de la gauche ne peut pas prétendre gouverner la France si elle n'est pas capable d'administrer ses villes'. (44).

Eventually, this logic was accepted by Mitterrand. At the April CD, he proposed that a Commission joining CERES and the majority should be established to draw up a joint motion for the Dijon Congress (45). This motion, accepted unanimously by the CD, gave considerable satisfaction to CERES.

It called on sections and federations to begin negotiations with the PCF over joint lists in all communes (46). Left unity was to be the rule. Exceptions to this

43. Ibid, 6 April 1976.

44. Editorial, Repères, 31, (March 1976).

45. Le Monde, 6 April 1976.

46. Le P/R, Supplement to 49, April 1976.

rule (situations particulières) would have to be agreed by the CD, for large towns (over 30,000 inhabitants); by the departmental authorities for smaller towns. Exceptions would be granted only because of 'excessive demands' by either PCF or MRG (47). Finally, an appeal procedure would be available at a CN in December 1976.

Mitterrand calculated that agreement with the PCF and CERES would do more for party unity than trying to *placate* the few remaining diehard anti-Communists still left in the party's municipal wing. For its part, CERES could claim credit for the consistency with which it had advocated unity lists in 1977. By compromising with Mitterrand, CERES could hope for reintegration into the leadership at the 1977 party Congress - and position itself more favourably for participation in government after 1978. However, this led to criticisms from CERES' base, accusing its leadership of selling out to Mitterrand, by admitting exceptions in certain circumstances to the left unity rule (48).

The municipal election agreement^{*} revealed the CERES leadership's dilemma. Its reinforcement at Pau and the accentuation of its parallel factional structures (see below), meant that CERES increasingly united the various 'oppositional' elements in the party, and this had a constraining effect on its leaders' freedom of manoeuvre.

47. Ibid.

48. Le Monde, 6 May 1976.

If the 'historical chiefs' agreed with Mitterrand, they risked losing the support of elements of their base,

'Alors que les principaux dirigeants de la minorité souhaiterait être en situation de réintégrer la direction du PS en 1977.. une partie de la base du CERES' renâclerait'.(49).

Despite these pressures, CERES rallied to Mitterrand at Dijon,, in May 1976, and as a conciliatory gesture, refused to present any of the federal texts it had supported as an amendment to the joint motion (50). With the unanimity achieved at Dijon, the confrontation between CERES and Mitterrand appeared to have terminated. CERES now concentrated its energies on securing as wide a representation as possible for itself in the left unity lists. This reflected the limitations of its arbiter role: to attempt to act as arbiter in a situation of likely fierce PS/PCF competition over the composition of left unity lists would offend party patriotism, and harm chances of reentering the leadership at the 1977 Congress.

Yet, even after Dijon, there remained differing appreciations over the meaning of the joint motion. The CD of September 11th condemned the Hautes-Alpes, and Meurthe-et-Moselle federations - both CERES - for decreeing that left unity lists had to be achieved by all sections (51).

49. Ibid, (Pfister).

50. Ibid, 18 May 1976.

51. Le P/R, 53, September 1976. On the PS, CERES, and the 1977 municipal elections, see Goldey and Bell, 'The French Municipal Election', op cit.

For Mitterrand, this was inconsistent with the Dijon motion, which left responsibility for negotiations with the sections. It also deprived them of any bargaining power with the PCF. Privately, PS leaders were scathing about CERES' naïveté in Meurthe-et-Moselle, Loire, and Marne, which handed the leadership of lists in towns like Reims to the PCF beyond that party's wildest expectations. At the CN of December 18-19th, 1976, CERES refused to vote the provisions of exemption, which allowed homogeneous socialist (or UGSD) lists in Marseilles, Laval, and Aix-en-Provence (the remaining bastions of SFIO anti-Communism in Bouches-du-Rhône and Normandy) (52)

Prior to the 1977 municipal elections, the CERES leadership had increasing difficulties in controlling its activists, particularly where they had lost out in local factional struggles within the PS. In Toulon, the local CERES leadership figured en masse on the PCF's list, in competition with the official PS list (53). This decision was taken despite an appeal from Motchane. In Evreux, CERES publicly declared that it supported the PCF's claim to head the left list; while in Villersurbanne, the local CERES leader openly campaigned for the PCF, in competition with the PS under Hernu (54). Such unitary devotion could only

52. Resolution attached to Circulaire Nationale, 553, PS archives, Lille.

53. Le Monde, 5 March 1977.

54. Ibid, 4, 24 March 1977.

embarrass CERES' leaders. At the CD of March 26th, 1977, Mitterrand argued that certain CERES sections had too easily ceded the head of the list to the PCF, notably at St. Étienne and Reims (55). In addition, Mitterrand and Mauroy criticised the obvious incompetence of Sarre's campaign in Paris, as well as the manner in which Sarre had been selected by the Paris federation (56). In response, CERES pointed to an impressive array of new towns it had conquered: Rennes, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Belfort, Aurillac, amongst others (57).

By its 11th colloque, held at Bondy, January 1977, centrifugal pressures within CERES had already become apparent. Criticisms of the leadership came in particular from CFDT activists joining CERES at Pau, and demanding an enlarged secretariat (58). At Bondy, the CERES leadership admitted the limitations of the oppositional faction role, and declared that its objective was to reenter the leadership at Nantes, in June 1977 (59). This reflected the difficulties of CERES' role as an ideological faction, providing an umbrella for a variety of oppositions, and lessening its leaders' margins of manoeuvre. By publicly declaring its intention to reenter the leadership, the CERES leadership confirmed the illusory nature of its initial

55. Ibid, 29 March 1977.

56. Ibid.

57. 'Actuelles: une campagne peu commune', Repères, 42, (April 1977), pp. 61-4.

58. Politique Hebdo, 7-13 January 1977.

59. Ibid.

objective: to take control of the party organisation from the left.

The campaign for the Congress of Nantes was largely dominated by Marchais' call for an updating of the PCG, and by Mitterrand's disciplinary campaign against factionalism (see chapter 2). Mitterrand's condemnation of factionalism was obviously not disinterested, but no serious party leader could have been indifferent to CERES' organisation and activities. Certain analysts have pointed to CERES as a model of the organised faction, most closely approximating a faction as understood along the lines of those in the Italian Christian Democratic and Socialist parties (60). The chief characteristics of such a model are: a relatively durable intra-party group, with a stable leadership, a disciplined vertical chain of command, and an extensive coverage throughout the party, from summit (party leadership), to base (sections and federations); an elevated degree of factional consciousness amongst its members, and visible organisational forms, parallel to those of the party itself; a primary loyalty to faction. CERES both fits this model - and contradicts it.

The essential facets of CERES organisation predated

Épinay, underlining that factionalism is partly an historical

60. On the Italian DC and PSI, see, inter alia, F.P. Belloni, 'Factionalism, the party system, and Italian Politics', in Belloni and Beller, Faction Politics, op cit, pp.73-108.

phenomenon. An internal document published in October 1970 revealed the existence of CERES membership cards, of detailed liaison mechanisms between Paris and the provinces, of CERES groups separate from the party at the level of section, federation and leadership.

'Le CERES se développe. La tâche principale est de relier les différents CERES dans une structure nationale souple, par le biais des cartes, des réunions nationales de tous les CERES, et des colloques et contacts divers'(61).

CERES had held its annual colloques since 1966; had published a theoretical review since 1967, and an internal bulletin - Volonté socialiste - since 1970. Within the PS after Épinay, CERES claimed to exist as a ligne politique - the socialist pole within social democracy - and this pole could only exist if given concrete organisational expression (62). Ideological and organisational rationale therefore became confused. Ideology also served to legitimate CERES' hierarchical leadership structure: the CERES secretariat, dominated by the 'historical chiefs', held most influence in defining the group's ideology, and ⁱⁿpreparing motions for Congress (63) (see chapter 4 on 8th colloque).

CERES more closely approximated^{to} the model of an organised parallel faction than any other courant within the PS, and

61. 'Comment travaille le CERES', Volonté Socialiste, 13-14, October 1970.

62. See 'Le CERES: un autoportrait', op cit.

63. Interview with Marc Wolf, 21 May 1983.

this contributed to its long term strategic weakness. Such parallelism was manifested both internally, through caucus organisation at the different levels of the party; and externally, through specific factional structures distinct from the party. At the leadership level, the General Assembly, and the Political Council grouped around 100 CERES leaders from the federations, and met on a bi-monthly basis; while day-to-day leadership was reserved for the 10 member secrétariat. In addition, CERES had its own national headquarters, permanent commissions, summer schools, theoretical review - Repères - with a claimed circulation of 20,000, and internal bulletin - Volonté socialiste (64). Regional CERES groups existed in several areas, coordinating the activities of neighbouring federations; while departmental and local CERES groups existed at the level of federation and section.

In theory, this constituted a well developed factional structure. Isolated in the minority after Pau, CERES had sought to strengthen its factional structures, and to branch out into related organisations, creating tendencies within FEN, CFDT, and UNEF (65). Mitterrand also criticised CERES' activities within the party itself, accusing it of seeking

64. Charzat and Toutain, op cit, pp.55-56. In English, see D. Hanley, 'CERES - an open conspiracy?', pp. 116-9, in D.S. Bell and E. Shaw, The Left in France, (Nottingham, Spokesman, 1983).

65. Politique Hebdo, 7-13 January 1977.

to transform the sections it controlled into 'small committees of public safety', and turning away potential members not favourable to CERES (66). That kind of accusation was particularly levelled at the Paris federation: a 1976 study concluded that 'a socialist supporter in Paris is essentially a supporter of CERES' (67). It is necessary to speak of degrees of support for CERES. These ranged from merely voting for CERES at Congress;

through assuming leadership responsibilities in the sections; to belonging to the small group of CERES leaders in the départements and regions (68).

Within the Nord, for example, the CERES collectif fédéral was composed of CERES representatives on the federal executive, and of certain prominent élus - around 15-20 members (69). It met monthly to determine CERES' positions on the federal executive, and to coordinate departmental activity. The real leaders in the Nord - Wolf, Cacheux, Bataille, Vignoble - derived their authority not from the CERES national leadership, but from their positions as élus, and as important figures in the local organisation. On a local level, CERES activists were coordinated through

66. Le N/O, 11-17 April 1977.

67. H. Portelli, and T. Dumais, 'Les militants socialistes à Paris', Projet, 101, (January 1976), p. 43.

68. Charzat and Toutain, op cit, pp. 55-6.

69. Interview with M. Wolf, 21 May 1983. Account also based on 'Qu'est-ce que le CERES-Nord?' Document dated 14th December 1978. J.M. Regnault, Private CERES archives, Lille.

collectifs d'arrondissement. In terms of centre-periphery relationships, CERES-Nord frequently manifested its independence from the Paris leaders, and functioned in a largely autonomous manner. D. Hanley has portrayed a similar pattern in Ille-et-Vilaine (70). It is difficult to establish a national pattern from these atypical examples. It is plausible, however, to consider CERES as being ultra-centralised not in the control it could exercise over the daily activities of all its groups in the federations, but in the definition of CERES' ideology, and motions for Congress; and in drawing up leadership lists. Again, this pattern was justified by ideology,

'Le principe d'organisation du CERES est le centralisme dialectique, c'est à dire l'unité de direction fondée sur une discussion collective aussi continue et aussi démultipliée que possible' (71).

Nonetheless, CERES accused Mitterrand of attempting to concentrate attention preceding Nantes on internal, organisational problems, in order to stifle any debate within the party over the attitude to be taken to the crucial negotiations with the PCF; or to the role to be performed by the party after March 1978 (72). In reality, Marchais'

70. D. Hanley, 'The CERES in two departments - Political compromise on Aude and Vilaine?', pp. 123-137, in D.S. Bell ed, Contemporary French Political Parties, (London, Croom Helm, 1982).

71. Le CERES; un autoportrait, op cit, p.25.

72. 'Dé-mocratie et Cohésion', Repères, 44, (June 1977), pp.6-9.

stance from March 1977 onwards (see chapter two), compromised CERES' chances of reentering the leadership at Nantes. On a series of issues, CERES appeared again to try and act as arbiter, or directly to side with the PCF against Mitterrand. This could be seen in relation to nationalisations: CERES advocated additional nationalisations to those foreseen in the PCG (in the energy, car, iron and steel industries), and invoked the question of subsidiaries (as the PCF had done since April 1977) (73). If CERES now accepted the direct election of the European parliament, it continued to share a community of views over Europe with the PCF, rather than the PS majority (74). Moreover, following the PCF's precedent, CERES called on the PS to 'complete and update' the Common Programme, thereby distinguishing itself from Mitterrand, for whom actualisation was strictly limited to updating the programme (75).

CERES equally implied that the party must control the actions of the (expected) future left government.

'Le Parti ne devra pas être l'instrument du gouvernement, mais le gouvernement l'instrument du programme du Parti'. (76)

These propositions were entirely foreign to Mitterrand.

73. Motion 2, 'Pour appliquer le programme commun: unité, autogestion, indépendance,' Le P/R, 62, June 1977.

74. Ibid. This was illustrated in the anti-European Annexe 1 à la motion 2.

75. See above, chapter 2.

76. 'Le sens d'un Congrès', Repères, 44, (June 1977), p. 73.

Given these developments, the CERES leadership must have had few illusions over their chances of reentering the leadership at Nantes. After the failure to reach a compromise with Mitterrand at the CD of May 5th, 1977, CERES resorted to the role of oppositional faction, to attempt to increase its support amongst the activists, conscious that any agreement would be decreed or otherwise by Mitterrand alone (77). Thus, CERES editorials in Repères successively accused the Pau majority of 'deviation' with regard to the PCG (echoing PCF judgements); of increasing the weight of the 'new petite bourgeoisie' (Rocard); and of abandoning the 'line of Epinay' (78).

On the opening vote at Nantes, CERES received 24.21%, a marginal percentage decline in relation to Pau (79). CERES could have been expected to benefit from Rocard's continuing disinclination to play a factional game, and pick up support from ex-PSU activists. There is only limited evidence to support this - in Loire-Atlantique, for example (80). The CERES motion led in 11 federations, one less than at Pau. Its areas of geographical strength remained overwhelmingly concentrated in east France; Paris (despite a significant decline, following Sarre's municipal election campaign) and

77. Le Monde, 10 May, 1977.

78. Repères, 42,43,44 - April, May, June 1977.

79. Le Monde, 14 June 1977.

80. Ibid.

the Paris region (81).

Mitterrand's internal and external reasons for refusing to compromise with CERES are outlined above (chapter 2). They emphasised once again the long term strategic weakness of CERES' location as self-identified left wing: CERES' only means of reentering the leadership was through Mitterrand, yet it was for Mitterrand alone - as central element within the leadership - to decide whether such alliance was in his organisational and political interests. Mitterrand's decision was taken despite pressures from Mauroy and Defferre to reach a compromise with CERES (82). CERES' position was complicated further by the bipolarisation resulting from the Congress campaign itself. While Chevènement held out for a compromise with Mitterrand at Congress, a majority of CERES delegates refused any further erosion of CERES' ideological positions (83). Despite CERES' hierarchical structure, its leadership was in practice usually constrained to take account of opinion within CERES as a whole. In short, to retain its base, CERES had to maintain the characteristics of an ideological faction.

CERES appeared to suffer a further reverse at Nantes by accepting Mauroy's compromise motion over acceptable levels of factional organisation (84). If rigorously applied,

81. Le P/R, 63, July 1977.

82. Politique Hebdo, 26 June - 3 July 1977.

83. Le Monde, 18-19 June 1977.

84. Politique Hebdo, 26 June - 3 July 1977.

this would have ended CERES' chief characteristics as an organised faction. CERES' leaders clearly recognised the pressures amongst certain Mitterrandists to expel it from the party, and that, outside the PS, it would be merely another impotent leftist group.

After Mitterrand's refusal of a compromise, however, it appeared as if this conciliatory gesture would make little practical difference to its functioning, as Motchane was at pains to stress (85). Finally, Nantes opened a more overt ideological confrontation between CERES and Rocard,^{etc} competing poles of ideological reference, with Chevenement publicly challenging Rocard's 'two culture' thesis, and stressing the central role of the state in any process of social transformation (86). This skirmish presaged a more extended battle after March 1978.

The breakdown of left unity in September 1977 ^{etc fcc} highlighted that both party leaderships saw the PCG as in their own interests only in so far as it was compatible with their retention of a dominant position within the left as a whole (see chapter two for detailed analysis). Only CERES saw the programme in terms of strategic convergence between the two parties. Its position ultimately underestimated the reality of the historical division between the two

85. Ibid, Interview with Motchane.

86. Chevenement's speech reprinted in La NRS, 28, (1977) pp. 14-24.

branches of the left. In particular, it tended to abstract unity from the concrete competition between the parties. It called on both parties to recognise that their unity was more important than their identity, and ran contrary to the perceived interests of both party leaderships. Hence the impotence of CERES: it could scarcely act as an arbiter if the respective leaderships failed to acknowledge the legitimacy of its mission. The PCF had consistently refused to do so, as had Mitterrand, especially since Pau and in reality since Changer la vie (87).

Strategic convergence required as a minimum the continuing existence of the PCG. With the split over the Common Programme, and the left's defeat in March 1978, the bases for an offensive strategy no longer existed. Indeed, even electoral unity now seemed threatened. CERES action became increasingly defensive and ideological, predicated on changed internal and external political circumstances after March 1978. This led to an ideological campaign against modernism, and against Rocard's bid for the 1981 presidential nomination.

Immediately after the September 1977 split, the CERES leadership appeared to accept the constraint of a resurgence of party patriotism amongst the activists (contrary to PCF expectations), and to fall into line with Mitterrand. This

87. See H. Portelli, Le socialisme franais tel qu'il est, (Paris, PUF, 1980), pp. 116-7.

constraint justified CERES' decisions to sign unanimous resolutions at the October CD, and November CN that lay responsibility for the split entirely on the PCF (88).

'Les compromis acceptés successivement par le CERES au Comité Directeur du 8 Octobre, et la Convention Nationale du 6 Novembre sont le résultat d'une appréciation attentive de la conscience politique des militants, ainsi que de l'évolution de la crise de l'union de la gauche' (89).

Had CERES openly refused to support these texts, the PCF would have pointed for confirmation that the PS had 'swung to the right', with the risk for CERES of an eventual marginalisation. Yet, unanimity was not interpreted in the same sense by the different courants: for CERES, the call for resumption of negotiations in the October CD resolution signified that the leadership should take immediate steps to impose unity (90). The idea that unity could be 'imposed' stemmed from a continuing attachment to the Union as a dialectical process: if the PS occupied the unitary ground, the PCF would be constrained to return to the Union. This hypothesis rested on the assumption that the anti-unity faction within the PCF had gained the ascendancy: to reverse this state of affairs, the PS had to show itself to be the most unitary element on the left. This was forcefully expressed in Chevènement's speech to the November

88. 'L'Union: tactique ou stratégie?', Repères, 47, (November 1977).
 89. Ibid.
 90. Ibid.

CN,

'Si nous n'avancons pas, et si nous ne faisons pas de propositions nouvelles, nous encourageons au Parti communiste les tendances les plus rétrogrades, les plus sectaires, et par conséquent, c'est dans la mesure où le Parti socialiste est vraiment socialiste qu'on oblige le Parti communiste à bouger' (91).

CERES thereby retained an ideological, mechanical and abstract vision of the union, far removed from the practice of disunity on the left after September 1977. This was bound to weaken its position in the party. Partly, this was because CERES' arguments were almost entirely retrospective. It attributed responsibility for left disunity to the PCF, but also to the PS leadership, and the choices made at Pau and Nantes (92). Deviations from the unitary path by the PS leadership had encouraged symmetrical developments within the PCF. For many, however, 'imposing' unity could only mean giving in to the PCF, and indeed allowing the PCF alone to decide when the PS had become sufficiently unitary, since PCF reticence could always be blamed on PS failure to perform its unitary duty.

In November 1977, CERES published its 'propositions' to relaunch unity (93). This initiative confirmed that CERES' sense of factional identity as the arbiter of left unity counter-balanced its appreciation of the constraints

91. Reprinted in Repères, 47, (November 1977)

92. 'L'Union: tactique ou stratégie?', op cit, p.8.

93. Le Monde, 3 November 1977.

on its freedom of internal party action that should have been imposed by a resurgent party patriotism; but also that it too, like the PCF, judged that to tomber à gauche would pay dividends after electoral defeat. Implicitly, this was a logical development of CERES' thought, whereby the PCF alliance was seen as a necessary guarantee that the PS would remain faithful to a 'rupture' with capitalism. It was also more than the rest of the PS would ~~take~~ in the circumstances. There could have been little doubt that Mitterrand would reject CERES' initiative. Given its precarious position within the party - with certain Mitterrandists calling for its expulsion - CERES withdrew its propositions at the November CN. Implicitly, it recognised limitations on its capacity to act as arbiter.

Moreover, there was evidence of further internal divisions within CERES' ranks. Chevènement and Motchane had been isolated amongst CERES' leaders in the CD of September 19th, (between the two left summits) when they criticised the leadership's approach to the updating (94). There were reports that the Propositions had emanated exclusively from Chevènement and Motchane, and were opposed by Sarre and Fournier. Further, a significant proportion of CERES' regional leaders refused to sign the CERES motion

94. A. du Roy, R. Schneider, Le Roman de la Rose, (Paris, Seuil, 1982), p. 220;

for the party's CN on efence, January 7-8th, 1978, which gained less than 20% (95). By firmly accepting the force de frappe as indispensable to national independence, CERES again illustrated a proximity of analysis with the PCF.

Despite its weak position, CERES continued to attempt to act as arbiter prior to the March 1978 elections, especially when it became clear with the publication of the PS manifesto that Mitterrand rejected further negotiations with the PCF until after the second ballot. At the February 8th CD, CERES presented a resolution demanding that the PS immediately resume negotiations with the PCF, and give assurances over adequate Communist representation in government, based on the parties' respective first ballot vote (96). These demands again paralleled those made by the PCF in February 1978 (97). CERES opposed the final resolution, refusing any negotiations over the programme until after the second ballot.

CERES' sense of factional identity, as the avant garde of left unity within the PS, was too developed to prevent its continuing public expression, despite the recognition that the breakdown of left unity had caused a closing of party ranks. This was likely to weaken CERES' position

95. Le P/R, 67, January 1978; Le N/O, 7-13 November 1977.

96. Le Monde, 10 February 1978.

97. Ibid, 3 February 1978.

after March 1978.

CERES had preferred to move into opposition at Pau, and so to reinforce its identity as the party's left wing, rather than to continue to participate in a leadership in which it could only exercise a negligible control. With the move into opposition, how did CERES conceive of its role?

'Le CERES n'a de sens que par rapport à la construction du Parti. Il est le pôle socialiste de la social démocratie: c'est dire que si la transformation du Parti se traduira nécessairement au niveau des Congrès, par l'arithmétique d'une majorité différente, le champ de conquête du CERES est celui d'une hégémonie (dont le Congrès d'Épinay et l'évolution du Parti pendant l'année suivante donnera une première, mais très imparfaite approximation)' (98).

Self-consciously Marxist, CERES justified all its actions within the party in terms of hegemony, and the operation of the dialectic. CERES' conception of its action as that of a potentially hegemonic political line implied one of two courses of action. It implied that CERES either provided the political identity of a majority, of which it was only one component, but the pivotal one, as from Epinay until the signature of the PCG. After Pau, however, the majority rassemblement behind Mitterrand excluded any such role for CERES. That justified reinforcing CERES' factional organisation, in preparation for renewed participation in a future majority on more favourable terms.

98. 'Le CERES: un autoportrait', op cit, p. 24.

Alternatively, hegemony could be assured by the conquest of an arithmetical majority for CERES. This ultimate objective had underpinned CERES' initial justification for remaining within the SFIO, and it continued to do so within the PS: to construct socialism out of social democracy. CERES would take control of the party 'from the left', as Mollet claimed to have done in 1946. This formulation equally justified CERES' organisation as a faction: a socialist pole seeking to conquer a majority needed organisation to be effective.

Both interpretations of hegemony were ill-adapted to the political reality of the PS after the 1974 presidential election. CERES alone was unlikely ever to conquer a majority within a potentially majoritarian PS: its apogée of nearly 30% was achieved at the party's CN on autogestion in June 1975. Indeed CERES' own definition of social-democracy as the 'pente naturelle' of mass organisations in capitalist society, underlined its own disbelief that it could ever conquer such a majority, .

'La social démocratie, pour le CERES, n'est pas un état de péché dont le révolutionnaire devrait détourner chastement son regard. C'est un état objectif qui résulte naturellement de l'immersion de ceux qui se disent socialistes dans la société capitaliste' (99).

In these circumstances, the reality of CERES' situation

after Pau was as a self-identified left wing in a party whose ideology and organisation had been fundamentally altered by the presidential nature of the regime. Moreover, given the expected proximity of power, that party defined its self-appointed left wing as by nature oppositional. CERES claimed to refuse the oppositional conception, and frequently differentiated itself from Pivert, and the Gauche Révolutionnaire in the inter-war SFIO; nonetheless, its language, its political positions, and its application of the revolutionary/reformist dichotomy to the PS itself were oppositional traits in a party preparing for the exercise of power.

CERES thus most nearly approximated the model of an organised faction. Ideological formulae - the triumph of socialism from within social democracy - were used to justify organisational imperatives (only CERES, through conquering the party organisation could construct a genuine Socialist party), and parallel factional organisation (a ligne politique de gauche required a concrete organisational expression). Ideology also justified CERES' hierarchical leadership structure (see p.24-3). Ideological principles and organisational interests were virtually inseparable. It was by reference to its position as 'left wing' that CERES achieved support from some 25% of party members at Pau and Nantes. Had it compromised with Mitterrand merely

to figure in the leadership, rather than to influence it, CERES would undoubtedly have lost significant support, and its *raison d'être*.

Yet, ideological satisfaction could be bought only at the expense of opposition, therefore impotence within the party. Its declared objective - exercise of hegemony over the PS leadership - was in probable contradiction with its factional organisation structures (easily exploited by Mitterrand as constituting a 'party within a party'); while its self-evaluation as the party's left wing limited its political constituency, and prevented it ever becoming a challenge to the leadership, much less a majority. In terms of strategic location, CERES was at a long term disadvantage, notwithstanding the period from Épinay to June 1972. As a self-conceived left wing, and as a faction defining its *raison d'être* in relation to ideology, it situated itself unfavourably for the exercise of significant power in a party dominated by the presidentialism of the wider political system, and anxious to promote its ideological oecumenicism to expand the boundaries of its attraction. The effectiveness of Mitterrand's various campaigns against factionalism, and the justifications used at Pau and Nantes to isolate CERES, on account of its factional structures, leads to the tentative conclusion that

the model most closely approximating the organised, parallel faction - CERES - was also the one most likely to be withdrawn from the centre of power within the party, and confined to the periphery of opposition. The fate of CERES affords a useful contrast with a less obviously parallel faction, in some ways CERES' reformist counterpart the deuxième gauche of Michel Rocard.

CHAPTER SIX

Michel Rocard and the deuxième gauche

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In contrast to Mitterrand, CERES and Mauroy, Rocard (and some of his PSU supporters) originally thought both the PCF and PS fundamentally unreformable, and if the French left was again to prosper, an alternative was needed - the Parti Socialiste Unifié. The PSU was formed in 1960 as an alliance between three groups: Union de la Gauche Socialiste, Parti Socialiste Autonome, and Tribune du Communisme (1). It was a heterogeneous alliance of ex-Communists, who had left the PCF in 1956 (TDC); of Marxist left Catholics, neutralist intellectuals, and Trotskyites in the UGS; and of anti-Mollet Socialists, and some Mendesists in the PSA, a splinter party from the SFIO formed in 1958. Alienated from both PCF and SFIO, the PSU provided a political expression for the Catholic left, and a vehicle for moving it further leftwards again. This was its great originality.

It was through the PSA that Rocard entered the PSU (2). Rocard had led the SFIO Étudiants Socialistes from 1954 to 1958 and had a similar political background to the UNEF left christian leadership. A left alliance of the ES, and the Jeunesse Étudiante Chrétienne had taken control of UNEF, the French National Union of Students, in 1956, and the new leadership consistently called for Algerian

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1. 'Histoire et pré-histoire du PSU', Notre Combat, 67, (February 1974). Cited in Archives d'espoir, 20 ans du PSU. 1960-1980. (Aubenas, Ed. Syros, 1980).
 2. H. Hamon and P. Rotman, L'Effet Rocard, op cit, p. 80.

independence, in opposition to Mollet's Front Republicain government, and to the church hierarchy (3). In February 1958, the SFIO dissolved the ES for maintaining a rigorous opposition to government policy in Algeria (4). While Rocard left the SFIO, his counterpart at Jeunesses Socialistes, Mauroy, remained within the party. Many of Rocard's future lieutenants within the PSU, and then PS figured in the UNEF leadership during this period: De la Fournière; Chapuis; Borella; Frachon; Juilliard. Moreover, the CFTC minority, Réconstruction, which would deconfessionalise the CFTC and rename it the CFDT in 1964, opposed the Algerian war, alongside UNEF and the PSU (5).

Broadly speaking, this 'second left' displayed an independent, secular spirit as expressed in its refusal to submit to organisational, or doctrinal orthodoxy, whether of church or party (SFIO). The second left expressed an antipathy towards existing - compromised - political organisations, and to their hypocrisy: the institutionalisation of the divergence between theory and practice, embodied in both PCF and Mollet's SFIO. There was distrust of purely ideological positions, accompanied by a desire to modernise the structures, and revise the thought

3. R. Chapuis, Les Chrétiens et le socialisme, (Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1976), p. 81.

4. K. Evin, Michel Rocard ou l'art du possible, op cit, p.42.

5. J. Juilliard, Preface to Michel Rocard, Parler Vrai, (Paris, Seuil, 1979), p. 9.

of the left, to take count of, and contribute to a changing society. The aspirations of this generation were symbolised by Mendès-France, both as a colonial reformer, and for advocating a coherent economic and social programme. Mendès had failed for lack of effective support. His programme could be realised only by the modernisation of the left.

What united the various groups forming the PSU was opposition to the Algerian war, to the Gaullist Fifth Republic, and to the mainstream parties of the left, ~~which were~~ compromised over Algeria, De Gaulle, and Soviet intervention in Hungary. The PSU's early importance was that it was the only party consistently to declare itself in favour of Algerian independence. However, once the Algerian war had ended in 1962, the main source of political cohesion between the factions disappeared. By its nature, the PSU was a factionalised party. Structural incentives to factionalism stemmed from the circumstances of the PSU's formation: that of a negatively defined alliance of groups with differing historical origin~~s~~, and ideological outlooks. It was stimulated by a complicated system of internal party democracy, based on PR. Finally, factionalism reflected the PSU's institutional location: divergences over whether the PSU should remain as an autonomous force, or whether it should participate in attempts to regroup the left, constantly

split the party.

Alongside factions seeking to tie the PSU closer to either PCF, or SFIO, there existed a courant autonomiste, of which Rocard became the spokesman from 1967 to 1974. Schematically, this courant sought to develop the PSU as an autonomous force of socialist renovation, on the grounds that the PCF could only be changed and surpassed if there were real competition from a genuinely reforming Socialist party. In their view, the old SFIO was irremediably compromised, and there had to be a democratic socialist alternative. The PSU was thus to compete directly with the SFIO for ideological and electoral leadership of the socialist left.

Rocard became PSU leader at its 1967 Congress, on a platform of retaining PSU autonomy, and of refusing participation in Mitterrand's FGDS (6). An important dispute between the factions was whether the PSU should support Mitterrand's 1965 candidacy, having already unanimously declined to back Defferre's centre-left initiative. The PSU 'autonomists' (Vincent, Guerche) argued that to support Mitterrand would remove the PSU's *raison d'être*, and that the party should present its own candidate; the 'unitarists', based around Martinet (ex-UGS), and Popere (ex-TDC) argued that the PSU should support Mitterrand in

6. Evin, op cit, pp. 75-80.

the name of left unity, especially given PCF support (7). Rocard took an intermediary line. His real candidate was Mendès^{France}, who would not stand. At a Conseil National in October 1965, Rocard tabled an amendment pledging the party's critical support for Mitterrand, but calling on the PSU to lead its own autonomous campaign. This amendment received an absolute majority at the CN (8). Rocard thus made himself a potential leader of the PSU, partly at the expense of Mitterrand. Henceforth, Rocard clearly situated himself within the courant autonomiste.

The second occasion on which Rocard made an impact was at the Grenoble colloque, April 1966. Unable to convince Mendès-France to stand, the PSU was marginalised by the presidential contest. The PSU 'autonomists' thus needed to justify their analysis, and position themselves for the aftermath of De Gaulle's victory. The organisation of the Grenoble colloque was initiated only days before the first ballot of the 1965 presidential election, when an appeal was launched by organisations which were equivocal to Mitterrand's 1965 campaign, and unenthusiastic about the FGDS. *These included*

PSU, CFDT, UNEF, Citoyens 60. This initiative appeared directly to challenge Mitterrand: it was accompanied

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7. B. Criddle, 'The Parti Socialiste Unifié: an appraisal after 10 years', Parliamentary Affairs (1971), pp. 140-169, p. 146; '1965: Du Congrès de Gennevilliers à l'élection présidentielle', Cited in 20 ans du PSU.
 8. R. Voog, 'Le PSU dix ans après', Chronique Sociale de France, 5/6, (1971), p. 24.

by a refusal to associate him with the colloque's organisation. Mitterrand subsequently declined to attend. The colloque thus amplified the divisions between those clubs participating in the 1964 Vichy Assises, and the constituent clubs of Mitterrand's CIR (see chapter 2). Rocard saw the colloque as an attempt to lay the bases for a renovated PSU, which would act in close collaboration with the associative and para-political movements, and would eventually compete with and replace the FGDS for leadership on the left (9).

The various forces present at Grenoble underlined the diversity of the gauche nouvelle, or second left. It again suggested the confluence of groups with left Catholic origins - CFDT, Témoignage Chrétien, Ésprit, Citoyens 60 - and the demand for a redefinition of socialism (10). Defferre had also attempted to ally secularists and Catholics, through ~~linking~~ SFIO and MRP in a Grande Fédération (see chapter 3). The failure of Defferre's initiative confirmed the irremediable sectarianism of the traditional parties, for the Catholic left. The participants at Grenoble were united by a common reaction against the perceived archaism of the traditional parties, rather than a common commitment to political action, much less agreement on

9. Interview with P. Viveret, 9 May 1984.

10. J. Mossuz, Les clubs et la politique en France, op cit, p. 97.

what sort. Grenoble highlighted the contradictions existing within the gauche nouvelle.

The Club Jean Moulin, for example, had consistently called for a redefined socialism, yet, while the Club promoted Defferre's centre-left initiative, Rocard and the PSU vigorously opposed Defferre as a centrist. Clearly, similarities between groups claiming the 'new left' title could lead to widely diverging political analyses. Despite temporarily participating in the Club until 1966 (on account of its anti-colonialist, modernist origins), Rocard's belief in the necessity of political action firmly separated him from clubs of the Jean Moulin type: the role of the PSU was to give a political expression to the 'new left' forces, and to overturn the FGDS (11). Notwithstanding these contradictions, the participants at Grenoble considered themselves to represent an alternative left to the FGDS, and here the presence of Mendès-France had an important symbolic value.

They declared their objective as being to define the bases of a modern socialist project. This implied a greater concentration on the content of the programme, and the conditions for the future exercise of power, rather than merely with conditions for the electoral conquest of power. They reproached Mitterrand for conceiving of the left's

11. Hamon and Rotman, op cit, pp. 71-5.

renovation merely in electoral and institutional terms. The left had to secure a greater unity of theory and practice; to abandon its archaic language, and to adapt its theory to its practice, its practice to its language. This courant could be called revisionist. The salient themes that emerged from the colloque formed the basis of the 'Rocardien' challenge after March 1978. Rocard drew a distinction between nationalisation as a tool of economic policy, and as a principle of socialism; called for a widescale decentralisation of state authority (opposing the French left's dirigiste traditions) and launched the idea of democratic planning, previously confined to the CFDT (12). Implicitly, the traditional left was archaic because it refused to confront these themes.

In the 1967 legislative elections, prior to Rocard taking over the leadership, the PSU obtained 2.3% of the first ballot vote and returned 4 élus; while the FGDS with 18.9% returned 116 (13). For a majority of leaders, the marginality of the PSU had been unambiguously underlined. This reasoning led certain figures (notably Poperen and Bérégovoy) to advocate collaborating with the CIR within the FGDS structure; while Martinet argued that the PSU could best preserve the ideas of the new left by ^{affiliating} as an

12. Evin, op cit, pp. 224-5; M.Rocard, Parler vrai, op cit, pp. 107-9.

13. R.Cayrol, 'Histoire et sociologie d'un parti', p.29, in M.Rocard, Le PSU et l'avenir socialiste de la France, (Paris, Seuil, 1969).

organisation to the FGDS. In opposition to a majority of the founding fathers, Rocard refused to sacrifice the PSU, and aligned himself with the 'autonomists'. In an unholy alliance with Heurgon, leftist leader in charge of the party organisation, and the neo-Trotskyite left based around Vincent and Bridier, Rocard received an absolute majority of the mandates at the 1967 Congress, and was elected National Secretary (14). Having been defeated at Congress, Poperen and Bérégovoy left the PSU, and formed the UGCS, and Socialisme moderne respectively, as a means of . to the FGDS (15).

The PSU - led by Rocard - was the only party outside of the extreme left to emerge with an enhanced reputation from the May '68 events. In association with the CFDT, the PSU spoke of autogestion, and rigorously opposed PCF/CGT attempts to channel the agitation into purely *materialistic* demands (16). The height of PSU involvement came with the Charléty mass meeting, at the end of May, organised by the party, and from which the PCF, CGT, and SFIO (although not the CIR) were officially absent. Prior to Charléty Rocard sought to persuade Mendès-France to declare himself willing to head a provisional government. Mendès-France refused,

14. Evin, op cit, pp. 75-80.

15. Ibid, pp. 76, 80; Mossuz, op cit, pp. 39, 48.

16. 'PSU Documentation', 20 ans du PSU. See also La deuxième gauche, op cit, pp. 195-221 for the CFDT.

it was unlikely that the PCF would ever have consented to support him.

In the June 1968 elections, the PSU attained 3.9% although this increase was largely due to tripling its candidates (17). The breakdown of the FGDS after these elections possibly vindicated Rocard's 1967 choice; the FGDS had remained little more than an electoral cartel, dominated by the SFIO. By the end of 1968, PSU membership had increased from 11,599 to 15,511 (18). However, it had recruited predominantly amongst those inspired by the revolutionary sentiments of May, rather than the modernist ideals of the new left; radical Catholics and Trotskyites had been strengthened at the expense of Rocard and his friends. Faced with these events, Rocard adopted theoretical positions and a discourse that bore little relation to his language at Grenoble in 1966, and more to a renovated gauchisme, reflecting the revolutionary aspirations of the new PSU activists, and of the PSU's Trotskyite, Maoist, and Populist factions. It is possible to see Rocard's gauchiste phase, 1968 - 1971, as basically inconsistent with his previous political career. Alternatively, it can be argued that from 1968 - 1971, Rocard attempted to express a synthesis between the modernist left - the courant de Grenoble - and the revolutionary left - the courant de Mai - forming

17. 'Le PSU en chiffres', Témoignage Chrétien, 27 June 1968.

Cited in Vingt ans du PSU.

18. Cayrol, op cit, p. 33.

complementary aspects of the same political analysis.

There was evidence at the Congress of Dijon in March 1969 to support both views. The leadership's 17 thèses were accepted by an overwhelming majority of delegates (19). The 17 thèses attempted to situate the PSU within an autonomous courant socialiste, inheriting the legacy of Grenoble. It was to be distinct from both PCF - with which it sought limited collaboration - and SFIO, with which it refused any contact. The role of the PSU was to *dévelop* an original socialist strategy, and to construct the Parti Révolutionnaire, attempting to surpass PCF and SFIO. The 17 thèses called for alliances with the 'forces of May', and placed a primacy on revolutionary over parliamentary and electoral action (20). This contrasted with the PSU's willingness to negotiate electoral alliances with the FGDS in 1967. Ultimately, it was difficult to reconcile the 'spirit of Grenoble', and the gauchiste interpretation of May: the immediate heritage of May, as expressed in the 17 thèses, was that of a born again Marxism-Leninism. This was recognised retrospectively by Rocard himself.

'Une tentative fondamentalement libertaire et anti-hiérarchique trouvait son expression politique dans des groupes d'extrême gauche ultra-Léninistes.. fascinés par quelques grandes figures de despotes héroïques: Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Castro' (21).

19. Le Monde, 18 March 1969.

20. 'Les dix-sept thèses du PSU', in Le PSU et l'avenir socialiste de la France, pp. 170-1.

21. M.Rocard, 'L'avenir de Mai '68', Libération, 13 March 1968. Cited in Parler Vrai, op cit, pp. 97-8.

Rocard's 1969 presidential campaign was important for a number of reasons. It was evident that there were ambiguities and contradictions between Grenoble and May. Yet, Rocard attempted in 1969 to encompass both these movements, both components of an autonomous courant socialiste. This laid a marker for the future. Rocard attempted to provide a point of reference for various movements and forces, which shared certain common strategic references - such as the archaism of the traditional left - but which differed in their interpretation of these. He attempted thereby to appeal to a wide diversity of political sensibilities: modernist, autogestionnaire, centre-left, electoralist. Thus, the origins of Rocard's later presidential strategy were laid in 1969, including an awareness of the importance of the media (22).

In 1968 - 1969, at the nadir of the SFIO, an autonomous courant socialiste might plausibly triumph over a discredited social democracy. The PSU leadership continued to believe that their party, 'beaucoup plus neuf, et beaucoup plus intéressant', could rejuvenate the left in competition with the SFIO (23). In the 1969 presidential election, Rocard refused to be tied by the PSU, and elevated himself above party. The conflict between Rocard's presidential ambitions and a party destined to remain marginal helps explain his

22. Evin, op cit, pp. 95-7.

23. The expression is Viveret's. Interview, 5 July 1983.

calling to the PS in 1974. In the 1969 presidential elections, Defferre, PS/SFIO candidate, supported by Mendès-France, achieved a mere 5.1%; while Rocard managed 3.66%, and made a significant public impact (24). Further, in October 1969, Rocard was elected against the ex-Prime Minister, Couve de Murville, at a bye-election in Yvelines. The PSU confirmed its desire for splendid isolation by rejecting a call for unity discussions made by Mitterrand in December 1969 (25).

Despite the 1969 presidential election, Rocard continued to compete with the leftist factions - Trotskyite, Maoist, Populist - which had dramatically increased in importance since May '68, and which accused Rocard of pouvoir personnel. At Rouen, in June 1970, these various factions secured 41%, by advocating alliances with Maoist, or Trotskyite groups, or with 'unorganised revolutionaries' (26). This was opposed by Rocard, rejoined by Martinet.

Whether Rocard would retain the PSU leadership was the central issue at the July 1971 Congress of Lille. Rocard's motion for Lille was opposed by five others, a testament to the fissiparousness of the PSU after May. Despite their nuances, the leftist factions proposed to make the PSU into the axis of an extreme left federation, that would have

24. Evin, op cit, p. 95.

25. Ibid, p. 102.

26. Criddle, op cit, p. 152.

definitively removed it from the PS' orbit. Ironically, the triumph of such an orientation may have been to Rocard's long term benefit: it would have led the PSU Rocard faction to split, and seek integration into the new PS, formed at Épinay. Rocard might then have benefitted from the legitimacy of Épinay.

Despite entering ^{the} Congress with only minority support, (43%), Rocard's motion secured 53% on the final vote, enabling him to constitute an homogeneous leadership. This reversal was largely due to the realignment to Rocard of ex-UGS left Catholics, alienated by leftist tactics at Congress (27). Yet, despite Mitterrand's fraternal message to the Lille Congress, the final motion remained silent over relations with the new PS, and Mitterrand's address was unanswered because of leftist pressures. The final text confirmed PSU's pretences to act as an autonomous courant socialiste, aiming to triumph over the PS (28). Rocard paid a heavy price for his victory at Lille. 1971 was no longer 1968 and any opportunity the PSU had to replace the SFIO/PS as the major force of the non-Communist left had now been lost, with Mollet's final defeat at Épinay, and Mitterrand's takeover of a PS committed to negotiating a Common Programme with the PCF. Rocard recognised this

27. Evin, op cit, p. 113.

28. 'Pour une orientation révolutionnaire', Le Monde, 3 July 1971.

only tardily.

The PSU remained paralysed 1971-2 by continuing factional struggles. The Maoists in the Gauche Révolutionnaire quit the party in 1972, while most Trotskyites drifted towards Krivine's LCR (29). Rocard's Lille victory was unacceptable for these leftist factions, as it marked a strategic move to the right and away from the revolutionary left. The autonomy/unitary cleavage was also important in explaining Martinet's decision to leave the PSU in January 1972. Martinet summed ^{«e} up [^] PSU's dilemma when he claimed that, 'il est très difficile pour une petite organisation de ne pas devenir marginale' (30). Martinet's schism signalled a reemergence of the unitary/autonomy cleavage, partly displaced from 1968 - 1971 by the debate over revolutionary alliances. Martinet considered that the heritage of the PSU could best be promoted within the PS, where he would cooperate with CERES, 1972-4.

The next casualty of the left alliance risked being the CFDT. At its 1970 Congress, the CFDT had declared itself a *supporter* of autogestion. The CFDT leader, Maire, was hostile to the 1972 Common Programme, seen as ultra-centralist and unrealistic (31). The CFDT thus shared PSU preoccupations, and the idea of a PSU/CFDT alliance had a certain logic.

29. Politique Hebdo, 8 June 1972.

30. Cited in Evin, op cit, pp. 230-1.

31. See Hamon and Rotman, La deuxième gauche, Chapters 8 and 9.

Yet, the CFDT needed an effective ^{political arm} if it was successfully to compete with the CGT. After 1971-2 only the PS, and not the PSU could hope to fulfil that function. Despite its insufficiencies, the CFDT recognised that the left alliance offered new hope for the 1973 elections (32).

During 1971-2, the PSU leadership continued its splendid isolation, and concentrated on defining autogestion as a political programme. The Toulouse Manifesto, ratified in December 1972, was *drawn up* as the PS appeared finally to have broken with Mollet's SFIO, and had even accepted the principle of autogestion in its programme. This had been followed by the signing of the Common Programme in June 1972, resurrecting the unitary/autonomy cleavage within the PSU. If the PSU refused to consider left unity, it risked appearing as a marginal, sectarian force. If it accepted the PCG, however, it would compromise its own principles, and risked being absorbed into the PS on the latter's terms. The Toulouse manifesto was intended to respond to the rise of the PS and the left alliance. It attempted to define autogestion as an original socialist project, formulating the new demands that had arisen in May '68. According to Rocard, autogestion had to be opposed to the PCG,

32. Interview with A. Detraz, L'Unité, 22 September 1972.

'Or, aux questions centrales, qui décide, au profit de qui, qu'est-ce qui va changer pour nous, le programme commun n'apporte pas de réponse suffisante' (33).

By concentrating on a strategy for social change *which was* seemingly removed from concrete institutional questions, the PSU reiterated the distinction made above at Grenoble between the preoccupation with the immediate conquest of power of the mainstream left, and with the exercise of power by the 'second left'. The central theme of the manifesto - Contrôler aujourd'hui pour décider demain - was intended to underline a belief in the actuality of socialism, through the development of self-managed experiences in all areas of society (industry, local government, social experiments). This differed significantly from the CERES' version of autogestion (see chapter 4).

The Toulouse manifesto strengthened the theoretical ties between PSU and CFDT, and presaged Rocard's later attacks on programmatic left unity. It argued that the PCG was based on a classic Communist vision of social change (Advanced democracy), and that any genuine unity on the left stemmed from a confrontation between competing societal projects, rather than, as with the PCG, by avoiding the nature of future society. It opposed a libertarian, experimental culture to a jacobin one.

Rocard maintained *this position*

33. M.Rocard, Preface to PSU: Contrôler aujourd'hui pour décider demain, (Paris, Ed.Tema, 1973), p.16.

after he joined the PS. By ^{the}end ^{of} 1972, the PSU leadership continued to justify its autonomy: it was the only force independent of both the extreme left, and the left alliance, capable of expressing the demand for autogestion; it also saw itself as the main centre for theoretical development on the left (34). However, in the 1973 legislative elections, the PSU declined to 2.3%, and Rocard lost his Yvelines seat. By contrast, the PS realised its best Fifth Republic score - 20.3% in the UGSD (see chapter one). This led to the reemergence of the unitary/autonomy cleavage. Rocard made it clear that he now saw little future for what again had been shown to be a marginal political force. In May 1973, he conceded.

'Le PSU a été affaibli au point que sa crédibilité est en doute, ce qui limite non seulement quelque peu notre écho de presse, mais aussi notre recrutement.. Si le PS fait des choix nets pour un socialisme autogestionnaire, nous saurons en tirer les conséquences' (35).

Rocard's efforts to construct the PSU as an autonomous party, within a wider courant socialiste had failed. This disillusion helps explain the meetings between Rocard, Maire, and Mauroy after the 1973 elections (see chapter 3). Further evidence of Rocard's disaffection was provided in November 1973, when he resigned as PSU National Secretary, to be replaced by Chapuis (36). It was the 1974 presidential

34. M. Rocard, 'Le sens du manifeste', in 20 ans du PSU.

35. Cited in Evin, op cit, p. 120.

36. Politique Hebdo, 11 November 1973.

election, however, that precipitated Rocard's convergence towards Mitterrand's PS.

Rocard agreed to participate in Mitterrand's 1974 presidential campaign team without consulting either the PSU leadership, or even his closest advisers (37). Nonetheless, the Conseil National of April 15th, 1974, supported Mitterrand by 63% to 34% favouring Piaget, hero of the Lip factory occupation (38). Yet, Rocard's position was precarious, and the CN condemned him for supporting Mitterrand without consulting the party (39). His support for Mitterrand could be seen as a strategic, rather than merely tactical choice: it implied the need for unity between those forces supporting, and those opposing the PCG. For Rocard, the PS and PSU were complementary: the PSU had been present in many social struggles since May '68, yet had failed to provide a serious political expression for these movements; the PS had restored electoral credibility to the left, but had been absent from grass roots disputes (40). Rocard hoped that a new political force could be created that would replace the PCG with a looser 'pact of popular unity'.

However, there were divisions within the PSU over Mitterrand's campaign, and over regrouping on the left.

37. L'Effet Rocard, p. 221.

38. Politique Hebdo, 9 - 17 April 1974.

39. Ibid.

40. M. Rocard, 'Les raisons d'un choix', L'Unité, 26 April 1974.

Chapuis, new 'Rocardien' PSU leader, insisted that any future PS/PSU collaboration would have to modify existing organisations, and lead to the creation of a Parti des Socialistes (41). The PSU would not simply go in on PS terms. Despite these affirmations only a minority of PSU activists eventually followed Rocard and Chapuis into the PS, in conditions of simple annexation, rather than dépassement. Underlying this lay a series of tactical errors by Rocard, and a reemergence of the unitary/autonomy cleavage.

The PSU Direction Politique Nationale, May 26th, agreed to respond positively to Mitterrand's appeal and participate in the Assises, on condition that the PS was willing to call its organisational existence into question (42). The CFDT in turn responded favourably to Mitterrand's appeal on May 27th (43). By October 1974, however, reactions from the CFDT grass roots in favour of trade union autonomy had led the Maire majority to lessen the significance of its participation in the Assises (44). At the PS CN, of June 15th, both Mauroy and Mitterrand stressed that the Assises would reunify previously divided socialists within existing PS structures; it would refuse to call its organisational

41. R. Chapuis, 'La coalition de gauche et son avenir', Critique Socialiste, 18, (May-June 1974), pp. 49-52.

42. Politique Hebdo, 31 May - 5 June 1974.

43. Ibid, 13-19 June 1974.

44. La deuxième gauche, pp. 275-280.

existence into question, as the PSU had originally demanded. The PSU leaders had to choose between absorption into the PS, or calling off the whole operation.

The strengths of the pro and anti Assises PSU factions were finally settled at the Orleans CN, held one week before the Assises. The Chapuis/Rocard text, calling for the dissolution of the PSU, and participation in the Assises, received 32.83% (45). Two other texts refused to sanction the PSU's dissolution: Leduc-Mousel rejected the Assises altogether, and won 41.68%; Barjonet-Guerche were ready to attend the Assises, but not join the PS (25.49%). While the leadership enjoyed a majority in 35 federations in November 1973, they now held only 11.

Why did the Rocard/Chapuis leadership fail? There was a general reaction against the leadership's attempt to present the PSU with a fait accompli, its own dissolution, and against lack of consultation with the membership: only the Rocardiens had participated in drawing up the Assises document Pour le Socialisme (46). More fundamental reasons can be advanced. Since 1967, Rocard had attempted to construct the PSU as an autonomous party, aiming to overtake the SFIO/PS. This aim had manifestly failed after the PS' reconstruction at Épinay. Rocard now accepted that the PS occupied a pivotal position in the political system,

45. Politique Hebdo, 10-16 October 1974.

46. Evin, op cit, p. 146.

especially as the only party liable to win a presidential election for the left. He thereby recognised his previous underestimation of institutional pressures shaping the left. Yet, Rocard proposed to enter the PS thanks to Mauroy, symbol of the SFIO, and the party's 'right'. For many, this smacked of opportunism, and alienated the traditional PSU autonomist sensibility, of which Rocard had been the spokesman since 1967.

Meanwhile, entering the PS through the back door, Rocard was deprived of the legitimacy of Épinay,^{which} proved to be a long term strategic disadvantage, and ~~ensured~~ that he assume^{the} characteristics of ^{the leader of} an external faction.

In accepting the institutional logic of the PSU's position after 1973, Rocard fell victim to the primacy placed on PSU autonomy by its activists. This had directly benefitted him in 1967, and had previously defeated Savary (1963), Popperen (1967), and Martinet (1972). The PSU was thus a staging post; many PS leaders moved through the PSU, engaged in its factional struggles, and carried over former antipathies into the PS.

The Assises of socialism were held in Paris on October 12-13th, 1974. Participation required an official acceptance of the PCG, but this acceptance was more formal than real. Thus, despite officially accepting the PCG,

Rocard continued to oppose autogestion to the Common Programme,

'Il reste que nous faisons grief au programme commun d'avoir en matière de dévolution de l'autorité, d'organisation de la société, une démarche trop exclusivement descendante... l'autorité, le sens de la démocratie, les conditions de gestion sont trop exclusivement descendantes, pas assez ascendantes, il n'y a pas de pente vers ce qui est pour nous l'autogestion' (47).

One important symbolic value of the Assises was the further unification of christian and ^{secular} socialists. Such convergence was a sign of the continuing renewal of the PS, distinguishing it further from the old anti-clerical SFIO. The new wave of christian socialists came primarily from two sources: the PSU, and the various christian groups participating in the Assises as the troisième composante : Objectif socialiste, Vie Nouvelle, Témoignages Chrétiens, as well as the CFDT (48). While it was clearly true that the Assises brought a new wave of Catholic left supporters (paralleling the realignment of non-practising Catholics to Mitterrand in 1974), it would be misleading merely to assert 'Rocard, c'est les chrétiens'. On closer inspection, Catholics participated in all PS factions (including that of Mauroy). Schematically, (and necessarily somewhat arbitrarily), the christian left within the PS can be divided into two main categories. Firstly, the 'progressive'

47. L'Unité, 18-24 October 1974.

48. Evin, op cit, p. 236.

left Catholics, for whom Marxism acted as a central reference and as a surrogate political religion. These Catholics were located overwhelmingly within CERES, as shown by Cayrol's 1973 survey (49). The other category were the ^{secular} left christians. The foundation of this movement has been outlined above in relation to the Algerian war. It was laïc, in the sense of a spirit of independence from party and ideological orthodoxy. The CFDT and the Algerian war generation around Rocard were the best examples of this. One area, however, where it is legitimate to draw distinctions between CERES and Rocard is at the level of leadership: within the Rocardien leadership, Chapuis, Frâchon, De la Fournière, amongst others, were from left Catholic backgrounds. The same could not be said for the higher reaches of CERES.

The real importance of the left christian debate is contradictory. At Épinay and the Assises, the PS was opened to Catholic left activists, who had been permanently excluded from the SFIO. Nonetheless, the PS, particularly the Mitterrand/Mauroy majority, remained predominantly anti-clerical, with links to traditional laïc organisations

49. R. Cayrol, 'L'univers politique des militants socialistes', RFSP, April 1975, pp. 23-53. See comments made above (p. 11). This discussion leans heavily on H. Portelli, 'Au rendezvous du Parti socialiste', Esprit, 4-5, (April-May 1977); P. Rosanvallon, 'La CFDT et la Laïcité', Esprit, 4-5, (April-May 1977). It also draws from comments made by Viveret in an interview on 9 May 1984.

(FEN, FO, freemasonry). These atholic were essential for the public image of transformation from SFIO to PS, and may have attracted many irregularly practising atholic voters, something the SFIO could never have done. Yet, there remained important differences in sensibility between activists from anti-clerical and Catholic backgrounds. The strength of anti-clericalism enabled Mitterrand later to use the Catholic bogey to attack Rocard as alien to the socialist tradition.

Having *joined* the PS in 1974, the courant des Assises attempted to create an autogestionnaire pole, that could exert a maximal influence over party doctrine and policy,

'Depuis le début, la tentative a été une tentative de direction du PS, et notamment de sa majorité de l'époque' (50).

Yet, this aim was interpreted differently by Rocard and his main lieutenants. Rocard proposed to consolidate the alliance with Mauroy at Pau, by supporting the Mitterrand/Mauroy motion. For Rocard, there could be no question of strengthening the existing 'left'(CERES), or of creating an alternative one outside the majority. He sought to avoid playing a factional game, and to maximise his influence through collaboration, rather than confrontation with Mitterrand. Meanwhile, a majority of leaders of the courant des Assises refused to sacrifice their political identity

to Rocard's tactical considerations, and determined that either a motion or an amendment to the majority's text should be presented (51).

In October 1974, Chapuis, Rocard's closest PSU partner, formed the Centre d'Initiatives et de Recherches pour le Socialisme Autogestionnaire (CIRSA)(52). This attempted to structure those *joining* the PS at the Assises into a more distinct and organised faction. Chapuis argued that the creation of a pole autogestionnaire demanded a specific existence within the PS, even if this *involved* being cast into the party minority,

'Si l'on n'a pas d'identité politique, on n'existe pas, et sans expression politique, il n'y a pas d'identité possible' (53).

Chapuis was initially supported by many ex-PSU leaders: Le Garrec, Huchon, Huchet. He then launched Le Manifeste, a factional internal bulletin, aimed at coordinating the activities of the courant des Assises in preparation for the Pau Congress (54). Rocard strongly opposed this initiative.

For Rocard, it was essential to be seen as a loyal, constructive member of the majority, and to avoid any behaviour that Mitterrand could construe as factional, if he wished to gain influence within the PS. He could not openly

51. Evin, op cit, p. 149.

52. Ibid, p. 147.

53. Ibid, p. 148.

54. Ibid, p. 150.

promote a courant, and risk being accused of factionalism by Mitterrand. Rocard recognised that by 1974, open factionalism was unlikely to bring influence within the leadership, as CERES was discovering. Of primary consideration was Rocard's status as a potential competing leader - eventually presidential candidate - rather than just head of a courant autogestionnaire. Rocard joined the PS when Mitterrand's status as the oecumenical leader above faction had been established by the 1974 presidential election. The exercise of future influence within the party demanded an initial recognition of Mitterrand's federative role.

While it is possible to speak of a courant autogestionnaire from the Assises onwards (most of whose ^{supporters} signed the Martinet amendment at Pau) Rocard considered it not to be in his interest to assume its leadership. To demonstrate his loyalty to Mitterrand, Rocard was constrained to underline his 'legitimist' stance on every occasion. He had heeded the warning given by Mauroy that the Assises must not lead to the creation of a new faction within the PS: he recognised the constraint of subordination to Mitterrand, in return for protection by Mauroy within the majority. This personal strategy was divorced from that of most ex-PSU leaders, who suspected Rocard of sacrificing the PSU's identity, in order to gain a position in the PS leadership (55). Rocard thus

55. Ibid, p. 151.

attempted to position himself as one of Mitterrand's loyal lieutenants, and a likely candidate for his succession.

The Congress of Pau illustrated the divisions between Rocard and his erstwhile base. Rocard refused to present a separate motion at Pau, or even to sign Martinet's amendment to Motion 1, which attempted to give a minimal structure to the courant des Assises (C/A) and an autogestionnaire reading to the majority motion (56). A majority of ex-PSU leaders aligned themselves behind Martinet's amendment, and placed themselves in a position of semi-opposition to Rocard: Chapuis, Le Garrec, Soulage, Beneteau, Feran, Verlhac (57). The score realised by the amendment - 15.5% - was a rough indication of the potential weight of a courant autogestionnaire within the PS, and largely exceeded the number of new members coming to the party from the Assises. The number of ex-PSU activists following Rocard into the PS has been estimated at only 1,500-2,000 (58).

The Martinet amendment received an absolute majority in one federation - Corrèze - and more than 30% in 16 others (59). It appeared to take support from Mitterrand and CERES, depending on the locality. In certain areas, support for the amendment was accompanied by a declining

56. 'Pour le renforcement de la ligne de gauche', Le P/R, 36, January 1975.

57. Ibid.

58. Le N/O, 4 April 1979.

59. Sevin, op cit, p. 589.

CERES percentage total. This stressed that organisational antagonisms were likely to separate CERES and the courant des Assises on a local, as well as national level. The Martinet amendment appealed for support through autogestion, a theme most closely associated with the Catholic, CFDT party activists, who had hitherto sided mainly with CERES. In other areas, however, the amendment picked up support from the majority. Overall, it is difficult to establish any consistent national pattern: support for the amendment was strong in certain areas of recent socialist *penetration*, and traditional electoral weakness, where CERES did not dominate locally (pockets of the West, Paris region, East); it was also significant where the SFIO remained strong (Var, Aude, Gironde, Puy-de-Dôme), suggesting that it was used as a protest vote against an incumbent local organisation.

Refusing Martinet's amendment, Rocard had to accept 8th position on the majority list - behind Popere, his old PSU enemy (60). Immediately after Pau no PSU representative sat on the SN, despite the nominal presence of Martinet, at Études; while only Rocard (PSU) and Acquier (CFDT) represented the Assises on the BE (61). This reflected Mitterrand's determination to subordinate the new arrivals, and retain his organisational influence. Rocard was eventually promoted to the SN only in October 1975, to what

60. Le P/R, January 1975.

61. Ibid, 38, February 1975.

was then considered a mainly technical post - public sector. According to Mitterrand, it would have been a 'grave political error' to have appointed Rocard before this date, given the PCF's opposition to the Assises, and Rocard's past stance on the PCG (62). In the event, it was a post with significant importance, when renegotiation of the PCG became an acute problem in 1977.

The artificial convergence of courants behind Mitterrand's oecumenical leadership after Pau (excepting CERES), blurred wide ideological divergences within the Pau majority. Schematically, there existed an autogestionnaire and a unitarian pole based around Poperen and Joxe, competing for ideological leadership of the Pau majority (see chapter 1). If Mitterrand sought to subordinate the courant des Assises within the organisation, he gave it a certain leeway as a source of doctrinal development, again underlining Mitterrand's tactical use of ideology. This was illustrated by the adoption of the Quinze thèses pour l'autogestion in June 1975, elaborated largely by Martinet, and the courant des Assises (63). Pfister, in Le Monde went so far as to assert that,

'Le corps de doctrine dont viennent de se doter les socialistes, reprend pour l'essentiel l'idéologie de Michel Rocard et de ses amis'(64).

62. Evin, op cit, p. 149.

63. Interview with Viveret, 5 July 1983.

64. 22-23rd June 1975.

This document acted as a constant source of reference for the autogestionnaires, and promptly provoked a reaction from those based around Joxe and Poperen. After the quinze thèses, the formation of Faire in October 1975 was a further attempt by the C/A to maximise its ideological influence within the PS. Faire was formed by Viveret, and Martinet, leading members of the C/A, despite Rocard's hostility. However, it would be inexact to portray Faire as merely a factional bulletin. Its orientation committee included representatives of all three elements participating in the majority: the C/A, Mauroy and Mitterrand (65). Nonetheless, the Committee excluded those close to Joxe and Poperen, and the two key posts were held by Martinet and Viveret (66). The formation of Faire represented an attempt to provide a forum for the development of ideas associated primarily with the courant des Assises: autogestion, social experimentation. This was consistent with the attempt to influence official policy, without resorting to open factional structures. Faire's opening editorial defended its ~~founders~~ : from seeking to create a new faction,

'Nous n'avons pas pour but de construire une nouvelle chapelle. Nous voulons seulement contribuer, à notre manière et à notre place, à cet immense travail de préparation qui permettra de "faire le socialisme" (67).

65. Faire, 1, (October 1975).

66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

Nonetheless, Faire's salient themes - autogestion, local social experimentation - were intended to act as a bridge between the C/A, and those based around Mauroy, (who actively participated in the review) (68). This partly reflected contacts maintained since the Assises between Mauroy, and certain ex-PSU leaders, (see chapter 3). Faire was intended to form part of a wider ideological offensive, to develop the idea of autogestion. A circular to regional ex-PSU leaders explained,

'Le but est d'arriver aux alentours du Congrès de 1977 avec de sérieux acquis, manifestant une nette avancée de notre hégémonie idéologique' (69).

Rocard remained hostile to these initiatives, fearing they compromised his personal aim of gaining Mitterrand's confidence, and positioning himself for the succession.

Despite Rocard, Faire developed an increasingly critical line on certain aspects of the official programmatic unity strategy, and outlined the bases of what later emerged as the Rocardien critique: notably, over left unity and socialist identity; the respective roles of the State and social movements in social transformation; the function of the party (70). These may be conveniently summarised with the argument that, if PS renovation stemmed from Epinay, the

68. Ibid. Rey, Mothé, and Buron - all close to Mauroy - were on the editorial committee.

69. Cited in Evin, op cit, p. 157.

70. These seem to me to be the prominent themes expressed in Faire, 1975-8.

Assises were crucial in developing an autogestionnaire political culture within the PS. This must form the basis of the party's future identity (71).

It is therefore necessary to distinguish between the courant autogestionnaire, based around Faire, and freely developing the bases of what later became the Rocardien critique; and Rocard, a political leader vowed to *loyalty to Mitterrand* and recognising constraints on his public expression. The term courant autogestionnaire or courant des Assises is preferable at this stage to that of the Rocardiens.

From 1974 - 1977, Rocard remained in partial opposition to the ex-PSU leadership. During this period, he was one of the main leaders of the party's Economic Commission, along with Attali, and Fabius (72). This gave Rocard influence in the formulation of party policy (Mitterrand preferred to rely on Rocard, preaching the need for economic realism, rather than 'Marxist' economists, such as Goux); it also excluded him from the forefront of political activity. However, despite his relative external invisibility, Rocard managed to visit 85 federations from 1974 - 1977, itself a sign of his growing popularity. This increased Mitterrand's antagonism to him (73).

71. See, for one example amongst many, P. Viveret, 'L'exigence de la lucidité', Faire, 9, (June 1976).

72. Reported by Martinet, Le P/R - Responsables, 13, 10 June 1976.

73. L'Effet Rocard, p. 287.

This hostility was most evident within the SN.

Rocard's standing in the polls had already been well established by the Assises; in his former role as PSU leader, and its presidential candidate in 1969, Rocard had established contacts with many political organisations (especially the CFDT), and with the media, particularly in the press, which tended to see Rocard as the party's number 2 (74). His public popularity was uncontested. In a poll conducted in October 1975, Rocard was seen by 56% as the most likely contender to succeed Mitterrand as party leader (Defferre 16%; Mauroy 7%)(75). This popularity worried not only Mitterrand, with an eye to his leadership and presidential authority, but also the Mitterrandist sabras, whose positions of power and prospects of promotion within the organisation were threatened by Rocard's popularity.

Mitterrand's stance towards Rocard was ambiguous. Mitterrand had recognised the threat of an alternative leadership coalition based around Mauroy and Rocard, and had promptly minimised the threat at Pau, by severely limiting Rocard's representation. He intended to keep Rocard out of the political limelight, and to erode his external popularity. He also professed distrust for the 'christian left' that had entered the party at the Assises, and of which Rocard was

74. Politique Hebdo, 3-9 January 1977.

75. Evin, op cit, p. 158.

regarded as the spokesman (despite his protestant origins) (76). Mitterrand suspected the 'christian left' of hostility to his leadership, while the left catholics in the courant autogestionnaire pointed to Mitterrand's centrist past in the Fourth Republic, and his late conversion to socialism (77).

Nonetheless, Rocard was valued by Mitterrand for helping to portray the PS as a party of government. Thus, it was Rocard, along with Delors, who took the lead in assuring business representatives of the left's intentions to act responsibly once in government, and who praised the market at the Expansion Forum, in October 1976 (78). Rocard thereby affirmed his modernist, mendèsiste roots. In general, however, Rocard was profoundly dissatisfied with his limited leadership functions:

'J'ai passé plus de deux ans à rechercher la confiance et l'amitié de François Mitterrand. Et cela en imposant à mes camarades du courant des Assises des conditions d'existence politique difficiles. Le Premier Secrétaire m'a exclu de l'animation du Parti.' (79).

If Rocard intended to play the 'legitimist' card, he remained privately hostile to the PCG, and maintained a specific advisory structure, parallel to the party organisation itself. Those who formed the core of the

76. Ibid, p. 155.

77. Interview with Viveret, 5 July 1983.

78. Politique Hebdo, 18-24 October 1976.

79. L'Effet Rocard, p. 239.

équipe Rocard had themselves followed different political trajectories, and represented different generations of Rocard's political allies. On accession to the PS, Rocard continued to be advised by those surrounding him from the early '60's, or the Algerian war generation: Chapuis, Cossé, Frachon, Prévôt, Neuschwander (80). Secondly, there was the May '68 generation, the core of the PSU leadership after Lille in 1971: Viveret, Gallus, Soulage (81). Finally, there were those who had joined Rocard since 1974: Zemor, Merle, Ciret (82).

After Rocard's entry into the PS, a powerful brains trust could be discerned, *constituting* dossiers on the whole range of interests of a potential future Socialist party leader, or presidential candidate. By 1976, Rocard's advisers formed a more distinct Cabinet occupying separate offices, and receiving financial contributions from outside of the party. The groupe économique was in the forefront of this structure, and the expertise of Rocard's economic advisers paralleled that of Mitterrand's Cabinet itself. Thus, Cossé, and Lannes were both Inspectors of finance, while Bravo was a ^{Planning Commission} specialist (83). To this was added: the groupe politique, elaborating Rocard's overall political

80. Ibid, p. 286.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid, pp. 287-8.

83. Politique Hebdo, 3-9 January 1977.

strategy, and led by Frachon, Viveret, and Dreyfus; and the groupe économie sociale, led by Soulage (84). Finally, there was the groupe image, led by Marti, a top *public relations man* and concerned mainly with improving Rocard's public image in relation to the medias and public opinion (85). The existence of this latter structure was symbolic of Rocard's belief in the importance of modern communication techniques, and an element of an overall presidential strategy.

To support this organisation, Rocard received financial contributions from both inside and outside the party (86).

He met his main advisers on a weekly basis, and occupied separate offices for this purpose. From these weekly meetings circulars were sent to Rocard's *contacts*

in the federations, attempting thereby to ensure a minimum of national parallel factional organisation, and using a network already established in the PSU (87).

The consolidation of this advisory structure was certainly a source of contention between Mitterrand and Rocard in 1975-7. It was partly against this *skeletal* factional organisation that Mitterrand launched his campaign against factionalism at Nantes. Despite his opposition to structuring a more open faction, Rocard's ^{*backing*} during this period combined the characteristics of a parallel faction (concentrated at the

84. Evin, op cit, p. 166.

85. Ibid, p. 170.

86. Ibid, p. 166.

87. Ibid, p. 171.

summit, and signifying a presidential strategy) with those of the external faction. By external faction we mean that Rocard attempted to increase his internal party standing by relying on his poll popularity, and eventually thereby attempting to influence the party in its choice of presidential candidate.

External faction also signified that Rocard was constrained to rely primarily on his external popularity to compensate for his relative internal weakness, and openly to force the party's hand by external pressures. This external strategy, necessary on account of his internal party location, placed him at a long term strategic disadvantage, only partially counter-balanced by his status as a plausible presidential candidate. Aside from this considerable advantage, Rocard's strategic disadvantages were compounded by his absence from Épinay; by Mauroy's refusal openly to side with him against Mitterrand, a factor ultimately frustrating his bid for the 1981 presidential nomination; and by perceptions that Rocard constituted the party's modernist 'right wing', on account of his criticisms of the PCG, and his calls for economic realism. Rocard's parallel factional structures illustrated the historical nature of PS factionalism: having been leader 1967 - 1973, and presidential candidate in 1969, of an alternative party

on the left, it was unrealistic to expect Rocard totally to dissolve structures and networks with their origins in the PSU.

Backed by this unofficial organisation, Rocard attempted to deflect party policy, without directly challenging Mitterrand. However, there was an underlying hostility between the two men, and underlying contradictions between the policies, and strategies they represented, which was to explode after March 1978. A series of events illustrated this. Charged with responsibility for the public sector, Rocard adopted positions that were either opposed to the party's official policy, or else committed the party in areas where the official policy had not been decided. As party leader in charge of nationalisations in the PS/PCF working group on the Economy, Rocard defended in June 1976 the position that it was not necessary for the state to take over total capital in the industries to be nationalised, for it to exercise adequate control. This position was taken without consultation with Mitterrand. It attempted to encourage a debate within the party over the means of the nationalisations foreseen in the PCG, a debate which Mitterrand was determined to avoid (88). The prominent issues raised by Rocard were: partial or total expropriation of capital; compensation for shareholders; subsidiaries.

88. L'Effet Rocard, pp. 244-7.

From the beginning of 1977, Rocard decided on the advice of his team to differentiate himself from the 'majority of the majority' (Mitterrand, Mauroy) and to coordinate his activity with the courant des Assises. Undoubtedly, Rocard's decision to maintain 'a certain autonomy' with regard to Mitterrand was a reaction against the latter's refusal to elevate him as his dauphin, as had been hoped after Pau. Rocard's initial strategy had failed. He thus intended to address himself to public and party opinion, with the Congress of Nantes, June 1977, the perfect tribune, and more openly adopted the external strategy outlined above.

Yet, increased autonomy did not imply divorce. In 1977, it would have been an act of political suicide for any leader participating in the majority too overtly to oppose Mitterrand. Mitterrand had triumphed in the March 1977 municipal elections, and seemed in 1977 a probable future Prime Minister, after the 1978 legislative elections. Influence within the party leadership, and a favourable positioning for future participation in government continued to demand a recognition of Mitterrand's federative role. Rocard had to avoid demotion into the minority at all costs. There could be no question therefore of tabling a motion against Mitterrand, and the necessary differentiation could

only take place at Congress itself, after the opening vote had guaranteed Rocard representation in the SN.

Rocard's decision to adopt a more autonomous position coincided with Mitterrand's growing determination to reinforce his control over the PS, and to end the majority's heterogeneous expression. Mitterrand's campaign against factionalism prior to Nantes, aimed mainly against CERES, was also a warning to Rocard to dismantle the skeletal organisation outlined above, or else risk demotion into the minority. In preparation for the negotiations with the PCF, the 1978 elections, and the probable future exercise of power, Mitterrand demanded the absolute subordination of all factions within the majority to his leadership. But it was unlikely at this point that Mitterrand ever seriously considered demoting Rocard into the minority, when he most needed to show the PS as a party of government, and especially given Mauroy's continuing protection of Rocard.

The Nantes Congress, June 1977, intervened between the left's victory in the 1977 municipal elections, and the breakdown of the left alliance in September 1977. It came after the PCF had forced an 'updating' of the PCG on an unwilling Mitterrand, but before negotiations had fully started. Mitterrand intended at Nantes to underline to the PCF his refusal to renegotiate, rather than update the PCG,

(see chapter 2). He would publicise his total authority over the PS majority, while retaining CERES in the minority, and refusing an internal debate over the party's options for a minimal updating.

Rocard's speech at Nantes marked a landmark in the affirmation of a specific identity for the courant des Assises. It could be interpreted on two levels: the immediate, and the general. In the immediate sense, it attempted to take a distinct stance on the 'updating', and the problems that an incoming left government would face. Rocard warned the left not to deny the existence of economic constraints that would necessarily influence future government choices.

'Si l'impréparation, la suffisance, le mépris des données techniques des problèmes, le refus de reconnaître l'existence des contraintes les plus lourdes, attitudes que l'on rencontre déjà ici ou là dans le Parti, se répandaient à l'excès, alors, c'en serait fait de nos chances' (89).

If the left sought a durable exercise of power, it had to recognise these constraints. In particular, Rocard argued that the left's social objectives had to respect overall economic equilibriums, and that the market, rather than the plan, would remain the global regulatory factor of the economy. Further, nationalisation was a tool of economic policy, but not a principle of socialism itself. It was not therefore necessary for a future left government

89. Rocard's speech is reprinted in La NRS, 27, (1977), pp. 69-76; p. 70.

formally to nationalise subsidiaries - as demanded by the PCF - of the groups designated for nationalisation,

since effective control of subsidiaries could be assured without nationalisation, itself an expensive operation.

Rocard thus attempted to situate himself as spokesman of the Mendèsiste, modernist left, integrating a recognition of economic constraints into an overall political strategy.

This repeated the divergence noted at the 1966 Grenoble colloque between the 'new left', concerned with conditions for the successful exercise of power and the traditional left, concerned primarily with the conquest of power.

Rocard's speech was an attack not only on the political volontarisme of CERES, but also on Mitterrand's refusal to pose the question of the exercise of power until after March 1978. Finally, Rocard exhorted Mitterrand to take a tough line over nationalisations in the negotiations with the PCF.

In a more ~~genera~~ sense, Rocard attempted to provide a theoretical framework of reference for the courant autogestionnaire. The central theme here was that,

'Il y a deux cultures politiques dans la gauche française. La plus typée, qui fut pour longtemps dominante, elle est Jacobine, elle est centralisatrice, elle est étatique, elle est nationaliste, elle est protectionniste' (90).

Rocard was aiming mainly at the PCF and CERES. By implication, however, this criticism could be extended to

90. Ibid, p. 71.

Mitterrand, artisan of the programmatic agreement with the PCF, the content of which corresponded to Rocard's 'Jacobin culture'. Rocard claimed that the PCG was a synthesis between these two cultures; yet, his rejection of nationalisation as a principle of socialism, amongst other factors, implied a rejection of the PCG as it stood. Rocard continued,

'L'autre culture qui réapparaît dans la gauche française aujourd'hui, elle est là, elle est décentralisatrice, elle refuse les dominations arbitraires, celles des patrons, comme celle de l'état' (91).

This culture was based on autogestion. It involved widespread decentralisation of power structures, and a primacy for the micro-decision making process. The form of autogestion was defined as social and economic experimentation, with Rocard placing particular emphasis on the development of cooperative and associative movements, and self-managed industries. It involved a distrust of the cradle-to-grave state, and a reassertion of civil society against the state. The themes outlined by Rocard were given their fullest development in Pour une nouvelle culture politique, published in October 1977 by two of Rocard's close collaborators (92). The central argument developed here was that Stalinism and Social democracy formed a part of the same Statist political framework and

91. Ibid, p. 72.

92. P. Rosanvallon, and P. Viveret, Pour une nouvelle culture politique, (Paris, Seuil, 1977).

that this could only be overcome by the development of an autogestionnaire, libertarian political culture.

Rocard thus attempted to position himself as a bridging point between an autogestionnaire political culture, based on the experiences of May '68, and the modernist demand for a coherent socialist project, defining conditions for the successful exercise of power. This attempted marriage of Mendèsism, and May '68 formed the basis of Rocard's offensive after March 1978. In so far as Rocard sought to articulate diverse strands of thought in his speech, he had already adopted a presidential strategy, appealing for support within the party, and beyond it. After Nantes, it was clearer than ever that two competing ideological poles existed, personified by Rocard and Chevènement. It was equally clear that Rocard was positioning himself for the future against Mitterrand, should the left be defeated in March 1978.

From the Congress of Nantes, through the breakdown of left unity, and the eventual defeat of the left in March 1978, Rocard's position was one of barely concealed hostility to Mitterrand's leadership. After Nantes, Attali replaced Rocard as the chief PS economic negotiator in the groupe des 15, while Rocard maintained an ominous public silence. This reflected Rocard's determination that the PS

must not capitulate to the PCF over nationalisations, or social benefits. In the first left summit meeting, September 14th, 1977, Rocard was isolated in opposing the Socialist proposal to increase family allowances by 50% ^{by} the end of the first year of a left government (93). Moreover, at the second left summit meeting, September 21st, he was publicly disowned by Mitterrand for opposing PS concessions to the PCF over subsidiaries (94). As the PS leadership fell into the trap of programmatic competition with the PCF, preceding the election, the Mitterrand/Rocard conflict possibly became irreversible. Rocard had consistently opposed the PCF over minimum wage increase levels, a position shared by Mitterrand's closest advisers, in particular Attali (95). Rocard's silence coincided with criticisms made by Maire, CFDT leader, in December 1977, calling for the left to adopt a more economically realistic programme for 1978 (see chapter 2).

With Mitterrand's announcement in January 1978 that the PS had decided to raise its proposed increase for the minimum wage to 2,400F, advocated by the PCF all along, the division between Rocard and Mitterrand deepened (96).

Finally, Rocard refused to support the PS' 'costing' of its programme, and declined to attend a press conference

93. Evin, op cit, pp. 189-90.

94. Ibid, p. 190.

95. See J. Attali, 'Socialisme ou capitalisme d'Etat?', L'Unité, 9-15 September 1977.

96. Le Monde, 6 January 1978.

called to justify this (97). On these specific issues Rocard positioned himself as having refused to caution a U turn which had gravely damaged the credibility of the PS election manifesto. The divergence between the conquest and exercise of power was repeated, as more generally was the relative importance to be given to governing against winning elections. Rocard, representative of the Mendèsiste, modernist left, played the role of Mendès-France within the Fourth Republic, but this time inside the PS.

The breakdown of left unity, in September 1977, removed the constraints imposed on Rocard by participation in the majority, on the basis of official support for programmatic unity. The failure of a strategy (programmatic left unity) in March 1978 changed the conditions for internal party competition. Rocard, the most prominent leader associated with an alternative strategy, henceforth performed an offensive and active role, in a bid to win the party's nomination for the 1981 presidential election. It is to the development of factional competition* from March 1978 - May 1981 that we must now turn.

97. Evin, op cit, p. 191.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Preparing for battle: March 1978 - November 1978

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The defeat of the left in March 1978 completed the changes in the conditions of factional competition begun with the breakdown of left unity in September 1977. The tendency towards artificial convergence within the majority, based on a mutual recognition of constraints (by Mitterrand, the presidential leader, and by the leaders of the other factions within the leadership); and the artificial dichotomy between a heterogeneous majority, and the minority, (which had characterised the party from 1974 - 1978), effectively ended with the election defeat.

Before 1978, the salient characteristics of factional relations had been the external constraint represented by the perceived proximity of power in March 1978, and the internal dynamic predicated upon Mitterrand's presidential leadership, and the artificial dichotomy between the majority and CERES. The conjunction of external constraint and internal dynamic largely explained the conditions for factional competition prior to 1978. Aside from CERES, each leader (Mitterrand, Mauroy and Rocard) accepted constraints on his freedom of internal party action in order to prepare the party for the probable exercise of power after March 1978. For Mauroy and Rocard, this involved a recognition of Mitterrand's presidential authority in return for continuing participation in the leadership; while such

participation was regarded as a precondition for the exercise of future governmental influence. For Mitterrand, this involved recognising that the privileged alliance with Mauroy was central to the leadership, and that he had to accept limitations on the extent to which he could hope to dominate the official leadership. It also involved accepting Rocard's presence within the Secretariat, despite the hostility of his own clan.

Within this pattern of artificial convergence, the presidential cleavage was not so much absent, as displaced. There was no credible alternative nominee to Mitterrand before March 1978; any leader (Rocard) intending to pose his candidacy for 1981 after March 1978 still had to defer to Mitterrand before the 1978 elections, or risk marginalisation. External constraints and internal dynamic translated into the existence of minimal conditions for open factional competition, and a partial public suppression of the inherently complex cleavage structure.

With the breakdown of left unity and the left's defeat in March 1978, these internal and external constraints on the freedom of open factional competition were removed. Mitterrand's presidential authority, which had served as an - albeit imperfect - source of party cohesion, was strongly contested. The conjunction of the election defeat,

(apparently marking the failure of the programmatic left unity strategy), and the presidential perspective of 1981, combined to end the period of Mitterrand as 'leader above faction'. Subsequently, during the key period, March 1978 - April 1979, there was a maximalisation of conditions favouring the expression of factional cleavages. These maximal conditions were due primarily to the changing external salencies of the party's action: the perspective of 1978 had been replaced by that of 1981. The centrality of the presidential cleavage led to a progressive bipolarisation around the party's only ^{two} plausible candidates for 1981, Mitterrand and Rocard. Internal party relations were no longer predicated upon the expectation of the conquest of power in 1978, on the basis of a programmatic alliance with the PCF. This could account for the affirmation of strategic and tactical cleavages, over the nature of left unity.

After March 1978, it is possible to speak of an offensive-defensive dynamic in relation to left unity. Those factions which had based their authority in the party on the programmatic left unity strategy were now forced onto the defensive, for this alliance appeared no longer to exist. This was the problem for Mitterrand and CERES. Conversely, those factions which had historically taken an ambivalent

attitude towards the Common Programme came onto the offensive, with calls for an adaptation of the party's unitary strategy. This was the case for Rocard and the courant des Assises, and to a lesser extent for Mauroy.

After March 1978, there was no longer an artificial tendency towards convergence: rather, a dynamic of disunity established itself, whereby the presidential cleavage was added to by a series of other cleavages, hitherto partially suppressed on account of the party's preparations for 1978. These could be labelled, rather too schematically, as based around organisation; history; ideology/policy; and strategy/tactics. They were of sufficient importance to reject any interpretation of intra-party conflict within the PS from 1978 - 1981 reduced merely to competition between potential presidential candidates. The presidential factor itself was superimposed upon a complex pattern of historical cleavages, simplified by circumstances to that separating the modernist, autogestionnaire left, based around Rocard; and the unitarian, institutional left, based around Mitterrand. To these were added more immediate organisational rivalries, focussed on the party's Metz Congress, in April 1979. Finally, cleavages based around ideology and policy must be noted, applying with most force to CERES and Rocard. It is therefore necessary to speak of

an interrelated cleavage structure.

The result of this interrelated cleavage structure was to promote the maximal open expression of factions at the party's 1979 Metz Congress. The conditions for a resurgence of factionalism stemmed from changing external circumstances, and saliencies, rather than from any structural factors, such as the operation of PR in internal party elections. However, PR enabled this situation of open factional competition to materialise, once that each major faction considered it in its own interests openly to bid for support at the party Congress. It also probably accentuated the tendency towards factionalism, in particular amongst the smaller factions at Metz, wh^{ic}h sought to secure more than 5%, to promote a specific cause (see below). It may also have been true that PR, an invitation for ambitious leaders to present motions for Congress, encouraged each leader to overestimate his strength within the party, and thereby indirectly to stimulate factionalism. It was not, however, the root of factionalism itself which lay in the cleavage structure developed above.

In a televised speech on the evening of the second ballot, Rocard appeared to position himself as potential candidate for the party's presidential nomination in 1981, by urging his audience to look forward to 'the next time'.

If interpreted by his adversaries as presidential rivalry, Rocard sought in the immediate sense to criticise the manner in which the party had conducted its 1978 election campaign. Primarily, Rocard questioned the party's programmatic left unity strategy, thereby resuming his criticisms of the PCG from 1972 - 1974,

'Par loyauté envers le Programme commun de gouvernement, nous l'avons laissé réduire à une plateforme revendicative. C'est peut-être là notre part de responsabilité à nous, socialistes' (1).

This criticism was accompanied by a call to develop a more specific socialist identity, and societal project, seen as the condition for the left's accession to power. Rocard thus attempted to situate himself as spokesman within, and outside of the PS for the various strands of opinion who felt that the party could no longer be constrained by an exclusive reference to the PCG, and must adopt an autonomous left unity strategy. Rocard's speech was taken as a declaration of war by Mitterrand. It had preempted Mitterrand's own reactions to the election defeat, and had implied that partial responsibility was incumbent on the PS itself, an argument categorically rejected by Mitterrand. This opposition hardened when it became clear that Rocard's speech had previously been prepared by his specialist advisers, and exhaustively rehearsed prior to transmission(2).

1. Cited in Faire, 30, (April 1978), p.7.

2. K. Evin, op cit, p. 196.

Through his second ballot speech, Rocard situated himself on the offensive within the PS, with the ultimate aim of the conquest of presidential power in 1981. The essence of this offensive position was that the left's defeat in 1978 signalled the demise of the party's programmatic left unitary strategy, which now had to be adapted to take into account changing political circumstances. Rocard's position reflected his status as the most prominent representative of a tradition hostile to the Common Programme, and as the party's only plausible candidate for 1981, aside from Mitterrand. It thus combined cleavages over strategy and ideology with personal rivalries, and it was virtually inevitable that Rocard's stance would lead to confrontation with Mitterrand.

Initially, Mauroy appeared to align himself behind Rocard in criticising the PCG, and calling for a more autonomous unitary strategy,

'Le Programme commun était, ces derniers temps, un carcan dans lequel nous étions enfermés... Il n'y a pas d'alternative à l'union de la gauche, mais il faudra désormais que les partis soient plus libres qu'ils ne l'étaient sur le plan des programmes' (3).

Mauroy's position was consistent with his demand, regularly expressed before March 1978, for the creation of a 'strong Socialist party'. This central theme had previously provided a bond of coherence between Mitterrand and Mauroy,

3. Cited in Le N/O, 20 March 1978.

whereby both accepted the programme as one weapon in the bid to ensure Socialist ascendancy. After March 1978, however, Mauroy's position was closer to that espoused by Rocard. The party had to adapt its unitary strategy to fit what Mauroy perceived as the changing conditions for the creation of a dominant Socialist party. This demanded that it develop its own programme, which did not merely reiterate the PCG, and that it postpone any left unity agreement until immediately prior to the next legislative election. Rocard's and Mauroy's calls for greater socialist autonomy shared with Mitterrand the aim of creating a dominant PS, contingent on the victory of a Socialist candidate in 1981; they differed over means. Rocard and Mauroy refused Mitterrand's formula of tenir bon (see below) which they feared would constrain the PS to continue competing with the PCF on grounds defined by the latter, alienate the vital centrist electorate, and commit a Socialist President to an untenable economic programme.

Mitterrand's initial reaction to the election defeat was a defensive one, clearly anticipating that there would be pressures within the PS to replace him as leader. At a meeting of the SN on March 30th, 1978, Mitterrand refused to admit that the PS had suffered a defeat, and preferred to talk of a non-victory (4). He simultaneously condemned the

4. Le Monde, 1 April 1978.

PCF's defeatist strategy in 1978, thereby absolving his leadership of any responsibility for the defeat, and stressed that the party had to tenir bon (stand firm) on its programmatic commitments, and refuse any revision of its programme. Further, Mitterrand refused to forward the date of the party Congress - demanded by CERES and certain Rocardiens - and called for the party to *draw up* a Projet Socialiste, effectively as an attempt to divert pressures for an internal party debate over the election defeat, and in apparent concession to those who wanted a distinctive PS line.

If arguing that the PS had to stand firm over the programme, Mitterrand also stressed (for Mauroy's benefit) that there would be no future programmatic discussions with the PCF until immediately prior to legislative elections,

'Plus question de se laisser engluier dans des discussions programmatiques. Plus question non plus d'établir des liens organiques entre les deux partis. Mais on peut conserver la solidarité et la discipline républicaine.. On étudiera, le moment venu - quelques mois avant les législatives - la possibilité de conclure un accord électoral basé sur une plateforme de gouvernement' (5).

Mitterrand's unitary strategy remained axed on the question of the balance of power between left parties. In practice, Mitterrand, Rocard and Mauroy all relegated left unity to a legislative electoral agreement, *involving* either a

5. Cited in Le N/O, 3 April 1978.

governmental contract (Mitterrand, occasionally Mauroy), or merely mutual withdrawal in favour of the best placed left candidate (Rocard). Mitterrand clearly envisaged competing PS and PCF candidates on the first ballot of a presidential election.

On an external level, tenir bon was not an invitation to the PCF to engage in future discussions over a governmental contract, prior to the 1981 presidential election. Rather, it was an attempt to ~~se~~ as rigidly as possible to the commitments that had been made in the PCG, and to empty of any substance PCF accusations of a 'rightward swing'. Mitterrand judged that this would enable the PS to compete for support amongst the PCF's unitary electorate, liable to be attracted by a 'left wing' PS on account of the PCF's sectarian, anti-unitary attitude. Aside from the unitary electorate, Mitterrand predicted that the PCF's vituperative anti-socialist campaign would enhance the PS presidential candidate's image with the centre (6). In short, it was a means to the consistent end of creating a majoritarian PS.

Mitterrand's tenir bon^{policy} also served an internal party function: it was an attempt to demarcate any opponent his leadership - or any leader demanding a revision of the party's programme - as lying on the party's right, and

eventually to appeal to Socialist orthodoxy to disqualify Rocard from effectively challenging the presidential nomination. At the March 30th meeting, Mitterrand anticipated Rocard's challenge for the presidential nomination by arguing that the party's candidate in 1981 could only be Mauroy, Rocard, or himself. This was an attempt to test Mauroy, by provoking the latter into declaring his support for Mitterrand in 1981; by early isolating Rocard, and by preventing the formation of a Rocard/Mauroy axis in opposition to his leadership. It was already clear that for Mitterrand, control over the process leading to the nomination of the party's candidate for 1981 had become the salient internal party objective, and that this necessitated an early confrontation with Rocard before the latter's strategy of attempting to influence internal opinion by external popularity could succeed. Henceforth, Mitterrand's actions could be largely explained in terms of attempting to isolate Rocard, testifying to the centrality of the presidential cleavage. The crucial question was the position that would be adopted by Mauroy.

If Mitterrand had resisted pressures for an early Congress by CERES and certain Rocardians, it seemed likely that the party's National Convention, April 29th, would be transformed into a mini Congress. The most significant factor to emerge from the April Convention was Mauroy's

After his initial offensive with the second ballot speech, Rocard remained publicly silent and was careful not to take responsibility for breaking leadership solidarity. He had attempted to position himself as a plausible presidential candidate, and now sought to consolidate his party base, rather than openly and prematurely opposing Mitterrand, especially when it was unclear how loyal Mauroy remained to Mitterrand's leadership. Nonetheless, Rocard repeated the call at the April Convention for the party to adapt its unitary strategy and thereby gave notice of his intention not to allow internal party debate to be stifled by Mitterrand (9).

If Rocard was careful not to take responsibility for a leadership split, the courant autogestionnaire was determined that a debate be held over the causes of the election defeat, and over the nature of the party itself. Despite a greater convergence between Rocard, and his party base since the Congress of Nantes, in 1977 there remained considerable suspicions with regard to Rocard's motives by elements of his potential following. Thus, in April 1978, Martinet pleaded for a political debate over the party's identity, removed from immediate electoral considerations :

9. Le Monde, 3 May 1978.

'Nous avons espéré la victoire en 1973; nous l'avons crue possible en 1974 et quasi-certaine en 1978. Ne reportons pas toute la mise sur l'élection présidentielle de 1981.' (10).

Given later developments, it is fair to assume that this comment applied to Rocard, as well as to Mitterrand. At the CD of April 28th, several Mitterrandists bitterly criticised the content of a series of post-election articles appearing in Faire (11). These criticisms partially resumed the ideological debate between the courant autogestionnaire and those professing a marxist allegiance within the majority from 1974 - 1977. Joxe, for example, accused Martinet of acting as spokesman for the CFDT, and warned against the dangers of constituting a PS/CFDT axis (12). These incidents were rapidly followed by the resignation of the six Mitterrandist representatives from Faire's sponsoring committee, who publicly accused Faire of expressing 'un seul courant idéologique' (13). In reality, after Rocard's second ballot speech - and its

reprinting in the April edition - Faire became a more overt medium for supporting Rocard's action in the PS, testifying to a closer - if still conflictual - collaboration between the political leader and the ideological courant,

10. G. Martinet, 'Les leçons d'un échec', Faire, 30, (April 1978), p. 4.

11. Le Monde, 3 May 1978.

12. Ibid.

13. Cited in 'Faire: aujourd'hui plus que jamais', Faire, 32, (June 1978), p.9.

despite the critical line adopted by Martinet and others.

The April Convention ended the first phase of reaction in the party to the election defeat. The second phase opened with the publication on June 20th of the Contribution pour le renforcement du Parti socialiste et la victoire du socialisme en France, signed by 30 prominent Mitterrandists (14). After the election defeat, Mitterrand's lieutenants realised the potential threat posed to their position in the organisation by the party's poor electoral performance: it was likely to lead to demands for organisational reform. Prior to March 1978, the Mitterrandists had been heavily represented at all levels of the organisation, and often they owed their positions uniquely to Mitterrand's favour. Having failed to capture the highest posts in the state, these leaders now sought to consolidate their control over the party. They scarcely concealed their desire for Mitterrand to constitute an homogeneous majority at the next Congress. The strength of the leader/follower basis of Mitterrand's support helps explain why any attack on Mitterrand was regarded as a direct threat to the influence of the Mitterrandists in the party. The development of intra-party cleavages after March 1978 led the Mitterrandists - and especially the sabras - to challenge not only Rocard's lèse-majesté, but also Mauroy, and his demands for

14. Published in La Nouvelle Revue socialiste, 32, (1978).

organisational reform.

The publication of the Contribution marked a reorientation of Mitterrand's defensive strategy, away from a vain attempt to silence internal party debate, and towards a return to socialist orthodoxy that can be classed as neo-Molletist. The salient characteristics of this neo-Molletism were: a tactical use of ideology; a marked anti-intellectualism, in particular in relation to the intellectual left wing media, (suspected of favouring Rocard); and an attempt to tighten control over the party organisation. An immediate parallel can be drawn between Mitterrand's attempt to represent socialist orthodoxy, in order to marginalise Rocard, and Mollet's opposition to Defferre, from 1963 - 1965, in the name of retaining a 'pure' Socialist party, or even Kautsky's denunciation of Bernstein's revisionism in the pre-1914 SPD (15).

The primary condition of Mitterrand's neo-Molletism was a tactical use of ideology. For Mitterrand, ideology had consistently performed a precise internal, as well as external, tactical function. From 1971 - 1972, Mitterrand had relied on Chevènement to elaborate the party's programme, partly to underline the authenticity of the change of leadership occurring at Épinay, in contrast to Mollet.

Similarly, from 1975 - 1977, when Mitterrand attempted to

15. See Simmons, French Socialists In Search of a Role, Chapters nine and ten.

marginalise CERES in the opposition, he had given a - limited - degree of leeway to the courant autogestionnaire. The Contribution served a similar aim: the evidence of Rocard/Mauroy convergences led Mitterrand to prepare the ground for a possible CERES alliance. It was no coincidence that the publication of the Contribution immediately preceded CERES 12th Colloque, held at Évry on June 23rd (see below). The ideological bridges the Contribution sought to establish with CERES related to anti-modernism; anti-revisionism; and fidelity to the 'line of Épinay', a concept symbolising the return to orthodoxy, balm to CERES' offended sense of its own historical importance :

'Tout langage, tout comportement qui donnerait l'impression qu'une autre option est possible, toute recherche de solutions prétendument techniques ou modernistes, feraient courir à notre Parti et à ses chances de victoire un danger mortel' (16).

The immediate aim of the Contribution was to force Mauroy and Rocard to situate themselves with regard to the Mitterrandist leadership clan: either they recognise the leading organisational role played by the Mitterrandists, or else accept demotion into the minority. Since these conditions were evidently unacceptable to Rocard, especially given that the text acted as a declaration of ideological war on the courant autogestionnaire, the real aim of the Contribution was to test Mauroy. It was believed that Mauroy

16. 'Contribution....', op cit, p. 12.

could be separated from Rocard, and would be constrained to make a public declaration in favour of Mitterrand, thereby isolating Rocard prior to his demotion into the minority at the next party Congress (17).

A further aspect of Mitterrand's neo-Molletism was the strengthening of his control over the organisation, making him more starkly than ever head of the most powerful organisation faction. At the April Convention, Mitterrand announced that he intended to take direct control over the Secteur d'Entreprises, previously administered by délégué général A. Rannou, now clearly aligned behind Mauroy (18). This was followed by Mitterrand attempting to diminish the control exercised by Mauroy over party finances, in his capacity as National Secretary for Coordination, and by his attempts to launch a party daily without Mauroy's consent (19).

Mauroy's reaction to the Contribution was : hostile.

This reaction must be seen against the background of a developing organisational cleavage separating Mitterrand and Mauroy, which stemmed from the Assises of socialism, in 1974, the Congress of Pau in 1975, and the Congress of Nantes, in 1977. Mauroy had tolerated the increasing weight of the Mitterrandists in the organisation since Pau largely as a result of a political constraint: the

17. Le Monde, 23 June 1978.

18. Le P/R, 70, April-May 1978.

19. Le Monde, 23 June 1978; Le N/O, 20-26 November 1978.

recognition of Mitterrand as leader above faction, in preparation for March 1978. With the election defeat, the question of organisational reform was pursued by Mauroy, as imbalances within the organisation appeared less tolerable.

At the party's April Convention, Mauroy constrained Mitterrand to agree to establish a Commission to draw up a règlement interieur, which would consider the means of introducing the direct election of members of the CD and BE at Congress (20). In its pure form, this would retain the principle of the proportional representation of competing motions, but would give motion delegates the right to elect the leaders of the factions on an open ballot at Congress, as proposed by Percheron, head of the Pas-de-Calais federation (21). Mauroy also proposed that there should be direct regional representation on the CD, another means of increasing the influence of the large federations (22). Mauroy was thus determined to restore the previous balance of power within the leadership prior to Pau, based on a relative equilibrium between Mitterrand and himself, and to end the system of leadership cooption in operation since Grenoble, in 1973. Cooption had enabled Mitterrand, through the closed list, PR system of election

20. Le Monde, 29 April 1978.

21. Reported by Mauroy, to the Commission Exécutive Fédérale of the Nord Federation, 10 July 1978, PS archives, Lille, (henceforth CEF-Nord)

22. Le Monde, 7 July 1978.

to party organs, steadily to promote his protégés on to the CD and BE. It had reduced the CD to merely rubber-stamping decisions of the Secretariat, within which the Mitterrandists were increasingly dominant. Direct election would enhance the status of the CD (in theory the supreme body of the party in between the bi-annual Congress) and the BE, and would theoretically ensure that the Secretariat was an accurate reflection of the various forces within the majority, thereby modifying Mitterrand's monarchical control. As an homme de synthèse, Mauroy originally associated the call for direct election with CERES' reintegration into the leadership (23).

Proposals over the direct election of members of the CD, or regional representation on the party's governing organs would both increase the weight of the large federations, whose true influence would be reflected in the manner they voted at Congress. Hence, the Mitterrandists feared - not without reason - that any reforms increasing the power of the large federations risked dislodging them from their privileged positions within the organisation (24). The PR closed list system, adopted at Épinay, had altered the balance of power within the party. Power no longer resulted from deals between the leaders of a handful of the largest federations, as ^{was the case} towards the end of Mollet's SFIO.

23. Johnson, op cit, p. 257.

24. See Pfister's analysis in Le Monde, 23 June 1978.

The large federations had been declining in relative weight within the party as a whole, on account of membership renewal from Épinay - March 1978 (25). Control of a large federation, if of supreme regional influence, had by itself only a limited impact at national level, where the composition of the leadership resulted from negotiations between the leaders of the factions. The manner in which these negotiations had been conducted since Pau, in 1975, now led the heads of these large federations (especially Nord and Pas-de-Calais - with Bouches-du-Rhône remaining an exception) to complain of underrepresentation within the party leadership. (26). Mitterrand had accentuated this under-representation by promoting leaders who usually had no significant regional base within the party (27). Mauroy, proud boss of the party's second largest federation, sought through organisational reform to impose a more collegial rule on Mitterrand, while it was clear that Mitterrand and his clan would resist any attempts to lessen their authority.

The opposition between Mitterrand and Mauroy shows that not all PS internecine cleavages can be reduced to the central presidential one. Mitterrand's and Mauroy's rivalry

25. From nearly 40% at Épinay, the three largest federations (Bouches-du-Rhône, Nord, Pas-de-Calais) had declined to under 25% at Nantes. Bulletin socialiste, 15 June 1971; Le P/R, 63, July 1977.

26. Le Monde, 7 July 1978.

27. With certain notable exceptions, such as Mermeze (Isère), Fillioud (Drôme), Joxe (Saône et Loire).

could only indirectly be linked to the presidential election: at the April Convention, Mauroy had publicly aligned himself behind Mitterrand as the party's best candidate. The immediate rivalry was an organisational one. Mauroy's demand that Mitterrand refrain from attacking Rocard could again be related to the organisational cleavage: any attack on Rocard was indirectly an attack on Mauroy, since Rocard's exclusion would benefit not Mauroy, but Mitterrand's protégés. It was also, a posteriori, an attack on the Assises operation, for which Mauroy was responsible.

Mauroy's proposals over organisational reform had been accepted unanimously in Nord, and led to the reaffirmation of a powerful Nord/Pas-de-Calais axis: Percheron, head of Pas-de-Calais, was insistent on the need for the direct election of leaders (28). By the end of July, 1978, Mauroy's propositions over the direct election of leaders by Congress were supported in the Commission on the règlement intérieur by the Rocardiens and CERES, the common bond being a reaction against Mitterrand's constitutional monarchy (29). By calling for organisational reform, Mauroy underlined his claim to act as head of a courant de synthèse, and as a spokesman of the party organisation, against the perceived excessive presidentialism of Mitterrand and Rocard, both of whom he suspected of seeking to control the party

28. CEF-Nord, 10 July 1978.

29. Reported in Le N/O, 25 September 1978.

merely as a means to the presidency. Mauroy thus positioned himself as defender of the vieille maison (see chapter 2 for a fuller discussion of Mauroy as homme de synthèse).

Mauroy made known his opposition to the Contribution at the SN meeting of July 5th, where he accused the Mitterrandists of 'inadmissible factional activities' (30). His opposition was expressed so forcefully because Mitterrand's supporters appeared to be organising themselves within the party, with Mitterrandist meetings being held at Massy, and Vienne (31). Mauroy was privately enraged with these meetings, labelling them as 'une véritable déclaration de guerre' (32). Effectively, Mermaz's attempts to rally the federal cadres elected on motion 1 at Nantes around Mitterrand paid scant regard to organisational protocol, whereby Mauroy, *second* in the hierarchy, had his authority over the federations openly flouted by Mermaz, Secretary for the federations, who was theoretically under Mauroy's control (33).

Mauroy also opposed the political implications of the Contribution: any attempt to marginalise Rocard by relying on CERES' support risked gravely damaging party unity. At the CD of July 8th, Mauroy demanded either that the date of

30. Le Monde, 7, 8 July 1978.

31. Du Roy and Schneider, Le Roman de la Rose, p. 255.

32. CEF-Nord, 10 July 1978.

33. Du Roy and Schneider, op cit, p. 253.

the party Congress be forwarded to the end of 1978 (a proposition for which there would have been a possible majority at the CD, on the basis of a Mauroy/Rocard/CERES alliance) or else that Mitterrand publicly disown the Contribution, and establish a working group to draw up a motion for Congress on the basis of the Nantes majority (Mitterrand, Mauroy, Rocard) (34). However, Mauroy made it clear that, should the date of Congress be advanced, each faction should present its own motion, that is, that he would initially go it alone (35). Ironically, therefore, it was Mauroy who first publicly advocated the possible *break up*

of the Nantes majority, a majority which in his own interests it was essential to preserve, and only within which his claim to act as homme de synthèse had any meaning.

With the publication of the Contribution, Mitterrand had publicly descended from his pedestal as 'leader above faction', and served notice of his intention to secure Mauroy's continuing subordination (thereby marginalising Rocard) or else to take the initiative for the formation of a new leadership alliance. *Before* March 1978, Mitterrand had promoted his own factional interests by posing as the rassembleur of the socialists, and as a 'leader above faction' that it was impossible for the leaders of the other factions

34. Le Monde, July 7 1978.

35. Ibid.

in the majority to challenge. The Contribution risked reducing Mitterrand in the eyes of the activists to being another faction leader. Once Mauroy refused to incline to the Mitterrandist initiative, Mitterrand had effectively to withdraw the Contribution and face an apparent humiliation. Failure to do so risked sacrificing the capital accumulated through his public image as rassembleur and of precipitating an early Congress.

At the CD of July 8th, Mitterrand thus agreed to withdraw the Contribution, to reaffirm the solidarity of the Nantes majority, and to cease his attacks on Rocard (36). In return, Mauroy dropped his demand for a vote amongst majority delegates on his proposition to establish a working group to elaborate a joint resolution, underlining the continuing solidarity of the majority. Ultimately, the continuing artificial unity of the Nantes majority was secured by the CD's acceptance of a resolution drafted by Mitterrand, and supported by Defferre (37). Mauroy's climb down pointed already to the inconsistencies of his strategy: he was forced into an involuntary opposition to Mitterrand, but felt incapable, or unwilling, of maintaining his demands, once it appeared as if this would lead to confrontation with Mitterrand. Ultimately, Mauroy could not bear the prospect

36. Ibid, July 8 1978.

37. Ibid. 'Déclaration de François Mitterrand', (to CD of 8th July) reprinted in Le P/R, 73, August 1978.

of a break with Mitterrand, but his lèse majesté actively promoted this outcome. Finally, Mauroy was unwilling to break with Defferre, boss of the powerful Bouches-du-Rhône federation, and conspiratorial ally from the SFIO era.

By constraining Mauroy, and therefore Rocard (Rocard could not appear to be marginalised in the leadership) to sign his declaration, Mitterrand managed to reverse the tactical error of the Contribution, and to reestablish himself as rassembleur, unlikely to be credited with responsibility for a leadership split. The support given to Mitterrand by Defferre at the CD should be underlined: it considerably nuanced the popular appreciation that Mauroy 'held' the ex-SFIO party activists, and meant that Mitterrand need not fear a united front of the big federations.

By signing Mitterrand's text, Mauroy and Rocard had to accept Mitterrand's definition of what constituted factional behaviour, with the result that he could later accuse both Mauroy and Rocard of factionalism, for daring to oppose his leadership :

'D'une façon générale.. il faut que cesse au plus tôt cette rivalité de courants avoués ou non, déterminés une fois pour toutes, et qui constituent en fait autant de partis dans un même parti que chacun tend à dominer dans l'intention, je le crois sincère, de le servir, mais que tous affaiblissent' (38).

As head of the most important organisation faction,

38. 'Déclaration de François Mitterrand'.

Mitterrand was again able to define conditions of factionalism, and to juxtapose the interests of party, for which his leadership was a guarantee, against those of faction, ultimately being defined as being in opposition to him. It was as a man confident of his strategic advantage and tactical superiority over his opponents that Mitterrand prepared for the party's Metz Congress.

Rocard resumed his offensive with a tour of the federations, in the summer of 1978 (39). This was followed by a series of media interventions, during September - November 1978, in the course of which Rocard clearly positioned himself as a future candidate for the presidential nomination. All this took place against a background of the publication of numerous opinion polls favourable to him. The essence of Rocard's appeal after March 1978 lay on three interrelated fronts: his advocacy of an autonomous left unity strategy; his location as a source of confluence for the various strands of the deuxième gauche; his status as the party's 'only plausible presidential candidate apart from Mitterrand.

An autonomous left unity strategy meant for Rocard a rejection of a programmatic accord with the PCF in the foreseeable future, and limited left unity to the operation of 'republican discipline' in legislative

39. Johnson, The Long March of the French Left, pp. 258-9.

elections (40). Any government contract linking PS and PCF could only be determined after ^{the} legislative elections; meanwhile the PS had to develop its own identity and refuse to tie its hands in advance to a government of left unity with a PCF determined to sabotage the left's chances of victory in 1981 (41). While excluding any alliance with the right, Rocard remained silent preceding Metz over whether a dissolution of the National Assembly would follow a presidential victory, as a prelude to legislative elections and the formation of a government of left unity. To many, this appeared to give substance to Rocard's rivals' claims that the autonomous left unity strategy would lead, ipso facto, to future collaboration between a Socialist president, and elements of the existing right wing majority in the National Assembly. For Rocard, however, the threat of future political conflict or elections would weaken his own appeal to the centre and make the chances of the election of a Socialist President more unlikely.

Rocard called for each party to develop its own specific identity, and for there to be a confrontation of competing political projects only after this process had taken place. (42). Thus formulated, Rocard's autonomous

40. See, inter alia, 'La faute à qui: un entretien avec Michel Rocard', Le Nouvel Observateur, 25.3.78; 'Un entretien avec Michel Rocard', Le Nouvel Observateur, 2 October 1978.

41. This is the logic underpinning Rocard's view of the left alliance, though it is not explicitly stated as such. See 'Un entretien avec Michel Rocard'.

42. 'La faute à qui?'.

left unity strategy could be opposed to Mitterrand's tenir bon formulation. For Rocard, the PS had to develop its autonomy from the PCF at the level of the programme, as it had failed to do from September 1977 - March 1978, or even throughout the experience of the PCG. If the PS attempted to compete with the PCF through a detailed programme - one aspect of Mitterrand's strategy - Rocard argued that it risked remaining hostage to a largely PCF inspired programme, based on a bureaucratic centralist model of society and unrealistic in its economic plans and projections. Such imitation risked alienating important sections of the PS' potential electorate, on the centre and centre-left. Indeed, the PCF would be constrained to evolve only in so far as it was placed on the defensive by the PS differentiating itself through the elaboration of its own project, defined as the translation of autogestion into a concrete governmental programme (43):

'S'il (PCF) a commencé son aggiornamento, c'est grâce au Parti socialiste et à toutes les organisations qui, du PSU à la CFDT ont renouvelé la pensée de la gauche... Qu'il s'agisse de la régionalisation ou de l'autogestion, le PC a combattu toutes les idées nouvelles lors de leur émergence.. Tout cela montre bien que le seul moyen de parachever l'évolution communiste est que le courant socialiste autonome reprenne sa marche en avant' (44).

In essence, authentic competition must not be based on

43. 'Un entretien avec Michel Rocard'.

44. 'La faute à qui'.

imitation, but on differentiation. The central alternative advocated by Rocard to Mitterrand's tenir bon formula, was the need to adapt the party's unitary strategy by developing the Union des Forces Populaires (UFP). The substance of this union was that the party was not a self-sufficient entity; it had to work in close collaboration with trade unions, associative, and grass roots movements. This was in particular the case for those movements which had largely developed since May 1968 and which had too often been considered as marginal by the mainstream left: minority ethnic and regional rights, womens' rights, consumer movements, ecological groups (45). For the courant autogestionnaire, these groups gave a concrete expression to the demand for greater control, seen as the legacy of May '68: they provided the bases of a new alliance through which a new political culture based on autogestion and social experimentation could be established (46). Through forging closer links with the parapolitical associative structure, Rocard argued that the PS would compensate for the weakness of its *roots* in the workplace and localities (47).

This viewpoint was partly shared by Mauroy who characteristically placed greater emphasis on the activities of Socialist local

45. This theme is developed in detail in Rocard's motion for Metz, Le P/R, 79, February 1979.

46. See R. Chapuis, 'Trois tâches pour le PS', Faire, 35-34, (July-August 1978), pp. 28-33.

47. M. Rocard, 'Quel Parti', Le P/R, 71, June 1978.

authorities (48). It was hoped by Rocard and Mauroy that such an infrastructure would allow the PS to compete more effectively with the PCF within the working class, as well as to elaborate policy in closer collaboration with social partners whose support would be necessary for a future socialist government. Rocard's motion at Metz called on the party to cooperate with trade unions and grass roots movements in the *drawing up* of the Projet socialiste.

In practical terms, the UFP advocated a closer collaboration between the PS and the CFDT, in addition to the various movements outlined above. Any such collaboration would be vigorously opposed by Mitterrand, as well as by CERES, both of whom suspected the CFDT of being a vehicle for promoting Rocard's takeover of the party. By calling for the development of the UFP, Rocard appeared to resume the autogestionnaire legacy of May '68, whereby the political party had to act in collaboration with the wider social movement, in the attempt to create an autonomous courant socialiste.

Rocard's renewed offensive can be traced to an interview given on September 17th 1978, where he drew the lesson from recent poll evidence suggesting that he had overtaken Mitterrand in terms of public popularity:

48. See Mauroy's motion (B) for Metz, Le P/R, 79, February 1979.

'Un certain style politique, ou qu'un certain archaïsme politique est condamné; qu'il faut parler plus vrai, plus près des faits' (49).

Rocard's comments were immediately taken as a declaration of war by the Mitterrandists, with Estier, L'Unité editorialist, interpreting Rocard's reference to 'a certain political archaism' as a direct attack on Mitterrand (50). Rocard responded that his comments had not been directed against Mitterrand in particular, but against the whole political class in general (51).

If it is possible to speak of Rocardism, we must draw a distinction between two related, but historically distinct strands. The first of these was the legacy of the Mendèsiste, modernist left, expressed outside the mainstream left in the 1960's by elements of the PSU, the CFTC Réconstruction minority, (becoming the CFDT in 1964), and the Club movement. This movement was given its most concrete expression at the Grenoble colloque, in 1966 (see chapter 6). The other strand was the legacy of May '68, as expressed mainly through the PSU, and the CFDT, 1968 - 1972, and the theme of autogestionnaire socialism. Rocard sought to articulate the 'spirit of Grenoble', and the 'spirit of May'. To this historical heritage, must be added the image Rocard attempted to create within the PS, and in external public opinion, from March 1978 onwards as

49. Le Monde, 17-18 September 1978.

50. L'Unité, 22 September 1978.

51. Ibid, 29 September 1978.

representative of a new political generation, and the party's most plausible candidate for 1981.

Both as representative of the Mendèsiste left, and as a leader of presidential calibre, Rocard attempted to associate himself with the images of competence, modernity, and honesty (52). Rocard's presumed competence was mainly economic: it rested on his background as an Inspecteur des Finances, and on his calls, preceding and after the 1977 ^{with the Communists} split, for the left to revise its social objectives to take into account economic constraints, and on the need for a rigorous financial management. This aspect of Rocard's appeal could explain the confidence he enjoyed in some business circles. It was further related to the wider question of **the** necessary conditions for **the** durable exercise of **power by the** left, a theme characterising the modernist left at least since the 1966 Grenoble colloque. The theme of competence was integrally linked to that of modernity. By condemning the 'archaism' of existing political styles and structures, Rocard attempted to harness the theme of modernity to his cause, drawing a distinction between the outmoded (implicitly represented by Mitterrand's leadership, and the reference to the PCG), and the new (the implied prospect of victory in 1981, if Rocard were candidate).

This echoed Rocard's condemnation of the institutional left

52. See 'L'effet Rocard', Politique Aujourd'hui, 5-4, (March-April 1980), pp. 91-104.

as archaic in the 1960's and early 1970's.

The theme of modernity illustrated the ambiguities surrounding Rocard's appeal: it could be interpreted differently by differing constituencies within and outside of the PS. As such it was linked to Rocard's wider presidential strategy. If any substance can be given to Rocard's use of modernity - aside from its utility in his quest for the presidential nomination - it was a plea for a greater autonomy for civil society, in reaction to the left's traditional project, excessively centered on the development of the Jacobin state as a means of establishing social justice. It also signified a reaction against traditional conceptions of forms of party, with their military style organisation, and coded language, to which must be added a rejection of the ideological mode of explanation, as cherished by the PCF and CERES, and to which Mitterrand now had tactical resort (53).

The third quality image Rocard attempted to project was that of honesty, summarised in the formula parler vrai .

By attempting to harness honesty, Rocard implicitly sought to capture support from those rejecting Mitterrand's resort to neo-Molletist tactics. The course of events from March

1978 - May 1981 would underline ^{the fact} that Rocard was prepared to

53. 'Quel Parti', op cit. On the courant autogestionnaire and ideology, see Rosanvallon and Viveret, Pour une nouvelle culture politique, pp. 45-50.

caution manoeuvres - such as over the Projet socialiste - which were not consistent with the sole criteria of truth. If Rocard appealed through these themes to elements normally associated with the centre of the political spectrum, he sought equally to situate himself as spokesman of the autogestionnaire left, claiming the heritage of May '68. Many party activists saw in Rocard a political leader who openly referred to autogestion and May '68, as much as a future presidential candidate. This may explain why Rocard was simultaneously more popular than Mitterrand within the polls amongst those situating themselves on the left, as well as on the centre, and centre right of the political spectrum (54).

From March 1978 to April 1979, the contours of a heterogeneous courant Rocard remained uncertain; the credibility of an eventual challenge by Rocard for the presidential nomination would rest on his ability to articulate a variety of strands of opinion and interest, within and outside of the party. The core of his potential party base was the courant autogestionnaire, essentially linking those joining the party after the Assises of socialism, in October 1974, with those supporting the Martinet amendment in 1975, then representing 15.5% of the

54. Johnson, op cit, p. 255.

party. Rocard hoped eventually for the support of those who had accepted the PCG as a tactical necessity, and who now sought to adapt the party's unitary strategy, but who had hitherto mistrusted Rocard as representative of the christian left (55). Finally, Rocard appealed to the mass of uncommitted élus, whose future depended on a restoration of the party's electoral fortunes.

Rocard's presidential strategy had to cope both with his position within the PS, and with public opinion. Briefly, he hoped to capitalise on his strength outside the party, to impose himself within it. His external popularity had long been a source of contention with Mitterrand, and the polls from 1975 to 1977 tended to create the public image of Rocard as Mitterrand's protégé and probable successor (56). While Mitterrand's popularity waned from September 1977 onwards and Rocard's rose consistently from around that date, Mitterrand kept his advantage until the 1978 elections (57). On the eve of March 1978, Mitterrand retained a significant advance over Rocard: 51% of a SOFRES poll hoped that Mitterrand 'would play an important role in the future', as against 37% for Rocard.

55. Hamon and Rotman, L'Effet Rocard, pp. 310-311.

56. Interview with P. Viveret, 5 July 1983.

57. The following figures are from J.L. Parodi, and P. Perrineau, 'Les leaders socialistes devant l'opinion', Projet, 134, (April 1979), pp. 475-92.

From March to October 1978, Mitterrand's popularity rating decreased massively within the left electorate, declining by 22% on the SOFRES scale among PS, and 11% among PCF identifiers, (wish to see play an important role in the future). Rocard was the only leader on the left to increase his popularity during this period, by 3%. If this evolution was more marked amongst UDF and RPR, than the PCF electorates, by October 1978, Rocard had not only overtaken Mitterrand within the electorate as a whole (40 - 39 on the SOFRES scale), but also amongst those identifying with the PS (61-60). This gap had increased considerably by February 1979, on the eve of Metz, when Rocard led Mitterrand by 13% on the SOFRES scale (49 - 36).

Rocard also appeared to have established a considerable lead over Mitterrand in the public's appreciation of who would be the party's best candidate in 1981, although continuing to trail Mitterrand on 'presidential qualities'. By October 1978, Rocard led Mitterrand by 34% to 27% in response to the question 'who would be the best PS candidate in the 1981 presidential election', a lead which had widened to 22% by January 1979 (42 - 20). By this latter date, Rocard had established a commanding lead over Mitterrand amongst PS identifiers' appreciations of the best candidate (50 - 30). (The poll evidence will be considered in more detail in the next chapter).

In the absence of precise indications of the extent of his audience within the PS, Rocard calculated that the left's defeat in March 1978 might lead to a reorientation amongst the party activists in favour of a more autonomous strategy. This led him to engage in an extensive campaign within the party, from the summer of 1978 onwards, in an attempt to build a substantial party base, that extended beyond the boundaries of the courant autogestionnaire. Rocard was equally determined to campaign outside the party, to increase his ratings within the polls, and his presidential stature, and to attempt to use his external popularity as a means of competing for support within the PS (58). This dual offensive was intended firstly to increase Rocard's weight within the party at the next Congress (officially to force a reequilibrium within the leadership on Mitterrand); and ultimately to impose himself on the PS as its candidate in 1981 (59). Both these courses of action would bring Rocard into conflict with Mitterrand, as established presidential leader, and with the Mitterrandists, fearful for their organisational domination if Rocard became the party's candidate.

It was clear then, that once Rocard stressed a more specific identity, he risked confrontation with Mitterrand,

58. See Pfister 'Michel Rocard veut briguer l'Elysee en 1981', Le Monde, 23 September 1978.

59. Ibid; Hamon and Rotman, op cit, pp. 260-1.

and demotion into the minority at Congress, a position from which it would subsequently be more difficult to secure the presidential nomination. But without demarcating himself, he could not hope to run for the presidency. Although not expecting to secure a majority at Metz, Rocard had little option but to affirm a more specific presence within the PS after March 1978, if he sought the party's eventual presidential nomination: there was sufficient evidence to suggest that Mitterrand would not accept him as his protégé. Rocard may have hoped for an alliance with Mauroy, whereby the latter would control the party organisation, and he would secure the presidential nomination. Certain evidence supports such a hypothesis, although the extent to which Rocard believed in its realisation is unclear (60). While aware of Mauroy's reservations over a joint motion, Rocard must have hoped that, faced with the evidence of increasing CERES - Mitterrand collaboration, Mauroy would eventually side with him at Congress. The prospects of such an alliance were shattered by Mauroy's Congress strategy (see below).

However, if Rocard conquered some 30% of Congress mandates at Mitterrand's expense, that might prove a

60. Viveret categorically rejects the idea that Rocard sought to overturn Mitterrand's leadership, in favour of the re-equilibrium thesis, (Interview, 5 July 1983). Rocard's later comments, however, lend the former hypothesis a certain weight.

sufficiently powerful base to attract Mauroy, and force Mitterrand to ^{come to terms} with them, and thereby to share the advantages of leadership, in the contest for the party's nomination. Prior to ^{the} Congress, Rocard's advisers continued to believe that Rocard might secure around 30% of mandates, able thereby to negotiate a new majority including Mauroy and Mitterrand (61). This calculation, along with the necessity to maximise Rocard's media coverage, explains the conviction with which Rocard's advisers insisted that he table a distinct motion at Congress. If neither of these options materialised, Rocard would have to accept demotion into the minority as preferable to a continuing subordination to Mitterrand within the majority, and rely more openly on external developments to conquer the party for his candidacy. But it was not easy for anyone not in control of the party apparatus to reconcile intra-party with extra-party strategy.

On November 21st, 1978, Le Matin announced that Rocard was ready to present a motion for the Metz Congress, a report he neither denied nor affirmed (62). This leak must be seen as tactically naive. It appeared to create the impression that Rocard was responsible for the disunity of the leadership, and thereby risked taking responsibility for any eventual leadership split. Moreover, it succeeded in temporarily alienating the courant critique that it had

61. Ibid; Le Monde, 23 September, 25 November 1978.

62. Ibid, 23 November 1978.

intended to constrain into more open support. This courant grouped those based around Martinet, who were on a similar political wavelength to Rocard, but distrusted his presidential ambitions (63). Aside from Martinet, this nascent courant was composed of a number of young élus determined to carry to Congress the debate over the reasons for the party's defeat in 1978: Taddei, Gau, Le Pensec, Josselin. Following the Matin announcement, they threatened not to support Rocard, 'merely to substitute one pope for another', and to table their own motion (64). Any too openly presidential strategy risked losing the support of this influential sub-faction. It was the courant critique whose initiative lay behind the presentation of the ^{four} documents as a joint Contribution for Metz, and it may have considered joining forces with the CERES minority (see below p.364). Their decision to rally to Rocard at Metz reflected the probability that they would not have received 5% at Congress, rather than any uncritical attachment to Rocard.

Rocard's dilemma was that it was imperative to attempt to widen his constituency, and escape from the left christian, cédétiste stereotype of his support among the activists. Yet to appear too openly to display personal ambition risked

63. Le N/O, 11 December 1978.

64. Ibid.

alienating sections of his potential party base, and particularly the left christian activists, committed to a principle and distrustful of politics. During the campaign for Metz, Rocard had therefore openly to appear as spokesman of the courant autogestionnaire, rather than merely as a plausible presidential candidate. It is to the campaign for Metz, and to the Metz Congress itself that we must now turn.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

Confrontation: November 1978 - April 1979

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If Mitterrand had overplayed his hand with the Contribution his intention had been clear: to isolate Rocard, and to secure Mauroy's subordination to his leadership. Even after the final compromise reached over the règlement intérieur, in October 1978, which removed any direct threat to the Mitterrandists in the organisation (see below), Mitterrand now considered Mauroy as a potential constraint on his freedom of manoeuvre within the leadership. He had therefore either to separate Mauroy from Rocard, (while securing the former's clear subordination), or to attempt to form an homogeneous leadership, in which he could maximise his control over the organisation and control the process leading to the selection of the party's candidate in 1981. His intra and extra-party strategy was coherent - an advantage only the head of the organisation faction enjoyed.

After the Contribution, the party's National Convention, November 25-26th, 1978, can be seen as Mitterrand's second step towards the homogenisation of the leadership (1). Mitterrand's lieutenants, after their relative setback over the Contribution, were determined to push Mitterrand towards presenting his own motion to Congress, as a prelude to completing their conquest of the party organisation. By November, prominent Mitterrandists envisaged an alliance with CERES at Congress, if this was the necessary cost of

1. Mitterrand's speech reprinted in L'Unité, 1-7, 8-14 December 1978.

Rocard's exclusion, and Mauroy's insubordination, a threat to their domination of the organisation (2).

There were, however, increasingly acrimonious rivalries amongst Mitterrand's lieutenants themselves. Mitterrand's sabra protégés were less tainted with the party's historical origins than the Conventionnels, and so less likely to be held responsible for the party's failure in March 1978. In the campaign for Metz, Mitterrand relied mainly on a new generation of vociferously anti-Rocardien leaders rather than the Conventionnels (3). Quilès, elected the only PS deputy for Paris in 1978, was given responsibility for organising groups of 'core' Mitterrandists in each federation. He was aided by a team of hitherto unknown figures: Auroux, Nucci, Emmanuelli. Finally, Jospin assumed more than ever the function of Mitterrand's heir-apparent and spokesman. These developments enabled Mitterrand at Metz to give the image of being a force of continuing attraction for some of the party's most dynamic young leaders..

Mitterrand's speech to the Convention clearly presaged a split not only with Rocard, but also with Mauroy. He declared that any courant tabling a contribution for the CD of January 6th, would be regarded as having broken leadership solidarity (4). Mauroy and Rocard were given the

2. See Mermaz's speech to the CN, Le Monde, 26-27 December 1978.

3. Du Roy and Schneider, op cit, pp. 236-8.

4. Le Monde, 26-27 November 1978.

choice between rallying to Mitterrand on subordinate terms, a condition Rocard could never accept, or taking responsibility for a confrontation at Congress. Mitterrand still hoped to detach Mauroy from Rocard, but only on a subordinate basis, and he was clearly prepared to face the possibility of a joint Mauroy/Rocard motion. It is probable that Mitterrand gambled on Mauroy overestimating his strength within the party, and that the 'Party of Épinay' would remain loyal to his leadership.

At the Convention, Mitterrand called for loyalty to the 'line of Épinay'. By alluding to the 'line of Épinay', Mitterrand signalled in an unambiguous manner his intention to use neo-Molletist tactics to pose as defender of the socialist tradition, and guardian of the orthodox, central line within the party. The function of this socialist orthodoxy was primarily to defend positions of established authority by delegitimising a party rival. It was also necessary to provide Mitterrand with his majorité de rechange. A return to Socialist orthodoxy implied the return of CERES into a revised Épinay majority. It would be a reminder that the Épinay alliance had excluded Rocard, and that Rocard and the PSU had previously fought both the Épinay leadership and the PCG. Both Mitterrand and CERES had been placed on the defensive by the failure of the PCG, and both now converged in defence of a past strategy. The

tactical essence of the 'line of Épinay' was compounded by the fact that its content was never precisely defined.

If any coherent political line had emerged from Épinay, it had been the priority given to the signing of the Common Programme with the PCF. Yet, by the end of 1978, even CERES, and certainly Mitterrand had practically excluded the prospect of a programmatic agreement preceding the 1981 presidential^{elections}. Given that tenir bon was, de facto, an autonomous left unity strategy (while claiming to be its opposite), so the 'line of Épinay' relied for its internal and external efficacy on institutionalising the divergence between theory and practice, a marked neo-Molletist characteristic.

The potential strength of Mauroy's position had been acknowledged by Mitterrand withdrawing the Contribution, and agreeing to Mauroy's demand for a règlement intérieur. The demand for organisational reform also highlighted the weaknesses of Mauroy's strategy after March 1978. It was on organisational reform alone that a hypothetical anti-Mitterrand majority could be realised, and in the Commission on the règlement intérieur, established in April 1978, CERES and Rocard were initially willing to make common cause with Mauroy in favour of statute reform, and in reaction against Mitterrand's monarchic rule (5). However,

5. Le N/0, 25 September 1978.

Mauroy refused to push the demand to its logical conclusion - the direct election of leaders by Congress - since this would have confirmed a split with Mitterrand.

After a period of deadlock at the end of July, when Mauroy was supported in the Commission by CERES and Rocard, against Mitterrand, Mauroy substantially modified his demands over organisational reform. At the CD of September 16th, a tentative compromise between Mitterrand and Mauroy was announced whereby there would be two separate electoral colleges for electing the CD, one based on the federations, the other on the existing PR list systems (6). This compromise was subsequently called into question by Mitterrand, to whom Mauroy appeared again to have given way (7). In the final compromise, realised in October 1978, and approved by the November Convention, Mauroy effectively abandoned his previous positions over the election of leaders by Congress, and regional representation on the CD (8). The compromise accepted fell far short of electing leaders by Congress delegates, which alone might have threatened Mitterrand's control over the organisation: it instituted a system theoretically giving Congress delegates a greater influence in the composition of representatives on the different motions at all levels of the organisation.

However, it preserved the PR mechanism of election to the

6. Le Monde, 17-18 September 1978.

7. Ibid, 11 October 1978.

8. Ibid.

CD, and modified the form, rather than the content of the existing list system, refusing any method likely to increase the weight of the large federations (9). The règlement intérieur also established that the party's presidential candidate would be elected by a free vote of all activists. Mauroy's compromise over statute reform weakened his position: it disenchanted elements of his base, especially in Nord and Pas-de-Calais (10).

Mauroy's strategy towards Metz may be summarised as follows: he sought to position himself as head of a courant de synthèse, linking the SFIO, Épinay, and Assises traditions, and thereby as the indispensable element of any future majority. He aspired to reconstitute the Nantes majority, with the courant Mauroy exercising an increased influence within the Secretariat (the warning given to Mitterrand over statute reform) (11). This position was rational, since it would have maximised Mauroy's influence in the organisation, while retaining Mitterrand and Rocard in the leadership, with Mauroy acting as arbiter between

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9. It is not proposed further to explain the subtle mechanisms of the system adopted, which marked a clear regression on Mauroy's initial demand for direct election. The BE's recommendations were largely accepted by the CN. L'Unité, 24-30 November 1978.
 10. Criticisms of Mauroy's compromise were made by Wolf (CERES), and Gosselin (Rocardien) at the CEF-Nord, 4 November 1978. See Percheron's editorial in L'Espoir (Journal de la Fédération du Pas-de-Calais), October 1978, for the Pas-de-Calais leader's deception.
 11. Le Monde, 12 December 1978.

them. It was unlikely to materialise, given the bipolarising tendency incumbent on the presidential cleavage.

If he failed to constrain Rocard and Mitterrand to sign a common motion, Mauroy's position dictated that he present his own motion de synthèse which he hoped would be accepted by the activists as being in the higher interests of the party, and which by its weight would constrain Mitterrand and Rocard to continue to coexist within the majority. Mauroy's position led to an image of indecisiveness. He was unwilling to push opposition to Mitterrand too far, for fear of harming opportunities for an eventual agreement on the basis of a reconstituted Nantes majority. This could explain his stance over organisational reform. Yet, he was equally unwilling to participate in any majority that excluded Rocard, whom he had drafted into the PS at the Assises. Any majority excluding Rocard would be one where his own influence would be lessened. It would remove the possibility of a Rocard-Mauroy axis within the leadership acting as a counter-weight to Mitterrand, and Mauroy's participation in such a majority could only be as a clearly subordinate partner. By attempting to position himself as necessary arbiter and bridge between Mitterrand and Rocard, Mauroy situated his action as that of future party leader, or prime minister, whichever leader took the presidential nomination.

Mauroy's position was ill-fitted to the situation within the PS after March 1978, and weakened his power base within the party. It enabled Mitterrand to exclude him from the majority at Metz, and to attempt to burden him with ^{the} responsibility for breaking the Mitterrand/Mauroy axis that had governed the party since Épinay. Moreover, it frustrated Rocard's presidential strategy: a joint Rocard/Mauroy motion would pose a serious threat to Mitterrand's continuing party leadership. This was not perceived by Mauroy to be in his own interests, as he asserted at the November Convention :

'Le PS doit garder sa capacité de synthèse, donc une majorité qui soit le plus grand possible... Le Congrès d'Épinay, c'était l'art du rassemblement; et moi, je vous le dit, qu'aujourd'hui, le Parti socialiste doit assumer l'obligation de se rassembler' (12).

By criticising the Latin mass¹ given by several Mitterrandist speakers at the Convention, notably Mermaz, Mauroy made it clear that he would be unwilling to accept the terms outlined by Mitterrand for an agreement, in particular, Rocard's isolation (13). From the November Convention until Metz, Mauroy continued to insist that Rocard - la volonté de changement - and Mitterrand - la volonté de continuité - had to form part of the same leadership (14).

12. Ibid, 26 November 1978.

13. Ibid.

14. Cited by Mauroy in a speech at Lyon. Le Monde, 6 December 1978.

The November Convention was followed by a series of unsuccessful 'verification' meetings, forced by Mauroy, in a vain attempt to reaffirm the existing majority, and to draw up a joint motion for Congress (15). On December 20th, Mauroy presented the ^{Four} 'documents' drawn up jointly by himself, Rocard, and the courant critique, as texts seeking to reach a compromise agreement with Mitterrand. However, only Mauroy saw them as a basis for a likely compromise with Mitterrand (16). Mitterrand refused to consider these documents. Instead, he accepted Defferre's proposal whereby two of his recent speeches would form the basis of collaboration within the existing majority, a condition clearly unacceptable to Rocard, against whom the speeches were directed (17). Defferre thereby again underlined his hostility to Rocard and his support for Mitterrand, as well as his desire to retain the Mauroy/Mitterrand alliance. Defferre's position was consistent with the support he had given Mitterrand since Épinay; it also reacted against Rocard's attempts to recruit support within Bouches-du-Rhône, where Defferre's authority had been badly shaken after the 1978 elections (18).

The difficulties with Mauroy's position were illustrated at the December 20th meeting. He first accepted Defferre's

15. Ibid, 2 December 1978.

16. Le N/O, 23 December 1978.

17. Ibid.

18. Johnson, op cit, p. 259.

proposed mode of procedure, to retain the chance of an agreement with Mitterrand, only subsequently to reject it, when Rocard made known his opposition (19). Mauroy's position ultimately frustrated both Mitterrand and Rocard. The December 20th meeting was probably the last occasion on which a pre-Congress agreement could have been reached between Mitterrand and Mauroy; it was followed on January 3rd by the announcement that the '^{four} documents' had been transformed into a Contribution for the CD of January 6th, signed by Mauroy, Rocard, and Martinet (20).

It was clearer than ever that Mitterrand could not afford to reach an agreement that might retain Rocard in the majority: the rapid increase in Rocard's popularity risked altering the balance of power after^{the} Congress, to an extent that it would be politically difficult to refuse a Rocard candidacy. Henceforth, the central question was the position that would be adopted by Mauroy. At the January 3rd meeting, Mauroy implicitly accused Mitterrand of preparing an alliance with CERES, an option he considered to be totally unacceptable :

'Nous ne nous associerons jamais avec ceux qui auraient l'intention de chercher des appuis du côté du CERES' (21).

19. Le N/O, 12 December 1978; 8 January 1979.

20. Ibid, 8 January 1979.

21. Le Monde, 5 January 1979.

The split that occurred at the CERES' 12th Colloque, on December 17-18th, hastened the dislocation of the existing majority (see below p. 364-5). A diminished CERES at Metz, certain after the split within its ranks, would be all the more attractive as a force d'appoint for Mitterrand.

At the CD of January 6th, 1979, the constat de désaccord was ratified (22). Rocard, along with the courant critique, hoped now to be able to constrain Mauroy into presenting a joint motion, the only alternative likely to challenge Mitterrand's leadership, and attempted to obtain more definite guarantees from Mauroy over his intentions (23). Mauroy refused to commit himself to a joint motion, although confirming that he would not be a signatory of any motion directly aimed against Rocard (24). Mauroy justified the Contribution not as a preliminary skirmish, presaging an open confrontation at Metz, but as a means of attempting to force Mitterrand into a unity agreement with Rocard (25).

The joint contribution was another factor weakening Mauroy's support at Metz: it alienated sectors of his partly laïc, ex-SFIO base, which perceived Rocard as representative of the christian left, and alien to the socialist tradition (26). It also provoked opposition from elements of his

22. Ibid, 8 January 1979.

23. Hamon and Rotman, L'Effet Rocard, p. 272.

24. Mauroy's speech to the CEF-Nord, 3 February 1979.

25. Interview with Guy Allouche, Premier Secrétaire, Fédération du Nord, 22 June 1983.

26. Le N/O, 5-11 February 1979.

'legitimist' following, concentrated amongst the mayors, local councillors, deputies, who saw in Mauroy the continuity of the socialist tradition, yet who were firmly attached to the Mitterrand/Mauroy partnership, and anxious to remain within the party majority (27). Mauroy risked losing the support of elements of this following if he openly sided with Rocard, or appeared likely to be demoted into the minority. Most importantly, the joint Contribution received a hostile reception amongst elements within the Nord federation (28).

Aside from the Mauroy/Rocard text, ^{sixteen} other national contributions emerged from the January CD (29). Amongst these were three distinct Mitterrandist texts, signed by Jospin, Mermaz, and Delors. These texts differed significantly in their content, and were clearly aimed at differing constituencies within the party. This move could be seen as partly tactical: the differing contributions attempted to cover as wide as possible a margin of political space, as a prelude to a 'catch-all' motion, suggesting that Mitterrand intended to form an homogeneous Mitterrandist majority, but one which would continue to be characterised

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27. For example, A. Chenard, mayor of Nantes and head of the Loire Atlantique federation launched an appeal for the reconstitution of a Mitterrand/Mauroy alliance, excluding Rocard and CERES. A similar stance was adopted by Sainte-Marie. Le Monde, 17, 31 January 1979.
28. See the rather scanty CEF-Nord, 3 February 1979.
29. Reprinted in Le P/R, 78, January 1979.

by an ideological ecumenicism. It is also likely that these differing contributions reflected rivalries amongst the Mitterrandists themselves, between Conventionnels and sabras. The publication of the contributions marked the beginning of the active preparation for Congress. Before considering Metz, let us briefly retrace our steps, and analyse the evolution of CERES, from March 1978, until the Épinay split, in December 1978.

Chevènement summarised CERES' strategy after March 1978 as follows,

'Celle-ci consiste à battre politiquement la petite bourgeoisie au sein du PS, pour imposer l'Union de la Gauche et la politique de rupture sur les bases nouvelles, à la fois à l'actuelle majorité du PS, et au PCF' (30).

CERES now relegated the imposition of unity on the PCF until after a preliminary victory over the petite bourgeoisie (Rocard) within the PS. It no longer conceived of itself primarily as the arbiter of left unity, still less as its avant garde. Rather, it was in the front line of an ideological war to be waged against modernism, and its most articulate exponent, Rocard (31). In the background lay the determination that Rocard must not be the party's candidate in the 1981 presidential election; organisational and ideological cleavages were again largely inseparable.

30. J.P. Chevènement, 'Connaître l'adversaire pour mieux le combattre', Repères, 55-56, (May-June 1978), p. 97.

31. See H. Portelli, 'La guerre idéologique', Projet, 147, (July-August 1980), pp. 874-879.

Underlying this declaration of ideological war, lay a deeply ingrained pessimism, predicated upon the defence of an ideological vision of left unity - increasing strategic convergence between the PS and the PCF - which had little relevance after March 1978. The contradiction between CERES' avowed strategy and the actual situation of disunity on the left was axiomatic. The priority accorded to ideological defence by the CERES leadership was a reaction against the development of a courant which not only rejected programmatic unity, but also questioned the ideological bases on which the PCG had existed. The main adversary was Rocard, the representative of the modernist variant of social democracy. But Mauroy, representing traditional social democracy was also a target, as would have been Mitterrand, if not for his neo-Molletism. The salient themes evoked by the CERES leaders were the need for an ideological struggle against the influence of the 'American left' (Rocard), and the need to resist attempts to adapt the party's strategy towards a greater cooperation with the unions, labelled as néo-Travaillisme (Rocard/Mauroy)(32). This led to CERES leadership attack^{o^} ideas with which it had previously been associated within the PS, in particular, autogestion, social experimentation, and the legacy of May '68. These aspirations, closely linked with Rocard, were

32. These oft repeated themes were reiterated in the CERES motion (E) for Metz. Le P/R, 79, February 1979.

reduced to being the expression of the nouvelle petite bourgeoisie - implicitly illegitimate - and designed to coexist with capitalism, rather than to replace it ;

'On peut se demander si la fonction objective de la contestation... n'a pas au fond assez fidèlement traduit les aspirations de la nouvelle petite bourgeoisie, dans la mesure ou celle-ci ne vise pas spontanément a une transformation fondamentale de la société capitaliste, mais simplement à y améliorer sa place au soleil' (33).

This implicit equation of Rocard and the new petit bourgeoisie led his adversaries within CERES to accuse Chevenement of lapsing into a negative ouvrièrisme, in continuing imitation of the PCF (34). The significance of the 'American left' formula was especially important, since it was accompanied by an accentuation of CERES' anti-imperialist, anti-US stance. The point of labelling Rocard as the 'American left' was to assimilate the concept of modernity with US cultural and ideological hegemony, through the theme of the dominant ideology: Rocard was the representative of the dominant ideology within the left - and thereby alien to it.

The CERES leadership further reacted against the christian left phenomenon within the PS, assimilating this constituency to Rocard, despite the fact that traditionally,

33. 'Connaître l'adversaire...', op cit, p. 90.

34. Criticisms expressed in the 'Contribution des 21', signed by the CERES minority, Repères, 58, (November 1978), pp. 20-30.

christians had been at least as prominent within CERES as within the courant des Assises (35). The theme of the struggle against the americanisation of French society led CERES directly to espouse nationalism as an ideological weapon. There had always been a strong nationalistic content in CERES' anti-imperialist, anti-European dialogue, but at the early stages of its history, this had taken the form of support for third world liberation and socialist movements, rather than veiled approaches towards the Gaullist right, (as in Chile, and Portugal). CERES' post-March 1978 evolution witnessed the triumph of one, consistent, strand of its thought over other, earlier aspects. This stressed national independence in both political and economic terms; the development of productive forces; the primacy of the political will (volontarisme) through concerted state action over international economic constraints; anti-imperialism. There was often little to distinguish this model of socialism from that espoused by the PCF. As a counterpart, the CERES leadership distanced itself from those earlier aspects of its thought stemming more directly from May '68, and with which it now equated Rocard.

35. See chapter 6. At Évry, Chevènement criticised 'La méfiance à l'égard du pouvoir et de la politique' of the catholic ideology. Repères, 55-56, (May-June 1978), p. 50.

The resort to ideological defence performed two further essential functions. It confronted the CERES minority with the choice between silencing its criticisms, or departing, thereby consolidating CERES' homogeneity, and its identity as the courant de gauche. It prepared CERES for a reentry into the party leadership, in alliance with Mitterrand.

The CERES' leadership's initial reaction to the election defeat gave little indication of an eventual alliance with Mitterrand at Metz. It consisted in juxtaposing the 'line of Épinay', for which it claimed responsibility, ^{with} the 'line of Nantes' imposed against its will in June 1977, and which had led to the breakdown of left unity, and the left's defeat in March 1978 (36). This approach appeared to signify CERES' willingness to continue to attempt to act as an arbiter between the left parties. The difficulties in maintaining this stance had already become clear from September 1977 - March 1978: it laid CERES open to accusations of treason. Initially, Chevènement called for the *drafting* of a 'good common programme' with the PCF, in preparation for the 1983 legislative elections (37). This proposition was subsequently retracted on account of the criticisms it aroused not only

36. See, for example, D. Motchane, 'Épinay: aujourd'hui et demain', Le P/R, 69, March 1978.

37. Le N/O, 3 April 1978.

from within the majority, but from certain CERES activists as well (38). There were continuing calls for CERES' exclusion by leading Mitterrandists after the election defeat (39).

Yet, CERES voted the leadership quitus at the April National Convention; while Guidoni argued that CERES no longer considered itself to constitute the minority, since the existing majority no longer had any authentic existence (40). It thus clearly positioned itself as a candidate for reentry into the party leadership, its official attitude since the January 1977 Bondy colloque. This was a recognition of the impotence of its role as an oppositional minority faction. It could account for CERES' calls to forward the party Congress, a proposition rejected by Mauroy and Mitterrand, although supported by certain Rocardiens (41).

After the publication of the Mitterrandist Contribution, and the CERES Évry colloque, held on June 25-26th, 1978, it was clear that the official CERES position had evolved. The Contribution was regarded by Chevènement as positive, and as vindicating CERES' insistence that there had been divergences between the lines of Épinay and Nantes (42). A preliminary meeting occurred between Mitterrand and

38. Ibid.

39. Le Monde, 29 March 1978.

40. Ibid., 3 May 1978.

41. Ibid., 22 March, 4 April 1978.

42. See Chevènement's introduction to the Évry colloque, Repères, 55-56, p. 38.

the CERES leadership on June 20th (43). At the Évry colloque, the CERES leadership was bitterly criticised by the minority, based around C. Pierret (ex-head of the Paris federation) and J. Guyard (44). From June onwards, the CERES leadership placed less emphasis on Mitterrand's responsibility for the election defeat, purged by the Contribution, and more on the *break down* of the existing majority, designating Rocard as its major enemy, and rediscovering bridges with Mitterrand across the defence of socialist orthodoxy, and anti-modernism.

The opposition manifested at Évry to the 'historical chiefs' had been expressed sporadically at least since Nantes. At a preparatory session of the 12th colloque, held at Créteil, on April 1-2, 1978, significant opposition emerged to Chevènement, associated with demands for a more democratic functioning of CERES (45). This was followed by an extended delay in the publication of Repères after March 1978, stemming from disagreement within the editorial board (46). At Évry, the criticism levelled against the leadership took two forms: a reaction against ideological developments; and criticisms of the hierarchical, and centralised nature of the CERES power structure. Faced with the defeat of the left, the minority argued that CERES had

43. Le N/O, 3-9 July 1978.

44. Speeches reprinted in Repères, 55-56, (May-June 1978).

45. Le N/O, 24 April 1978.

46. Le Monde, 4-5 June 1978.

refused to alter its political language, or to propose new ways of relaunching left unity. Most fundamentally, in reaction to Rocard, it had abandoned important aspects of its ideological heritage, such as autogestion, and May '68. Thus, Pierret asserted :

'En effet, nous avons assisté à un appauvrissement progressif de la force de proposition du CERES... depuis quelques temps, le courant a donné l'impression de ne plus se définir que négativement dans le Parti, par rapport à un seul pôle, Michel Rocard. Notre courant semble parfois, il faut le dire, malade de Rocard' (47).

The existence of divergences within CERES could no longer be denied by its leaders after March 1978, and it was constrained to allow a 'democratic debate' to occur, and to involve the minority in drawing up the political reports to be presented to the colloque (48). Three of the seven reports presented at Évry were drawn up by future dissidents. This development was a novel one. Traditionally, the 'historical chiefs' had justified CERES' internal power structure in terms of the principle of dialectic centralism (see chapter 4). CERES was not a party within a party; rather, it was a political line. Either one *accepted* this line (in practice defined by the leadership) or else one did not belong to CERES. By agreeing to a wider elaboration of official CERES' texts, Chevènement attempted to limit the impact of an eventual schism by the dissidents.

47. Repères, 55-56, p. 53.

48. Le Monde, 24-26 June 1978.

After the Évery colloque, the 'democratic debate' took the form of the CERES Secretariat elaborating a text which was presented to two meetings of the Collectif National (composed of the main CERES regional, and national leaders), in September and November 1978 (49). This text was to form the basis of a future CERES contribution. Two competing texts were presented to the CERES Collectif on November 4th: that elaborated by the Secretariat, and the Contribution des 21, signed by a significant minority of dissidents (50). At the Collectif itself, Chevènement refused to accept any of the minority's proposed amendments to the leadership's text, arguing that 'vous partagez les idées de ceux que nous combattons de tout temps' (51).

As the *break down* of the Nantes majority continued apace, there were further signs that a CERES/Mitterrand alliance was in the process of formation. Thus, at the November CN, Sarre repeated that if there were three public dialogues within the party, there were only two lines: that which accepted, and that which rejected the line of Épinay (52). In practice, what distinguished Mitterrand's tactical use of ideology from CERES' declaration of ideological war against modernism? While Mitterrand had rediscovered the merits of ideology with the Contribution,

49. Ibid, 3 November 1978.

50. Repères, 58, November 1978; Le Monde, 3 November 1978.

51. Le Monde, 7 November 1978.

52. Ibid, 26-27 November 1978.

CERES could at least claim consistency. Many of the arguments it now levelled against Rocard (such as néo-Travailleurs) could be traced back to the 8th colloque, in June 1974 (see chapter 4). Within this caveat, ideological defence had the clear tactical aim of excluding Rocard from the majority, and restoring CERES to the party leadership.

In the run up to the ^{second} session of the 12th colloque, at Épinay on December 16-17th, 1978, the leadership clearly marked itself off from the Pierret minority. In a press communiqué dated November 21st, the CERES secretariat asserted, 'Que certains militants se réclamant du CERES pensent le moment venu de se démarquer de sa ligne politique, c'est leur droit le plus strict de militants socialistes', but implied that the minority would be given the choice between complying with the text adopted at the November collectif, or presenting their own motion for Congress (53). In reality, the CERES leadership was convinced that Pierret intended to provoke a split within CERES: indeed, it went so far as to accuse Pierret of attempting to neutralise CERES from June 1978 onwards, to enable Rocard's offensive to have its maximum impact (54). Moreover, it admitted to having been 'paralysed' during the period June-December 1978

53. J.M. Regnault, Private CERES archives.

54. Circular from CERES Secretariat to CERES-Nord, 12 December 1978. J.M. Regnault, Private CERES archives.

by the minority's activities, and concluded prior to the colloque, 'il est impossible de ne pas voir que nous avons affaire à une entreprise préméditée' (55).

Finally, the CERES leaders accused the dissidents of planning to join forces with Martinet's courant critique, and the party's feminist faction (Femmes), in an attempt to obtain 10% at Metz - that would cripple CERES, and ~~might~~ secure Rocard (in alliance with Mauroy) an absolute majority of mandates (56). This projected alliance failed to materialise, probably because of political divergences between the CERES dissidents, and the courant critique, over for example, the ~~break~~ with capitalism; and because Rocard's 'autogestionnaire' motion was signed by Martinet (who would thereby figure in any Rocard leadership team) (57).

At the Épinay colloque of December 16-17th, 1978, there was effectively a double schism within CERES: those based around Pierret, Guyard, and the Contribution des 21, were joined in opposition to the leadership by Wolf, CERES leader in the Nord (58). Wolf's decision to leave CERES owed more to his reaction against the leadership's nationalist ideological 'deviation' than it did to opposition over the

55. Circular from CERES Secretariat to CERES-Nord, no date given, J.M. Regnault, Private CERES archives.

56. Ibid.

57. See the UPA (F) and Rocard (C) motions for Metz, Le P/R, 79, February 1979.

58. Le Monde, 19 December 1978.

manner in which the leadership's text had been elaborated (59). This defection was important, as Wolf headed the largest numerical CERES group outside of Paris. In normal circumstances, the *break up* of the Nantes majority might plausibly make CERES' support necessary for Mitterrand to retain the party leadership. In return for this support, CERES could expect to demand a heavy price, and recover the pivotal status it had enjoyed after Épinay. The Épinay schism endangered such a prospect, and made it probable that CERES would be able to wield only a limited influence in a new majority.

The last major party meeting prior to Metz, the Comité Directeur de synthèse, was held on February 11th, 1979 (60). Prior to the CD, Rocard committed a second major tactical error. Interviewed on Antenne 2, on January 15th, he asserted :

'Le nom de Pierre Mauroy figure en numéro un sur la liste des signataires de notre contribution. Il est candidat au premier secrétaire du Parti, mais je pense qu'il n'aurait pas souhaité que je le dise de cette manière' (61).

Rocard's comments were immediately criticised by Mauroy, who signalled that he excluded the idea of a joint motion which could be (and was) construed as being aimed against Mitterrand's leadership :

59. Interview with Marc Wolf, 20 May 1983.

60. Le Monde, 2 February 1979.

61. Cited in Hamon and Rotman, op cit, p. 271.

'Je dis fermement et amicalement à Michel Rocard: François Mitterrand est le premier secrétaire de notre parti, et je me suis toujours prononcé pour la réconduction de la majorité actuelle, sans exclusive, voire élargie' (62).

On February 4th, Mauroy announced that he intended to table a motion de synthèse, if no agreement was reached between the Contributions at the CD, with the intention of constraining Mitterrand and Rocard to unite at Congress (63). This position sought to establish Mauroy as future arbiter of the majority, and foresaw an increased Mauroy ^{group} representation within the Secretariat, due to the support he judged such a motion would receive from the activists. Prior to the February CD, Mitterrand's lieutenants continued to make thinly disguised calls for the demotion of Rocard, and Mauroy into the minority. Party unity could be assured by Mitterrand leading an homogeneous leadership from which all other courants would be excluded. Thus, Mermaz argued :

'Les questions de personnes, comme les grands manœuvres ne nous intéressent pas. François Mitterrand incarne l'unité du Parti' (64).

At the February 11th CD, Mitterrand justified his refusal to cede to Mauroy's calls for a pre-Congress agreement by arguing that a political debate between the different factions must now take place within the party as a whole (65)

62. Le Monde, 17 January 1979.

63. Ibid, 6 February 1979

64. L. Mermaz, 'Parler clair', L'Unité, 9-15 February 1979.

65. Ibid.

Mitterrand's readiness for a trial of strength at Congress was obvious. He made it clear that his text alone could provide the basis for a compromise motion, although its content was clearly designed to prevent any agreement with Rocard (66). Mitterrand thereby reiterated his rejection of Mauroy's conditions for an agreement, by refusing to take into account the Mauroy/Rocard contribution on an equal basis. This was a means of excluding any agreement with Rocard, while retaining the possibility for alliance with a sufficiently weakened Mauroy at Congress.

The CD gave further evidence of an embryonic Mitterrand/CERES alliance. In a series of votes, it became clear that Mitterrand, and Mauroy/Rocard could count on an approximately equal number of representatives of the majority, elected at Nantes (67). With CERES' support, Mitterrand still clearly controlled the party's parliament. After Mitterrand had sided with CERES, against Mauroy/Rocard on two occasions, Mauroy claimed that conditions for a constructive debate were inexistent, after which Mauroy and Rocard ^{supported} left the meeting, to protest against Mitterrand's 'manipulation' of proceedings (68). The confrontation was at last official.

There were considerable variations preceding Metz in assessments as to the real weight of the respective

66. Le Monde, 13 February 1979.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

courants. T. Pfister, writing in Le Monde, judged that the PS was divided by ^{four} competing factions of an approximately equal weight (69). Such assessments were, however, necessarily intuitive. Since Epinay, there had been no primaries within the leadership between Mitterrand and Mauroy, and ultimately, Mitterrand's organisational control had been predicated upon his political control, rather than by any direct mandate in favour of his leadership from the activists. For many, Mitterrand's actual weight remained ambiguous, as did that of Mauroy. Similarly, Rocard had never previously competed for support as head of a distinct motion, and remained somewhat of an unknown quantity. Only CERES had presented a motion at every Congress since Epinay, and was generally credited with around 25% of the party. It remained to be seen what impact the Épinay schism, and the emergence of Rocard would have on its weight within the party.

In the situation of maximal factional competition represented by Metz (unique since Épinay) each actor overestimated his weight within the party, a factor helping to explain why each faction was willing in 1979 to compete for support before the whole party, and expected to be in a position at Congress to be able to influence the future composition of the party leadership. Rocard hoped to secure

69. Ibid, 4-5 June 1978.

around 30% of Congress mandates, and subsequently be in a position either to take over the leadership in alliance with Mauroy, or else to alter the balance of power in his favour in a new majority including Mitterrand and Mauroy (70). Mauroy was confident of his ability to secure a sufficient number of mandates at Congress to constrain both Mitterrand and Rocard to ~~co-exist~~ within the majority; While CERES secretly declared its expectation to be in a position of arbiter between Mitterrand and Mauroy/Rocard, hoping to secure around 25% (71). Finally, Mitterrand's actions suggest that he must have entertained the hope of gaining a majority on his own motion. The opening vote indicated that each faction had overestimated its strength. Mitterrand and Rocard emerged as heads of the two most powerful factions, ^{thus} underlining the strength of the presidential cleavage. But even with Mauroy, Rocard was not within striking distance of a majority, nor able to force Mitterrand to ^{come to terms}, while Mitterrand could easily dispense with both.

In terms of strategic location, as well as size, the party's respective factions were of unequal importance. Neither CERES, nor Mauroy could directly compete for support in terms of the presidential candidacy for 1981. They could

70. Ibid, 23 September 1978.

71. Text from CERES Secretariat to CERES-Nord, no date given. J.M. Regnault, Private CERES archives. On Mauroy, see Pfister's analysis in Le Monde, 6 February 1979. The idea of a motion de synthèse implied that Mauroy could force his will on Mitterrand and Rocard.

Table 8.1 The opening vote at the Congress of Metz,
April 6 - 8th, 1979

<u>Motion</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Mandates</u>
Mitterrand (A)	40.11	2,824
Mauroy (B)	13.61	958
Rocard (C)	20.41	1,437
Defferre (D)	7.77	547
CERES (E)	14.43	1,016
UPA (F) (ex-CERES)	3.24	228
Femmes (G)	0.31	22

Source: L'Unité, April 6-12th, 1979.

hope at best to exercise a reactive and preventative role. The Metz results, by signalling an unexpected marginalisation of both Mauroy and CERES, confirmed the force of the presidential variable. This placed Mauroy and CERES at a strategic disadvantage, and had the opposite effect for Rocard, and (especially) for Mitterrand. The presidential variable alone, however, does not exhaust the range of the various factions' strategic advantages and disadvantages.

Mitterrand's strategic advantage in the preparations for Metz also related to his success in posing as representative of the party's orthodox centre. The resort to neo-Molletism by Mitterrand was an attempt to stamp his leadership as that of the orthodox centre, facing the dual danger of a right wing deviation represented by Mauroy and

Rocard, and the irresponsibility of CERES' propositions.

This was symbolised by the 'line of Épinay', held as the ~~correct~~

legitimate line. By situating himself as representative of the orthodox centre. Mitterrand assumed the heritage of threatened Social Democratic party leaderships since the origins of the socialist movement, repeating the triangular mechanism first noticeable in the pre-1914 German SPD (72). This involved a 'centrist' defence of the party's orthodoxy, to preserve the leadership in its position of authority, under threat from opponents ~~who~~ could be labelled as right or left.

In 1975, Mitterrand had expelled CERES from the leadership, using its factional organisation, and its attitude to the PCF to accuse it of treason with regard to the ^{correct} line, represented since Épinay by Mitterrand himself. CERES had been replaced in the majority by Rocard, whose ambiguous attitude towards the PCG - the contemporary orthodoxy - was well established. From Pau onwards, Mitterrand could base his authority not merely as presidential leader, but also as guardian of the juste milieu, threatened by CERES' maximalist reading of the PCG, and Rocard's tacit rejection of it. By Metz, the main threat to Mitterrand's leadership appeared to be Rocard, ^{who was} demanding an adaptation of the party's programme and strategy; while in the background

72. See Bon and Burnier, 'Qu'elle ose paraître ce qu'elle est', op cit.

lay the question of the party's candidate for 1981. The resort to neo-Molletism was an attempt to disqualify Rocard as alien to the socialist tradition. Mitterrand was willing to rely on the 'left' (CERES), which saw its most bitter adversary not as Mitterrand, but as Rocard, ^{who represented} an ideological anathema, ^{and} whose organisational interests were diametrically opposed to its own.

Mitterrand's attempts to label Rocard as the party's right were undoubtedly successful, and this success reflected the fragility of Rocard's position within the party. Rocard lacked the legitimacy of Épinay; had rallied to the PS only in 1974 ^{←has} (increasing suspicions of opportunism); and appeared guilty to many of seeking to 'kill the father'. Most importantly, Rocard's external strategy of attempting to use his outside popularity as a means of strengthening his position within the party, appeared to deny the party's self-sufficiency. The party was to be reduced to selecting a presidential candidate, imposed by outside forces. While Mitterrand's strategy was no less 'external', it consisted of the constant recall of party progress made under his leadership, and he was thus able to cover his actions with an internal party legitimacy that Rocard lacked. Through his position as established PS leader since 1971, Mitterrand could effectively portray his actions in terms of defence of the party's integrity and socialist character.

This gave him a distinct strategic advantage over Rocard, and here, it was Mauroy who was Mitterrand's greatest competitor, although again, the partners were of an unequal weight (see below).

Mitterrand's strategic advantage in having occupied the party's centre of gravity since Épinay reflected, in varying degrees, the disadvantages of the other factions. CERES had consistently located itself as the party's left wing. This helped to retain its homogeneity, its factional cohesion, its identity as a socialist pole within social democracy; it also limited its range of possible alliance partners, and excluded it from the real centres of party power (see chapters 4 and 5). While it would be totally inappropriate objectively to label Rocard as constituting the party's 'right', this was how he was perceived by a majority of party members, and what Mitterrand succeeded in doing at Metz. For Rocard, any alliance with CERES was inconceivable, and his only chance of overturning Mitterrand's leadership was through a direct challenge in alliance with Mauroy. This option was consistently refused by Mauroy. The indicative vote at Congress showed that it was not possible even if Mauroy had been willing. In short, despite his shared strategic advantage with Mitterrand *because of* presidentialism, Rocard was at an insuperable short term disadvantage within the PS.

The most significant competition Mitterrand faced for the party's central location was from Mauroy. Mauroy's Congress strategy, culminating in his motion de synthèse, was to attempt to occupy the centre of gravity of a leadership including Mitterrand and Rocard. His political past led him to aspire to represent the 'party' as an independent entity, distrusting both Mitterrand and Rocard for their reduction of the party to being a springboard for a presidential candidate. In reality, however, it is difficult to see how Mauroy could have replaced Mitterrand as the essential central element: he was vigorously opposed by CERES, determined to ally with Mitterrand, and to exclude Mauroy and Rocard from the leadership. Only a massive vote of confidence in Mauroy as homme de synthèse by the party activists could have helped him impose his arbitration on Mitterrand and Rocard. This did not materialise.

The strategic advantages of his central position and his larger support, help explain Mitterrand's greater freedom of manoeuvre than ^{that of} his rivals at Metz. He could ally with CERES, if that proved necessary for Rocard's demotion into the minority; or else attempt to form a homogeneous leadership, posing as the legitimate centre, flanked by left and right oppositions. If necessary to retain his leadership, he could ally with Mauroy, even if

this meant Rocard's continuing presence withⁱⁿ the Secretariat. The only direct threat to his leadership could have come from a joint Rocard/Mauroy motion: the Metz results suggest that such a motion would have been defeated. Even in the unlikely event that it had won more votes than a Mitterrand motion, Mitterrand would have been able to ally with CERES to preserve his leadership.

By contrast, his rivals' margins for manoeuvre were limited, and tended to reinforce Mitterrand in his central position. CERES looked uniquely to Mitterrand, as its only realistic chance of reentering the leadership, defeating Rocard, and humbling Mauroy. Mauroy refused to envisage any majority that did not include Mitterrand, and thereby had frustrated Rocard's tacit intention of overturning Mitterrand's leadership. Once the results of the opening vote were known, the only mathematical majority that could have overturned his leadership, would have been that which united the 'left', and 'right' against the 'centre', or CERES, ex-CERES, and Mauroy/Rocard against Mitterrand. The chances of this were nil.

Mitterrand was helped in his campaign by events. Metz took place just after a satisfactory Socialist performance in the 1979 Cantonal^{elections}, but two months before the disappointing PS score in the 1979 European elections (23.4%), (See below).

Mitterrand had undoubtedly benefitted from the party's success in the March 1979 Cantonal elections, when the PS won 26.96% of the vote, restoring the party to its 1976 level (26.50%)(73). Mitterrand had used the campaign for the Cantonal ^{elections} to make an extensive tour of the federations, thereby combining the party's electoral with his own Congress campaign (74).

Since Épinal, it has been argued that both Mitterrand and Mauroy headed organisation factions, and that they derived their authority from their location within the organisation, rather than by retaining open factional structures. Both had claimed a party legitimacy ^{which} they juxtaposed to a factional identity, as embodied by CERES, and even Rocard. Metz forced the party to arbitrate between Mitterrand and Mauroy for the first time since Épinal. Mitterrand emerged as the clear victor of this battle, and could henceforth claim a party legitimacy to which Mauroy could no longer pretend. Mitterrand was supported by 68 parliamentary élus, as opposed to 38 for Mauroy, 19 for Rocard, 9 for CERES, and 2 for UPA (75). The various élus of Bouches-du-Rhône supported Defferre's unanimous text, conceived of as a means of retaining the solidarity (and thereby national power status) of this Mitterrandist federation, with a

73. L'Unité, 23-29 March 1979.

74. Le Monde, 29 March 1979.

75. Ibid, 18-19 February 1979.

strong Mauroy minority (76).

Amongst these élus, Mitterrand was supported by a combination of ex-CIR, sabras, and ex-SFIO in opposition to Mauroy. These élus - aside from the remnants of Molletisme - largely owed their electoral positions to the party rejuvenation that had taken place up to and including March 1978, under Mitterrand's leadership. By contrast, those parliamentarians aligning themselves behind Mauroy were heavily concentrated in the Nord/Pas-de-Calais regions (9 out of 23 deputies), or within the SFIO's other remnants of electoral force and municipal *backing*, and were characterised by practising cumul des mandats. Thus, Mauroy counted among his supporters 8 Deputé-Maires of towns of over 30,000 inhabitants, as well as 5 presidents of Regional Councils (77). Mitterrand also counted 8 Deputé-Maires, but only 1 president of a Regional council (78). By contrast, Mauroy achieved the support of a substantial number of PS Mayors of large towns: one-third of PS Mayors of towns of over 30,000 inhabitants, including significant numbers of those elected for the first time in 1977, opted for Mauroy (79). This illustrated ^{*de fait*} that Mitterrand did not entirely

76. Ibid.

77. Le P/R, 79, February 1979.

78. Le Monde, 18-19 February 1979.

79. 27 of the 81 Mayors of towns of over 30,000 inhabitants elected in 1977, signed Mauroy's Metz motion. Le P/R, 79, February 1979. Sabras, or those elected for the first time in 1977, included: Badet, (St.Chamond), Gaspard (Dreux), Chattilliez (Tourcoing), Pesce (Valence), Picard (Maintes la Jolie), Boucheron (Angoulême), Frêche (Montpellier). Information compiled also from L'Espoir, April 1977; Faire, 18, April 1977.

monopolise the representation of the sabras, and many were attracted to Mauroy on account of Socialist experiences in local government.

On balance, however, it was Mitterrand who succeeded in attracting towards him the largest number of new élus, especially on a national level. We can draw the tentative conclusion that Mitterrand appeared as the legitimate source of party renovation ~~for~~ a majority of new élus: it was important for these figures to be located within the party majority in order to safeguard their electoral future. Rocard also attracted many new élus, in general PS sabras rather than ex-PSU. Among those supporting Rocard at Metz were a number of young deputies whom Mitterrand had previously attempted to promote as his protégés: Cot, Vivien, Le Pensec, Josselin (80). Rocard clearly hoped that any sudden increase in his external popularity would accelerate this trend. CERES' audience amongst the national élus remained marginal.

The widescale identification of party renovation with Mitterrand could be seen most cogently in relation to the party activists. Mitterrand's motion secured an absolute majority of mandates in 37 federations, a feat realised by Rocard in three, by CERES in two, and nowhere by Mauroy (81).

80. Le Monde, 18-19 February 1979.

81. Le P/R, 79, February 1979.

Moreover, it was in a position to form alliances with CERES in most other federations, thereby largely excluding Rocard and Mauroy from the federal leaderships. Only 12 federations could be governed on the basis of a Rocard/Mauroy alliance or by the Rocardiens alone (82).

Aside from the élus, Mitterrand was supported by 58 Federal First Secretaries, as opposed to 15 for Mauroy, 11 for Rocard, 8 for CERES, and 2 for UPA (83). This testified partly to Mitterrand's practice of extending his selection of political leaders into the federations, wherever Mauroy was powerless to resist (84). It also reflected the extent to which federal leaderships elected on Motion 1 at Grenoble, Pau, and Nantes regarded themselves primarily as Mitterrandist. Certain features can be noted in relation to the federations declaring themselves for Mitterrand. Almost without exception, they had experienced a continued growth since Épinay, including from Nantes in 1977, until 1979 (85). They therefore regarded themselves as Mitterrandist since it was due to party renovation under Mitterrand's leadership that the PS had been reestablished from a quasi-moribund SFIO.

82. Ibid.

83. Le Monde, 18-19 February 1979.

84. See above, chapter 2.

85. As judged by the number of Congress mandates, only two of these 58 federations had not increased its membership from Nantes to Metz, despite the election defeat.

Le P/R, 63, July 1977; 81, May 1979.

Yet, Mitterrand's support did not limit itself to these federations. He outdistanced Mauroy in all but three (Pas-de-Calais, Nord, Dordogne) of the 15 federations where the local leadership had declared itself for Mauroy (86). This suggests that Mitterrand had successfully posed as the legitimate inheritor of the socialist tradition amongst the ex-SFIO activists, as well as a force of party renovation for those coming to the PS after Épinay. Mitterrand's motion also led in 5 out of 11 cases where the local leadership supported Rocard; but only one out of 8 cases where the local leadership supported CERES (87). This result no doubt justified CERES' obsession with organisation and perhaps reflected Mitterrand's growing control over the central party apparatus (although this is difficult to measure with accuracy). Finally, Mitterrand secured the greatest number of mandates in 71 federations, giving him an authentic national representation, with zones of particular strength in the South West, and areas of relative weakness in the West, North, and pockets of the East, corresponding to Rocard's, Mauroy's, and CERES' areas of strongest support (88).

The other motions that could claim a national representation were those of Rocard and CERES. Rocard's

86. Le P/R, 81, May 1979; Le Monde, 18-19 February 1979.

87. Le P/R, 81, May 1979; Le Monde, 18-19 February 1979.

88. Le P/R, 81, May 1979.

motion led in 10 federations, yet was present throughout France, falling below 10% in only 6 federations (Aisne, Aude, Bouches-du-Rhône, Nièvre, Nord, Territoire-de-Belfort) (89). Its zone of particular strength was in the West, probably representing an identification of left christian activists with Rocard. By securing a base of over 20% Rocard could take satisfaction as the only alternative to Mitterrand in 1981. The campaign for Metz, generously covered by the media, had confirmed Rocard as a national political figure, and for many as the best PS presidential candidate for 1981. Within the party, however, Rocard now had little hope of securing the nomination. For whatever hypothesis is accepted in relation to Rocard's strategy for Metz, he had failed to achieve his objective. He had been unable to constrain Mauroy to present a joint motion, a motion he judged would have carried Congress (90). Moreover, he had been unable to secure sufficient support to act as the axis faction, altering the balance of power within the leadership in his favour and in a favourable position later to pose his candidacy for the presidential nomination. Most importantly, he had ensured his demotion into the minority, a position from which he realised the difficulties that would be involved in standing as the party's candidate in 1981. Effectively, Rocard had already lost the

89. Ibid.

90. Le Monde, 13 March 1979.

presidential primary for 1981. His strategy would henceforth be concentrated on attempting to persuade Mitterrand that it was in the party's interest that he, ^{Rocard,} stood as its presidential candidate.

From 24.21% at Nantes, CERES declined to 14.98% at Metz (91). Certain factors can explain what must be seen as a political condemnation by a significant proportion of ex-CERES activists. CERES faced meaningful competition from UPA in only a few federations. Two of these, however, (Nord and Paris) had provided CERES' largest number of mandates at Nantes (92). Within Nord, CERES declined from 23.39% to 7.31%, reflecting the defection of Wolf, the CERES leader since Épinay, and his support for UPA, which achieved 9.40% (93). The other areas where UPA significantly eroded CERES' support were in Paris (where CERES lost overall control for the first time since Épinay); Vosges (where Pierret was a deputy), Essonne, and Ille-et-Vilaine (94). CERES also lost support to Rocard, on account of the loss of its monopoly of opposition, and through its increasingly hostile reference to autogestion to the CFDT, and to the christian left. This could be seen clearly in relation to the East, but repeated itself

91. La Nouvelle Revue Socialiste, 28, 1977; L'Unité, 6-12 April 1979.

92. Le P/R, 63, July 1977.

93. Nord-Demain, 52, April 1979.

94. Le P/R, 81, May 1979.

throughout France (95). CERES also lost support to Mitterrand, although it managed a stiff resistance in its strongholds. Nonetheless, it now controlled only two federations outright (Territoire-de-Belfort^{and} Haut-Rhin), as opposed to 11 after Nantes (96). CERES arrived ahead in 9 federations, and its regional zones of strength remained the East and Paris (97). Clearly marginalised at Metz, CERES still remained a national courant: there were only ~~three~~ federations in mainland France where CERES failed to obtain a mandate, as opposed to 28 for Mauroy, (Corse-du-Sud, Haute-Loire, Lozère)(98). It was too close to permanent marginalisation to be able to impose terms on Mitterrand, as it had at Épinay. However, if it joined Mitterrand in the majority, it stood to enter the federal leadership in alliance with Mitterrand in around 50 federations.

Mauroy's position at Metz was weak. He was unable to win an absolute majority in any département, even where he had rallied the dominant local organisation, and where the SFIO tradition had remained strong. In the 15 federations

95. In Savoie, for example, where the local organisation declared for CERES, Rocard received 42.7% to 34.6% for CERES. Similar trends could be observed in Essonne, Paris, Haute-Saône.../Le P/R, 63, July 1977; 81, May 1979.

96. Ibid, 81, May 1979.

97. Ibid.

98. Ibid.

where the federal leadership had declared for Mauroy, there were no instances where Mauroy received an absolute majority (99). His motion arrived ahead in only *four* federations (Pas-de-Calais, Nord, Var, Dordogne), notwithstanding the presence of powerful organisational supports, especially amongst the élus. Within those federations where the SFIO remained powerful, Mauroy faced near uniform opposition from the remnants of Molletism, still seeking revenge for Épinay, who overwhelmingly sided with Mitterrand. This could account for Mauroy's relative weakness in a number of départments that had previously been considered as his 'fiefs': Nord, Pas-de-Calais, Aude, Ariège, Puy-de-Dôme, Gironde (100). Within Nord, Mauroy's motion received 39.99% only narrowly outdistancing that of Mitterrand (33.67%). Mauroy's fragile position within Nord can be partly explained by local factors: Notebart, head of the powerful Lomme section, and Mauroy's traditional rival, signed Mitterrand's motion, as did other local rivals, such as Haesebroeck, Deputé-Maire of Armentières; André Laurent, Deputé-Maire of Waghignies; and most significantly, Augustin Laurent, Mauroy's old boss, and head of the Nord federation from 1944-1967 (101). Henceforth, Mauroy's support was largely reduced to the Nord/Pas-de-Calais axis,

99. Ibid; Le Monde, 18-19 February 1979.

100. Le Monde, 3-4 April 1979.

101. List of signatories to motion A. Le P/R, 79, February 1979.

to certain socialist municipalities, and to a residual ex-SFIO base in a minority of federations.

If the appellation organisation faction is apt to label Mauroy and his bases of support within the party, Metz underlined Mitterrand's strategic advantage within this category, as party leader since Épinay, as presidential candidate in 1974, and likely candidate in 1981, and as ^(x. l. d.) centrally element within the majority. Mauroy was seen by most activists as head of an organisation faction in the strict sense of the term, rather than an homme de synthèse: outside those areas where Mauroy could count on organisational supports, his appeal was non-existent. By contrast, Mitterrand, who had consistently used his organisational status to promote his own factional interests, continued to be seen by many as rassembleur. His status as leader during the period when the PS had become the largest party in France, 1971 - 1978, shielded his position as head of the most powerful organisation faction; while Mauroy, by opposing Mitterrand, was reduced by the mass of activists to defending corporate organisational interests (large federations, Socialist local authorities). Mitterrand was more successful than Mauroy in claiming a party legitimacy, and in defining his adversaries' behaviour as factional.

After the opening vote, it was clear that Mitterrand held the key to ^{the} Congress. He had emerged as leader of the

dominant faction, even though only representing the largest minority. He was now in a position to dominate the organisation at both national and federal levels, and to control the process leading to the designation of the party's candidate in 1981. At ^{the} Congress itself, there was a slim possibility that Mitterrand might be able to form an homogeneous leadership, by attracting a sufficient number of other motions' delegates to cross the 50% barrier. The solidity of Mauroy's delegation at Congress prevented this (102). Mitterrand was assured of 70% of the Bouches-du-Rhône mandates, with Defferre rallying to his support; while a minority (30%) sided with Mauroy (103). After these readjustments, the final vote was as follows:

Table 8.2 The final vote at the Congress of Metz

<u>Motion</u>	<u>Mandates</u>	<u>%</u>
Mitterrand (A)	3,192	46.99
Mauroy (B)	1,142	16.81
Rocard (C)	1,444	21.26
CERES (E)	1,105	14.94

Source: Nord-Demain, 52, April 1979

In the event of his failing to separate Mauroy from Rocard at Congress, as seemed probable, it was clearly Mitterrand's intention to ally with the weakest organisational faction necessary to secure a majority, and to maximise his

102. Le Monde, 10 April 1979.

103. Ibid, 8-9 April 1979.

future control over the organisation. This could explain the approaches made towards Pierret's UPA at Congress: UPA was offered one post on the Secretariat, and five seats on the CD in return for supporting Mitterrand. Pierret refused (104). Only after this refusal did Mitterrand turn to CERES.

The theatrical and tactical importance of Metz was who would be seen to take responsibility for the inevitable leadership split. Neither Mitterrand nor Rocard, in their opening speeches to Congress, formally excluded the possibility of an agreement, but both posed terms which de facto acknowledged the eventuality of a leadership split. Mitterrand's speech opened ^{the} Congress, thereby reversing the trend of socialist Congresses. He decreed that any agreement had to be on his terms:

'Le problème est de savoir si le PS est disposé à changer ses représentants de défendre une ligne politique et laquelle... Le PS doit poursuivre dans la ligne qu'il s'est fixé il y a huit ans à l'occasion de son Congrès d'Épinay-sur-Seine' (105).

In reply, Rocard reiterated in substance his two-culture Nantes speech, and declared that a compromise would only be possible where there was a clear political agreement (106). He also demanded a more democratic internal party functioning, calling for the Bureau Exécutif to assume the role of the

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid., 10 April 1979.

106. Ibid., 8 - 9 April 1979.

party's real executive, and for the representation of all courants on federal executives, a tacit admission that he had already lost Congress.

For both leaders, the object of tactical competition at Congress was Mauroy's support. This would give Mitterrand a comfortable majority, and obviate the need for a CERES alliance only two months before the European elections. However, it was unlikely that Mauroy would acquiesce in Mitterrand's marginalisation of Rocard, a position he had consistently rejected. Mauroy's support for Rocard would prevent the latter's isolation in the minority; provide a collective opposition of nearly 40% of the activists, and keep alive Rocard's hopes of gaining the presidential nomination (either by acting as a base from which Rocard could build as a prelude to a primary against Mitterrand; or by enabling Mitterrand more easily to consent to Rocard's candidacy, if he considered it to be in party interests). Mauroy judged that he could weigh most effectively on PS development until 1981 by providing a loyal opposition and promoting a reconciliation of Mitterrand and Rocard at a later date (107).

Even in defeat, Mauroy continued to position himself
 as ^{le} homme de synthèse

107. Ibid, 10 April 1979.

'La victoire est possible. Nous devons la préparer. Nous devons nous rassembler. Voilà ce que nous vous demandons. Rassemblez-vous mes camarades pour les travailleurs qui attendent, pour tous ceux qui espèrent dans un grand Parti socialiste. Rassemblez vous pour permettre au socialisme demain de triompher' (108).

As Congress progressed, Mauroy sided more openly against Mitterrand, largely as a reaction against the tone of Mitterrand's lieutenants' speeches. Mitterrand's lieutenants were determined to avoid any compromise that might leave Rocard, or even Mauroy, within the majority, and frustrate their intentions to maximise their control over the organisation. This could be seen clearly in speeches by Jospin, Quilès, or Fabius (109). The most sectarian attack against Rocard came from Fabius, previously considered as a technocrat, rather than as one of Mitterrand's henchmen. In response to Rocard's defence of the market as the fundamental means of economic regulation, Fabius demanded 'Entre le marché et le rationnement il n'y a rien? Si, il y a le socialisme' (110).

The leadership split was consecrated in the Resolutions committee, meeting on April 7-8th (111). Mauroy and Rocard agreed on five amendments to be proposed to Mitterrand's text, yet negotiations broke down when Mitterrand's delegates refused to consider an amendment

108. Nord Demain, 52, April 1979.

109. Le Monde, 10 April 1979.

110. Ibid.

111. Ibid.

signed by Viveret (C), which asserted,

'Le Parti socialiste n'a aucun dogme, et il ne connaît pas de grand prêtre. Il doit être avant tout un Parti tolérant, refusant toutes les chasses que l'on voudrait donner aux chrétiens, aux laïques, et aux marxistes, et assurant à tous ces membres une réelle liberté d'expression' (112).

Mitterrand declared himself wounded by this text, and shortly afterwards, he made his intentions clear:

'Nous ne sommes qu'une majorité relative, inutile de nous le rappeler. Vous avez bien voulu accepter de discuter autour de notre texte. Vouloir imposer les vôtres était critiquable. Ce serait facile s'il n'y avait pas deux lignes politiques. Si nous ne sommes pas parvenus à un accord, c'est qu'il est difficile de substituer un text à un autre quand ils disent le contraire' (113).

The final stages of Congress were preoccupied with <<e debate from the tribune between Motchane, Chevènement, and Mitterrand over the conditions in which a future Mitterrand/CERES alliance should materialise. Mitterrand initially refused to commit himself to a formal alliance with CERES until after the European elections, and no agreement was reached at Congress itself, a unique solution which neglected the theoretically sovereign role of Congress (114). Metz ended with Mitterrand and Rocard publicly blaming each other for the leadership split, and with Mauroy issuing a public declaration blaming Mitterrand for party disunity (115).

112. Ibid.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid.

115. Ibid.

Only Rocard, in his final speech to Congress, alluded to the presidential cleavage which had underpinned internal party competition since March 1978:

'La notification de la rupture conduit à une situation nouvelle. Notre opposition sera politique, militante et collective. Elle ne sera pas procédurière. Ce ne sera pas l'opposition du prétendant. Si vous êtes, François Mitterrand, candidat à l'élection présidentielle, je ne le serai pas contre vous' (116).

The significance of Rocard's pledge, and the struggle for the presidential nomination engaged between Mitterrand and Rocard must now occupy our attention.

CHAPTER NINE

Towards the Presidency

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The leadership team that emerged from Metz was officially known only after the CD of April 22nd, 1979 when Chevènement read out a text confirming that Mitterrand and CERES had reached a political agreement as the basis of a new leadership alliance. The agreement consisted of a series of general commitments relating to the Union of the Left; Europe; the priority to be given to *reinforcing* the party in the workplace; and a condemnation of government economic policy (1). One condition of CERES' reentry into the Secretariat was that it agreed to silence any divergences over Europe, in the run up to the 1979 European elections (2). This text was voted by the minority in order to underline, in Mauroy's words, that 'il y a là non un accord politique privilégié, mais arrangement de pouvoir' (3).

The composition of the new leadership confirmed the domination at all levels of the organisation exercised by the Mitterrandists. Metz witnessed the accession to power of the Mitterrandist sabras, the new generation of leaders produced by the post-Épinay party, and in whose hands Mitterrand intended to leave the party once he eventually departed. These leaders were characterised as sharing the same leader/follower commitment to Mitterrand as the CIR clan, with whom they remained in competition. They had

1. Le Monde, 27 April 1979.

2. Ibid.

3. 'Refaire de notre parti un parti des propositions', Le P/R, 81, May 1979.

begun their rise to prominence in the era of Mitterrand/CERES confrontation, and distrusted CERES; they regarded Rocard, and his eventual presidential candidacy, as the greatest threat to their inheritance of the organisation; absent from Epinay, they lacked any sentimental attachment to Mauroy.

Within the new Secrétariat, 7 out of 11 Mitterrandist Secrétaires were new arrivals (4). Henceforth, the key posts - aside from that held by Mitterrand - were all occupied by sabras. Jospin (International affairs) was now number 2 in the party hierarchy; Quilès took over from Mermaz (and Mauroy), in charge of 'Organisation and federations'; Germon, a CGT leader, was given control over PS workplace sections; while Fabius took over relations with the press from Estier (5). Several of the new arrivals were in fact old hands, reflecting the composite nature of motion A at Metz: Mora (ex-Poperenist), Pezet (ex-SFIO, close to Defferre), Delborge (ex-Molletist), Durand (ex-Molletist) (6). By contrast, the CIR clan was largely retired from service: Delfau alone remained at Formation, while such prominent Mitterrandists as Mermaz, Joxe, Cresson, or Roudy were transferred to other functions (7).

4. Le P/R, 81, May 1979.

5. Ibid.

6. Le N/O, 16-22 April 1979.

7. Ibid., Mainly to the European Parliament.

The Mitterrandists' domination of the organisation was tempered only by the reduced presence of CERES, which counted three Secrétaires out of fifteen (8). Nonetheless, CERES' support was necessary for Mitterrand to form a majority, and it thereby partly recovered the pivotal position it had occupied after Epinay in 1971. But in 1979, CERES lacked an alternative to ^{an} alliance with Mitterrand; the significance of its pivotal position was so greatly reduced that in reality it constituted little more than a force d'appoint. It was Mitterrand who, as leader of the dominant, central faction, exercised the real pivotal role: he had allied with CERES to exclude Mauroy and Rocard, yet could rely on the latter on specific issues such as Europe, where the political disagreements between CERES and Mitterrand were manifest. The CERES component in the leadership was composed of Chevènement (Etudes), Charzat (Public Sector), and Chépy (Associations)(9).

The PS campaign for the European elections of June 1979 suffered from a lack of unity consequent on the Metz change of leadership. While opening the campaign critical of the other European Socialist parties, (thereby consolidating the CERES alliance) Mitterrand ended it praising the role of the German SPD, much to the chagrin of CERES, and the

8. Le P/R, 81, May 1979.

9. Ibid.

incredulity of Mauroy (10). The PS/MRG list was reduced to 23.4%, a decline of 1.5% in relation to March 1978 (11). The European election setback was important for mainly symbolic reasons: it marked the party's first regression in a national election since Épinay.

The factional battle continued unabated after Metz. At the CD of June 16, Mitterrand accused Mauroy of inadmissible behaviour for having published a text in Le Monde, outlining the positions that he would adopt at the CD, and harshly criticising the conduct of the European election campaign (12). In response to Mauroy's initiative, the majority announced that the CD meeting-due to discuss the European elections - was suspended, and that a National Convention (composed of the heads of the federations, overwhelmingly Mitterrandists) would be convoked to consider the European election results (13). In reply, the minority accused the majority of refusing to face up to the party's defeat in June 1979; while the majority accused Mauroy and Rocard of refusing to accept the legitimacy of Metz. Mauroy then announced that the minority would boycott the proposed Convention, an unprecedented step even at the height of the Mitterrand/ CERES conflict (14).

10. For CERES, see Repères, 64, (June 1979), Editorial; For Mauroy, speech to the CEF-Nord, 9 June 1979.

11. A. Lancelot, 'Europe minus zero', Projet, 138, (September-October 1979), p. 1008.

12. Le N/O, 25 June - 1 July 1979.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

This episode testified to the continuing traumatic effect of Metz. It also underlined the stark reality that hitherto, the pattern of internal party relations had been one of rassemblement, and that Metz had inaugurated a situation where two powerful factions (and arguably, the party's two most popular leaders), were excluded in the minority. Mauroy's position reflected his fear that the development of a factional dichotomy could only lead to sectarianism to the detriment of party unity, as was the case in his own federation. After Metz, the unitary tradition of the Nord federation appeared shattered. The new federal leadership was formed on the basis of a Mauroy/Rocard alliance, and excluded Mitterrand and CERES into the minority (15). If Mauroy retained control of the Nord, and was strongly supported by Percheron and Pas de Calais, the division of the federation could only weaken his power broker status, and it was indicative that he sought to reestablish the unity of the federation at the earliest possible moment. .

As self-conceived homme de synthèse, Mauroy initially refused to regard the majority as legitimate, arguing that 'nous nous quittons donc à Metz sur un Congrès inachevé' (16). In particular, he criticised the agreement reached between Mitterrand and CERES at the April CD, and declared

15. CEF-Nord, 23 April 1979.

16. Le P/R, 81, May 1979.

that the new majority was unconstitutional, because it had been formed by a declaration of the CD rather than by Congress itself. In so far as Mauroy blamed Mitterrand, Metz, and the CERES alliance for the party's poor showing in June 1979, he appeared initially likely to strengthen his cooperation with Rocard, presaged by the incident of the June CD. Yet, by the same rationale (party unity), Mauroy rapidly established a more conciliatory form of coexistence with the majority.

Despite Metz, Mauroy continued to see himself as representative of the socialist heritage, passing through the SFIO, Épinay, and the Assises. Once the immediate internecine fervour of Metz had died down, Mauroy used every occasion to propose the reunification of the majority, as a prelude to an early designation of the party's candidate for 1981, in the interests of party unity. Yet, he could no longer aspire to act as arbiter between Mitterrand and Rocard and any immediate participation in the majority could only be at the expense of Rocard's isolation, a position he continued to reject. Despite his initial hesitation in throwing his weight behind a Rocard candidacy, it was clear that political convergences remained between the two leaders. These could be summarised as: a continuing belief that an autonomous left unity strategy was necessary in preparation for the 1981 presidential

elections; a commitment to the idea of the Union des forces populaires and a rejection of tenir bon.

Clear master over the organisation, Mitterrand was now well placed to control the process leading to the designation of the party's candidate for 1981, whether or not he chose to be that candidate, whether he eventually left the field free for Rocard, or whether he used his influence in favour of one of his protégés. That meant reconciliation with Mauroy, much less Rocard, was impossible. It also meant that the position of CERES was uncomfortable, given the PCF's determination to defeat the PS candidate, whoever he was.

From Metz until the 1981 presidential elections, PS/PCF relations were characterised by continuing and deepening *action*, as the PCF's objective became more evidently to destroy the PS in 1981. In August 1979, Mitterrand made it clear that he considered the PCF's distinction between 'unity at the base' (with which it agreed), and 'unity at the summit' (impossible because of the PS' right wing deviation), as a 'futile distinction' (17). In order to compete for support amongst the PCF's unitary electorate, the Metz leadership proposed a series of common actions to the PCF, and delegations from both parties met in September

17. Speech at Anglet. Cited in Le poing et la Rose - Spécial Responsables, (Le PR/SR), 2nd series, 8, August 1979.

1979 for the first time since March 1978 (18). It was subsequently revealed that of ^{the} around 1,500 proposed joint initiatives made by the PS sections to their PCF counterparts, only 60 had resulted in concrete actions (19). If remaining publicly committed to the idea of tenir bon (thereby competing for support amongst the PCF's unitary electorate) the PS leadership, under Mitterrand's impetus, subtly shifted the emphasis of its strategy towards responding more directly to PCF attacks, thereby hoping to reassure a potential centrist electorate of its independence. It also sought to move towards a greater dialogue with the unions and associations - tardily, and partially responding to demands voiced by Mauroy and Rocard at Metz (20).

Rocard's demotion into the minority at Metz was paral^{lel}led by a further worsening of relations between the PS and the CFDT. In December 1979, Maire asserted that 'in the present situation', a left victory in the 1981 presidential ^{elections} could only be a failure, given that the state of its disunity, and its unpreparedness to govern (21).

These comments were bound to worsen relations between the PS and CFDT leaderships, and were taken by the Mitter^{rand}andists

18. Le PR/SR, 10, 9 September 1979.

19. Ibid, 21, 13 December 1979.

20. In September and October 1979, the PS held meetings with FEN, CGC, CFDT, FO, PCF, MRG. Ibid, 10, 9 September 1979.

21. Le N/O, 17-23 December 1979.

as signalling that the CFDT actively supported a Rocard candidacy. Rocard could only be embarrassed by Maire's comments, in so far as the Union federation which Rocard considered should be the party's privileged ally, had publicly gone on record as being unfavourable to the left's victory in 1981. This controversy largely dominated the CD of December 8th, 1979, at which there was a restoration of a Rocard/Mauroy block vote, with both men attempting to prevent the adoption of a resolution condemning Maire, in the name of trade union autonomy(22). At the CD, Mitterrand virtually explicitly accused Rocard and Maire of collaborating to promote Rocard's candidacy in 1981, and underlined that he intended to remain in control of the process leading to the designation of the party's candidate.;

'Rien donc ne fera fléchir ma détermination de m'opposer de toutes mes forces à ceux qui, de l'extérieur ou de l'intérieur, par une étrange concordance, nous harcèlent, nous retardent, et risquent de nous épuiser dans les luttes hors de saison. Je veux et je dois parler haut au nom du socialisme, qui peut et qui doit gagner l'élection présidentielle de 1981. Je mesure la rigueur, l'ampleur, la difficulté de mon rôle. Mais je le remplirai quoi qu'il advienne, quelles que soient les circonstances aujourd'hui, demain, et en dépit des interrogations compliquées et savamment entretenues sur la personne du futur candidat socialiste à la Présidence de la République' (23).

Within the Metz leadership, there were signs that the

22. Ibid.

23. Cited in Le PR/SR, 21, 13 December 1979.

renewed CERES alliance risked embarrassing Mitterrand, in particular with regard to PS/PCF relations. In October 1979, Chevènement publicly demanded :

'Est-ce un hasard si la rupture de 1977 s'est produite sur le dossier des nationalisations, dont le PS avait confié la charge à Michel Rocard?' (24).

Chevènement's statement had serious implications: it was a precondition of Mitterrand's tenir bon strategy that the PCF bore exclusive responsibility for the breakdown of left unity. By restoring CERES into the leadership, Mitterrand thus risked giving the PCF an ideological stick with which to beat the PS, via Rocard. Chevènement's statement was duly exploited by the PCF leadership to 'confirm' PS responsibility for the 1977 split (25).

By the end of 1979, the party's attentions were firmly centered on who would be its candidate in 1981. In December 1979, Mitterrand clarified his position over the presidential election, arguing that if competing lines existed within the party, each potential candidate had the duty to present himself for the party's investiture. This was clearly an invitation to Rocard to participate in internal party primaries over the nomination, as well as an indication that Rocard would be unacceptable as a 'consensus' candidate. Moreover, Mitterrand publicly absolved Rocard from the

24. Le N/O, 15-21 October 1979.

25. Ibid.

commitment he had made at Metz, whereby he would not present himself as candidate, if Mitterrand chose to stand; 'Personne n'a besoin de ma permission. Et, si l'on a besoin de ma permission, je la donne' (26).

These presidential overtones clearly underpinned the preparations of the party's Projet Socialiste, which was officially adopted at Alfortville, on January 12-13th, 1980 (27). The elaboration of the Projet had initially been conceived of by Mitterrand as a means of deflecting criticisms of his leadership after March 1978. The adoption of the Projet, originally foreseen for February 1979, was finally postponed until after the Metz Congress, with the argument that the party could not elaborate its project until its political orientation had been settled (28). After Metz, Mitterrand entrusted Chevènement to establish a preliminary text, and the BE appointed a commission representing all courants proportionately, to attempt to reach agreement over the Projet (29).

Chevènement's first text was presented to the CD on September 29th, 1979, where it was referred back to a joint body, consisting of members of the commission, and of the BE (30). Mauroy, Rocard and Mitterrand were united in

26. Cited in Le PR/SR, 20 December 1979.

27. Le P/R, 86, January-February 1980.

28. Le P/R, 85, November-December 1979.

29. Ibid.

30. D. Cacheux, 'Projet socialiste: son histoire, son contenu', Nord-Demain, December 1979.

rejecting this original text. A modified version of the Projet was accepted unanimously by this joint body on October 24th, 1979, with 7 amendments initially being tabled (6 Rocardien, 1 Mauroyite). The Rocardiens subsequently dropped their amendments and concentrated their efforts on what became known as the Page 9 amendment, initially proposed by Mauroy who in turn withdrew his support. The Projet was accepted only after an introduction written by Mitterrand (and moderating the tone of the text) had been agreed upon to satisfy Mauroy (31).

Having underlined his strength at Metz, the Projet offered Mitterrand the opportunity to restore party unity, and to lessen his dependence on CERES. Alternatively, Mitterrand could use the Projet, intended as the presidential platform, as a means of elaborating a programme based on the 'line of Metz', which, even if accepted tactically by Rocard, could be declared incompatible with the latter's candidacy. This was the emphasis Mitterrand's lieutenants intended to place on the Projet. Either attitude carried risks. The return of Mauroy and Rocard into the leadership, in return for unity over the Projet (as Mauroy continued to hope), risked giving Rocard's bid a new impetus. Moreover, it would have undone Metz, and was unlikely given the control exercised by the Mitterrandists over the

organisation. Yet, to use the Projet primarily as a means of ideologically delegitimising Rocard as a potential presidential candidate also posed problems for Mitterrand. It risked landing Mitterrand with a political project on which it would be difficult to retain the support of centrist electors in 1981. It also risked appearing to cede too much ground to CERES, laying the bases for a renewed Rocard/Mauroy challenge after an unsuccessful presidential election. On balance, Mitterrand preferred a modified version of this second option, to pose difficult conditions for a Rocard candidacy in 1981. The Projet therefore again saw Mitterrand mobilising ideology as a weapon to mask the clearly predominant presidential cleavage.

CERES saw the Projet as a specific weapon of ideological defence: it was a means of challenging the influence of the 'dominant ideology' within the PS (^{act of} Rocard), and was intended to consecrate the division between *supporters* and opponents of the line of Metz, between CERES/Mitterrand, and Mauroy/Rocard. CERES denounced the minority's acceptance of the Projet as a tactical manoeuvre, and accused the Rocardiens of dropping their amendments in the Commission merely to preserve Rocard's chances for the presidential nomination (32). Clearly, for CERES, the Projet had not been

32. 'La critique de la critique', Repères, 67, (November-December 1979), p.13.

elaborated as a means of restoring party unity, but of capitalising on its position to associate Mitterrand more closely with its ideology. It was also intended to diminish the weight of the courant autogestionnaire in the party's official doctrine, and to restore its status as the party's ideological brains trust.

Rocard was strangely silent from Metz, until the adoption of the Projet socialiste, in January 1980. He had been absent from the European election campaign, and he did not directly participate in the drafting of the Projet. Moreover, he had called a temporary truce after Metz, by declaring that Mitterrand would be a 'good candidate' in 1981 (33). During this period of relative respite, Rocard reorganised and expanded his team of advisers. As Mitterrand replaced the CIR clan with his own protégés, so Rocard relied less on his ex-PSU advisers and more on the diversity of forces supporting him within and outside of the party. Thus, for example, Cot, Martinet, Pisani (ex-minister under De Gaulle), Jossefin, Le Pensec, Moreau (on the CFDT Bureau), were among Rocard's direct advisers after Metz (34). Moreover, Rocard henceforth organised his courant more along the lines of a parallel faction than he had prior to Metz. After Metz, the members of the BE elected

33. Salomon, op. cit., p. 227.

34. Hamon and Rotman, L'Effet Rocard, p. 294.

on motion C acted as the executive of the Rocardiens, while a wider, bimonthly meeting linked delegates from the federations, and those elected onto the CD at Metz on motion C. After April 1979, with Rocard's presidential strategy clearly affirmed, the reference to the courant des Assises, or the courant autogestionnaire was progressively less marked, and replaced by that of the Rocardiens, which reflected the saliency of the presidential cleavage.

The bid for the presidential nomination largely explains Rocard's attitude to the Projet. He refused to be drawn into a debate over the Projet - an ideological anathema - which might have forced him to table a counter-project, and definitely excluded his chance of the presidential nomination. Consequently, he attempted to elevate himself above the debate, by his absence from discussions. Rocard's narrow margin of manoeuvre over the Projet led to a reaffirmation of the distinction between Rocard, as a hypothetical presidential candidate, and his base amongst the activists. The Rocardien leader in Nord, for example, Battist, argued that the Projet was merely a tactical manoeuvre, and proposed the formulation of a counter-project (35). This could be seen as a grass roots Rocardien reaction, freed from the tactical considerations of the national leadership.

In reality, Rocard had little option but to attempt to ignore the Projet, while giving it his official support, and thereby maintaining himself in the running for the presidential nomination. Mauroy saw the projet as a means of healing the wounds created by Metz, and of preparing the party to face the 1981 presidential ^{elections} in relative unity,

'Quand je mesure les difficultés qui ont été celles du Parti depuis le dernier Congrès, j'estime que si nous voulons être dans la bataille des présidentielles avec le maximum des atouts pour forcer la victoire, il faut réaliser autour du projet le rassemblement qui a été manqué au Congrès de Metz' (36).

Neither Mauroy nor Rocard could accept Chevènement's first draft of the Projet, presented to the September CD, with Mauroy describing the text as permeated by 'un tel dogmatisme, un hymne au scientisme, et une absence de réflexion sur la liberté' (37). In December 1979, Mauroy revealed that he had resumed negotiations with Mitterrand over the composition of the leadership (38) and he clearly hoped to be able to offer the minority's acceptance of the Projet as the occasion for its restoration to the majority. Mitterrand was not yet willing to accept such a compromise, although he attempted to use the Projet as a means of separating Mauroy from Rocard, a position refused by Mauroy. Mauroy accepted the Projet in the name of party unity, yet

36. Interview with Mauroy, Nord-Demain, 56, October 1979.

37. Mauroy to the CEF-Nord, 6 October 1979.

38. Ibid, 1 December 1979.

he was clearly unhappy with the final text, fearing that no PS candidate could credibly defend the Projet in 1981 (39). At the Nord's Federal Convention, January 6th, 1980, Mauroy restored the unanimity of ^{le} federation on a series of propositions to be presented to the National Convention, January 13th (40). The resolution called for the party's presidential candidate to be designated before June 15th, 1980. Underlying this lay Mauroy's belief that any primaries would have a 'catastrophic' effect (41). Finally, Mauroy proposed the adoption of a short, 10 page, programme as a presidential platform, to replace the Projet :

'Un projet de cent pages à vingt ans est utile, mais il nous manque ces dix pages qui seraient en quelque sorte la plate-forme pour un candidat aux présidentielles' (42).

By January 1980, Mauroy's position over the selection of the party's candidate had been broadly outlined: the candidate had to be rapidly designated by a large consensus, and on the basis of a political orientation that was clearly in line with present circumstances - that is the split with the PCF.

The reception of the Projet at the Alfortville Convention, January 12-13, 1980, left the overriding impression that it had encountered at best apathy, at worst

39. Ibid, 5 January 1980.

40. Circular from Nord secretariat to heads of the sections, 7 January 1980, PS archives, Lille.

41. Mauroy to the CEF-NORD, 10 November 1979.

42. Cited in Nord Éclair, 8 January 1980.

hostility from the activists. Certain sources estimated that around 70% of party activists had not participated in the vote on the Projet (43). In total, some 500 amendments were tabled and around 200 modifications to the text were accepted in the Resolutions Committee (44). In particular, the contentious section of Chevènement's original text, affirming that 'l'axe de notre sécurité passe par Moscou' was defeated by the Defferre-Mermaz amendment supported by the minority (45). CERES were also defeated over the question of nuclear energy: the Quilès option, calling for no nuclear reactors to be developed, largely defeated CERES' strongly pro-Nuclear option (46). Mitterrand would not be drawn into these perilous waters, even if they were the price for the renewal of the PS/PCF pact.

However, the major ideological debate was concentrated between CERES and the Rocardiens, and crystallised around the P.9 amendment. The Rocardiens, in alliance with certain Mauroy ^{supporters}, demanded the suppression of a passage on P.9 of the Projet, which was clearly aimed at delegitimising May '68, and the salient themes with which the Rocardiens had been associated within the PS (47). The Chevènement inspired text argued that the main themes emerging from May '68, and

43. Le N/O, 14-20 January 1980.

44. Le P/R, 86, January-February 1980.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid., 85, November-December 1979; 86, January-February 1980.

vehiculed by elements within the PS, had classically been associated with 'la droite libérale, voire réactionnaire', and were today a part of Giscard's ideological arsenal to defeat the left (48). Moreover, their audience within the PS was based on the 'ideological ambiguity' of 'certain middle classes' - a clear dig at Rocard (49).

In response to Chevènement's attempts to label certain themes on the left as being intrinsically right wing (those associated with May '68, such as social experimentation, decentralisation, even autogestion), the Rocardiens retorted that the left should reject liberty and equality by this reasoning, since the right also professed these values. Through a process of ideological exclusionism of themes that Giscard had sought to exploit to compete with the PS, (often those articulated by Rocard), the Rocardiens argued that the end result of Chevènement's reasoning was to attach the PS - through the Projet - with a series of themes normally associated with the right, especially nationalism (50). Rocard's friends concluded that the PS was bound to *be harmed* as a result of the Projet. Rocard, however, had (presidential) reasons for swallowing a partly unacceptable text that many of his supporters did not tolerate.

48. Ibid, 85.

49. Ibid, 85.

50. See P. Viveret, 'Projet Socialiste: un texte inquiétant', Faire, 47 (September 1979), pp.3-5; G. Martinet, 'Ce qui manque au projet socialiste', Faire, 50, (December 1979), pp. 3-5.

The P.9 amendment was rejected by 47.70% to 31.04% with 12.2% abstaining, and 9.04% calling for a 'rewriting' of the text (51). Given that most Mauroy ^{supporters}, but not Mauroy himself supported the P.9 amendment, it is difficult to draw any concrete conclusions from this vote. After failure to reach agreement in the Resolutions committee, Mauroy joined with Rocard in supporting a new amendment, which would have largely modified the passage concerned. This amendment received 37.6% of the mandates, 'rectified' by the leadership to 35.45%, leading to accusations of widescale manoeuvring by the Rocardiens (52). It is safest to say that this represented a relative stability in the overall respective weights of minority and majority in relation to Metz, suggesting that Rocard could count on a base of at least 30% should he contest internal primaries (the P.9 amendment receiving 31.04%).

It was clear that Rocard's influence had not significantly increased within the party, although neither had it declined. The amendment supported by Mauroy and Rocard carried 15 federations, opposed to 14 at Metz (53). It was equally clear that the Mitterrandists remained in control of the organisation. The Projet was accepted by 82.77% of the mandates, with 3.07% against, and 12.35%

51. Le PR/SR, 24, 17 January 1980.

52. P. Viveret, 'Les métamorphoses d'un vote', Faire, 52, (February 1980), pp. 28-9.

53. Le P/R, 86, January-February 1980.

abstentions (54).

At the Convention, Mitterrand rejected Mauroy's proposition that the PS candidate should be designated before June 15th, 1980 (55). He also rejected Mauroy's call for an extraordinary Convention, with powers of Congress, to be held on international affairs, and to define a more autonomous line in relation to the PCF, after its approval of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Mitterrand's rejection of Mauroy's proposals appeared likely to increase the distrust felt between the two leaders, and to renew the prospect of a Mauroy/Rocard axis on the eve of Rocard's renewed bid for the nomination. According to Mitterrand and the Metz leadership, the PCF's approval of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan facilitated the PS' task: it would illustrate to large sectors of the PCF electorate that that party no longer sought to accede to power with the PS; had totally realigned itself alongside the USSR; and that support for the PS in 1981 was the only authentically unitary choice, forcing the PCF to return to the union (56). Mitterrand harshly criticised the PCF for its approval of the Soviet invasion, thereby attempting to restore his image with the centrist electorate.

With the adoption of the Projet, internal party rivalries were henceforth nearly exclusively concerned with

54. Ibid.

55. Le PR/SR, 24, 17 January 1980.

56. Ibid.

who would be the party's candidate in 1981. The proximity of the presidential election *disguised* a cleavage structure that remained complex, and in which the presidential nomination was not merely an end, but also a means to an end: each actor positioned himself in relation to the question of the party's nominee for 1981, but also in function of the internal situation within the PS after the May 1981 election, should the PS candidate lose. The competition for the nomination thereby *disguised* an organisational cleavage, based on control of the party after 1981.

Rocard's renewed campaign for the presidential nomination can be dated from February 25th, 1980, his first TV appearance for 13 months (57). In order to attempt to neutralise the party, Rocard declared that a 'consensus' candidate could be chosen: implicitly he would be that candidate should Mitterrand decide not to stand. After this initial reentry, Rocard began a nationwide tour of the federations, an initiative arousing extreme hostility amongst the Mitterrandists. The idea of a Rocard candidacy gained an increased momentum in March 1980, when Mauroy provisionally declared himself in favour of Rocard (see below). However, Rocard's margin of manoeuvre was limited. Reduced to its essentials, Rocard's post-Metz strategy

57. Le N/O, 25 February - 3 March; 3-9 March, 1980.

consisted in attempting to maximise his opinion poll popularity as the party's best candidate in 1981, to achieve an impregnable lead over Mitterrand, and establish himself as the party's candidate in the eyes of the electorate, and if possible party activists. Its ultimate tenet was to gamble that Mitterrand and the Mitterrandist party leadership would not dare to sabotage the party's real chances of victory in 1981 by refusing his candidacy. In this sense, Rocard would be a consensus candidate.

Rocard's political appeal has been analysed above (Chapter 7). Despite his exhortations to parler vrai, Rocard could increasingly be accused of maintaining a double language. His internal party language, couched in terms of autogestion, was steadily overshadowed by his external, presidential language, preferring to speak of socialism with responsibility - as advanced in his February TV appearance,(58). Such modifications of language may be a necessary condition of a presidential strategy. Within the PS, however, Rocard's originality had been as a source of confluence for the legacies of May '68, and mendèsiste modernism: elements of his party base regarded his watering down of autogestion as a betrayal. By contrast to the campaign for Metz, where Rocard had appeared as leader of a courant autogestionnaire, he now attempted to elevate

58. Ibid, 3-9 March 1980.

himself above internal PS struggles, and to appear as a worthy presidential candidate. This accounted for his increasingly frequent interventions on international affairs and his well publicised meetings with various international leaders (59).

The impetus for Rocard's campaign came from his continuing ascendancy within the polls (60). Prior to Metz, Rocard had overtaken Mitterrand as the party's 'best candidate for 1981', yet Mitterrand had continued to outscore Rocard in perceptions of specific presidential qualities. By January 1980, Rocard had partially overturned Mitterrand's lead in this category, while consolidating his status as the best presidential candidate (61). By January 1980, 55% saw Rocard as the party's best candidate, opposed to 20% for Mitterrand, figures echoed amongst PS identifiers (58/29). From October 1978 - January 1980, Rocard's lead over Mitterrand in opinion as a whole as the party's 'best presidential candidate' increased from 7 to 35% (and from -2 to 29% amongst PS identifiers)..

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59. Rocard's speeches to the Alfortville CN, and the April CN were entirely consecrated to international affairs. Le PR/SR, 24, 17 January 1980; 39, 30 April 1980. In June 1980, Rocard was in Washington without a party mandate. Le N/O, 9-15 June 1980.
60. J.L. Parodi, P. Perrineau, 'François Mitterrand et Michel Rocard: deux ans de concurrence devant l'opinion', Pouvoirs, 13, (1980), 2nd Quarter, pp. 189-197.
61. Ibid. Rocard overtook Mitterrand, eg, in the 'capacity to assure the unity of the French people' category. He continued to trail Mitterrand in the 'capacity to represent France abroad'.

Despite these figures, certain ambiguities remained. In response to the question 'who do you wish to see play an important role in the future?', Rocard scored heavily amongst those identifying with the UDF, and RPR. It may be doubted whether these favourable ratings from supporters of right wing parties would translate into concrete votes in a presidential election. By contrast, Rocard trailed Mitterrand in popularity within the PCF electorate from March 1979 to January 1980. The general indications from these polls could provide evidence for both leaders' beliefs that they would be the best candidate in 1981. Rocard could point to his continually increasing stature with opinion to argue that his candidacy would make inroads into the centrist and the UDF electorates on the first ballot, while securing PCF votes on the second; Mitterrand could expect to capture a significant proportion of the PCF electorate from the first ballot, and hope for the rallying of the centre on the second.

In the attempt to gain the presidential nomination, Rocard's advisers relied on their candidate's popularity to secure a dramatic realignment of the élus behind Rocard as the party's best presidential candidate, and as the best safeguard for their own future. For the score obtained by a socialist candidate in 1981 would in turn influence the party's performance in the 1982 cantonal, and 1983 municipal

elections. One-third of activists were estimated to be élus and the party's poor performance in the 1979 European elections could only have helped Rocard in this sense (62). If certain important realignments towards Rocard occurred during 1980, these were ultimately of limited significance, underlining that Mitterrand, as leader of the dominant faction, continued to be regarded as a source of legitimacy by most élus, for whom it was important to side with the party majority (63). They could not contest an election if they were not nominated by the sections.

In many respects, Mitterrand's and Rocard's strategies remained similar: both prepared for an autonomous Socialist campaign in the 1981 presidential elections; both excluded a contract of government with the PCF before legislative elections; both limited left unity to 'republican discipline' in ^{the} legislative elections, before considering any contract of government between PS and PCF. The March 1980 CD clarified an area which had previously been blurred: Mitterrand was careful not to exclude the possibility of an homogeneous Socialist government, but his public preference remained a government including Socialists and Communists (a means of competing for support amongst PCF electors).

62. Le N/O, 3-9 March 1980.

63. Hamon and Rotman, op.cit, pp. 307-310.

Rocard continued to advocate an autonomous left unity strategy, although in the course of 1980, it became more accurate to talk of an autonomous Socialist strategy. At the CD of March 1st, 1980, ^{supporters of} Rocard and Mauroy voted an amendment opposing the dissolution of the National Assembly after the election of a victorious Socialist president (64). Rocard and Mauroy thus appeared to exclude the immediate formation of a Socialist/Communist government, and to commit a Socialist president to govern with the existing, rightwing dominated, National Assembly. This proposal (made to attract centrist electors to a Rocard candidacy on the first ballot) was vigorously opposed by Mitterrandists and CERES at the CD (65).

There were numerous pitfalls with Rocard's strategy. It sought to use the prospect of defeat in 1981 into forcing Mitterrand to agree to Rocard's candidacy. It therefore depended on Mitterrand agreeing with Rocard's analysis of the party's likely fate in 1981 (which he did not), and being willing to sacrifice future control of the organisation for the party's perceived electoral well being (which he was not). For Mitterrand to consent to Rocard's candidacy risked losing control of the PS after 1981, even if Rocard narrowly failed to secure election. In contrast, Mitterrand, if narrowly unsuccessful in 1981, could still hope to profit from his

64. Le PR/SR, 32, 6 March 1980.

65. Ibid.

location as leader of the dominant, central faction to resume his neo-Molletist defence of socialist orthodoxy, and hope to fight off Rocard's renewed challenge, to pass on the party leadership to his protégés, ^{who were} determined to marginalise Rocard.

A further weakness in Rocard's strategy was that it recognised his probable defeat in any internal party primary against Mitterrand and intended to avoid such a confrontation. Rocard could thereby be portrayed as fearing the normal processes of internal party democracy, and this left the ultimate initiative with Mitterrand, allowing him to delay announcing whether or not he would stand. By attempting to use external factors to influence the party's internal evolution, Rocard was likely to strengthen the activists' sense of the party's self-sufficiency and to continue to offend party orthodoxy. His main hope consisted in creating a bandwagon effect, whereby the prospect of victory in 1981, if he stood as candidate, shifted the centre of gravity within the party, and implicitly cancelled Metz. There was little evidence in the course of 1980 to suggest that this was the case, nor were the precedents encouraging.

The foundations for such a strategy stemmed back to Defferre's abortive candidacy in 1963-5: a political leader who relied on external popularity, a favourable media image,

and a presidential strategy, might hope to alter the internal party balance of power by constraining the established party leadership to accept a candidacy which threatened their control over the organisation, in the party's own interest. Somewhat as in 1963-5, the 1978 - 1980 Mitterrand/Rocard conflict illustrated that control over the party organisation of a pivotal Socialist party outweighed a potential candidate's external popularity when faced with the hostility of the party organisation.

It rapidly became clear that there were no circumstances in which Rocard could pretend to be a consensus nominee. In September 1979, Mitterrand met with certain of his lieutenants, and concluded that, aside from himself, there was no other plausible candidate other than Rocard (66). However, in March 1980, Joxe announced his candidacy, should Mitterrand decide not to stand. This initiative was a call for the Mitterrandists to begin mobilising in the federations against Rocard, and to sustain the division between the Metz majority and minority. For Mitterrand had failed to disassociate Mauroy from Rocard, and in March 1980, Mauroy took a more open stance in favour of Rocard. This was in reaction to Mitterrandist attacks on Rocard; to the perceived 'democratic centralism' of the Metz leadership; and to Mitterrand's refusal of his demand for an early

66. Du Roy and Schneider, op cit, p. 254.

designation of the party's candidate (67). Mauroy's stance followed a new rejection by Mitterrand of his demand for an enlarging of the majority at the March 1980 CD (68). Mauroy declared that in the event of Joxe standing for the nomination, he would support Rocard as candidate :

'Je précise que mes amis et moi-même apporterons notre soutien à Michel Rocard. Deux préoccupations nous guident désormais: battre la droite et proposer le candidat le mieux placé pour lever l'espérance, et forcer la victoire' (69).

Not to be outdone - or outflanked - in April 1980 Chevenement declared his intention to stand for the nomination, if Mitterrand did not present himself (70).

As elsewhere, party procedures for the nomination were part of the battle for the nomination itself. The official calendar for the selection of the party's presidential candidate was established at the CN of April 26-27th (71). It designated October 19th, 1980, as the opening date for the deposition of nominations for the candidacy, and specified only that the candidate would be ratified by an extraordinary Congress within three months of this date.

This procedure could scarcely be considered as neutral.

67. The accusation of 'democratic centralism' was made by Mauroy in his speech to the CEF-Nord, 15 March 1980.

68. Ibid.

69. Mauroy on Europe 1, March 30th, 1980. Nord-Demain, 62, April 1980.

70. L'Unité, 9-15 March 1980.

71. Le PR/SR, 30 April 1980.

Its immediate rationale was obvious: it attempted to forbid Rocard officially declaring his candidacy until October 1980, and thereby to lessen the feared impact of his renewed campaign for the nomination, outside and inside the party.

The Metz leadership intended to determine the rhythm of the selection procedure, designed to protect Mitterrand and thus to mark Rocard's bid as illegitimate in party eyes. There were differences in strategic approach between Mitterrand and his party 'Barons'. While Mitterrand sought to delay any decision over whether he would be the party's candidate, and to draw out Rocard into prematurely declaring his hand, the Mitterrandists feared the impact of Rocard's campaign on their immediate control over the organisation.

The calendar decided upon at the April Convention was vigorously opposed by Rocard and Mauroy. Rocard's advisers considered that a Rocard candidacy must result from an early designation of the party's nominee, leaving him sufficient time to develop his campaign and capture public opinion (72).

A period of six months was considered as the absolute minimum necessary. The calendar was equally rejected by Mauroy. At the CN, Mauroy continued to call for the

candidate to be designated by October 1980, and privately

72. See, for example, P. Viveret, 'Un candidat pour l'alternative', Faire, 57/58, (August-September 1980), pp. 3-5.

accused the Metz majority of preferring to maintain its position of near exclusive control over the organisation, than of maximising the party's chances of victory in 1981 by restoring party unity (73).

Mitterrand's hesitations over whether to declare his candidacy were interpreted differently by his advisers. Jospin thought Mitterrand genuinely hesitated over whether he would be a better candidate than Rocard; while Quilès believed Mitterrand engaged in a deliberate delaying tactic to draw Rocard ineluctably into internal party primaries (74). Both analyses were plausible but they were complementary, rather than contradictory. Mitterrand could afford to temporise; Rocard could not. If Mitterrand were humiliated in a presidential election (as the polls suggested), he might still risk losing control of the party after 1981, despite gaining the presidential nomination, as well as destroying his reputation. To accede to Rocard, however, meant that it would be unlikely that he could regain, or maintain control of the party, short of a catastrophic presidential defeat for his rival.

It was thus in Mitterrand's interests to delay announcing his candidacy, giving him time to consider the omens, and hindering Rocard's momentum. This delaying tactic might

73. Mauroy to the CEF-Nord, 15 March 1980.

74. Jospin and Quiles views - perhaps to be treated with caution - are reported in Du Roy and Schneider, op cit, p. 256.

force Rocard into irreversibly declaring his hand, and thereby to internal party primaries, which would result in Rocard's defeat and consolidate Mitterrand's present control over the party. Once Rocard had been defeated in an internal party primary, it would be difficult for him after an unsuccessful Mitterrand candidacy to present himself as the party's best candidate in 1981, who had been sacrificed to the interests of the Mitterrand clan. Hence, it was in Mitterrand's interest to delay his decision, as it was in Rocard's interest to seek a rapid consensual designation, and to refuse further open confrontation with Mitterrand.

A further sign that Mitterrand was still in the running came with his June 24th 1980 press conference (75). This was marked by a significant change in Mitterrand's political language, away from that of the Projet socialiste, and towards a more presidential style, epitomised by his call for a rassemblement des français, and by his priority consideration of international issues. Mitterrand sought thereby to distance himself from CERES, the Projet socialiste and the tone of the Metz leadership's political language, and to prepare the party for his decision over whether or not he would be its candidate. Mitterrand's poll popularity increased after this press conference.

75. Le N/O, 14-20 June; 21-27 June; 28 June - 4 July 1980.

Immediately preceding the opening of the selection procedure Rocard's strategy again came into conflict with elements of his party base: to neutralise the party, and to pose as consensus candidate, Rocard had actively to discourage his *supporters* from creating support committees before the opening date for the selection procedure (76). This revealed differences between Rocard and his supporters: many *supporters* refused to see Rocard's bid for the nomination merely in terms of the presidential election, but sought to organise more effectively within the party, and to prepare for factional battles after 1981. These *supporters* encouraged Rocard to fight an internal primary with Mitterrand (77).

The selection procedure established by the CD of September 20th was clearly designed to underline the Mitterrandists' control of the organisation, to favour Mitterrand's nomination, and to leave the designation of the candidate until the last possible moment. It left *le* responsibility for proposing nominees with the federal executives, overwhelmingly controlled by Mitterrandists since Metz, and postponed selection of the candidate until a special Congress, to be held in January 1981 (78). This latter decision was widely interpreted as an attempt to

76. Le N/O, 6-12 September 1980.

77. Ibid.

78. Le PR/SR, 51, 25 September 1980.

prevent a Rocard candidacy, since Rocard had declared that the credibility of his candidacy would depend on an early designation.

By delaying the closing date for nominations (November 5th) it was hoped that a majority of federations would have declared their support for Mitterrand, and that Mitterrand's candidacy would be portrayed as responding to the irresistible unitary will of the base. Yet, by creating a sufficient degree of mobilisation around Rocard, it was hoped that the latter would be drawn into internal primaries. This mode of procedure alienated not only Rocard, but also Mauroy, who demanded that the party's candidate be designated at the latest in December 1980 (79).

The procedure adopted was ambiguous enough to allow Mitterrand's candidacy to be proposed by the federal executives, yet for Mitterrand himself to delay announcing his intentions until early January 1981.

This procedure posed real problems for Rocard, since it appeared designed further to delay Mitterrand's decision over whether he would be candidate. Alternatively, it invited Rocard to engage in primaries, if he sought the presidential nomination. The basis of Rocard's strategy after Metz had been his promise that he would not confront Mitterrand in internal primaries, officially to prevent the

PS candidate being that of a divided party. Unofficially, this represented Rocard's realisation that Metz had shown Mitterrand to be the party's preferred candidate, and the near certain victor of internal primaries. By refusing to go down to defeat in an internal primary, Rocard intended to preserve intact his political capital for the renewed factional activity inevitable if Mitterrand was defeated. His only real chance of the presidential nomination remained Mitterrand's refusal of the party's candidature. Both Mitterrand and Rocard saw the presidential and organisational cleavage as virtually inseparable; both were positioning themselves for the presidency and the struggle for control of the party after 1981.

The selection procedure designated October 19th as the opening date on which candidates could be proposed by the federal executives. It was on this date that Rocard made his Conflans appeal, announcing his candidacy for the presidential election in a speech to the Conflans Mairie (thereby disregarding the official stipulation that candidates had to be proposed by the federal executives) (80). By engaging himself at the earliest possible date, Rocard attempted to create an internal party dynamic, constraining Mitterrand not to oppose his candidacy, and leading to an irreversible situation within the party. This did not

80. Le PR/SR, 55, 23 October 1980.

materialise. Any illusion that the Conflans appeal could constrain the party into accepting him as a consensus candidate was shattered when Chevènement reiterated his intention to contest the candidacy, if Mitterrand remained absent (81). Chevènement was positioning himself for the future as an implacable opponent of Rocard, and as a future ally of the Mitterrandist leadership in the struggle for control of the party after 1981. In the more distant future, Chevènement laid a claim for 1988.

With the Conflans appeal, Rocard had for the first time made a public declaration that he was a candidate for the nomination thereby taking the initiative, and forcing Mitterrand to react. It would subsequently be more difficult for Rocard to refuse an internal primary, or lose face. Yet, Rocard had little option but to proceed with the appeal, if he sought to gain the nomination, hoping that Mitterrand's hesitations covered a genuine reticence to stand again for the presidency, an interpretation that was increasingly implausible. However, the appeal effectively constrained Mitterrand to respond to Rocard, and thereby cut short the former's delaying tactics.

The Conflans declaration revealed the difficulties likely to hinder a Rocard candidacy. For the first time, it concentrated (if only briefly) the attention of the

81. Le N/O, 27 October - 2 November 1980.

party's adversaries on Rocard, rather than Mitterrand. Inevitably, once in the position of declared candidate, public attention would be more sharply concentrated on Rocard's presidential calibre, and political message, factors so far relatively ignored. Most of Giscard's and Chirac's advisers considered that Mitterrand would pose a greater threat than Rocard, despite the polls. It was also an open secret that Marchais would have preferred a Rocard candidacy, taken to justify the accusation of a swing to the right (82). On the positive side, Rocard, an unknown quantity, nonetheless appeared as representative of a new political generation. Less associated with the PCF in the eyes of the centrist electorate than Mitterrand, Rocard might prove a greater attraction for this electorate than Mitterrand, while the PCF would be constrained to support him on the second ballot.

After Conflans, Mitterrand allowed Rocard to develop the bases of his candidacy, before declaring himself, and attempting to force internal primaries. On October 19th, date of the Conflans appeal, Mitterrand merely claimed to have respected the timetable established by the CD, which gave the federations until November 8th to propose candidates (83). A second step taken by Mitterrand to draw

82. Ibid.

83. Le PR/SR, 55, October 23 1980.

Rocard into internal primaries came with his Marseilles speech, on October 26th, at which he declared he would take 'le plus grand compte' of appeals for his candidacy coming from the federations, until the November 8th CD (84). The plebiscitary nature of this call helped to disguise Mitterrand's ambitions, and to portray his candidacy as responding to the party's profound will. Moreover, it was a plebiscite won in advance, at least on the organisational level, since the Mitterrandists controlled the vast majority of federal executives. The final stage in the Mitterrand/Rocard conflict over the nomination came at the CD of November 8th, the date from which Mitterrand's campaign must be traced (85). Mitterrand declared that, in response to calls for his candidacy from 75 federal executives (out of some 95) he would once again seek the party's nomination. This declaration was followed by Rocard withdrawing his candidacy, honouring the commitment made at Metz; even without primaries, Rocard had lost credit not only within, but also outside the party. •

Rocard's withdrawal was followed by an upturn in the party's fortunes, measured by a series of parliamentary by-elections in November 1980, and by improvements in Mitterrand's standing in the polls (86). By January 1981,

84. Ibid, 56, 30 October 1980.

85. L'Unité, 14 November 1980.

86. Ibid, 28 November 1980; 5, 19th December 1980.

23% expressed their intention to vote for Mitterrand on the first ballot, as opposed to 18% in November 1980 (87). Mitterrand's candidature was officially endorsed by 83.66% of Congress mandates, at the extraordinary Créteil Congress, January 24th, 1981 (88). Despite being the only candidate, nearly 20% of party members preferred to abstain rather than to support Mitterrand, and this figure was frequently in the order of 40% in those federations with a strong Rocardien presence: Maine-et-Loire (41.76%); Morbihan (43.45%); Haute-Savoie (36.50%); Yvelines (36.71%); Manche (40.29%) (89). There remained hostility to Mitterrand amongst certain of Rocard's advisers, such as Viveret, editor of Faire, who abstained at Créteil, and Juilliard (90).

At Creteil, Jospin was unanimously elected Premier Secrétaire, on Mitterrand's proposition, symbolising the accession to authority of the PS sabras. In the campaign for the PS nomination, Mitterrand stressed that the candidate had to be of the party, rather than just supported by it, as in 1965, and 1974, and as Rocard had suggested. In reality, Mitterrand intended to act as candidate of popular

87. Cited in D.B. Goldey, and A.F. Knapp, 'Time for a change: the French elections of 1981. 1. The presidency', Electoral Studies, 1, (1982), Table 1, p. 23.

88. Le P/R, 91, February 1981.

89. Ibid.

90. See Viveret, 'Le sens d'un vote', Faire, 63, January 1981, pp.5-6; Juilliard, 'Prendre le Parti pour le tout', Le N/O, 24-30 November 1980.

rassemblement from the first ballot, as he explained in his speech to Créteil :

'Candidat des socialistes - je veut l'être aussi - je dois l'être du rassemblement populaire si nécessaire à la sauvegarde de notre démocratie, à la transformation de notre société, et à la grandeur de la France' (91).

The idea of popular rassemblement was a logical extension of Mitterrand's tenir bon unitary strategy developed since March 1978: it was an attempt to compete for support amongst the PCF's unitary electorate on the first ballot, by offering the only prospect of political change, and by calling on PCF voters to 'vote usefully'. In other respects, it appeared to move closer to Mauroy and Rocard, refusing to give any guarantees over the formation of a left unity government until the PCF had favourably evolved (92). Mitterrand thus attempted to build bridges to the centrist electorate, underlining his independence from the PCF. Implicitly for Mitterrand, a government of left unity would be possible only after legislative elections, in which the PCF would be constrained to practice 'republican discipline' (without negotiations) to preserve a parliamentary representation, but where the PS as presidential party, would obtain dominant party status. In short, left unity required a dominant PS and a severe electoral reverse for the PCF.

91. Le P/R, 91, February 1981.

92. A position reiterated by Jospin in February 1981, L'Unité, 6 February 1981.

Mitterrand ran in 1981 as the party's candidate, but not exclusively so. His platform was the 110 propositions, and the manifeste du PS adopted at Créteil, rather than the Projet socialiste, inspired by CERES (93). The 110 propositions were selected by Mitterrand from an inventory of around 400 policy proposals, drawn up from the Projet, and it was clearly Mitterrand who was responsible for elaborating the presidential platform. This eased the way for Mauroy and Rocard to participate in Mitterrand's campaign team. In other respects, Mitterrand was more clearly the party's candidate than in 1965 or 1974. He stood on the basis of a political programme which paid at least lip service to the party. While Mitterrand's personal image was tarnished with large sectors of the electorate, that of the PS remained largely positive (94).

Having secured the nomination, Mitterrand's first priority was to appear as reunifier of the socialists, achieved by abandoning the Projet, and associating all courants in his campaign. At Créteil, Mitterrand paid tribute to Mauroy, Rocard and Savary (95). In February 1981, he announced the composition of his campaign team and nominated Mauroy as spokesman. Mitterrand's campaign was directed by Jospin, Quilès (campaign organisation) and

93. Le P/R, 91, February 1981.

94. Goldey and Knapp, op cit, p. 18.

95. Le Monde, 27 January 1981.

Attali (head of Mitterrand's Cabinet), with Rocard, Chevènement and Defferre all participating in the political council (96). The election campaign healed - publicly, at least - the schism between Mitterrand and Mauroy, established at Metz. Mitterrand clearly intended to lessen the possibility of a renewed Rocard/Mauroy challenge for the leadership, after an unsuccessful election campaign. By associating all courants in his campaign team, Mitterrand claimed to be a consensus candidate, and thereby to respond positively to Mauroy's conditions for support, as established at Metz. With the benefit of hindsight, this suggests that Mitterrand was grooming Mauroy to act as ^a future Prime Minister acceptable to all courants (but posing no threat to Mitterrand). Mauroy's consistent positioning as ^{the} homme de synthèse eventually did bear fruit. Having failed to secure the presidential nomination, Rocard remained relatively absent from the campaign, loyally supporting Mitterrand when called upon (as in between the two ballots, responding to Giscard), the condition for future participation in government in the event of victory (97).

By March 1981, the appearance of party unity had been restored, and for a conjunction of reasons (Chirac/Giscard rivalry; evidence of desertions from amongst the PCF's base) Mitterrand's poll standing had increased sufficiently to

96. Dr Roy and Schneider, op cit, p. 270.

97. Goldey and Knapp, op cit, p. 36.

presage the possibility of victory on the second ballot. In the last polls before the first ballot, 42% of the electorate wanted Mitterrand to win on the second ballot, as opposed to 39% for Giscard (98).

Mitterrand's second priority was to appear as reunifier of the left, and candidate of popular rassemblement. In the eyes of many PCF voters, Mitterrand continued to personify left unity, 1965 and 1974 having left an indelible mark. Despite the PCF leadership not having given any official indications, 69% of the PCF electorate declared in January 1981 that they would vote for Mitterrand on the second ballot; while 76% hoped for his success against Giscard (99). For Marchais to advocate abstention on the second ballot risked widescale desertions from amongst the PCF's electorate and would not necessarily have sabotaged Mitterrand's victory.

Mitterrand's first ballot total, April 26th, 1981, marked a clear success for the idea of the PS as a party of popular rassemblement and the only force of political change on the left. His 25.84% outdistanced the score achieved by Marchais (15.34%) by more than 10%, while in 1978 less than 2% had divided the parties. Moreover, Mitterrand ran only 2.5% behind Giscard (28.31%), while polls in November 1980 had placed him 17% behind (100).

98. Ibid, p. 24.

99. J. Jaffré, 'De Valéry Giscard d'Estaing à François Mitterrand. France de gauche vote à gauche', Pouvoirs, 20, (1982), p. 10.

100. Goldey and Knapp, op cit, p. 23.

It was clearly Mitterrand, then, aided by Chirac, who won the campaign. Mitterrand's score allayed fears amongst the centrist electorate that the PS would be hostage to the PCF in any future government. Through the call for popular rassemblement and for a 'useful vote', Mitterrand was able to attract one quarter of the PCF's traditional electorate from the first ballot (101). This appeared to substantiate electorally Mitterrand's strategic analysis of relations between the left parties since the breakdown of left unity. Yet, Communist opposition on the first ballot made Mitterrand a credible candidate in the eyes of vital fractions of the centrist electorate on the second. More generally, Mitterrand's first ballot vote testified fully to the fruition of his long term strategy: it marked an effective reequilibrium within the left towards the PS, and away from the PCF, and it succeeded in this objective more convincingly than in 1978.

Mitterrand's third priority was to appear as rassembleur des français, a supremely gaullien role. This role was reserved for the second ballot, and was symbolised in the campaign slogan la force tranquille, quiet strength. On May 10th, 1981, Mitterrand was elected as the first Socialist president of the Fifth Republic, with 51.75% of the vote, to Giscard's 48.24% (102). By contrast to 1978, Mitterrand

101. Jaffré, op cit, p. 13.

102. 'Les résultats de l'élection présidentielle', Pouvoirs, 20, (1982), p. 145.

benefitted from the disunity of the right, while the left's disunion actively worked in his favour.

Having secured the presidency, Mitterrand signalled his ultimate acceptance of presidentialism by dissolving the National Assembly, and by calling for the return of a sympathetic majority in the ensuing legislative elections (103). On June 14th, 1981, the PS obtained 37.4% of the vote, and the left as a whole 55% (16.1% for the PCF); while the right wing parties were reduced to 43.2% (104). In turn, the electorate returned 270 PS Deputies (289 with MRG, and miscellaneous left supported by the PS) on June 21st, and gave Mitterrand an absolute Socialist majority in the National Assembly (105).

With the 'spring of the rose' completed, and with the nomination of the second Mauroy government, on June 22nd, including 4 Communist ministers, our historical period draws to a close. Henceforth, the problems of factionalism in an oppositional party would be subordinated to the difficulties of acting as a party of government and the lines of intra-party group cleavage would be altered accordingly.

103. See Bell and Criddle, The French Socialist Party..., p. 113.

104. 'Les résultats des élections législatives', Pouvoirs, 20, (1982), p. 149.

105. Ibid.

Conclusion

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The preceding chapters have attempted to concentrate ^{on} ~~the~~ cause, structure and location of factions within the PS, 1971 - 1981, and we will now consider each of these variables in turn. The party is an active, evolving entity, rather than a passive, static political sub-system. It evolves according to external political circumstances, as well as to internal stimuli. Factional relations are governed by a combination of external incentives and constraints (the party is only one element of a wider political system), by the internal dynamic created by external pressures, and by the mechanisms of intra-party competition itself.

Within the PS, factionalism results from the existence of a complex, interrelated cleavage structure, whose visibility will depend on the external concatenation of circumstances, and on the party's salient external objectives, for example, the proximity of elections. These factors also strongly influence the conditions of internal factional competition. Factions are composed of groups of individuals with varying degrees of factional ~~cohesiveness~~ and consciousness, durability, and organisational cohesion. They are divided by a range of cleavages based around personality (of heightened importance in the presidentialised Fifth Republic), ideology/policy, strategy/tactics, organisation and historical origins. No one faction fits

a uniform description or model, as outlined in the Introduction. Nonetheless, faction may be classified according to a number of ideal types: the organisation faction, with its roots in the party apparatus itself, and refusing the label faction (Mitterrand/Mauroy); the parallel faction, manifesting a relatively high level of independent factional organisation, parallel to the party's official structures (CERES, to a lesser extent Rocard); the external faction, seeking to rely on public popularity to conquer opinion within the party (Rocard).

Within the parameters of our historical analysis, three broad periods of changing factional relations can be discerned: from Épinay 1971 to Grenoble, 1973; from Grenoble to the March 1978 election defeat; from March 1978 until May 1981. At Épinay, Mitterrand took control of the PS thanks to an alliance with Mauroy/Defferre, and CERES. The Épinay majority was opposed by a minority of an almost equal weight (Savary/Mollet, Poperen), and Mitterrand was forced to rely on CERES for his leadership. From 1971-2, CERES, in a pivotal position, was able to influence party policy, notably the 1972 party programme, Changer la Vie, in a manner disproportionate to its real weight within the party; and to use its posts in the central apparatus to support its organisation and increase

its following in the sections.

During 1971 - 1973, factionalism reflected the different historical origins of the constituent elements of the party's formation (SFIO, CIR, UCRG, UGCS); organisational rivalries; conflicts over policy/ideology, personality, and strategy. These factional cleavages cut across the division between majority and minority, largely because of the politically heterogeneous nature of the Épinay majority. Within the majority, a distinction was rapidly established between a dominant Mitterrand/Mauroy axis, and CERES. This was illustrated over Changer la Vie; the conflict over a maximal and a minimal interpretation of the Common Programme signed in June 1972 and the campaign for 1973 legislative elections. Within the minority, a distinction could be drawn between Mollet and Poperen, both of whom attempted to structure short lived organised, parallel factions, and Savary, who rapidly reconciled himself to Mitterrand, and prepared to bargain his entry into the leadership. This particular factional diversity effectively ended at Grenoble, in June 1973.

Grenoble testified to the weight of external political circumstances in influencing conditions for internal factional competition. The party's success in the 1973 legislative elections, coming after the signature of the Common Programme, translated in internal party terms

into an increase of support from old and new members alike for the various factions of the Epinay majority (Mitterrand/Mauroy, CERES), associated with the party's electoral and membership revival. At Grenoble, the dichotomy between a majority and a minority of almost equal weight, was replaced by a situation of majority rassemblement, whereby the leaders of the most important factions in the leadership (Mitterrand, Mauroy/Defferre - but not CERES) agreed to a common text before Congress, signed also by Savary. This system of leadership cooption increased Mitterrand's margin of manoeuvre. Savary had signed Mitterrand's motion, and had to recognise the Mitterrand/Mauroy axis as the dominant element, and Mitterrand as the centrist element of the leadership. It also limited the effect of PR in internal party elections as a structuring variable of factionalism (a hypothesis retained amongst others by Sartori and Hine) (1). For minority factions, fearing extinction if they presented a distinct motion, or merely seeking to preserve a measure of authority in the leadership, would henceforth be inclined to compromise with Mitterrand before Congress, in return for recognising Mitterrand as 'leader above faction'. Only CERES refused this mode of procedure and survived. This pattern of majority rassemblement was accentuated at Pau, 1975; when Rocard and Poperen signed

1. G. Sartori, Parties and Party Systems, op cit, pp. 94-104.

the majority motion, and at Nantes, 1977, when the remnants of Molletism rallied to Mitterrand. It was shattered by the March 1978 election defeat.

The artificial tendency to rassemblement became more pronounced after the 1974 presidential election, when Mitterrand imposed his authority as purported 'leader above faction' on all those participating in the PS leadership. Conditions for internal factional competition were again heavily influenced by external political circumstances, by the external objectives of the party's attentions, and by the internal dynamic these created. After the 1974 presidential election, the party's salient external objective was preparation for the probable exercise of power after March 1978. This objective helped explain the pattern of internal factional relations established at Pau, in 1975, and retained at Nantes, in 1977: that of an artificial dichotomy between a politically heterogeneous majority and CERES. Mitterrand finally excluded CERES from the majority at Pau, (see chapters two and five); while Rocard, joining the PS after the 1974 Assises of socialism, and Poperen, signed the majority motion before Congress. Ultimately, Mitterrand regarded the CERES alliance as incompatible with his presidential interpretation of left unity, especially after May 1974; his intention to exercise power after March 1978 demanded that he reassure potential centrist

voters.

Pau illustrated that the exercise of influence within the party hierarchy necessitated a recognition of Mitterrand's role as 'leader above faction' after the 1974 presidential election, a role CERES refused to recognise. Underpinning the tendency to convergence by those leaders signing Mitterrand's text at Pau (Mitterrand, Mauroy, Defferre, Savary, Poperen, Rocard) lay a desire to participate in the party leadership, as a preliminary to future participation in government. These self-interested, rational motives overrode personal rivalries, and differences over policy.

From 1975-8, conditions for internal party competition could again be explained by the conjuncture of external constraints, and internal dynamic. For Rocard, and especially for Mauroy, these constraints involved recognising Mitterrand's presidential authority, and tolerating his increasing control over the organisation (particularly the unofficial organisation), in return for a measure of influence within the hierarchy, and favourable positioning for future participation in government. The rationale for this was essentially political - Mitterrand was uncontested leader of the united left in 1974, and kept that status. This political reality overrode any prior

organisational equilibrium between Mitterrand and Mauroy. Mitterrand was not, however, entirely a free agent. He had to recognise that the alliance with Mauroy remained the party's governing axis, and that Rocard's presence within the Secretariat was necessary to help portray the PS as a 'party of government', notwithstanding the hostility of his own lieutenants. Mitterrand could not maximise his immediate influence within the organisation, without risking too high an electoral price.

On an internal level, the composite Pau leadership was guaranteed a minimum of negative cohesion by a common reaction against CERES' political stances, and/or organisational methods. The artificial dichotomy between the majority and CERES helped - publicly at least - partially to blur the inherently complex cleavage structure. During this period, the existence of minimal conditions for open factional competition reflected the party's salient external objective - preparations for power after March 1978 - and the perceived rational interests of a majority of faction leaders, in participating in the majority rassemblement behind Mitterrand, as a sort of shadow government. However, this did not signify a weakening of the underlying causes of intra-party cleavage, merely their tactical, and temporary displacement.

These cleavages were illustrated openly between Mitterrand and CERES, and more subtly within the majority itself. They were based around: strategy (interpretation of the Common Programme, separating CERES, joined tacitly by Joxe and Poperen, from Mitterrand and Mauroy, and again from Rocard); ideology/policy (dividing for example, Rocard from Joxe and Poperen over autogestion within the majority, as well as CERES from Mitterrand over Portugal); organisation (publicly dividing Mitterrand and CERES, but unofficially leading also to a developing gap between Mitterrand and Mauroy/Rocard); and different historical origins (especially in relation to the distrust of Rocard by CERES, and Mitterrand's lieutenants). If personal rivalries were important in accentuating these divisions, the presidential cleavage was not so much absent, as displaced. Any leader (Rocard) intending to pose his candidacy for the 1981 presidential ^{elections} still had to acknowledge Mitterrand's ^{supremacy} before the 1978 elections, or risk marginalisation, and before March 1978, Mitterrand remained the party's only credible candidate.

Isolated in the minority, ^{from} 1975-9, CERES grouped a variety of 'oppositional' forces, including those from the CFDT) who joined it after the 1974 Assises, and at Pau, in 1975 (see chapter four). To retain its cohesion as the party's left wing, CERES was drawn into the logic of

impotent opposition , and of reinforcing its parallel factional structurss. In reality, the margins of manoeuvre of the CERES leaders were limited: any attempt to compromise with Mitterrand, such as occurred at the Congress of Dijon, in May 1976, over municipal election strategy for 1977, appeared likely to lead to desertions from elements of its party base. It could only reenter the leadership at Mitterrand's behest, an opinion publicly refused by Mitterrand at Nantes, in June 1977. The CERES leaders' attempts to reach an agreement with Mitterrand at Nantes led to disaffection, if not desertion for certain activists.

The pattern of majority rassemblement behind Mitterrand was reaffirmed at Nantes, and again, external political circumstances (Mitterrand's triumph in the March 1977 municipal elections; the determination to avoid a renegotiation of the Common Programme, as demanded by the PCF in April 1977), largely accounted for the internal constellation of alliances (Mitterrand's refusal to restore CERES to the leadership, despite pressures from Mauroy and Defferre)(see chapter 2). Nantes marked the apogée of Mitterrand's power as 'leader above faction': his status as probable future prime minister after March 1978 (and presidential candidate in any precipitate presidential election) enabled him to impose his own solution on ^{the} Congress, and further to promote his protégés within the party

leadership.

The transformation of Mitterrand's status as 'leader above faction' at Nantes, to leader of the dominant faction at Metz was a gradual process, resulting from two main events: the breakdown of left unity, in September 1977, and the left's defeat in the March 1978 elections. The breakdown of left unity, at the left summit of September 21 - 22, 1977, rudely called into question the external assumptions underpinning Mitterrand's strategy, and the pattern of majority rassemblement since May 1974, or even Grenoble, in 1973; that of exercising power after March 1978 with a Communist alliance partner that would not dare to break the left alliance, even if it worked exclusively in Socialist interests. The breakdown of left unity led to a redrawing of the lines of factional cleavage, as illustrated most importantly by Rocard's unofficial opposition to the manner in which Mitterrand led the party's 1978 campaign (see chapter 6). The leadership's official unity remained intact, however, until after the left's defeat in the March 1978 legislative elections, which appeared finally to bury the programmatic left unity strategy with which Mitterrand had been associated since 1972.

After the left's defeat in March 1978, the tendency to convergence by leaders of the 'governing factions' was replaced by a dynamic of disunity. Preceding March 1978,

Mitterrand's presidential authority had provided an essential source of internal party cohesion, however artificial. This was now openly challenged, and during the crucial period March 1978 - April 1979, there was a maximisation of conditions favouring the expression of factional cleavages. This situation reflected the changing salient external objectives of the party's attentions, as the 1981 presidential contest became the dominant concern. Hence, the centrality of the presidential cleavage, leading to a progressive bipolarisation around Mitterrand and Rocard, the party's only two plausible presidential candidates for 1981.

The presidential conflict was complicated by a series of other cleavages, some of them cross cutting, partially suppressed before 1978. These were based around: different historical origins (in particular, Mitterrand's and Rocard's rival political itineraries); organisational rivalries (with each faction seeking to increase its percentage weight in the party, and control in the organisation); strategy/tactics (the nature of left unity, separating Mitterrand from Rocard, and to a lesser extent, Mauroy, and continuing to distinguish CERES from all other factions); ideology/policy (with CERES and Rocard representing competing ideological poles, and Mitterrand resorting to a tactical use of ideology to delegitimise Rocard). These cleavages

were of sufficient importance to prevent any serious interpretation of factionalism from 1978 - 1981 solely in terms of presidential rivalry - although they largely reinforced this rivalry.

The internal/external dynamic was of greater importance in explaining changes in the conditions of factional competition than the use of PR in internal party elections (see chapter 2). Nonetheless, once each major faction leader considered it a rational choice openly to compete for support at Congress (not the case for 1973 - 1978), PR enabled this situation of maximal factional competition to materialise. It also helped account for the existence of mini-factions at Metz (UPA, Femmes), formed in the hopes of crossing the 5% barrier necessary for representation. PR was a necessary, but certainly not sufficient condition, or 'structuring variable' of factionalism. Indeed, from 1973 to 1978, it had precisely the reverse effect: the prospect of marginalisation, or exclusion from the leadership should a separate motion be presented to Congress, led a series of leaders to bargain themselves a position within the majority motion before Congress (Savary in 1973 ; Poperen and Rocard in 1975). Nor is there much evidence to suggest that PR strengthened 'factions of interest', as opposed to 'factions of principle', as argued by Sartori (2). For most PS leaders, both

2. Sartori, op cit, pp. 94-104. See above, Introduction, p.8.

'interest' and 'principle' could best be served by foregoing open factionalism. After March 1978, the idea of a dichotomy between 'factions of interest' and 'factions of principle' is even more clearly untenable: factionalism resulted from a complex, interrelated cleavage structure, and each major faction combined principle (ideology/policy, or at least strategy/tactics) with interest (attempts to maximise organisational control).

Maximal factional competition was most evident at the Congress of Metz, April 1979. Mitterrand's victory at Metz illustrated his strategic advantages over all his opponents (see chapter 8); while the relative bipolarisation around Mitterrand and Rocard, and the relative marginalisation of Mauroy and CERES testified to the centrality of the presidential cleavage. From Metz until Mitterrand's nomination ^{as Presidential Candidate} in November 1980, factionalism continued to reflect a combination of external incentives, and internal stimuli. The struggle for the presidential nomination engaged between Mitterrand and Rocard dominated the PS during 1980, and all other divisions appeared subordinated to this central factor. Intwined with this presidential rivalry, however, lay considerations of the future control of the party organisation after the 1981 presidential ^{elections} (see chapter 9), and this helps to explain the respective stances of Mitterrand and Rocard, as, of

lesser importance, those of Mauroy and CERES.

It is clear that the conditions for factional competition were the same in none of our three periods, owing to differing external circumstances and internal stimuli. We must now consider the impact of what Hine calls 'structural incentives to factionalism': the use of PR in intra-party elections (analysed above), and the nature of the electoral system (3). The Fifth Republic electoral system has had a crucial effect on determining the nature, and existence of factions within the PS. The initial division between the Gaullists and the rest has been converted with the help of two ballot majority elections into a bipolar left/right dichotomy on the second ballot in both parliamentary and presidential elections. In so doing, it has created a series of overwhelming institutional pressures. The first of these operated in relation to the various forces competing on the non-Communist left after 1958 (SFIO, political clubs, PSU): the unification of these various groups into a single political structure was necessary for their own survival, on the first ballot. Mitterrand's 1965 presidential candidacy defined the institutional conditions for Socialist success in the Fifth Republic: the choice between the coexistence of the various elements of the non-Communist left within a common

3. D. Hine, 'Factionalism in West European Parties', op cit, pp. 42-7.

political structure - achieved in the FGDS, 1965-8, and in the PS after Épinay - or the risk of political marginalisation the PSU's fate. Such coe~~x~~istence was a necessary precondition for a successful second ballot pact with the PCF.

For the institutional system also encouraged a minimal degree of unity between the left parties on the second ballot of both parliamentary and presidential elections. Within the Fifth Republic's political system, there existed a political space for a reforming ^ocumenical Socialist party, and the development of such a party was the condition sine qua non for a victory of the left and thus political alternation within the system. Most fundamentally, political cleavages dictated that the left could gain power in a presidential election only if it united behind a representative of the Socialist left on the second ballot, able to federate support on the centre (impossible for a Communist), as well as on the left. This potentially pivotal position gave an added impetus to the creation of a new, supple presidential Socialist party, ^{which had been} on the agenda since Mitterrand's 1965 campaign.

Such a party came into existence over a period of time - 1969 - 1971, 1974 - after Defferre's disastrous 1969 presidential campaign appeared to show that Mitterrand's strategy was the only plausible one. It was from the

Congress of Épinay, 1971, however, that party renovation is usually dated, and it was at Épinay that Mitterrand - presidential candidate in 1965, and the most plausible future candidate - took control of the PS, and restored his political leadership over the socialist left, finally defeating a thoroughly discredited Mollet.

By the nature of its formation, then, the PS - like the SFIO before it - was a factionalised party. It united a variety of competing groups with different historical origins, and varying degrees of mutual suspicion, partly forced to coexist by the institutional system. From its factional beginnings until 1981, the PS retained a sense of the divisiveness of its own origins, especially after Rocard *joined* in 1974. There were also, however, genuine sources of cohesion. Its major source of initial cohesion was institutional: it depended on the unification of its constituent groups for its survival, and each faction leader recognised this. It was given an added, if imperfect, cohesion by the presence of a presidential leader, Mitterrand, candidate of the united left in 1965, and 1974, and whose authority was recognised after 1974 by all faction leaders participating in the leadership. The perceived proximity of power after 1974 - the left's expected victory in 1978 - acted as an additional source of intra-party cohesion, in the context where there

was no open challenge on Mitterrand's authority.

More generally, it is possible to discern a diffuse sense of belonging to a real party, rather than a mere federation of factions, although the nature and functions of this party were interpreted differently by the various courants. Of the party's leaders, only Mitterrand had not originally been a Socialist, or member of the SFIO, and the recognition of the historical continuity of the vieille maison was an important factor in considering each leaders' attitudes to the party. This obviously affected Mauroy, but also CERES (the need to work from within Social Democracy to construct a genuine Socialist party); Rocard (the need to rally to the PS in 1974 once that it had purified and engaged itself in a principled direction); and even Mitterrand, illustrated by the agility with which Mitterrand attempted to portray his leadership as one of historical continuity with the traditions established by Jaurès and Blum.

After March 1978, no one leader was recognised as rassembleur, and the presidential cleavage removed an important source of internal party cohesion, such as had existed under Mitterrand until then. This suggested that the institutional mechanisms which constrained the Socialist left to unite (presidentialism, bipolar electoral system), also ultimately reduced the role of the party to choosing

between hypothetical presidential candidates, a type of US style Democratic party. For the major effect of the presidentialised Fifth Republic on factionalism within the PS, especially during 1978 - 1980, was to elevate the presidential cleavage (where no one leader was recognised as a rassembleur) into the most divisive source of internal party rivalry, albeit reinforced by other cleavages.

Rocard's bid for the presidential nomination after Metz relied on his external popularity, favourable media image and poll ratings to constrain the established party leadership to accept a candidacy, in the party's interests, that threatened its organisational control. To this extent, it echoed Defferre's abortive candidacy, 1963-5. The 1978 - 1980 Mitterrand/Rocard conflict illustrated that control over the party organisation of a pivotal Socialist party was more important than a potential candidate's external appeal, when faced with the hostility of the organisation. Yet, despite the extreme pressures of internal factional rivalries, and PCF attempts to split the party, the PS' sense of its own identity was sufficiently strong to prevent any open schisms. Partly, this reflected the continuing institutional pressures towards rassemblement in a bipolarising political system; but also, it reflected the belief that the PS was a real party, and the necessary vehicle through which Socialist change could be achieved.

Having outlined ^{the} cause, we must now consider ^{the problems of} structure and location. Most writers on factionalism have classified factions as groups of individuals based around the charismatic personality of a political leader, or adhering to an ideology, or some combination of the two (4). Writers such as Nicholas have stressed the importance of the psychological relationships between a leader and his followers for explaining the durability, and cohesion of factions (5). The closest approximation of the leader/follower model within the PS is provided by Mitterrand and his lieutenants. Especially ~~after~~ the 1965 campaign, (see chapter one), Mitterrand was surrounded by different generations of loyal partisans, ranging from his ~~Foerck~~ Republic Princes (Dayan, Dumas, Beauchamps, Mermaz), his CIR Barons (Hernu, Joxe, Estier, Fillioud) and, after Épinay, his PS sabras (Jospin, Attali, Fabius, Quilès). The reciprocal loyalties between Mitterrand and his closest political supporters overrode divergences over ideology, and even strategy. Despite their fratricidal rivalries,

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4. For a general summary of authors seeing factions as primarily factional cliques, or 'client-group factions', see F.D. Belloni, and D.C. Beller, 'Party and Faction: modes of political competition', In Beller and Belloni, Faction Politics, op cit, pp. 422-7. See also R.Zariski, 'Party factions and comparative politics: some empirical findings', In Beller and Belloni, op cit, pp. 19-34.
 5. R.W. Nicholas, 'Factions: a comparative analysis', op cit.

especially between the CIR clan and the sabras after March 1978, the different generations of Mitterrand's lieutenants ultimately subjected themselves to Mitterrand's will. From 1974 onwards, these leader/follower relationships gradually took on the form almost of patron/client ties, with Mitterrand promoting politicians to leadership positions, in return for an assumed absolute loyalty (see chapter two).

Amongst the other factions, the leader/follower model fits less well, and relations between leaders and followers were frequently conflictual. Rocard thus strategically clashed with the ex-PSU leadership clan from 1974 - 1977. Relations improved when he openly assumed the leadership of the courant autogestionnaire in the campaign for Metz, only to degenerate anew over the Projet socialiste, and the implications of Rocard's presidential strategy (see chapter nine). Similarly, the CERES 'historical chiefs' faced hostility from elements of their base over CERES' hierarchical structures, and over proposals to compromise with Mitterrand, during 1975-7. This acted as a real constraint on the freedom of manoeuvre of the CERES leadership (see chapter five). Finally, Mauroy's association with Rocard at the Assises, and in the campaign for Metz, led to harsh criticisms from elements of his anti-clerical following, (see chapters two and eight) and trouble in his Nord bailiwick.

The leader/follower model is thus only partially satisfactory in explaining the nature of ties between faction leaders and their party base. Nonetheless, the PR list system has altered the structure of party power in relation to the old SFIO: power is no longer bartered between the bosses of a handful of large federations, but is concentrated in the hands of the leaders of the national factions, through their power to draw up lists of candidates for the party's executive organs. In theory, this enables the faction leaders to dispense patronage, (favourable positioning on lists), and cultivate clienteles within the party. The importance of such patronage depended on the various factions' strategic locations: it was more relevant for the dominant faction (Mitterrand at Metz), or combination of factions (the Mitterrand/Mauroy axis from Grenoble to Nantes, and even to a limited extent, CERES 1971-5), than it was for an ideological faction, such as CERES, largely withdrawn from the centres of party power 1975-9, or for Rocard, dependent on Mauroy's protection for his leadership status, 1975-9.

Notwithstanding well-informed, if essentially intuitive estimates preceding Metz, that each faction represented around one quarter of party activists, in terms of strategic location, the various factions were of unequal significance (6). Mitterrand disposed of a number

6. T. Pfister, Le Monde, 4-5, April 1978. See chapter 8 for fuller development.

of strategic advantages over all his rivals. These were: presidentialism, a central party location, and leadership of the most important organisation faction. As presidential candidate of the united left in 1965 and 1974, Mitterrand defined the necessary conditions for the unification of the non-Communist left in the Fifth Republic: the collaboration of diverse groups in a common political structure under a 'presidential' leader. At Épinay, Mitterrand took control of the PS as the most plausible candidate of a united left, apparently the only strategy after Defferre's 1969 humiliation (see above chapters 1 and 3). His presidential status was further enhanced in 1974, when he was again candidate of the united left. Mitterrand's 'triumphant defeat' in 1974 enabled him to impose his authority on the entire left - despite the PCF's resistance - and, as 'presidential leader above faction', to consolidate his control over the PS from 1974-8. After the 1978 election defeat, Metz illustrated that for many activists, Mitterrand, restorer of Socialism in France, remained the party's best presidential candidate for 1981, as the guarantor of the left unity strategy, likely to rally PCF voters (as in 1965 and 1974), and force a government of left unity on the PCF.

Mitterrand's authority also stemmed from his location at the centre of party gravity from Épinay onwards.

Through his central position within the Épinay majority, Mitterrand acted as an indispensable source of cohesion for the new leadership, although initially having to cede perhaps more than he bargained for to CERES. Since CERES, the party's self appointed left wing, and Mauroy/Defferre, representing the most traditional elements in the party, could not politically join forces to oppose Mitterrand, Mitterrand's leverage was increased, especially after Grenoble, when he was no longer dependent on CERES' support for his leadership. His position as central element within the leadership extended his range of possible alliance partners, allowing him to ally with the 'right' against the 'left', and vice versa. This margin of manoeuvre was open to no other faction. Moreover, Mitterrand's central location enabled him to pose as guardian of the juste milieu, the party's orthodoxy, threatened alternatively by left and right. This was illustrated at Pau, in 1975, when Mitterrand expelled CERES from the leadership, accusing it of siding with outside forces (PCF) against the party (embodied by Mitterrand himself). It was illustrated again at Metz, when after a neo-Molletist return to socialist orthodoxy, Mitterrand allied with the 'left' CERES, to exclude the 'right', Rocard/Mauroy from the leadership, thereby completing the triangular mechanism analysed by Bon and Burnier in the pre-1914 German SPD (see Introduction)(7).

7. F. Bon and M.A. Burnier, 'Qu'elle ose paraître ce qu'elle est'.

Mitterrand's position was further strengthened in so far as each faction (possibly excluding Rocard) looked to Mitterrand as an indispensable alliance partner against their main factional adversaries (Rocard/Mauroy for CERES; CERES for Mauroy, even Rocard) (see chapter eight for more detailed analysis). After Metz, Mitterrand, now leader of the dominant faction, continued to dispose of a greater degree of manoeuvrability than his rivals (although Rocard's strategy posed a real threat to his future position in the organisation after May 1981). Thus, he relied on Chevènement to draw up the projet socialiste as a presidential platform, with the aim of frustrating Rocard's bid for the nomination; but he largely abandoned the projet and restored Mauroy and even Rocard to grace, once he had secured the 1981 presidential nomination.

The combined effect of Mitterrand's presidential status, and central location at the head of the party organisation, was to make him head of the most powerful organisation faction. The organisation faction (Mitterrand, Mauroy) derived its power from its position within the party apparatus itself, rather than through parallel factional structures. Through its location, the organisation faction held the strategic advantage of defining the criteria of ideological orthodoxy and of organised factionalism, as in the pre-1914 SPD, and of juxtaposing the interests of

party and faction. This was illustrated by Mitterrand's success at Pau and Nantes in concentrating the party's attentions on the dangers of organised factions, against which his leadership was a guarantee. By Pau, 1975, and even more by Nantes, 1977, Mitterrand clearly represented the most important organisation faction, and had been able to increase his influence within the organisation (official and unofficial), in the name of developing the party as a whole (see chapter 2). Metz confirmed that Mitterrand headed the most important organisation faction, and he was more successful than Mauroy in claiming a party, as opposed to a factional legitimacy, though Mauroy's links with the party, and its traditions were longer and deeper. At Metz, Mitterrand's success in rallying the most important sectors of the post-Epinay party organisation illustrated that he was widely credited with having restored a Socialist party to France. These three factors - presidentialism, central party location, organisation faction - gave Mitterrand a distinct strategic advantage over all his rivals throughout the period concerned.

Mauroy, as head of an organisation faction, and essential component of the dominant Mitterrand/Mauroy axis 1971-9, also potentially benefitted from the strategic advantage of being able to define faction, and to juxtapose party and faction. Nonetheless, Mauroy could not prevent

Mitterrand, as presidential leader, from progressively extending his influence within the party organisation prior to Metz. Mauroy's claim to head a courant de synthèse - thanks to his ex-SFIO past, and his roles at Épinay and in the Assises made sense only if he could act as the pivotal element of a leadership alliance including Mitterrand and Rocard (a solution accepted by neither leader), as he attempted at Metz. His failure to constrain Mitterrand and Rocard to unite at Metz reflected - aside from the weight of the presidential cleavage - that Mauroy was perceived by most activists merely as head of an organisation faction (that is, spokesman for interests such as local élus, ex-SFIO federations), rather than as Socialist rassembleur, as Mitterrand succeeded in portraying himself. Ultimately, despite his political past, Mauroy could not challenge Mitterrand's claim for a party, ^{as} opposed to a merely

factional legitimacy. Nonetheless, his consistent positioning as homme de synthèse made Mauroy an eventual intermediary for Mitterrand and Rocard after Metz, to help restore party unity, and this helps explain Mitterrand's decision to call Mauroy to be his first prime minister.

Mauroy suffered certain other strategic disadvantages. Primarily, he was not an obvious presidential candidate - a crucial disadvantage. Furthermore, he was widely perceived to represent the party's traditional and municipal right wing,

as successor to Augustin Laurent in Lille. Whatever its objective justification, this perception was important: it limited his margin of manoeuvre and range of possible alliance partners. While CERES refused any alliance including Mauroy, but excluding Mitterrand, Mitterrand could if necessary ally with CERES against Mauroy and Rocard, as occurred at Metz, or with the latter two against CERES, as at Pau and Nantes. However, Mauroy's leverage was increased after the Assises by the hypothetical possibility of a Mauroy/Rocard alternative leadership to Mitterrand. This alternative, likely to be opposed by powerful elements of his anti-clerical base, was consistently rejected by Mauroy, helping to frustrate Rocard at Metz. Although at the centre of party power from 1971-9, Mauroy nonetheless occupied a less strategically advantageous party location than Mitterrand.

The strategic advantages and disadvantages of CERES party location have been analysed in detail above, (chapter 5). From 8.5% at Épinay, CERES gained 25.4% of Congress votes at Pau, in 1975. It benefitted from its status as the dynamic left wing of an expanding party, and as the avant garde of left unity, enabling it consistently to increase its audience, and to help restore a Socialist party in many areas of traditional electoral, and organisational weakness (Catholic East and West France, Paris, and the Paris region). It also benefitted from its position within the leadership

to build up its support within the party, especially in relation to the PS workplace sections, 1971-5. Its identity as the courant de gauche, ^{the} source of its striking rise in importance from 1971-5, also accounted for its long term strategic weakness. CERES declared its objective to be the construction of socialism from within social-democracy. This implied either that its political orientation triumphed within a majority where it constituted only one element (as occurred imperfectly from Épinay, until Changer la Vie, 1972), or else that it could take control of the party itself. The former objective was increasingly remote after the signature of the Common Programme; during 1972-4, CERES participated in Mitterrand's majority as a clearly subordinate partner, with little influence over party policy. At Pau, in 1975, it preferred to move into opposition, and recover its factional identity as the party's left wing. Despite attaining an apogee of nearly 30% ^{support} at the June 1975 CN on autogestion, it was never likely that CERES alone could conquer an electoral majority, and take control of the party 'from the left'. This was implicitly recognised at Nantes, in 1977, when the CERES leadership made determined efforts to reenter Mitterrand's majority. When CERES was finally restored to the leadership at Metz, in 1979, it was as a force d'appoint, rather than as an hegemonic alliance partner in a position to impose its political

orientation.

The reality of CERES' internal party location from Pau to Metz was as a self-identified left wing, and as an ideological faction. On both counts, it suffered strategic disadvantages. As a self identified left wing, it limited its range of possible alliance partners, and made its reentry into the leadership dependent on Mitterrand's goodwill (forthcoming only at Metz, when CERES had been reduced to under 15%). Its nature as an ideological faction (see chapters 4 and 5) is essential for understanding CERES' leadership structures, and organisational ambitions. These factors meant that CERES was situated unfavourably for the exercise of significant power in a party dominated by the presidentialism of the wider political system, and that it could never hope to capture the party's presidential candidacy for itself. In a party that had integrated the consequences of the presidential regime into its ideology, and its organisation, CERES could perform only a subordinate, or oppositional role.

CERES most nearly approximated⁶⁰ the model of an organised, parallel faction outlined above, and described by other authors in the ^{Italian} DCI or PSI (8). While attempting to counteract its relative weakness in the organisation, CERES' parallel factional organisation paradoxically acted

8. See, inter alia, F.P.Belloni, 'Factionalism, the party system, and Italian politics', In Belloni and Beller, op cit, pp. 73-108.

as a further long term strategic weakness. It lay CERES open to the accusation of constituting a 'party within a party', and of preferring factional to party interest. This helps explain the effectiveness of Mitterrand's various campaigns against factionalism, especially at Pau, and Nantes. For in reality, CERES' parallel factional structures were intended to act as a surrogate for its weakness within the party (in terms of proximity to the decision making centres of party power, if not in terms of numerical strength), as an impotent socialist pole within a flourishing Social Democratic party.

There were also strategic advantages and disadvantages with Rocard's position. Owing to his late arrival in the PS, at the Assises of socialism in 1974, and Mitterrand's refusal to make him his dauphin, Rocard, an aspiring and plausible presidential candidate, was forced to construct a group with the characteristics of an external faction, maintaining an elite level parallel factional organisation (see chapter 6). After the left's defeat in March 1978, Rocard adopted a dual strategy. He competed for support within the party, as representative of an autonomous left unity strategy stressing the originality of a socialist project based on the confluence between mendèsiste modernism, and May '68 (especially autogestion, which he had attempted to develop as PSU leader). He also attempted to maximise

his standing outside the party, in the opinion poll ratings, as a means of increasing his internal party support. The conflicts between Rocard's personal strategy and the aspirations of his party base were frequently manifested.

This external strategy - characterised in particular by an attempt to use the media to his own advantage - was necessary once it became clear in the course of 1974-7 that Mitterrand would not promote him into one of his loyal lieutenants, and would not voluntarily select him to be the party's candidate in 1981. The Congress of Metz clarified the strengths and weaknesses of Rocard's location. His reputation as the party's only plausible presidential candidate apart from Mitterrand helped to explain his honourable Congress vote, a long term strategic advantage in the presidentialised Fifth Republic, but insufficient to give him a serious chance for the nomination in 1981. Rocard lacked the legitimacy of Épinay, compounded by his former criticisms of Mitterrand and the PCG, as PSU leader, 1971-3; this led to bitter hostility from Mitterrandists and CERES alike. His external strategy appeared to many to deny the party's self-sufficiency, a factor wilfully exploited by Mitterrand with the return to socialist orthodoxy.

Rocard was particularly vulnerable to accusations from Mitterrand and CERES that his victory would lead to a 'rightward swing'. Herein lay the great paradox. As PSU

leader, Rocard had headed a formation which had placed itself consistently to the 'left' of the PS, but he entered the PS at the Assises thanks to its traditional right wing (Mauroy). Once within the PS, the courant autogestionnaire - in a position of semi-opposition to Rocard, 1974-7 - considered itself rather than CERES to constitute the party's left wing, through its concentration on autogestion, and the May '68 heritage. While this may suggest that objectively a left/right continuum is inadequate as a tool for analysis, it remains true that Mitterrand at Metz succeeded in portraying Rocard as constituting the party's modernist right wing, on account of his criticisms of the programmatic left unity strategy (reference to which continued as the party's theoretical orthodoxy), and his plea for economic realism. Mitterrand successfully occupied the centre ground, and his success in labelling Rocard as the ^{representative of the} modernist right was of crucial importance in explaining his victory at Metz. Moreover, perceptions of the validity of left and right by party activists and faction leaders alike (or by Mitterrand and CERES, if not by Rocard and Mauroy) helped limit Rocard's range of possible alliance partners. Any alliance with CERES was inconceivable, and his only chance of overturning Mitterrand's leadership was through a direct challenge in alliance with Mauroy, an option Mauroy consistently refused.

In short, despite his shared strategic advantage with Mitterrand over presidentialism, Mitterrand succeeded in portraying Rocard as the party's right, and this acted as an insuperable short term disadvantage.

In the longer term, Rocard might hope to benefit from his external strategy and favourable presidential location. After Metz, the Mitterrand/Rocard conflict over the presidential nomination was only partially focused on the 1981 contest, for underpinning immediate presidential rivalries lay the question of the control of the party organisation after 1981. In the event of humiliation for a Mitterrand candidacy, as the polls originally suggested, Rocard might hope to renew his bid for control of the party, in alliance with Mauroy (determined to restore the party's electoral fortunes, and to oust CERES from influence).

To conclude, it is clear that Mitterrand, presidential leader of the non-Communist, and then Socialist left from 1965 onwards, with only short interruptions, and consistently able to occupy the centre ground of the party's gravity, occupied a strategically superior position to all his rivals throughout the period concerned. Despite disadvantages in many spheres, Rocard's location as a plausible alternative

presidential candidate made him Mitterrand's most dangerous rival. CERES' historical aspiration to create socialism out of social-democracy was a vain illusion in a party dominated by the presidentialism of the wider political system; it thus remained an impotent Socialist pole within a fundamentally Social Democratic party. Finally, Mauroy's bid to exercise authority as head of a courant de synthèse fell victim to his relative marginality with regard to the central presidential factor, and to the internal bipolarising effects of presidentialism.

Our historical parameters of analysis end with Mitterrand's election as the first Socialist President of the Fifth Republic, on May 10th, 1981, and with the subsequent Socialist landslide victory in the June 14th-21st legislative elections, giving the PS an absolute majority of seats in the National Assembly, and strengthening the presidentialism of the French regime. Mitterrand, rather than Rocard or any of his ^{other} rivals had first recognised the likely effects of presidentialism on the reorganisation of political parties, and the necessary realignments amongst them. With Mitterrand's election, often abstract problems of factionalism in a party of opposition were superseded by the concrete dilemmas faced by a socialist party, born in opposition, attempting to act as a party of government in ^{which was} an economic crisis, unprecedented in recent times. They

were not wholly eliminated, but that is the subject of another thesis.

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