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ABSTRACT

Collective agrarian violence was examined in the U.S. and Canada to determine: (1) if the American historical experience was unique; (2) if the American farm movements evidenced the same characteristics and development as those in Europe; (3) if American collective agrarian violence has manifested the same characteristic shape as that of France over the periods 1830-1860 and 1930-1960. It was found that in France the characteristic forms, precipitating factors, and objectives of agricultural disturbances had changed predictably with increasing organization and that similar phenomena had occurred in North America over the same time periods. It was concluded that in America there has been a lack of political/historical research on agricultural violence which might substantiate these tentative findings. Examination of contemporary French and American farm revolt movements revealed the emergence of "autonomist" themes and a corresponding new emphasis on internationalism. For example, the Committee for Economic Development has advocated (1957 and 1962) the gradual removal of price and income support programs; acreage allotments and controls; and job training for displaced farmers. The ideology underlying such efforts is one that suggests government control has been both self-serving and manipulative on behalf of corporate interests and banking. (JC)

AGRARIAN VIOLENCE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RECENT FARM MOVEMENTS IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

by

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AGRARIAN VIOLENCE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RECENT FARM MOVEMENTS IN EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

Tilly (1969a) has suggested the terms Primitive, Reactionary, and Modern to describe pervasive changes in the form of collective violence in Europe during the last several centuries.[1] While Tilly posits large-scale structural change as generating these shifts in collective violence, the major linking variable in his conceptual scheme is the degree of organization of contenders and authorities. As Tilly (1970b:8) points out:

> Large structural changes in a society like urbanization and industrialization do not in themselves generate collective violence, but they strongly affect the number, identity, and organization of the contenders which in turn determine the predominant forms and loci of collective violence. In the short run, the magnitude of collective violence depends on an interaction of the tactics of contenders and the coercive practices of the government. In the longer run, the magnitude of collective violence depends on the established means by which contenders can enter and leave the polity, and the frequency with which entries and exits have actually occurred.

This paper began as an attempt to apply Tilly's theoretical framework to one specific occupational category - French agriculture - which has gone from a condition of virtually no organization to one of complex associational forms in the short span of a few decades.

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1. Primitive violence is the violence of communal groups holding positions of power or privilege engaged in open conflict. Reactionary violence is the defensive, backward-looking violence of communal groups losing positions of power and resisting this loss of specific rights and privileges. Modern violence is the violence of associational groups seeking to acquire positions and rights due them on general principle. The latter is an attempt to control the state rather than merely resisting it.

Finding the hypothesized shifts in collective violence to be even more marked than those encountered among French occupations generally,[2] I then attempted to extend the analysis to American and Canadian agricultural disturbances to address the following questions: Is the American historical experience unique, as some historians claim, or do American farm movements evidence the same characteristics and development as agricultural movements in Europe? Does collective violence in the American agricultural sector manifest the same characteristic shape as agricultural protest in Europe?

French Agricultural Violence

Wright (1964) presents an excellent summary of the development of French agricultural movements from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. He describes how several changes after 1850 brought about greater political awareness and involvement in political life of farmers. The use of the ballot at regular though infrequent intervals after 1848, the slow spread of literacy, the building of secondary rail lines into rural areas after 1880, the concentration of land in larger units, mechanization, increased use of fertilizers, experimentation with new crops such as sugar beets and liming the soil--all began to have a slow influence on the thinking of the agricultural population.

In 1884 Parliament passed a bill legalizing formation of associations dedicated to agricultural, economic, industrial and commercial development. During the next three decades local or regional farmers' syndicates were set up in every section of France. Organization of peasant families was

2. Tilly has done extensive comparisons of French disturbance data gleaned from newspapers and periodicals for the period 1830-1860 and 1930-1960. See Tilly (1969c, 1970a, 1970b; Snyder and Tilly, 1972).

rapid. For example, by 1914 several hundred thousand peasant families were affiliated with the Union Centrale des Syndicats des Agriculteurs de France (UCSAF). This right-wing syndicate had 10,000 locals.

Republican leaders, meanwhile, organized their own Jacobin syndicalism and after 1890 obtained subsidies from the government for farm-credit and mutual-insurance societies. By 1914 membership in farm organizations of the left equaled those of the right.

When phylloxera destroyed half the grape vines in France in the 1880's, grape growing was shifted to the Midi bottom land, and as a single crop, became subject to market fluctuations and overproduction. Marcellin Albert led a taxpayer's strike, arranged for mass resignations of local officials in several hundred communes, and led huge demonstrations of crowds as large as half a million. The result was the introduction of troops, violence and bloodshed (Wright, 1964: 27-28). The eventual outcome was a new federation of Midi winegrowers in 1907 with a membership of 70,000.

World War I, Wright suggests, heightened suspicions of politicians and government and gave added impetus to the drive for farm organization. During the 1920's most growers of particular crops organized into specialized associations like those of the winegrowers.

The effect of the depression was to stimulate mass meetings and demonstrations. In March of 1933 a mass meeting was called in Chartres by the Parti Agraire. Many demonstrators and policemen were subsequently injured in violent street clashes. In 1934, "for the first time in modern French history, an angry crowd of peasants converged on Paris to demonstrate on the Champs-Elysées, and the dairymen of the Paris region staged France's first successful producers' strike." (Wright, 1964; 41-42).

Government regulation of marketing and production gathered increasing support and in 1938 the Wheat Office was established whereby all wheat growers had to market their crops through storage cooperatives. Wright suggests that this strengthened the idea of organization among peasants. A strike was even attempted by labor organizers in 1937, but was unsuccessful.

A catholic youth group called Jeunesse Agricole Chretienne (JAC) was founded in 1929. By 1957 it had taken over the FNSEA, the dominant farm syndicate during the 1950's. During this period agrarian discontent increased with buyers' strikes, delivery strikes, and mass demonstrations featuring tractor roadblocks. Violent demonstrations reached a peak in July and August of 1953. At the same time Poujadism emerged as a right-wing movement.

When the post of Minister of Agriculture was abolished in 1956, the FNSEA called for nationwide rural demonstrations which drew over one million peasants. Widespread violent demonstrations in the summer of 1957 forced a special session of parliament. The JAC takeover of FNSEA resulted in a mass meeting of 30,000 peasants in Amiens in February of 1960 in which more than 100 demonstrators and police were injured (Wright, 1964: 163).

The violence of the 1950's was capped in May of 1961 by the dumping of potatoes in town squares and the disruption of elections by means of the seizing and burning of ballot boxes in southern Brittany. In northern Brittany 4000 peasants on tractors invaded the city of Morlaix. When two of the leaders were arrested, word spread to the west. For the next ten days railways and roads were blocked, towns were invaded by demonstrators

on tractors, telephone lines were sabotaged, and the Premier was repeatedly hanged in effigy. For the next six weeks disruption spread throughout France. A bill passed in 1962 in response to the strikes and demonstrations authorized collective marketing agreements which with a two-thirds vote became binding on all producers of farm commodities. Farmers were to negotiate these agreements themselves.

The foregoing portrays the developmental efforts of a group using assemblies and shows of strength to gain membership in the polity. Developments from the turn of the century to the present time indicate a trend toward increasing organization, deliberate planning, and increasing nationalization of the conflict. The violence which occurred was, for the most part, under control despite the vast scale of participation. Farmers in France during this period were attempting to wrest control of institutional structures, not merely resist. One the whole, the farm movement in France of the twentieth century was an associational, offensive, disciplined, forward looking, highly organized movement.

Hypotheses Concerning Collective Violence

Tilly suggests that changes in the organizational base of contenders produce changes in the forms, loci, and personnel of collective violence. This transformation changes the groups capable of collective action, their internal organization, their interests, their occasions for collective action, the nature of their opponents, and the quality of collective action itself.

The form of collective violence includes such characteristics as duration, intensity, scope, internal sequences, and outcomes. The loci and personnel include geographic location, season, type of community, participants, and type of economic activity.

By organization Tilly denotes such factors as the extent of stratification of the formations participating, the complexity of their communication networks, the degree of overall coordination, and the amount of internal differentiation (Tilly and Rule, 1965: 48-49). Tilly further suggests that violence can be analyzed with respect to magnitude, focus (extent to which the participants in the action are oriented to common, unified, and explicitly formulated objectives), and isomorphy (the degree of correspondence between the divisions separating the antagonists in a political disturbance and those prevailing in the social system within which the disturbance occurs), as well as organization.

Tilly suggests (1970a) that with respect to the organization and locus of conflict over time "groups taking part in collective violence became bigger, more complicated, more bureaucratized, more specifically committed to some public program or ideology, more open to new members prepared to support the group's special goals. Second, the locus of the conflicts involved moved away from the purely local toward the national, and even the international, scale."

Research Findings

My analysis of French agricultural disturbance data from 1830-1860 and from 1930-1960 generally confirms these hypotheses. As can be seen in

Table 1, the number of disturbances and number of formations dropped

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TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

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substantially from the 1800's to the 1900's. In a similar manner "mean participants" and "mean man-days" also increased substantially. The "mean number killed" decreased sharply, "mean wounded" increased substantially, and "mean arrested" decreased sharply for agricultural disturbances. The percent lasting over one day decreased to zero.

Thus we note that in the case of an occupational group changing from no organization to high organization, associated changes in the nature of collective violence occurred over time in the direction of increased size but decreased duration and violence resulting in death.

Turning next to prior organization it can be seen that the differences over time are very sharp (see Table 2). Collapsing the first to third category rows and fourth through seventh rows results in low level organization in 41% of agricultural disturbances from 1830-1860

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

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and only 2% of disturbances from 1930-1960. Similarly, highly organized disturbances account for 53% of all disturbances from 1830-1860, while the figure for 1930-1960 is 97%.

Looking at the character of objectives in Table 3 we find no change in the percentage of unspecified protests, and a moderate increase in

TABLE 1

INDICATORS OF MAGNITUDE OF FRENCH AGRICULTURAL DISTURBANCES BY PERIOD

	1830-1860	1930-1960
Number of Disturbances	60	17
Number of Formations	146	42
Formations per Disturbance	2.43	2.47
Total Participants	54,845	24,632
Mean Participants	962	1449
Total Man-Days	64,570	24,282
Mean Man-Days	1133	1428
Total Killed	368	0
Mean Killed	6.7	0
Total Wounded	206	296
Mean Wounded	5.0	19.7
Total Arrested	741	210
Mean Arrested	16.5	13.1
Percent Lasting Over One Day	19%	0%

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF DEGREE OF PRIOR ORGANIZATION OF FORMATIONS

	1830–1860	1930–1960
Formation did not exist as organized entity before the disturbance	9%	2%
Low level of organization before disturbance; no evidence of significant carryover into disturbance	11%	0%
Low level of organization before disturbance; evidence of carryover into disturbance	21%	0%
Organized entity before disturbance; no evidence of participation planned in advance or direct continuation of collective activities	5%	0%
Organized entity before disturbance; participation directly continued one of its collective activities	38%	40%
Organized entity; evidence of participation in disturbance planned in advance	7%	2%
Organized entity; evidence of both advance planning and direct continuation of collective activities	3%	55%
	(138)	(42)

TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE

objectives of specific change at the local level as well as specific changes at the national level. The findings in this table tend to contradict our expectation of an increase in demands for change at the national level, and a decrease in demands for specific changes at the local level over time. However, the differences between the two time periods tend to be non-significant statistically.

Table 4 on the predominant form of violence indicates a decrease

TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

over time in intensity of conflict, a finding consistent with the prediction that as disturbances become more highly planned and organized, whatever violence occurs is more likely to be controlled.

Table 5 indicates little difference between periods for kinds of property damage. However, the type of disturbance in which no property damage occurs showed a three-fold increase from 1830-1860 to 1930-1960.

TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED OBJECTIVES OF FORMATIONS

	1830-1860	1930-1960
Protest Unspecified	14%	15%
Specific Change on Local Level	6%	8%
Specific Change at National Level	4%	6%
	(412)	(126)

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PREDOMINANT FORM OF VIOLENCE

	1830-1860	1930-1960
Non-Violent--Inadvertent Property Damage	3%	0%
Conversion of Property--Intentional Destruction of Property	31%	24%
Minor Person to Person Combat--Throwing of Projectiles	30%	59%
Combat with Potentially Lethal Arms--Combat with Lethal Arms	23%	6%
	(61)	(17)

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED FORMS OF PROPERTY DAMAGE

	1830-1860	1930-1960
None	13%	35%
Action tending to destroy property	25%	29%
Conversion of property or premises	16%	18%
Multiple types of seizure or destruction of property and premises	20%	18%
	(61)	(17)

Table 6 indicates that changes in immediate background of formations' participation between periods are in the predicted direction. "Preparations for violence" and "demonstrations, belligerent marches" figure much more prominently into the collective violence of the twentieth century,

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TABLE 6 ABOUT HERE

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while spontaneous and unplanned activities are more representative of 19th century disturbances.

The data on precipitating factors of disturbances indicate a sharp increase for the category "violent acts by another formation" (which includes repressive actions by authorities) as one moves from 1830-1860 to 1930-1960 (see Table 7). The increase in disturbances "deliberately

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TABLE 7 ABOUT HERE

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planned in advance" is not surprising in view of our earlier comments concerning organizational efforts during the 1930-1960 period.

TABLE 6

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF IMMEDIATE BACKGROUND OF FORMATIONS' PARTICIPATION

	1830-1860	1930-1960
Not acting collectively before disturbance	7%	1%
Peaceful meeting	12%	8%
Presentation of demands	2%	4%
Preparations for violence	11%	17%
Obstructive measures	3%	1%
Organizational activity of formation	1%	0%
Parade, celebration, ceremony	1%	0%
Demonstration, belligerent march	5%	15%
	(275)	(84)

TABLE 7

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED PRECIPITATING FACTORS

	1830-1860	1930-1960
Deliberately planned in advance	26	35
Symbol or signal	5	0
Violent act by another formation	11	59
Communication of news or ideas (government action or inaction)	31	0
Seditious activities	5	0
Change in environment	2	0
Official acts	0	0
Other acts normally mobilizing repressive forces	2	6
	(61)	(17)

American Agricultural Violence

We turn now to an examination of farm movements and collective violence in North America. Do the changes in magnitude, objectives, intensity, precipitating factors, etc., of agricultural violence in America correspond with the changes which occurred in France over the same period?

Primitive violence among farmers in America is probably best exemplified, if at all, by the Indian uprisings of the early 1600's. Opechancanough's Insurrections, the Pequot War, King Philip's war, the Conspiracy of Pontiac, Lord Dunmore's War, the Seminole War, and Black Hawk's War were all communal conflicts centered around the attempts of the white men to encroach on native lands. The same "design to restore a status quo lay at the bottom of all the movements" (Shannon, 1957: 17-18). These native Indian uprisings were characterized by extreme violence with massacres and many deaths on both sides.

A shift in collective violence to Reactionary forms appeared as early as the mid-17th century in Maryland and Virginia. Interestingly enough, these first farmer revolts arose in highly commercialized agricultural areas where tobacco was grown as a single crop. These commercial areas of tobacco production were some of the earliest agricultural regions exposed to market fluctuations and the effect of trade and tariff variations. Bacon's Rebellion

in 1676 resulted in the burning of Jamestown. In 1682 plant-cutting riots occurred in Virginia.

Somewhat later in 1767 the Regulator Movement in North Carolina represented a peasant revolt against corrupt officials. Regulators assaulted sheriffs, lawyers, and judges, and went on a tax strike. In May of 1771 the militia killed 200 farmers and six more were hanged and disemboweled for treason.

Following the Revolutionary War and the expansion of government and the courts, high taxes became an increasing source of farmer protest and insurrection. Shay's Rebellion in 1786 was an attempt to stop the collection of debts and taxes at a time when farm prices were falling. Farmers armed with swords, muskets, and bludgeons stopped courts from conducting business (Taylor, 1953: 3-4). Discontented farmers in New England had been in open revolt for five years, and by 1786, 5000 farmers in Massachusetts had assembled at various times and places to stop the activity of the courts. Farmers felt that the tax burden for expansion of government and the costs of the Revolutionary War were being borne unequally.

The Judiciary Act of 1789 establishing a Supreme Court and federal district courts, as well as the establishment of a national bank and the funding of the entire national debt in 1791, coincided with the Whiskey Rebellion in Pennsylvania. The extension of the powers of the centralized federal government was opposed by representatives of the farmers when these bills were in the legislature and continued to meet

farm opposition after enactment.

Pennsylvania farmers refused to obey the new efforts at enforcing and collecting a tax of from 9 to 25 cents a gallon on whiskey. Shannon points out (1957: 34) that "a particularly odious feature of the new act was the provision for periodical inspection of all stills, search of households for hidden liquor, and payment in specie on the spot." The farmers refused to register their stills, smashed the stills of those who did, and otherwise intimidated and harassed enforcement officers. Farmers felt that their chief market product was being discriminated against by the federal excise tax. Taylor indicates (1953: 45-46) that similar taxes had been passed in Pennsylvania in 1684, 1738, 1744, and 1772, but each time had been repealed because of popular protest. Tax collectors were tarred and feathered, their houses burned, and demonstrations and marches organized. In one encounter with federal officials one person was killed and six wounded in July of 1794.

Fries Rebellion against taxes exhibited similar characteristics to the reactionary Whiskey Rebellion. The Anti-Rent Riots in New York in 1839 saw farmers interfering with evictions, two persons murdered, sheriff's deputies assaulted and wounded, destruction of records, and tarring and feathering of deputies delivering notices.

A tremendous increase in the number of farmers' societies and clubs occurred during the decade 1850 to 1860: "Such societies and clubs were organized in at least 20 states, stretching from New York and Vermont, to

Washington, Oregon, and California. In 1859, there were known to be in existence 621 such organizations. More than half of them (350) were in the eight midwestern states" (Taylor, 1953: 76-80).

The organization and commercialization of American agriculture was encouraged by the mid-century expansion of railroads into the Middle West. Self-sufficient farmers were now forced to become concerned about prices and markets. Railroads also enhanced communication and control from national centers of power and decision-making.

The economic and politically oriented farmers' clubs gave way to the organization of the Patrons of Husbandry (The Grange) in 1867, with one of the more notable Granger demonstrations against the railroads taking place in Independence in 1873. The Grange was followed by a host of other associations and reform parties: The Greenback Movement, 1872; The Southern Farmers' Alliance, 1878; The National Farmers' Alliance, 1880; The Agricultural Wheel, 1882; The Colored Farmers' Alliance and Cooperative Union, 1886; The Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association, 1882; The Ancient Order of Gleaners, 1894; the Populist Party, 1889; The Farmers' Union, 1902; The American Society of Equity, 1902; The Kentucky Night-Riders, 1906-1908; The Farmers' Equity Union, 1910; The Farmer-Labor Party; The Farm Bureau, 1911; The Nonpartisan League, 1915; The Farmers' Holiday Association, 1929-1932; and the contemporary National Farmers' Organization (NFO), 1955.

The extent of farm experience with organized associations is shown by a Department of Agriculture Survey in 1907 which showed some 85,000 cooperative societies with a membership amounting to over 3,000,000--

one-half the farmers in America. Six out of seven of these cooperatives were insurance, telephone, or irrigation combinations (Shannon, 1945: 346-347).

A shift in the nature of agricultural disturbances tends to parallel the increasing organization of farmers which began about the time of the Civil War. American farm movements turned toward attempts to control markets and prices. The American Society of Equity, for example, as early as 1902 engaged in cooperative grain marketing and livestock shipping. The Kentucky Night-Riders assaulted tobacco buyers, set fires, sowed plant beds with salt or grass seed, and dynamited machinery--all in an attempt to gain control of tobacco prices (Saloutos and Hicks, 1951: 124).

The Farmers' Holiday Movement in 1932 was an organized effort at withholding produce from market. Violence occurred between the militia and farmers in Iowa with one picket being killed and fourteen injured. Storming of jails and capitol buildings, and the stopping of trains and automobiles occurred in the state of Iowa. In Wisconsin half of the state's national guard was mobilized against milk strike pickets near Milwaukee. About 50 pickets had surrounded four milk trucks being convoyed by police. Four pickets were wounded with the police winning the engagement. At Shawano 130 farmers were arrested and two injured in similar riots with police (Taylor, 1953: 5-6).

Perhaps the best known modern farm movement was the populist revolt. Populists wanted powerful government control over business interests, especially as represented by the railroad trusts and patent monopolies. Complaints against the railroads included long-and-short-haul discriminations,

rebating practices, pooling arrangements, elevator monopolies, and the ineffective shipment of livestock. The attempts of patent monopolies to collect royalties from farmers by means of threats and harassment produced great hostility to corporations in general (Shannon, 1945: 300-302).

Hicks and others view the Populist Movement as backward-looking and primarily concerned with the restoration of a former way of life. It was unsuccessful because it stood in opposition to the growing mechanization and commercialization of agriculture. Hicks categorizes (1961: 422) the Populist response as follows: "To radicals of today, however, the Populist panaceas based as they were upon an essentially individualistic philosophy and designed merely to insure for every man his right to get ahead in the world, seemed totally inadequate".

In contrast, Pollack (1962:143) argues that "Populism was a progressive social force. It accepted industrial society, posed solutions not seeking to turn back the clock, and was strongly pro-labor. Yet, the movement was progressive in a still more profound sense. Not only did Populism look forward rather than backward, but it also was deeply committed to freedom. It attacked the very character of industrial capitalist society, not only on economic but also humanistic grounds".

Pollack goes on to demonstrate how the retrogressive framework (which he ascribes to Hicks and other historians) fails in three areas with which the Populists were concerned: technology, politics, and industrial labor. He points out that Populists did not oppose technology as such; in fact, they were receptive to mechanization, scientific procedures, and the dissemination of technical information. Furthermore, populists developed highly concrete proposals for meeting the existing

conditions at their time. These proposals were preeminently political in nature. Thirdly, he documents (1962: 3-5) the ideological interaction and attempts at coalition with labor.

Among the major proposals and new ideas put forward by the Populists were: free silver; abolition of national banks and substitution of direct issues of legal tender notes; government ownership of all railroads and telegraphs; prohibition of alien land ownership, and of gambling in stocks, options, and futures; a constitutional amendment requiring the election of President, Vice-President, and Senators by direct vote of the people; and the use of the Australian ballot system (Hicks, 1961: 210). The Subtreasury Plan introduced in St. Louis in 1890 for government storage of farm commodities and partial advance payment to farmers is not unlike the present Commodity Credit Corporation of the 1960's. The major regions of unrest and discontent in a state like Kansas were those where farmers had lived the longest, where they were settled and non-transient (Hicks, 1961: 35). Clanton similarly finds (1969: 28) that Populist leaders in Kansas were almost entirely middle class with some 35% having had a college education even in this early period. Many were professional people or former teachers who were now farming. Pollack also points out that Populist leaders and rank-and-file alike consistently appeared throughout this period in successive third party movements.

Populists supported the Pullman strike, Coxey's Army, and similar undertakings. They were hostile to the use of pinkertons. As early as 1891 there is evidence that Populists in Kansas desired to act in harmony with other labor organizations. The fact that the Populist Movement bordered on Socialism no doubt precipitated Socialist Labor Party attacks

on account of its potential for drawing away support (Pollack, 1962: 85).

By 1919 the Non-Partisan League was advocating a government commission to manage utilities and industries in the state of North Dakota. Across the border in Canada wheat farmers were beginning to organize protests. A demonstration of 1500 farmers in Regina in June of 1930 forced the government to begin to recognize widespread Canadian farm discontent. The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) was formed in 1933 and became the first socialist party in North America to gain an election victory, one which was sustained for several decades in Saskatchewan. The Progressive Movement in Canada generally emerged out of "agrarian protest against the growing urban domination of the Canadian economy and national politics. As such, it was closely allied to the sectional protest. As agrarian protest, the Progressive Movement was a response to industrialization of the economy, and the commercialization and mechanization of agriculture" (Morton, 1967: 292). The sectional protest included a resentment against national policy, and particularly the inequality of the provinces of the west in confederation. It could probably be argued with some justification that twentieth century Canadian farm movements included a curious mix of both "reactionary" and "modern" elements, with the highly commercialized wheat regions characteristically producing collective movements of the "modern" type.

The Primitive uprisings of Indians against white colonists in the 1600's call to mind the banditry of 17th and 18th century Europe. Massacres of whites and Indians were common, with the proportion killed probably being extremely high in any given engagement between the conflicting forces. Confrontations were normally localized, with communal

groups being the chief protagonists in the conflicts. The primitive collective violence occasioned by these confrontations evidences little prior organization or ideological base, with the violence being predominantly lethal. Property damage was likewise substantial (for example, the frequent burning of towns and villages).

Moving to the mid-17th century we note increasing organization of people for specific purposes. In the case of Shay's Rebellion it is stopping the collection of debts and taxes. The Whiskey Rebellion of the same period was an attempt to thwart federal centralization of the power to levy excise taxes. Just as in England and France, American farmers fought the centralizing tendencies of the national government and resisted state-making efforts by the polity. The protest movements, nevertheless, tended to be localized and uncoordinated and defensive in nature, with the dominant motif being the loss of specific rights and privileges. The militia remained the enforcing agent (in the case of the Whiskey Rebellion headed by Washington himself), with the violence, such as it was, being mostly physical abuse of enforcement officials and widespread destruction of property.

Organization of the protests increased, with specific objectives becomming more clearly differentiated. Again we are reminded of grain riots and anti-conscription riots in Europe during this same period, with strikingly similar characteristics.

The mid-nineteenth century, saw a vast increase in the number and types of agrarian associations, especially in the midwestern part of the United States. The violence associated with this later period was

almost exclusively directed against property, except for the actions of enforcement officials themselves. Deaths were uncommon, and even mass arrests occurred only occasionally. A shift toward the use of city police and county sheriffs is apparent. Violent incidents tended to occur around specific demonstrations or blockages (for example, attempts to stop foreclosure sales, blockage of milk trucks, etc.). Incidents also tended to be directed at the state or national level as attention-getting devices to precipitate changes in specific programs or policies. Most demonstrations and assemblies were planned in advance with highly organized and disciplined groups of farmers taking part. Frequently the result of organized protest was a third party movement (for example, the Non-Partisan League in North Dakota, the Progressive Party in Wisconsin, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan). Perhaps the ultimate example of intense organization and discipline were the "holding actions" of the National Farmers' Organization culminating in a 1968 nationwide boycot of all food processors and buyers. The holding action lasted several months, involved hundreds of thousands of people on both sides of the conflict, and nevertheless was virtually free of violence against persons or property belonging to non-members.

Summary and Conclusions

I have attempted to test the validity of Tilly's analytical framework by means of the "known group" method. The agricultural sector of the French economy was known to have varied from a condition of no organization to one of highly developed and complex organizational forms from the

period 1830-1860 to 1930-1960. The characteristic forms, precipitating factors, and objectives of agricultural disturbances were observed to change in certain predicted ways with increasing organization.

Secondly, I found similar phenomena occurring in North America during the same periods. Perhaps American political transformations are not nearly so unique as some would claim, and that an enhanced perspective on American agrarian revolt could be acquired from increased attention to similar developments in Europe. In particular I am struck by the likelihood that the political transformations in French agriculture since 1950 may well anticipate trends yet to occur on the American scene, and may in fact predict likely political disturbances in rural America of the 1970's.

Thirdly, it seems likely that the reporting of agricultural violence in the United States and Canada remains a lacuna in political-historical research. I suspect that much more violent behavior occurred than has found its way into the specialized treatments of specific farm movements. It might be worthwhile to attempt to apply content analysis techniques to regional and local newspapers and magazines in the United States and Canada for specified historical periods in an attempt to ferret out in a systematic way those political confrontations which have occurred during the last three centuries. Using such systematic data one might be able to confirm or disconfirm those parallels with collective violence in Europe which I have tentatively identified. To the best of my knowledge such a data base does not exist at the present time.

Contemporary French and American Farm Revolt

In a recent paper (1969a: 40) Tilly describes the emergence of "autonomist" themes in contemporary movements and a corresponding new emphasis on internationalism:

> We might consider the possibility that they record a transfer of power away from the national state, perhaps in part because its own weight keeps it from dealing with the most burning aspirations of its own citizens, and in part because power is devolving to international blocs of states. Then we might be witnessing a transformation comparable in scope to the 19th century shift from reactionary to modern forms of collective violence.

I find some evidence for this assertion in the activities of the National Farmers' Organization since 1960. Large holding actions were initiated by NFO in 1959, 1962, 1964, 1967, and 1968. Each of these holding actions of course has stressed higher prices. However, in the more recent ones there has been a growing concern with two aspects of government control: the Committee For Economic Development (CED), and International Trade Agreements.

NFO leaders claim, with considerable justification, that the CED's recommendations for maintaining low food prices by creating greater agricultural efficiency are a coded formula for destroying family farming in America. The CED reports of 1957 and 1962 advocate the gradual removal of price and income support programs, the removal of acreage allotments and controls, job-training programs for the farmers displaced as a result of these policies, and wide-scale migration of rural dwellers to the cities (Walters, 1969: 34-36). Furthermore, NFO representatives claim that international trade agreements favoring the importation of cheap meat and dairy products from foreign countries create an artificial surplus

which forces down farm prices.

My participant observation indicates that international marketing and trading arrangements are issues of the highest salience, even at the local or county organizational level. In recent years the efforts of NFO have been mainly directed at obtaining a large enough membership (and sympathizers) to significantly alter market flows in particular sections of the United States. In some cases they have sought a hands-off policy from government, as in the negotiation of milk contracts during the holding action of 1967; in other cases they have sought and obtained direct government intervention, as in lowered import quotas on dairy products from Common Market countries.

The general ideology underlying all of these efforts is that government control of agriculture has been both self-serving and manipulative on behalf of vested corporate and banking interests. The NFO ideology and program includes eventual production controls, but advocates placing this power as well as that of controlling orderly marketing in the hands of the farmers themselves.

Attitude data which I gathered from a large sample of Illinois farmers in 1968 lend support to these observations. Almost 60% of Illinois farmers agree with the statement, "The role of government in determining production should be reduced." Only about 25% disagreed with the statement. In similar manner about 45% of Illinois farmers disagree with the statement that "strong government programs are needed to boost farm income." About 30% agree with the statement. Forty-nine percent of NFO members agree that "mandatory programs binding on every producer are needed to control production," while 60% of all farmers

agree that "direct financial payments to commercial farmers should be gradually eliminated from government programs." On the latter statement the disagrees and uncertains are split 20-20. More than three-fourths of Illinois farmers agree that "the main problem which farmers have is their lack of organization in dealing with processors and retailers."

I would suggest that the notion of "insulation from state control" is an integral part of the reform program proposed by NFO. Themes of autonomy from the powerful control of the federal government and corporate structures in the pricing of farm commodities form a central tenet of the movement's beliefs. And there is a growing lack of trust among the farm masses in the government's professed intentions or abilities to respond to the present crises in American agriculture.

From 1953 to 1961 France experienced some of the most large-scale (one million peasants demonstrated on May 19, 1956), wide-spread (railways and roads all over France blocked in 1961), and violent (more than 100 demonstrators and police injured in Amiens in February, 1960) demonstrations in recent history (Wright, 1964: 122-168).

The response came in 1962 in the form of government authorization for the formation of producers' groups with power to negotiate collective marketing agreements binding on all farm producers by means of a two-thirds vote of the farmers. It is worth noting that these marketing agreements were a gigantic step in the direction of creating autonomy and self-direction for farmers by means of integration (linking of production, processing, and marketing) carried out by the farmers themselves.

Perhaps this newly emerging political transformation in France and the United States could be called the "Post-Modern", "International," or

"Autonomous" type of collective violence to distinguish it from what Tilly calls the "Modern". Its dominant tactic may well be the blockage of the fragile communication and transportation networks of a complex industrialized society. Its violence may be directed exclusively against property, particularly the property of self. In the final analysis, it may well be an attempt to once again turn our attention to basic humanistic concerns--concerns with human cost and human worth--rather than the mechanistic economic growth of a technological society.

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