ELECTORAL STABILITY AND ELECTORAL CHANGE:  
THE CASE OF THE CATHOLIC PARTY IN THE NETHERLANDS

by

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Department of Political Science

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
June 1978
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ABSTRACT

Catholics in the Netherlands are unique. For a period of 45 years 85 percent or more of Dutch Catholics continuously voted for a single party—the Catholic party. Then in 1967 support began to decline so that by 1972 only 38 percent of Dutch Catholics were still voting for this party. No other West European country offers a similar example of long term consistency and sudden change on the part of a bloc of voters.

The aim of the study is to account for this unusual pattern of electoral stability and decline. Two competing explanatory frameworks are evaluated, the party identification and subcultural influence models. The former is rejected. The evidence suggests that party identification was not important in linking Catholics with the Catholic party. It was found that the loyalties of Catholics lay primarily with the Church and the Catholic subculture—not with the party. Support for the party was a by-product of subcultural cohesion and the drop in support after 1963 was a result of subcultural fragmentation.

The importance of subcultures in influencing voting behaviour has long been recognized; however, the internal organization and dynamics of the subcultures themselves have received much less attention. In part this study attempts to redress the balance by examining the factors responsible for both the cohesion and the disintegration of the Dutch Catholic subculture. For data the study relies on material from Catholic party archives, newspapers, interviews and the secondary analysis of aggregate and survey data.

The first section of the study outlines the role of the Dutch Church in creating a miniature society within a larger society. Bishops and clergy were affected by an ideology which stressed the importance of insulating Catholics from non-Catholic influences. This insulation was achieved largely
through the use of organization and the rigorous application of sanctions. Rank-and-file Catholics obediently joined organizations like Catholic trade unions and the Catholic broadcasting organization, subscribed to Catholic newspapers and at election time voted for the Catholic party. At the same time the Church and Catholic institutions provided their clientele with spiritual, social and economic rewards which were equal to, and often greater than, those provided by competing blocs.

The second section is concerned with the changes within the Dutch Church which occurred during the 1960s. The bishops radically altered the boundaries of the subculture, suggesting that Catholics could now decide for themselves questions of religious belief and politics. Many Catholics decided to no longer vote for the Catholic party. The Catholic party in turn, racked by internal conflict and no longer enjoying the blessing of the Church, was incapable of finding an alternative basis of support. In 1976 the party merged with the two major Protestant parties to form a single Christian Democratic party.

The theoretical contributions of the study are twofold. One theme in the literature on electoral behaviour argues that party-system stability is a function of the degree to which the sense of identification with the parties is rooted in mass public consciousness. The case of Dutch Catholicism demonstrates that a cohesive subcultural bloc can provide a stable and robust basis of support for a political party, making high levels of party identification unnecessary. Secondly, the study suggests that in party systems of the kind found in the Netherlands, subcultures can vary greatly in their cohesion. It points to the role of leadership, ideology and organization in sustaining or altering the consistency of blocs over time and by implication the success and stability of political parties.
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None of the above should be interpreted in any way as an effort to apportion blame. I take full responsibility for all errors of fact or interpretation.

Herman Bakvis,
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan,
12 June 1978
Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with an unusual case of electoral stability and electoral change involving the Catholic party* in the Netherlands. In contrast with Catholic parties elsewhere in Western Europe, this party is unique in that for several years it managed to attract almost all eligible Catholic voters. Then in the mid 1960s the vote began to decline so that by 1972 it enjoyed only a fraction of its former support.

My aim is to provide an explanation for this pattern of extremely high and consistent political cohesion and then sudden decline. The explanation will focus on the relationship between voting and subcultural influences. It will be shown that the high degree of political orthodoxy of Dutch Catholics was primarily a function of subcultural cohesion. This cohesion was a result of the Church's success in enforcing a rigorous code of religious, social, economic and political behaviour. In the enforcement of this code the Church was aided by a willing lay leadership. Catholic elites exacted a high degree of loyalty from Catholics through authoritarian means, at the same time providing spiritual, social and economic rewards which helped cement that loyalty.

* The Catholic party has gone by various names: from 1904 to 1926 it was called the "League of Roman Catholic Electoral Associations" (BRKKV); from 1926 to 1940 (when the party was disbanded because of the German occupation), it was known as the "Roman Catholic State Party" (RKSP); and from 1946 to 1976 it was called the "Catholic People's Party" (KVP). Use of the term Catholic party refers to the party in its entirety. Use of a specific title (e.g. RKSP) means I am referring only to that particular period.
The disintegration of the vote in the 1960s occurred in part because of a significant re-orientation on the part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and in part because of changed socio-economic conditions which no longer permitted the high degree of social control. These changes placed the Catholic party at a competitive disadvantage, vis-à-vis its electoral opponents.

The pattern of electoral stability and decline on the part of Dutch Catholics is an extreme case. Yet it does allow insight into the relationship between voting behaviour and subcultural cohesion, a relationship which may operate at a partially submerged level in other societies. Examining Catholicism and its influence on Dutch political life is also relevant to the study of Catholicism and politics in such countries as Germany, Switzerland, Canada and the United States. Furthermore, this study will have a bearing on the nature and operation of subcultures in modern societies generally and the conditions under which they become politically relevant.

Let us consider the details of the Dutch Catholic party a little more closely. Since 1918 when universal suffrage was first introduced, the party achieved a record of almost perfect electoral stability up to and including 1963. For a period of nearly half a century the Catholic party consistently received between 29 to 32 percent of the total popular vote. And in every election in this period at least 85 percent of Catholics, drawn from all classes of Dutch society, voted for the Catholic party. Yet in 1967 the party experienced a sharp decline in support, dropping from 31.9 percent of the popular vote to 26 percent. In 1971 the vote for the Catholic party dropped to 21.9 percent and in 1972 to 17.7 percent. While in 1963 85 percent of Dutch Catholics voted
for the Catholic party, in 1972 only 38 percent did so. In 1976 the party entered into a federation with the two major Protestant parties. Although still separate, they run under a common Christian Democratic Party banner (CDA).

Within the Netherlands, the Catholic party is unusual. Table 1.1 (1946-77) indicates that the other four major parties competing in the Dutch electoral arena, the Calvinist Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP), the Christian Historical Union Protestant (CHU), the Labour party (PvdA) and the Liberal party (VVD), although relatively stable, were not as consistent in their electoral support as the Catholic party (KVP) prior to 1967. During the 1967-72 period they did indeed lose ground along with the KVP. However, with the exception of the CHU, the smallest of the five, their decline was neither as spectacular nor as linear as that of the KVP. These parties managed either to stabilize their vote, to regain lost votes or, in the case of the VVD, to improve their overall position.

The duration and consistency of Catholic party support, and then its rapid decline, is also unique by West European standards. The 85 percent plus figure, representing the proportion of Dutch Catholics constantly voting for the party, is exceptional compared with other West European countries with Catholic parties or with Christian Democratic parties depending in large part upon Catholics for their electoral support.3

The contrast between the KVP and other West European Catholic and Christian Democratic parties is shown in figure 1.1. In Belgium and Italy one can see that support varied more from election to election than it did in Holland. However, for these parties support did not tail off as drastically in the last decade. Since both Belgium and Italy are countries where the entire populations are at least nominally Catholic, the percentage of people voting for Church-supported parties may not be meaningful.
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Parliamentary Election Results, 1946-1977

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<td>.4%</td>
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<td>(Secular)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communists (CPN)</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacifist Socialists (PSP)</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmers Party (BP)</td>
<td>.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>.8%</td>
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<td>Democrats '66 (D'66)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
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<td>Democratic Socialists '70 (DS'70)</td>
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<td>5.3%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radical Party (PPR)</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middenstands (NMP)</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>.4%</td>
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<td>Other Parties:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>.8%</td>
<td>.8%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1.1.  Percentage of Catholics voting for European Catholic Parties
In these countries it is difficult to sort out those individuals who have lost all contact with the Church and those who have not. However, it is interesting to note that of the Italians who attend mass regularly, 67 percent voted DC while in the Netherlands, according to 1956 survey data, 90 percent of those who regularly attended mass voted KVP.

Belgium and Italy are also less valid as cases for comparison insofar as the Catholics in the Netherlands are in a minority, constituting only 38 percent of the population. Sixty-two percent of the Dutch population is Protestant or non-religious. Much more significant for comparative purposes is the case of Switzerland. There the Catholic population, 40 percent of the total population, is in a minority situation similar to that of Dutch Catholics. The Swiss Catholic party has a record of stability which more or less matches that of the KVP. However, the Swiss Catholic vote has remained stable through 1971 while the vote for the KVP drops off rapidly between 1967 and 1972. No more than 50 percent of Swiss Catholics voted for their party which is considerably less than the proportion in the Netherlands.

Probably the best example with which to compare the Dutch Catholic vote is the Catholic vote for the German Catholic Centre party during the Weimar republic (1918-1933). Conditions were very similar to conditions in the Netherlands. There was a direct proportional electoral system and the ratio of Catholics to the rest of the population was virtually the same. The Centre party was very stable in its voting support from 1920 right up to the end of the Weimar republic in 1933, obtaining from 11.2 to 12.2 percent of the popular vote. There was virtually no decline in its vote even during those fatal years of crisis in the early 1930s. Yet the Centre party never did obtain more than 40 percent of the Catholic
vote, much lower than in the case of the Dutch Catholic party in both post-war and pre-war times.\textsuperscript{10}

By most standards the case of the Dutch Catholic party is unique. How does one go about explicating this particular pattern of voting stability and then sudden decline? Why did such a high proportion of Dutch Catholics vote for the Catholic party? Why did the Catholic vote suddenly drop? In providing answers to these questions there are two competing explanatory frameworks available, the party identification and subcultural influence models.

**Party Identification.** Undoubtedly the most sophisticated and voluminous literature on electoral stability and change is concerned with what is generally referred to as "party identification." In the early 1950s at the University of Michigan, researchers were confronted by what appeared to be the unusual stability of American voters in their party preference election after election. Some of the earlier voting studies by Lazarsfeld et al. had assumed the existence of some sort of decision-making on the part of voters in the few weeks before the election.\textsuperscript{11} They were quickly disabused of this assumption when they discovered that few voters consciously arrived at a decision shortly before the election and only a small minority diverged from their party choice at the time of the previous election.

To account for this stability in voting behaviour Campbell et al. at the University of Michigan developed the social-psychological notion of "party-identification" or "partisanship."\textsuperscript{12} According to this model individuals are socialized into this "identification" by their parents. Upon reaching voting age there is a possibility that young adults may
defect from their parental party-identification. But once voters have settled down to a particular party choice over a number of elections, their loyalty to that party tends to harden. Once this stage is reached, party identification is considered to be a potent independent variable. On occasion voters may deviate and vote for another party but their party identification will tend to act as a homing device to draw them back in future elections.

The party identification model has been applied to countries other than the United States, largely in order to explain the stability or instability of party systems. According to researchers, the extent to which voters in a given population have developed loyalties to political parties determines how muted political change will be and whether or not "flash parties" will arise. Thus Dennis and McCrone claim: "Party system stability, in the sense of a persisting configuration of organized partisan competition, is a function of how widely rooted in mass public consciousness is the sense of identification with the parties." \(^{13}\)

Long term party system stability, where it does exist, is accounted for not only by party loyalties on the part of current generations but also by the fact that these loyalties will be transmitted and imparted to future generations. Long term electoral change is often explained as being due to the growth and decline of the different blocs of party identifiers because of different rates of fecundity, mortality and socialization.

The best example of the party identification approach to change can be found in Butler and Stokes, *Political Change in Britain.*\(^{14}\) They argue, for example, that the results of the 1964 British general election can be explained not by the defection of supporters from one party to another but by the growth of the working-class, the majority of workers
being Labour supporters, and the decline of the Conservative support base (the Tory support base being older, many Tory supporters dropped out of the electorate). Butler and Stokes allow that cataclysmic events, such as war or severe economic depression, may alter the basis of party alignment and lead to the development of new party loyalties among voters.\textsuperscript{15} However, even in such instances Butler and Stokes claim there is a very close connection between the renewal of the electorate (through the entrance of new voters and the death of older voters) and changes in party alignment. A voter is most susceptible to change when he is young while the older "partisan" voter is much less responsive to change when new grounds for party cleavage develop. Thus it may take many years before a change in alignment is fully reflected in party support.\textsuperscript{16}

In the case of the Netherlands before 1967 the vote for the KVP was especially stable. Voters by consistently voting for the same party undoubtedly developed strong party loyalties, or so one would expect in terms of the Michigan model. A number of students of Dutch politics state that high proportions of strong party identifications provided a firm prop for the old party alignment during this period.\textsuperscript{17} If so, the rapid dropping off of the KVP vote in the three elections subsequent to 1963 is somewhat surprising.

During the 1963-72 period the size of the Catholic population (the natural base of the KVP), declined only marginally. Table 1.2 shows Catholic support for the KVP among the different age groups. In terms of the party identification model, even if one assumes severe discontinuity in the transmission of KVP partisanship to younger Catholics, it is obvious that many older Catholics must have abandoned their party loyalties, since in 1963 85 percent of all Catholics voted KVP.
Table 1.2

Percentage of Catholics Preferring KVP by Age, 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>50-64</th>
<th>35-49</th>
<th>25-34</th>
<th>21-24</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>59.8%</td>
<td>48.6%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>579</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch election survey (provincial elections). Respondents were asked how they would vote if national election were held.

What evidence is there for the claim that the Netherlands, during the period of party system stability, enjoyed high levels of party identification? In the main, these high levels have been inferred on the basis of responses to a survey question asking what party the respondent supported. Yet even if there had been a more direct measure of party identification, there is a problem of interpretation. For example, Campbell and Valen, in their examination of Norwegian voting behaviour, wonder whether party identification did have an independent effect: "The Norwegian labour union member who is a member of the Labour Party may display a strong party attachment, but one wonders if this does not merely express in different form his basic identification with the working-class." On the whole, the party identification model is not very satisfactory. It does not provide an adequate framework for explaining electoral stability and decline among Dutch Catholics.

Subcultural Influence. Recently Phillips Shively raised doubts about the party identification model similar to those of Campbell and
Valen. However, he went one step further and developed an alternative framework, the subcultural influence model, to explain electoral stability and electoral change. He used the case of the Weimar republic in the inter-war period in Germany to test his argument.

Shively argues that large blocs of voters, whom one would have expected to be unstable in their voting behaviour, for example women who had only just obtained the right to vote in Weimar Germany, were in fact just as stable in their voting behaviour as those who would have had ample opportunity to develop party loyalties, for example male Protestant voters. In the later Weimar period, 1928-33, when there was a surge of support for the Nazi party, Shively notes, "... those groups which added disproportionately to the Nazi gains in the early 'thirties were the ones that had been relatively stable in the more "normal" elections of the mid-'twenties." On the basis of his analysis of voting behaviour in Weimar Germany Shively makes the following propositions:

If the social or economic conflicts in which a voter is involved are sufficiently clear; and if the position of parties or groups of parties with regard to these conflicts is sufficiently clear; then there is no need for the voter to develop lasting ties to any party 'per se' and he will not do so.

... [A] voter who is a member of a clear and distinct social or economic group, for which he feels that some party or group of parties is the clear spokesman—a Catholic in the Weimar Republic, for instance, or a Welsh miner—may not need a further guide in voting. Since his social and economic position, coupled with the linkage of some party(ies) to that position, provides him with sufficient voting cues, he does not need to identify directly with a party.

Shively's propositions could be applied to the Netherlands with regard to party system stability before 1967. In terms of this model, one can see the Dutch KVP supporter as a conscientious Catholic who perceives the KVP as the only party which properly represents the interests
of the Catholic subculture. The bond between the Catholic and his Church would be quite strong while the bond between the Catholic and the KVP would be an instrumental one at best.

In general, Shively's model is quite attractive, although there are several points that need to be clarified. For example, from where would a voter, as a member of a particular subculture, receive his cues to vote for a particular party? Would these cues derive from the voter's own evaluation of the situation, from neighbours, union leaders, religious authorities?

The largest difficulty in Shively's model, however, stems from his explanation of electoral change. In terms of the model as applied to Weimar Germany, electoral change occurs when an alternative party moves in and successfully competes for the vote of a particular bloc. The new party is seen by voters as being able to represent better the interests of their subculture. The subcultural blocs themselves do not change. Unfortunately, with respect to the Netherlands, Shively's model cannot really be used to explain party system instability in the post 1963 period. Particularly, it cannot be used to explain the decline in the KVP vote. In the case of the Catholic bloc or pillar in the Netherlands no alternative Catholic party has successfully moved in. Moreover, most commentators focus on the theme that the Catholic pillar in the Netherlands, with its 'cradle to the grave' organizations, is undergoing a process of decay or "depillarization."

For Shively's examination of voting in Weimar Germany, it was sufficient to assume subcultural cohesion. In this study, however, the cohesiveness of the Dutch Catholic subculture cannot be simply assumed. What needs to be explained is the unusual degree of cohesion on the part
of the Dutch Catholic subculture. This requires a special focus on those factors making for subcultural cohesion. Secondly, it will be argued that it was a change in those factors which resulted in the transformation of the Dutch Catholic subculture into a much less cohesive body which in turn resulted in the decline of the KVP vote.

Subcultural Cohesion. The subcultural influence model is clearly the most attractive for the purpose of explicating the case of the Dutch Catholic party. But what are the factors making for subcultural cohesion in the Netherlands? Some of the more prominent writers on subcultures in Western Europe, for example Lijphart, Lorwin and Roth, all argue the importance of ideology both as a source of authority and as a means of distinguishing a bloc from other blocs and society as a whole. Secondly, they suggest that organizations, and the elites operating them, are important in insulating the members of a bloc from outside influences. A third set of factors mentioned relates to the characteristics of the clientele. The willingness of the rank-and-file to comply with directions, the degree to which they accept the tenets of the ideology, and the type of benefits they receive are all factors which are important in accounting for the viability of a subculture.

In the first part of the study, I will focus on these three sets of factors. The ideology of Dutch Catholicism will be examined, particularly with regard to the way it was used by the Church authorities. Secondly, I will show that an extensive range of institutions, operated by a willing clerical and lay leadership, helped insulate Catholics from the outside world. Equally important these institutions, as well as the Church itself, provided an adequate range of benefits and services, both
spiritual and economic, allowing the Catholic subculture to remain competitive with other blocs in Dutch society and preventing the alienation of large numbers of Catholics from the Church. I will discuss specific characteristics of the clientele, such as the low level of education among Catholics, which facilitated social control by the Church. The successful efforts of Church authorities will also be related to the larger political, social and economic context. The timing and slow pace of industrialization in the Netherlands provided Dutch clergy with the opportunity to pre-empt the socialists in organizing Catholic workers. The rule of proportionality in disbursing state funds permitted the Catholic subculture to set up institutions like the Catholic Radio Broadcasting Organization and the Catholic University to further insulate the membership from outside influences. As well, the role of the Catholic party will be discussed. The Catholic party, and its support base, was primarily a function rather than a cause of subcultural cohesion. Yet the party did make a contribution to the well being of the Catholic bloc by acting as a bridge between conflicting elements within the bloc and as a point of communication with the outside world.

The latter part of the study focusses on the changes within the Catholic subculture which occurred during the 1960s and the impact of these drastic changes on the Catholic party and the voting behaviour of Catholics.
Jean Laponce notes: "[The] Catholics of the Netherlands merit some attention. They are unique, in the states of Western Europe, in having a party with a religious basis which attracts all the votes of the members of that religion. . . . Because the proportion of Catholics to the total population is 35%, the ratio of communal support is close to 90%. This indicates a political cohesion comparable to that of the more unified racial groups. No other Catholic party in Europe offers a similar example." J. Laponce, The Protection of Minorities (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), p. 139.

Before 1918 a different electoral system based on two member districts was in operation which provided a different set of incentives for electoral mobilization. Thus in the north and west where Catholics were in a minority, Catholics threw their support first behind the Liberals and later the Anti-Revolutionaries (Calvinists). This still indicates a high degree of control on the part of the clergy and Catholic political organizations. See H. Daalder, "The Netherlands: Opposition in a Segmented Society," in R. Dahl (Ed.), Political Oppositions in Western Democracies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 204; J. Verhoef, "Kiesstelsels en politieke samenwerking in Nederland, 1888-1917," Acta Politica, Vol. VI, No. 3 (July 1971), pp. 261-268.

In the case of Italy, Hazelrigg notes that less than half the population could be called either a moderate or strict Catholic. L. Hazelrigg, "Religious and Class Bases of Political Conflict in Italy," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 75, No. 4, Part I (January 1970), p. 502.


Ibid., p. 41.


Laponce, pp. 154-155.


15 Ibid., p. 17.

16 Ibid., p. 18.

17 E. van Thijn, "Kritische Kanttekeningen bij een Trek naar Rechts," *Sociologische Gids*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (1963), p. 239; Wolinetz, pp. 85, 111. Wolinetz states that both "party and subcultural identifications were strong factors in the Netherlands" (p. 111, fn. 1). It could be that Wolinetz is referring to different subpopulations, some having strong party identifications, others subcultural identifications. I would argue, however, that at the individual level it is not possible to have both. Furthermore, if party identification is seen as a function of subcultural identification then this would considerably reduce the status of the former as an independent variable. At best it can only be seen as an intervening variable. For further discussion of the problem, see D. Robinson, "Surrogates for Party Identification in the Rational Choice Framework," in I. Budge, I. Crewe and D. Farlie (Eds.), *Party Identification and Beyond* (London: Wiley, 1976), pp. 365-382; K. MacCorquodale and P. Meehl, "On a Distinction between Hypothetical Constructs and Intervening Variables," *Psychological Review*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (March 1948), pp. 95-107.

18 Wolinetz, p. 90.


21 Ibid., p. 1214.

22 Ibid., p. 1222.

23 I am using the term pillar in the sense that Lijphart and Rogowski use the term. According to Rogowski, "In any highly stratified society, a faction that contains members of every stratum in rough proportion to their respective fractions of the total population of the society will

A new party which appeared in 1972, called the "Roman Catholic Party of the Netherlands" (RKPN), received only .9 percent of the total vote. Another new party, the "Party of Political Radicals" (PPR), contains a number of ex-KVP'ers as well as former members of the Anti-Revolutionary Party. It has attracted some of the Catholic vote but it has not done so on an explicitly religious basis.


Lijphart, pp. 36-58; Lorwin, pp. 153-156.

Chapter II

THE DUTCH CATHOLIC SUBCULTURE:
ETHNICITY, IDEOLOGY, ORGANIZATION AND CLIENTELE

Several writers on West European politics have stressed the importance of subcultures as factors in structuring political behaviour.¹ In what ways are subcultures important? How did they come to play such a role? In this chapter I will show that in the Netherlands the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church and lay Catholic leaders were largely responsible for the creation of a highly insular and cohesive miniature society involving virtually all Catholics residing within the Netherlands. The existence of this miniature society resulted in a high degree of uniformity in the behaviour of Dutch Catholics. Prior to the changes in the 1960s, Dutch Catholics rigorously followed prescribed norms of behaviour. Interfaith marriages were virtually non-existent.² Catholics not only attended mass and confession regularly but also limited their reading to Catholic newspapers and periodicals, joined Catholic trade unions if they were workers, joined the Catholic employer federation if they owned or operated large commercial enterprises, and joined the Catholic middle-class organization if they were shop-keepers or small businessmen.³ And at election time the vast majority of Catholics voted for the Catholic party.

The Catholic subculture, however, never was, and is not presently, primarily political in nature. The main purpose in the insulation of Catholics from the rest of Dutch society prior to 1963 was to protect the
core values of the Catholic community, values which were spiritual and social rather than political in nature. The spiritual and social cohesiveness of Dutch Catholics had political implications insofar as this greatly facilitated the mobilization of Catholics behind the Catholic party. And, as will be shown in the subsequent chapter, the Catholic party did help in maintaining spiritual and social unity among Catholics. Nevertheless, it was the Church which was mainly responsible for the maintenance of this unity, and, therefore, an examination of its role will be the primary focus of this chapter.

Before beginning to probe the nature of the Dutch Catholic sub-culture one should ask more specifically, what is a subculture? What are the factors that make for subcultural cohesion? Unfortunately the term subculture has not been well defined. People have attached different meanings to it. At the same time it is possible to discern at least two and perhaps three basic conceptions of the term.

Guenther Roth, in his study of the Social Democratic Party in Imperial Germany, is an example of someone who uses the organizational concept of subculture. He refers to an entity called the Social Democratic subculture which for Roth was political in nature, consciously created by German labour leaders through organization. It encompassed a large proportion of the German working-class, but it was not identical to the German working-class as a whole. Rather, in terms of membership, it formed a subset of the German working-class. Individual choice on the part of participants and organization are seen as the basic elements of such a subculture. As well organization is seen as the major factor making for subcultural cohesion.

A different notion of subculture is often used by those studying
developing countries, for example J. S. Furnivall on Indonesia and M. G. Smith on the Caribbean. These analysts focus mainly on certain characteristics common to a group of people, characteristics such as race, language, religion or "primordial sentiments" which serve to impart a sense of identity to the members of the group and to demarcate them from other groups in society. In such a case the basis for subcultural cohesion is ethnicity, not organization.

Which conception of subculture is most appropriate for analyzing the Dutch Catholic bloc? Val Lorwin, in his important article on segmental pluralism, argues that the latter notion of subculture, that is one seeing race or caste as important elements, is not appropriate for analyzing most segments or 'familles spirituelles' in Western Europe. He points out that membership in such segments is, in theory at any rate, voluntary. People in Western Europe are not permanently marked by stigmata such as race or caste. The lack of such stigmata make opting out of a subculture relatively easy, at least compared with the type of subcultures which exist in many developing societies. Lorwin admits that in countries like Austria or the Netherlands there are some conversion costs involved if an individual decides to switch from the Catholic subculture to the socialist subculture, but such a conversion is not impossible. In a country such as Malaysia it would be virtually impossible for a Malay to drop his affiliation with the Malay community and become a member of the Chinese community. Lorwin's point is that a West European subculture such as the Catholic bloc in the Netherlands, based on organization, is qualitatively different from an ethnic bloc in a developing society. This is not in dispute. Nevertheless, there are instances in the West European context, and to some extent the North American context as well,
where one does speak of a working-class subculture or a middle-class subculture. And in doing so one does not imply that such a subculture has a defined leadership or organization. At the same time, stigmata such as race are not necessarily present. Yet Richard Hoggart and Richard Hamilton, for example, refer to the unique and distinctive cultural patterns of workers which help set them apart from the rest of society. Furthermore, they do not see the working-class subculture as a whole as being identical to the organized working-class. Phillips Shively also seems to use the concept of subculture in this sense. For Shively subcultural blocs in Weimar Germany consisted of aggregates of individuals who had certain characteristics in common. They were workers or Protestants or Catholics. He imputed to these blocs certain economic and cultural interests but not necessarily organization.

In this chapter I will document that the organizational structures developed by the Catholic Church in the Netherlands were crucial in insulating Catholics from the rest of Dutch society. However, these organizations did not become fully developed until shortly after World War I. And prior to 1853 the Dutch Church did not even have an ecclesiastical hierarchy in place. Yet one can still speak of a Catholic subculture in the period of the mid sixteenth century to the early twentieth century: Dutch Catholics formed a community and were conscious of having a unique identity. Basic stigmatic characteristics were of minimal importance in accounting for the cohesion of Dutch Catholics. But this does not mean that these characteristics were totally absent. And in the post 1963 period, to be discussed in chapter IV, when pressure from the Church was relaxed, one can still talk of
a Catholic culture which is distinct from one actively fostered through organization.

Thus the term subculture or bloc with respect to Dutch Catholics will be used in the wider sense of the term, that is it will refer to a group of people having certain characteristics in common, shared symbols, rituals and the like but not necessarily institutions. This helps to facilitate comparison with other blocs both within and without the Netherlands. Thus by referring to the Catholic bloc in Germany, the Netherlands or Switzerland I am referring to all individuals who are Catholic and not to a subset of Catholics who may be organized within particular institutions.

The organization of the remainder of this chapter is as follows: The first part will examine briefly the ethnic dimension of Dutch Catholicism to see if racial, linguistic or lifestyle characteristics may have played a role in demarcating the Catholic bloc from the rest of Dutch society. The bulk of the chapter, however, will focus on the ideological and organizational dimensions and the socio-economic characteristics of the clientele.

The emphasis will be primarily on the period 1918 to 1963, the period generally considered to be the zenith of the Dutch Catholic subculture in terms of cohesiveness and cultural distinctiveness. Through necessity, however, reference will be made to earlier eras with regard to the development of ideology and the beginnings of organizational life.
1. The Ethnic Dimension

We often find that subcultures, especially those with ghetto like qualities, are based on distinct characteristics such as race or language. And often a series of characteristics such as language, race and religion reinforce each other to provide a basis for the division of societies into separate groups. Such objective characteristics are usually highly interrelated and produce, or are associated with, a constellation of shared cultural elements. People belonging to such a subculture are usually said to have their own ethos and unique customs, habits and rituals. These elements make for what is sometimes referred to as ethnicity. This is usually thought of as being subjective but has the objective effect of further distinguishing a subculture from other subcultures or from the dominant culture in a society. Ethnicity imparts to an individual a sense of identity, a sense of belonging to a particular group.

To what extent was the Catholic subculture in the Netherlands based on or reinforced by factors such as race, language or even territory? A review of some of the basic characteristics of the Dutch Catholic population suggests that beyond the religious factor, racial, linguistic and ethnic factors, serve only in a limited way to help demarcate the Catholic subculture from the other blocs in Dutch society.

The Catholic population has usually constituted from 35 to 40 percent of the total Dutch population. Approximately 45 percent of the Catholic population resides in the two southern most provinces of North Brabant and Limburg (see appendix I). Both provinces have always been at least 95 percent Catholic. As well the southern part of the province of Gelderland, the province just above Limburg, is largely
Catholic. This part of Gelderland along with all of Limburg and North Brabant is usually referred to as the area below the rivers.

Thus less than half the Catholic population resides in this homogeneous Catholic region. The rest are dispersed in the northern section of the Netherlands where, with the exception of several villages and a number of towns, Catholics are in a distinct minority position. For example 23 percent of the population of Amsterdam, 21 percent of Rotterdam and 29 percent of the Hague is Catholic. Within these non-Southern cities and towns there are virtually no areas which could be referred to as Catholic ghettos. Catholics in these cities have always lived side by side with Protestants, socialists and the like. As will be discussed later, contextual factors such as amount of Catholic concentration (i.e. whether Catholics are in a minority or majority in a given area), region and urbanization do have some effect on the degree of loyalty by Catholics to the subculture. However, it is worth noting that Catholics are by no means segregated within their own territorial limits.

There is no evidence that race is an important factor. Some attempts have been made to categorize Catholics from the south as being from alpinic stock while people in the north are said to be from nordic stock. However attempts to verify this have not been successful. The same is true of theories which attempted to relate Catholicism to those of celtic stock. If these patterns have ever existed migration over the centuries would have blurred them considerably. This was especially true around the turn of the century when thousands of Catholics from North Brabant migrated to Rotterdam, many of them ceasing to regard themselves as Catholic. More importantly, there is no evidence that the Dutch people use physical stereotypes as a guide to pinpointing the
What about language? The Netherlands is basically a unilingual nation. There is an ancient regional language called Frisian spoken mainly by people in the province of Friesland. They constitute only a small proportion of the total population and among them are very few Catholics. There are a number of regional dialects which contrast somewhat with what is formally known as "Universal Civilized Dutch," the official Dutch taught in schools and based primarily on the Dutch spoken in the provinces of North and South Holland. People from the south can usually be identified by their speech. Especially people in the southern part of Limburg have an intonation which is quite akin to German. And generally people from any part of the south can be identified by their pronunciation of the letter "g". In the northern part of the Netherlands it is made to sound quite harsh while in the south it is pronounced in a much softer, gentler fashion. However this characteristic does not apply to Catholics living outside of the south and thus is not a general identifying characteristic of the majority of Catholics.15

Generally all Catholics are said to be more prone to use certain types of greetings and idioms.16 However these are relatively minor variations on the Dutch language. The overall differences in language between Catholics and non-Catholics certainly would not act as an impediment to communication nor in themselves would they act to demarcate and insulate the Catholic population from the rest of Dutch society.

The idea of a subculture often implies that its members have distinctive rituals, habits, a unique music and literature beyond those directly related to the religious factor. To what extent is or was this true of the Dutch Catholic subculture? There is some evidence that there
are differences between Catholics and their fellow Dutchmen on this dimension. As noted Catholics tend to use certain idiomatic expressions and ways of pronunciation. But this in itself would not have constituted a distinctive cultural style although the Dutch historian I. Schöffer argues that before the second world war these differences were more pronounced even for Catholics living outside of the south.\(^{17}\)

In the early 1950s a team of researchers under the direction of I. Gadourek did an intensive case study of a Dutch village named Sassenheim.\(^{18}\) They noted that in this village Catholic children learned different rhymes and verses compared to Protestant children. In terms of recreational activities they discovered that Catholics tended to favour pianos as opposed to the organs favoured by Protestants. It appears, however, that the citizens of Sassenheim were rather indiscriminate in their radio listening habits. Although radio broadcasting is divided along religious lines, and until 1965 it was officially forbidden for Catholics to listen to socialist radio programs, both Catholics and non-Catholics often ignored these divisions. Most preferred light music and would switch to the station offering it at the time, regardless of the religious affiliation of that station.

One expects any subculture to have its own distinctive literary tradition. For example Richard Hoggart in his *The Uses of Literacy* notes that this is the case of the British working-class.\(^{19}\) However this is only partially true for the Dutch Catholic subculture. The period between the two world wars, an era in Dutch Catholic history referred to as the epoch of the "Rich Roman Life,"\(^ {20}\) saw the production of a voluminous amount of Catholic literature, literature that played upon the sense of being Catholic and the Catholic ethos. However more talented Catholic
poets and writers such as Anton van Duinkerken tended to offend the sensibilities of the Church authorities and as a result the circulation of their work was rather curtailed. More common fare for Catholics was a vast amount of pious literature of low quality extolling the virtues of sainthood. Although Catholics were inundated by this type of literature, how much was actually consumed is another question.²¹

During the inter-war period there were popular Catholic magazines such as the Catholic Illustrated. This particular magazine was filled with photographs of priests, nuns and brothers celebrating their golden or diamond jubilee or standing on the deck of an ocean liner departing for distant lands to carry out their duties as missionaries. One particular feature was a large photograph of the "Roman family of the week" with captions such as "here we have the Jansen family with no less than 16 healthy children."

Radio programs carried by the Catholic Broadcasting Organization (KRO) propounded similar themes. Generally the period of the Rich Roman Life was when Dutch Catholicism was most distinctive in terms of cultural spirit and elan. Against a background of processions, prayer sessions, retreats for young and old, most Catholics certainly felt themselves to be different from, and in fact superior to, non-Catholics.²²

In the post-World War II period much of the overwrought piousness had disappeared, at least the more public manifestations of it. Catholics were still exposed to large amounts of "approved" Catholic novels and magazines. However, Gadourek reports that in Sassenheim both Catholics and Protestants tended to read the same popular novels. Catholic and Protestant women also tended to share tastes in home-making magazines.²³ This finding is borne out by a 1956 nationwide survey carried out by the
Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics. The survey asked respondents, among other things, which radio program guide and newspaper they subscribed to and the kind of novel they had last read (i.e. whether the novel was Catholic, Protestant or neutral in orientation). The results are shown in Table 2.1. Although the various groups are relatively segregated

Table 2.1
Reading Preferences by Religion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radio Program Guide</th>
<th>Catholic (%)</th>
<th>Moderate Protestant (%)</th>
<th>Orthodox Calvinist (%)</th>
<th>Other Church (%)</th>
<th>No Church (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>(823)</td>
<td>(797)</td>
<td>(235)</td>
<td>(97)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily Newspaper</th>
<th>Catholic (%)</th>
<th>Moderate Protestant (%)</th>
<th>Orthodox Calvinist (%)</th>
<th>Other Church (%)</th>
<th>No Church (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.C. + Protestant</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.C. + Neutral</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant + Neutral</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>(1235)</td>
<td>(1146)</td>
<td>(300)</td>
<td>(151)</td>
<td>(712)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Read Novel</th>
<th>Catholic (%)</th>
<th>Moderate Protestant (%)</th>
<th>Orthodox Calvinist (%)</th>
<th>Other Church (%)</th>
<th>No Church (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>(833)</td>
<td>(858)</td>
<td>(260)</td>
<td>(130)</td>
<td>(562)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

with regard to which newspaper they read and which radio guide they subscribed to, these differences tend to disappear in the case of reading material like novels.

In the Netherlands there are a number of popular images or stereotypes concerning the different religious groupings. Calvinists are thought to be much more serious and soberminded than the less serious, fun loving Catholics. For example Dutch Catholics especially in the south of the Netherlands, like their brethren in the more latin countries, celebrate carnival, a week long period of festivities in the month of February. Gadourek discovered that the Catholics of Sassenheim did tend to indulge more in card playing and dancing compared to their Protestant counterparts. These findings are again confirmed by the 1956 nationwide survey. Table 2.2 repeats the responses to questions asking whether or not the person engaged in a number of recreational activities.

There are indeed a number of contrasts evident in this table, particularly between Catholics and Calvinists with regard to card playing, chess, dancing and spectating which may indicate differences in lifestyles. Nevertheless compared with the Dutch population as a whole Catholics do not differ that drastically. One cannot conclude from this table that Catholics have a radically different lifestyle.

In terms of basic characteristics such as race, language and ethnicity generally the Catholic population does not differ greatly from the rest of Dutch society. And the differences that do exist would not by themselves support the development of a highly institutionalized subculture without the help of additional factors. With slight exaggeration one could say that the only obvious characteristic which serves to best distinguish Catholics from non-Catholics has been, and still is, the
fact that Catholics of both sexes wear their wedding ring on the left hand while other Dutch people wear theirs on the right hand.

Table 2.2
Recreational Activities by Religion
(Percentages indicate proportion of respondents engaging in each activity)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation</th>
<th>Catholics (%)</th>
<th>Protestants (%)</th>
<th>Calvinists (%)</th>
<th>Other Church (%)</th>
<th>No Church (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cards</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chess</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checkers</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectating at sports events</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = (697) (644) (182) (95) (393) (2016)


Thus the ethnic dimension of Catholicism in the Netherlands is rather weak. It has been suggested, particularly by critics, that many of the differences in culture and lifestyle between Catholics and others were the products of Church influence rather than manifestations of racial, linguistic or ethnic factors. It is the religious factor, in particular the Roman Catholic Church as an organizational force, which was obviously a major, if not the major factor in creating and maintaining
The Catholic Church with its hierarchical structure and emphasis on the acceptance of centralized authority does appear to offer an ideal format for creating subcultural cohesion. The formal elements of the Catholic "Weltanschauung" include the beliefs that the Church represents God on earth, that salvation can be obtained only through the Church and that Papal authority is absolute. Before the second Vatican council in the 1960s the chief characteristics of Roman Catholicism were that the beliefs and doctrines of the Church were held to be absolutely true. For example, transubstantiation, the holy trinity, the chastity of the Virgin Mary were believed to be literally true and seen not merely as symbols. Other important features of Catholicism have included the stress placed on the unitary nature of the Church and the belief in the importance of absolution in order to be received by God in a state of grace.²⁶

It should not be thought that these basic features of Catholic doctrine have always been accepted or fully understood by both ordinary Catholics and clerics. Papal infallibility has come under attack both within and without the Church. And there have been a number of movements to transform the teachings of the Church, the modernist movement in France and Germany at the turn of the century to cite one example.²⁷

However in the past most questioning of Church doctrine occurred within seminaries and universities. Rank-and-file Catholics, although not fully understanding or aware of many aspects of Catholic doctrine, nevertheless accepted the authority of the Church. J. Poeisz writing about Dutch Catholics circa 1958 noted that the good Dutch Catholic "... faithfully followed the directives for behaviour in Church and society laid down by the Church. He asked no questions but simply did
what was expected of him. He had no specifically religious motives for his conduct. Normally his actions were motivated by an awareness that it was his duty to live in accordance with the Church's expectations."

The Church has available a number of sanctions to back up its directives. In extreme cases those Catholics breaking the rules of the Church can be threatened with ex-communication. This involves not being allowed to take part in communion and being denied the holy sacraments. As well, the confessional can be used as a control mechanism. By being obliged to confess his sins to his parish priest the Catholic places himself in a position further obliging himself to the authority of the Church. The priest in turn is subject to control from his bishop and, through his bishop, from the pope.

In the Netherlands the authority of the Church and the use of sanctions were used by the ecclesiastical hierarchy to isolate Dutch Catholics socially and politically from the rest of Dutch society. Yet the Roman Catholic Church is a universal church. Its organization does not differ drastically from country to country. Why was the Church so effective in the Netherlands? To answer this question one has to look at the ideology of Dutch Catholicism and the particular way in which the authority and sanctions of the Church were used by Dutch bishops and clergy.

2. IDEOLOGY

What is ideology? What function does it serve? One writer has stated that ideology may be seen "as a systematic set of ideas with action consequences serving the purpose of creating and using organization."
As we shall see the ideology of Dutch Catholicism was neither systematic nor logically coherent; it was often contradictory. In particular there were tensions between ultra-montane sentiments and beliefs concerning the need for the physical survival of the Dutch Catholic minority within a society dominated by Protestants. Nor were these beliefs always used directly for purposes of creating and using organization. Nevertheless, particular ideas or strands of ideas can be identified which had important consequences for the behaviour of Dutch Catholics. And in the twentieth century these ideas became of paramount importance in the creation and usage of organization.

The ideology peculiar to Dutch Catholicism is far from simple. There are various elements within this ideology; they have different sources yet at the same time are closely interrelated; there has been continuity yet the different elements have played a variable role in the different phases in the history of Catholicism in the Netherlands. To make sense of the aspects of the ideology peculiar to Dutch Catholicism I have developed three categories to deal with what I see are the three main aspects or elements of this ideology. They are: (1) the isolationist mentality resulting from the post-reformation period when Dutch Catholics had to go underground in order to practice their religion; (2) the emancipation ideology dating from when Catholics were legally free to practice their religion and Rome had restored the Dutch hierarchy; and (3) the Calvinist penetration—this concerns the beliefs underlying the rigid adherence to the rules and regulations of the Church by Dutch Catholics which has been ascribed to the influence of Calvinism.
A distinction is sometimes made between pure and practical ideology. In the case of Dutch Catholicism it is possible to see beliefs in the Holy Trinity and the Virgin Mary as elements of pure ideology while the isolationist mentality, for example, can be seen as practical ideology intended to protect and further these elements of pure ideology. In practice pure and practical ideology are often interrelated and the distinction becomes difficult to maintain. In this analysis the different elements of ideology will be examined in terms of how they developed in relation to concrete historical circumstance.

The Isolationist Mentality. The reasons for the isolationist mentality of Dutch Catholics must be sought in their historical experience dating back to the time of the reformation. In the sixteenth century the Netherlands did not become Protestant as a result of a fiat on the part of government authorities as in the case of Sweden and England. Rather the arrival of Protestantism in the Netherlands was intricately linked with the 80 Years War and the revolt of the Netherlands against Spanish rule. The Church sided with Spain. However, merchants in large cities and several members of the nobility who were influenced by the libertarian traditions of Erasmus feared the centralizing tendencies of the Church. They joined with more sectarian Protestant groups in revolting against Spanish rule and the Church in 1566. Calvinism, which previously was restricted to lower and middle-class elements in Dutch society, proved to be increasingly attractive to the higher classes.

Among the precipitating factors which led to the revolt were the bad economic conditions, the introduction of new taxes by Spanish
authorities and the establishment of a new ecclesiastical hierarchy by the Catholic Church. The Pacification of Ghent in 1576 marked the beginning of a united Netherlands. By this treaty the provinces of the Netherlands decided to jointly oust Spanish rule. At the same time they agreed to maintain the Catholic religion outside the provinces of Holland and Zeeland. The military successes in the Northern part of the Netherlands brought about the co-operation of others previously inactive who, perceiving a change in the tide, joined the revolution. This led to the union of Utrecht in 1597, a union of the Northern provinces.\(^{32}\)

Only about 5 percent of the population of the Netherlands could be considered to belong to the Reformed (Calvinist) Church before the revolts. However, Calvinism soon spread mainly because the emerging economic and political elites found in Calvinism a more tolerant and pluralistic outlook which fitted in much better with their mercantilistic beliefs than Catholicism. It was at this stage that a more systematic attempt was made to convert Catholics in the northern provinces. The practice of the Catholic religion was officially banned and Catholics were barred from holding public office. Nevertheless large pockets of Catholicism remained. For example in 1656 in what is now the province of North Holland 45 percent of the population was still Catholic.\(^{33}\) Why these substantial blocs of the population remained loyal to the Catholic Church is a question on which there is considerable disagreement among historians.

One explanation has it that in communities where there was a "worthy" priest, a priest who could command respect and loyalty from his parishioners, the community remained loyal.\(^{34}\) Other explanations place more stress on the apparatus of the Church. Thus the historian Rogier
notes that in those areas where the Church's organization had been effective and after the reformation had succeeded in re-organizing itself, the population remained Catholic. This, according to Rogier, would explain the "Catholic strip" along the coast of the current provinces of North and South Holland.

Another important variable, one stressed by the historian Geyl, is that of force. In certain places the magistrate would call on the use of armed troops in order to ensure the removal of the priest in a local community. In one such community, for example, the priest was removed and banished to foreign parts yet succeeded in returning and re-establishing himself. He was again forcibly removed and again he succeeded in making his way back. The third time the magistrate finally was successful and the priest did not return. The villagers, left without spiritual care, succumbed gradually to Calvinism with the exception of one or two families. In other places force was not used and the authorities would either be indifferent or depend upon the local Calvinist minister and the parish council to ensure conformity.

Undoubtedly the variables discussed by different historians such as local leadership, Church organization and the use of force all played a role in determining where Catholicism would survive. The important point to remember is that pockets of Catholicism which did survive were in a rather tenuous position. Catholics had no civil rights and legally priests were subject to deportation. Catholic services were carried out in hidden locations. At first these locations were private homes; later more elaborate permanent structures were built but still hidden. These were known as "underground churches" and often the isolationist mentality of Catholics in the past has been referred to as the "under-
ground church mentality."

Given the distribution of force in the northern provinces the Church, priests and individual Catholics were in no position to fight back or indulge in proselytizing activities. Instead they became highly introverted, nurturing a fervent hope that the Church would be fully restored sometime in the future and the wayward fallen, namely the Calvinists, would return to the fold.

Their attitude was characterized by considerable anxiety of the dominant non-believers, paired with a high level of internal intolerance with regard to deviant tendencies among their fellow Catholics.

In this atmosphere Catholicism certainly did not flourish. Rather the Church declined numerically as many of the weaker elements dropped off with the result that only the more fervent priests and their followers survived. Thus the Catholic population in all the provinces of the Netherlands dropped from 47 percent in 1656 to 34 percent in 1726. Virtually all of this drop is accounted for by the northern provinces. Thus in what is now the province of North Holland the percentage of Catholics in this period dropped from 45 percent to 20 percent.

After the revolt of the Netherlands, Rome suspended the Catholic hierarchy in the Netherlands and the country reverted to the status of a mission ruled by a nuncio appointed by Rome. Leaders of the Dutch Church such as Sasbout and Rovenius during the Eighty Years War and later Neerkassel in the second half of the seventeenth century did much to ensure the survival of Catholicism in the Netherlands. They re-organized the Church according to the principles of the counter-reformation yet at the same time steered a middle course when it came to dealing with the authorities of the republic. Although Dutch Catholics remained true to
Rome to the best of their abilities, the Papal authorities themselves did not always reciprocate. In 1702 Codde, the immediate successor of Neerkassel, was suspended by Rome following charges of heresy involving Jansenism.

Three-quarters of the secular priests (as opposed to those in religious orders) followed Codde and refused to recognize his successor De Cock. This led to the so-called Schism of Utrecht which in turn resulted in what is referred to in the Netherlands as the Old Catholic Church, a sect which has survived to the present day. However, since so much of the identity of the Dutch Church was based upon the premise of loyalty to Rome, many priests who had followed Codde felt caught in a crisis of conscience. By 1706 more than two-thirds of those priests who had left returned to the side of Rome.

The Schism of Utrecht helped reinforce the introverted nature of the Dutch Church. In rather ironic fashion the Dutch clergy helped maintain their belief in the Church of the counter-reformation and their loyalty to Rome by becoming even more insular and independent not only of Dutch society but also of Rome itself. By keeping the influence of Rome at a distance, the Dutch Church could maintain the belief that Rome was still the centre of spiritual authority on earth. Clashes which occurred between the Dutch Church and Rome were blamed by Dutch clergy on faulty communication or on intermediaries who did not understand the intentions of the Pope or misconstrued the true position of Dutch priests. The independence of the Dutch Church was further reinforced by friction between secular priests and those in religious orders. The Dutch secular priests jealously guarded their autonomy and independence against what they felt were unwarranted intrusions by orders such as the Jesuits.
The survival of Roman Catholicism in the Netherlands in the early post-reformation period did not depend upon the exercise of control from above. Local clergy took the initiative in organizing and protecting their own parishes with progressively less and less outside help. As well, while still believing that Roman Catholicism was the only true religion, Dutch clergy nevertheless co-operated to some degree with the civil authorities. They paid extra taxes and permitted the civil authorities to perform marriage ceremonies. In return the civil authorities remained tolerant and, for example, allowed clergy to perform an additional marriage ceremony so that in the eyes of the Church the marriage was a proper one. The commonly held belief was that this co-operation was a temporary necessity which would disappear when the Netherlands returned to the Roman Catholic fold. Through this means clergy maintained a high degree of control over their flocks and were relatively free from outside control.

All this was part and parcel of the isolationist mentality and could be observed in attitude and behaviour: a rigid emphasis on orthodoxy internally and a pronounced wariness, combined with pragmatic considerations, when communicating with the outside world. This curious posture on the part of the Dutch Church was maintained well into the twentieth century. For example, in the late nineteenth century the priest, Herman Schaepman, considered to be the father of the Catholic party in the Netherlands, had to defend himself from considerable criticism by both the bishops and conservative Catholics, when he engaged in political activities. He was told his actions were endangering the position of Catholics in the Netherlands by arousing the ire of the non-Catholic majority. In 1904 the bishops ordered that an
association of reform minded priests and lay Catholics be disbanded on the grounds that priests and laymen could not consort with each other in a common society. The motives of the bishops were in part due to puritanism (i.e. the corruption of priests by socializing with laymen), but also in part due to fear of disturbing the social equilibrium in the Netherlands by having untoward demands made upon Dutch society by liberal minded Catholics.45

Another manifestation of the isolationist mentality occurred in 1954. In that year the bishops, in a well publicized letter, reiterated the ban on belonging to non-Catholic organizations, listening to socialist radio programs, and reading non-Catholic newspapers and ordered that communication with the non-Catholic majority could occur only through official Church sanctioned agencies.46 This again was in large part due to their belief that Catholics had to be insulated and protected from the influence of non-Catholic Dutch society.

The Emancipation Ideology. After the Reformation Catholics in the Netherlands were reduced to the rank of second-class citizens. Catholics were shut out from all civil service functions. These positions were not only ones such as mayor but also minor posts such as lantern lighter and turf carrier. Catholics were also kept out of the guilds contributing further to their economically backward position. And as noted earlier there was always the threat of force on the part of civil authorities.

The Church itself was harrassed. Between 1703 and 1727 the papal internuncio was denied entry to the Netherlands.47 In socio-economic terms Catholics tended to be located in the less well off categories.
Jan Rogier, in an article, described the parish of Saint Antonius in Delfshaven circa 1829. Aside from the pastor and his assistant, not a single Catholic could be called a member of the intellectual and merchant class. In the categories of small businessmen, salesmen (e.g. fish wives) and workers Catholics were over-represented in comparison with Protestants. In the city of Den Bosch in 1786, a city which was 95 percent Catholic, only four of the 20 registered lawyers and medical doctors were Catholic. Much of this socio-economic imbalance was due to discrimination although some as well was due to the rather narrow and restricted attitude towards education by the Church.

A number of better off Catholics were certainly aware of the second-class position of Catholics in Dutch society. Yet in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries this in itself did not lead to organized protest. One well known Catholic writer even went so far as to suggest that there were distinct advantages to having civil service posts reserved for Protestants only. Generally Catholics accepted their lot and focused on preserving what they had.

In 1795 with the beginning of the Batavian republic under Napoleonic rule Catholics were finally granted their full civil rights. This development, although generally welcomed, did not lead to great rejoicing. Objectively it did not lead to any significant improvement for Catholics with regard to civil service positions. Catholics concerned themselves with seeking an improvement in the status of their Church. A number of priests and lay Catholics began agitating for the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in the Netherlands, though according to Thurlings there was no consensus among Catholics on how this was going to be achieved or even if this was a desirable goal. Liberal non-
Catholic politicians were ready to permit the return of the Catholic hierarchy but there was resistance from several quarters; from the Calvinists, from Rome, and not least from priests who valued their independence resulting from the lack of effective control from Rome.

In 1848 William II, under the influence of the liberal revolts that took place all over Europe, instituted responsible government with the result that Liberal statesmen, like Thorbecke, men who were very tolerant, humanistic and secular in outlook, were given a great deal of influence. Thorbecke and liberally minded Catholics opened the way for the restoration of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. This finally came about in 1853 when Rome overcame its hesitancy. This combination of secular statesmen and liberal minded Catholics, referred to as the Papo-Thorbecke coalition, hoped for the integration of the Catholic Church into Dutch society. Liberal Catholics placed great stress on openness as opposed to isolation and at the same time pressed for the emancipation of Catholics.\(^5\)

However, their influence soon faded. Directives from Rome in the form of the Syllabus of Errors and the encyclical Quanto Cura in 1864 warned the faithful about the dangers of liberalism and instructed that children could not go to non-Catholic schools. The "true to Rome" isolationist tendency in Dutch Catholicism re-asserted itself but now combined with emancipationist feelings to produce a unique force. There was a new tendency on the part of Dutch Catholics to be somewhat less cautious and attempt to arrogate to themselves more influence over what they considered their own affairs.

Fortuitously the orthodox Calvinists under the leadership of Groen van Prinsteren and later Abraham Kuyper also began to press for
educational rights as a defence against the liberal principles of the central authorities. Catholics and Calvinists joined in an electoral alliance and began pressing their case in parliament. Changes in the administration of the education act in 1888 and 1889 gave them partial victory. In 1917 what is known as the Pacification resulted in Catholics and Calvinists obtaining full state support for their school systems.\(^5^4\)

The Pacification of 1917 set a precedent for the meeting of further Catholic demands which were increasingly framed not in terms of freedom and equality of Catholics as individuals but in terms of the freedom of the Church to set up its own organizations. Catholics took great pride in the institutional edifice that was developing. Emancipation came to mean more Catholic institutions. The best examples were the founding of the Catholic University at Nijmegen in 1923 and the founding of the Catholic Broadcasting Organization (KRO) in 1926. In 1926 as well the Catholic political party was founded (before it was simply entitled the Association of Catholic Electoral Associations). Many Catholics believed that since they now had the same institutional trappings as the other blocs, the liberals for example, they were on an equal footing.

Catholics also began to see themselves as loyal Dutch citizens. This was reinforced by the events of 1918. The leader of the Social Democrats, Troelstra, who was under the influence of the revolutions that had occurred in Russia and Germany, advocated open revolt against the established order in the Netherlands. In retrospect this call for revolt was only a minor crisis. No one heeded Troelstra's call. However, in 1918 the bishops and Catholic lay leaders threw their support behind the government and the throne. For a period of time several Catholics were convinced that it was they and they alone who were the saviours of the fatherland.\(^5^5\)
In the 1920s a Catholic became prime minister for the first time and the important post of minister of social welfare was given to a Catholic. All this was cause for rejoicing and aided in the development of a triumphalist spirit which characterized the period known as the Rich Roman Life. But at the same time there was a feeling that Catholics were still being discriminated against. Catholics were still under-represented in the civil service and among those graduating from universities. This feeling persisted well into the 1950s and the early 1960s. In the early 1950s the leader of the Catholic party said that Catholics would only be truly emancipated when more than 50 percent of the population was Catholic. The Mandement of 1954 as well as reflecting isolationist sentiments also reflected the perception of the bishops that discrimination against Catholics still existed in the Netherlands and that Catholic institutions were still necessary not only to protect but also to further the interests of Dutch Catholics.

The Calvinist Penetration. Calvinism is thought to be unusually severe and unyielding, stressing rigid adherence to the norms and values found in the bible and as laid down by the religious community. Catholicism, on the other hand, is generally considered to be more forgiving in matters involving the breaking of Church laws, so long as the practicing Catholic ultimately accepts the authority of the Priest and the Pope. However, the Dutch Catholic Church, in contrast to the Catholic Church elsewhere, has always been characterized by the extremely rigid manner in which it applied sanctions against Catholics who broke the rules and norms of the Church. This rigorous approach to rule
application by Dutch priests has been linked to the all pervasive influence of Calvinism in the Netherlands.

The first apostolic vicar to the Dutch Roman Catholic mission, Sasbout Vosmeer, was extremely sparing in giving absolution or dispensation with regard to fasting laws. In fact the dispute with Rome at the turn of the eighteenth century which led to the schism of Utrecht was due to complaints brought to the Pope of the rigorous behaviour on the part of Dutch priests.57

This behaviour has been ascribed to the influence of Jansenism, a highly moralistic stream of Roman Catholic thought which probably comes closest to Protestantism in spirit if not form of all the various intellectual movements within the Church. Cornelius Jansenius, the spiritual father of this movement, taught at the University of Louvain and was Bishop of Ypres (1585-1638).58

Jansenist teachings have the tendency to deprecate the authority of the Church and to increase the emphasis on personal motivation. Holy communion can be received only under conditions of the utmost purity which requires intensive preparation. Absolution at confession could be received only after the priest was convinced that the parishioner was thoroughly repentant.

The sociologist Van Heek suggests that Jansenism had an unusually strong influence on Dutch Catholicism.59 He cites the fact that during the seventeenth century many of the missionaries sent to the Netherlands received their education at Louvain. The evidence is not clear enough to suggest such a direct link. Nevertheless there is no doubt that the moralistic aspects of Jansenism had a ready market in the Netherlands. And it was received sympathetically, in part because of a basic
predisposition by the Dutch population as a whole to take matters of religion very seriously. The sociologist Thurlings points out that both Protestants and Catholics in the Netherlands take religious rules and edicts in a much more literal fashion than is the case in Mediterranean countries like France and Italy.\(^60\)

Secondly, there is evidence that the Catholic Church in the Netherlands had taken over many attitudes and practices from the Calvinists. It was with the Calvinists, militant and well organized, that Catholics had the most social contact outside of their own circle. And in defending themselves from Calvinist proselytizing the priests in particular, consciously or unconsciously, picked up many of the characteristics of Calvinism; they became distinctly more puritanical than Catholics in other countries. Rogier gives several examples of this. Observance of Sunday as a day of rest is minimal in most Catholic countries. In the Netherlands Catholics are much stricter in their Sunday observance.\(^61\) The Carnival celebrations were banned in the Netherlands until 1815. Afterwards because of the Belgian influence, Carnival festivities penetrated into the two southern provinces adjacent to Belgium. When this occurred, however, Catholic priests did their utmost to discourage the festivities.\(^62\)

This process of learning from the Calvinists was not restricted to the early post-reformation period. In the late nineteenth century it was from the Calvinists under Abraham Kuyper that Dutch Catholics learned how to organize themselves politically in order to achieve their goal of state support for Catholic schools.\(^63\) The norms as to what was to be observed or adhered to are, of course, different for Calvinists and Catholics. Yet the spirit with which these norms were carried out has often been quite similar.
The ideology of Dutch Catholicism up to the early 1960s can be summarized as follows. Considerable stress was placed on physically insulating Catholics from the rest of the Dutch population. In the early post-reformation period this was achieved through the means of the so-called underground churches. Much later, organizations were developed to ensure that Catholics had no need to interact with non-Catholics in social and cultural spheres. The idea that Catholics were an oppressed minority who needed to be emancipated became an important element in the ideology. In the early part of the nineteenth century liberal Catholics hoped to achieve a degree of equality not only for the Catholic Church but also for individual Catholics. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, however, largely because of the bishops, emancipation came to be defined in collectivist terms; Catholics needed to be emancipated as a group, not as individuals.

Throughout the years, Dutch Catholicism was marked by a zealous application of sanctions and stringent demands upon the individual. Church law, interpreted in a strictly literal form, represented a major element of control. The ideology which evolved had a significant impact upon the development and use of organization. The structures of the Church and the subculture will now be examined with a view to highlighting the way the bishops, clergy and lay Catholic leaders used organization to severely limit the range of individual behaviour.

3. Organization

Structure. The Dutch Church province is divided into seven dioceses (before 1956 there were only five dioceses) each with a bishop. The archbishop for the entire province is based at Utrecht. Each diocese is divided into dekenaten or deaneries and each deanery is further
subdivided into parishes. There are a total of 129 deaneries and 1800 parishes in the entire country. Each parish handles anywhere from 800 to 10,000 parishioners. In the southern Netherlands, which is solidly Catholic, there might be two or more parishes in a single village or town. In the northeastern part of the Netherlands, however, where there are very few Catholics, one parish might cover several villages.

Before changes in Church organization and the clerical manpower crisis in the 1960s each parish had at a minimum one pastor and usually one or more assistants. Their duties involved not only the preparation and performance of mass and the taking of confession but also work done under the heading of pastoral care. In fact the largest part of the day's work was devoted to this area. Concretely it meant visiting parishioners in their homes on a regular basis, visiting them when they were ill, administering the sacraments, tendering advice on the whole gamut of problems that might afflict a household. Systematic records were kept on each family in the parish using a card index system.

Along with their other duties parish priests also had a number of "spiritual advisorships" to the different Catholic lay organizations operating in their parishes. A newly arriving pastor would be handed a list of such advisorships in organizations such as the local branch of the Catholic Farmers' Association, the Catholic Choral Society, the Catholic Watch Makers Association and so on.

The numerous Catholic socio-economic organizations themselves were, and for the most part still are, organized on a diocesan basis by both priests and lay Catholics. Organizations such as the Catholic Health Care organization (the White and Yellow Cross) began on a diocesan basis under the aegis of diocesan approval. After a period of development
organizations from the different dioceses usually decided to create a national organization on a federated basis or at least have a national co-ordinating office. The national organization would then also have a spiritual advisor appointed by the bishops.

Catholic trade unions such as the woodworkers, printers, painters started off on a diocesan basis with chapters organized in terms of parish boundaries. Later it became apparent that national organizations were needed and industry and geography became the basis for more functional organization. This process of re-organization occurred not without considerable argument with the bishops. Most Catholic organizations, however, even now tend to be organized in terms of ecclesiastical boundaries. Organizations such as the Catholic Broadcasting Organization (KRO) and the Catholic University were founded after first receiving approval from the bishops, have spiritual advisers sitting on the board of directors and still have revisions in their statutes approved by the bishops.

This is the bare outline of the Catholic Church and the Catholic subculture in the Netherlands. The next step is to see how these organizational structures were used by the bishops, clergy and lay Catholics to create cohesion among Catholics and to look at how tensions and conflicts between different organizations within the Catholic subculture were resolved.

The Bishops. The bishops have played the most active role in promoting the authority of the Church. And they have performed this in a manner quite different from that in other countries. In the Netherlands, particularly since the turn of the century, the bishops have tended to act collectively as a collegial body, speaking on behalf of all Catholics and
issuing instructions or appeals to the faithful as a joint group. In doing so they in fact violate one of the principles of the Catholic Church, namely the principle of territoriality which states that a bishop is the sole authority within his diocese.\(^6\)

This means that pronouncements from the top carry the full weight of all the bishops. It also makes for a high degree of standardization and cohesion. Decisions of all the bishops are valid not just for one particular diocese but for the entire province. It lessens the scope for leeway by individual bishops whereby, for example, one particular bishop might decide to disregard or considerably change some instruction from Rome. Thus in the Netherlands official letters to the faithful invariably carry the signature of all the bishops. In Belgium the exact opposite occurs. There only in exceptional cases do the Bishops act in a collective fashion.\(^7\)

This collegiality of the Dutch episcopate is due in part to the fact that the ecclesiastical hierarchy is a relatively new arrival in the Netherlands. Prior to 1853 there was no diocesan autonomy thus diocesan territoriality was not institutionalized nor given a chance to harden over time. The parishes themselves, however, were fairly autonomous. Fairly strong collective action on the part of the bishops was needed to rejuvenate Catholic life at the time of the hierarchical restoration. Another major factor that makes for episcopal collegiality is the fact that there are very few bishops in the Netherlands, especially in proportion to the number of Catholics. Ireland, for example, with a total population considerably lower than the total Catholic population in the Netherlands (2.8 million versus 5 million) has 26 bishops while the Netherlands has only seven (and only five before 1956).\(^7\) A small number of
bishops greatly facilitated the reaching of common decisions and in turn enhanced centralized control in the period up to 1963.

The chief interests of the bishops lay in ensuring that the faithful were suitably protected and sheltered from the non-Catholic world. Beyond the hope of obtaining Catholic schools, the hierarchy was not interested in institutional or subcultural development per se. Their attitudes were ones of conservatism and caution. They did not provide leadership in the sense of having a set of goals, a vision of the future which led to the transformation of the Catholic community in the Netherlands. Rather their role was one of defining the boundaries of the Catholic subculture, deciding what was acceptable or unacceptable behaviour. Initiatives for progress and change came not from the bishops but from progressive-minded priests lower in the ranks and lay Catholics. The attitude of the bishops was that if Catholics were going to be involved in organizations those organizations had to be Catholic.72

This divergence in orientation between the bishops and some of the clergy is best illustrated by the case of Unitas at the turn of the century. Unitas was an interdenominational Christian union for textile workers based mainly in the eastern part of the Netherlands. Some members of the clergy, particularly those involved in helping to organize Unitas, favoured interdenominational organizations. Some of the members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, however, were far from certain they favoured trade unions let alone interfaith ones. In 1906 the Dutch bishops collectively defined the official Church position: Catholics should "unite and remain united in Catholic organizations."73 It took another two pastoral letters over a six year period before all vestiges of interconfessional trade unionism were eradicated. But at the end of this
period the bishops had achieved their goal.

By the post World War I period the bishops had become convinced of the need for Catholic trade unions, and their utility, particularly after what happened to Catholic migrants from the south who came to work in the harbours of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and environs. Starting in 1800, a steady stream of poor Catholics from the rural areas of Zeeland, Brabant and Limburg flowed into the northern cities, especially Rotterdam. Rogier estimates that the rise in the population of Rotterdam from 210,000 to 340,000 between 1890 to 1900 was due almost entirely to the influx of Catholics from the above-mentioned regions. Unfortunately the clergy in the northern cities were unable to cope with this massive expansion of their flocks. The strongly conservative bishop of Haarlem, whose diocese encompassed cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam, remained blind to the needs of the Catholic migrants. Considerable work was done by a limited number of priests mostly in the way of help for the destitute. But it was not sufficient. Many of the Catholic migrants found help from the socialists who were well organized. In the process the migrants, removed from the influence of the Church, lost their faith "by the tens of thousands."

It was not until 1910 that the bishop of Haarlem realized what was happening. He called in the Capucin order for help in Amsterdam. However, they were not called into action in Rotterdam until 1918. When the magnitude of the disaster was realized the bishops began to place stronger emphasis on organizing several aspects of Catholic life in order to ensure the spiritual protection of Catholics. As well the tendencies towards collegiality among the bishops were reinforced even further.

Increasingly, Catholic institutions such as the Catholic Trade
Union Federation, the Roman Catholic State Party (RKSP), the KRO and the Catholic University began to be established on a national level. The bishops perceived that only on a collective basis could they maintain their authority over developments. Conferences and meetings between the bishops became more and more frequent. Officially an informal body, this council of bishops developed into a *de facto* governing body of the Dutch Church. This image of the bishops being jointly at the head of the Dutch Church was deliberately cultivated by the bishops themselves.\(^7\)

The bishops also became more farsighted. In what was probably their most perceptive move of the twentieth century they condemned National Socialism, both in Germany and the Netherlands, at a very early stage. Their behaviour with regard to Naziism was a good example of the way the bishops used their authority and the sanctions made available to them by the Church. In 1934 when the National Socialist Bond (NSB), the Dutch version of the German Nazi party, was first organized it was immediately condemned by the bishops under the leadership of the archbishop Cardinal de Jong. Any Catholic who gave "measurable support" to the NSB was not permitted to receive the holy sacraments.\(^7\) In 1936 when it was evident that a number of Catholics, especially in Limburg, had voted for the NSB the bishops repeated their warning and urged clergy and Catholic socio-economic organizations to make the utmost efforts to bring to the attention of Catholics the dangers of National Socialism.\(^8\)

In 1940 when the Netherlands were occupied by German forces the bishops became even more rigorous in their demands. Specific guidelines were sent out concerning appropriate behaviour on the part of clergy and Catholics: members of the NSB could not be married in Church or receive a Church burial. If there was any doubt as to the status of any Catholics
with regard to the NSB, clergy were required to refer these cases to their bishop for a decision. There are several cases on record where Catholics were denied a Church burial on the personal order of the bishops because of their links with the NSB.79

Even more significant were the lengths to which the bishops went in order to safeguard the autonomy of the Church especially with regard to Catholic organizations. The German authorities had ordered the integration and rationalization of organizational life in the Netherlands by saying that only one general or neutral organization was permitted for each sphere of activity whether it be trade unions or soccer clubs. The bishops ordered Catholic organizations not to co-operate with the German authorities. To prevent organizations from being forcibly taken over by the Germans the bishops simply ordered many Catholic organizations to disband. Henceforth membership in such an organization served as the basis for ex-communication. Thus the Catholic university and higher schools were promptly shut down by the bishops. The KRO, the White-Yellow Cross, the Catholic Trade Union Federation, the Catholic Farmers Association and several other organizations were disbanded. Full-time officers of these organizations were given relief payments from an emergency fund specially set up by the bishops.80

To the bishops the maintenance of subcultural unity, "our sacred unity" as they called it, was of prime importance. In the immediate post-war period the bishops again asserted their will. Cardinal de Jong announced that it was the wish of the bishops that all Catholic organizations, including the Catholic party, be revived.81 Having proved that Catholic unity and solidarity had been an important force in resisting the German occupation, the bishops again felt that a highly insulated
Catholic subculture would be invaluable in the future. They still perceived the outside world as uncertain and threatening, especially in light of what was happening in eastern Europe and the attempts made by the Communist influenced Unity movement to dominate the trade union movement in the Netherlands.

In the 1950s the bishops perceived that matters were slipping, that the sacred unity of the Dutch Church was being compromised. The Labour party (PvdA) had made some inroads on Catholic party (KVP) support in the Catholic south; the Catholic caucus in the PvdA had refused to heed earlier requests from various sources to leave the PvdA and come to terms with the KVP; there was evidence that Catholics were still under-represented in the civil service. All this reinforced the basic belief of the bishops, especially that of Cardinal de Jong, of the importance of maintaining the isolation of Catholics from the rest of society. In 1953 at the time of the celebration of the one-hundredth anniversary of the re-installation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, Cardinal de Jong, pleaded in a radio broadcast: "Dear fellow believers, we must remain one. Whatever we have accomplished in the past, particularly in public life, we owe to our unity in our dealings with the outside world. But as our emancipation progresses, that unity will be exposed to ever greater dangers. . . . Therefore, dear fellow believers of the Netherlands, stay one, one!"

In 1954 the letter of the bishops appeared, the "Mandement," renewing the call for Catholic unity, warning of the dangers of socialism and listing the penalties for indulging in inappropriate behaviour such as listening to the socialist radio station or joining a non-Catholic trade union. The letter is interesting both for the
insight it gives into the isolationist and emancipatory spirit of Dutch Catholicism and because it was publicly supported and defended by all the bishops. It was defended in public even though in private there was strong disagreement among the bishops. Mgr. Alfrink who succeeded Cardinal de Jong continued to defend the document in the spirit of collegiality long after de Jong had died although he opposed the document in private when it was first discussed.

In practice the penalties listed in the Mandement (denial of the sacraments) were rarely carried out. Nevertheless the bishops gave little public indication that they were willing to tolerate deviance. When asked to rule on specific cases, for example a sports organization asking for permission to play with non-Catholics, the bishops refused to give dispensation.

Along with the emphasis on strong collective leadership in defining the boundaries of the Catholic subculture, the bishops have also been characterized by an unusually severe approach even to issues indirectly related to subcultural unity. The Dutch ecclesiastical hierarchy was much more literal and rigorous in the interpretations they placed on orders from Rome compared with bishops elsewhere. For example in 1929 Rome sent out a letter noting that it was desirable that clergy not be members or attend meetings of Rotary International. The tenor of the letter did not indicate a ban on membership in the Rotary Club nor did it apply to Catholic laity. Within a year, however, the Dutch Church hierarchy instituted a general ban on membership in the Rotary Club for both clergy and laity. In no other country did the Church attempt to classify Rotary International as a banned organization.

In the matter of fasting the Dutch hierarchy was also considerably
more severe. Because of World War II the Canon law regarding fasting and abstention was suspended. In 1950 a new letter from the bishops was issued detailing fasting days in the Netherlands. There were in total 56 fasting days in the year. In Belgium, in contrast, only four days in the year were classified as required fasting days.90

The Clergy. In the Catholic Church, priests perform functions which we associate usually with 'line' positions of organizational theory. They are the ones who in a concrete fashion represent God on earth. They actually carry out the tasks of celebrating the mass, administering the sacraments and hearing confession. When Catholics have contact with the Church it is usually with their local parish priest or pastor.

The priest is responsible for the spiritual well being of his parishioners. Before the theological changes of Vatican II, the priest primarily guarded and maintained the faith of his flock. The priest was directly responsible for boundary maintenance, applying sanctions against those who transgressed the rules of the Church.

In order that the tasks involved in spiritual care be properly carried out there had to be an adequate supply of manpower. A too high a ratio of parishioners to priests might have resulted in the lowering of standards. The Church in the Netherlands has usually been quite fortunate in this regard. On the basis of data gathered in 1960 the Dutch Church compares favourably with the Church in other West European countries. As one can see in table 2.3 below, only Switzerland with a ratio of 477:1 is marginally better than the Netherlands with a ratio of 480:1.
Table 2.3

Catholics per Priest by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>1,635</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: KASKI, "Het katholicisme in West-Europa," Memorandum No. 113, p. 18

In most countries the local pastor was not only the authority on matters of spirituality but was also an authority in most other fields. In the Netherlands the role of the pastor as a generalized authority figure lasted well into the 1950s. Especially in the rural areas in homogeneously Catholic villages the pastor was the prime carrier of the social ethical tradition of not only the national and international Church but also of the local group. He was the reflex element in the village collectivity. What the pastor believed, the village believed. He carefully watched over the morals and orthodoxy of the village. He was the prime authority in matters such as marriage, the family, the upbringing of children, organizational life and political life. Most agencies of social control were at his disposal. Well into the nineteenth century the local constabulary was frequently given the task of ensuring that parishioners attended mass and that the villagers observed the rules.
concerning Sunday as a day of rest. 92

The leadership of the priest was certainly authoritarian. In the popular literature he was usually depicted as being stern and unyielding but at the same time compassionate and helpful. Textbooks used by Catholic school children in the 1920s and 1930s frequently featured the pastor in different situations, for example rescuing a postman who had imbibed too much and putting him back on the path of righteousness. 93

The pastor was one of the few educated persons in the village or neighbourhood along with the mayor and the school teacher. Therefore he was also the dispenser of advice on a whole range of subjects. He could help people fill out their income tax papers, settle disputes between neighbours and related matters. He could also be helpful in a more material sense. A pastor in a village in the province of North Brabant noted: "You could say that until say 10-12 years ago here in this village my pastorate served as a general social welfare agency. People would come here with every conceivable problem and very few of these problems had anything directly to do with religious questions" (Interview No. 23).*

The pastor was also spiritual advisor to any local chapters of Catholic organizations in his parish. Thus he would be a member of the local school board, the Catholic Farmers' Association, Catholic Action and so on. His role extended far beyond that of merely commenting upon spiritual matters. At meetings he did not fulfill a chairman or arbiter role—he in fact dominated the meeting and his advice or suggestions were invariably followed. In the post-war period the role of spiritual advisor diminished somewhat in importance, especially in trade unions and in urbanized areas. In smaller centres, however, the pastor continued to be an

* For details on the interviews, see appendix II.
important figure at meetings of Catholic organizations. And in a number of rural areas, especially those outside of the Catholic south, the traditional conception of the role of the spiritual advisor still lingers to the present day. A pastor in a Catholic village in the eastern part of the Netherlands (outside of the Catholic south) describes his role:

When I first arrived as pastor in 1971 I was asked to be spiritual advisor for the various Catholic organizations. I said no. The time for such a role has passed. Besides I just do not have the time. . . . Now and then I do go to a meeting. . . . I suspect my word still carries a lot of weight, that people look up to me because I am the pastor. Usually I am asked to give a few words and I will say something on spiritual matters. Sometimes I am asked to give business advice at these meetings and I will give it because I may be the only one with sufficient education to give such advice. (Interview No. 12)

The authority of the priest was made apparent not only in Church and at organizational meetings but also on a personal face-to-face basis in at least two contexts; during regular visits at the homes of parishioners and in the confessional. They were important not only for the face-to-face contact but also because they involved the application, or threat of application, of sanctions. As Mancur Olson has argued in the Logic of Collective Action, the use of incentives or sanctions with regard to individuals is an extremely powerful weapon in obtaining compliant behaviour on the part of a group as a whole. 94 Of the two contexts the home was much more important and this was viewed as such by priests. An 82 year old priest, retired since 1972 stated:

House visits: I found that so important. . . . I would put it first on my list of duties as a priest. That was the way you maintained contact with the people. By seeing people in their homes you could sense immediately what the situation was like, if there were any problems. (Interview No. 17)

The prime function of house visits was control. The priest would ask about reading and listening habits, ensure that the union the person belonged to was Catholic and check the "condition" of the marriage:
"I would check the ages of the children and if there was a gap of three years between say the fifth and sixth oldest children I would ask, 'What happened here?"' (Interview No. 8).

Parishioners, if they had erred with regard to their reading habits and so on would be told that what they had done was a sin and their behaviour, if left unchecked, would seriously affect their well being in the hereafter. If their sins were sufficiently severe their names might be put on the black list so that at Easter time they would not receive the sacraments. Parishioners in turn would rarely argue or disagree with the pastor. They would meekly nod their agreement and promise to amend their ways. Someone who openly disagreed was rarely found.95

Not all priests would use the threat of denial of the sacraments or the imperative mode of persuading parishioners to change their ways.

One priest, of admitted conservative persuasions, claimed to use a more liberal approach in controlling the behaviour of parishioners.

When I visited a home I would keep my eyes open in order to evaluate the situation. If I saw a copy of the "Vrije Volk" (the socialist daily newspaper) I would not comment on this at all. I would avoid negative comments altogether. The important thing was to keep the conversation open, not to break off communication. . . . I would try to lure them out of the socialist camp. . . . I would never say "you must not" but try to set a personal example. For instance I would say, "I read the Katholieke Volkskrant. It really is a very interesting newspaper." (Interview No. 12)

Although the techniques of control might vary, the object was the same: to ensure as much as possible compliance with the rules and norms of the Church.

The confession was never quite as useful as a means of control or source of information. In earlier times it may have been more important. "Before the war [in Rotterdam] people came to confession quite often."
I asked a lot of questions. . . . I had considerable influence in the confessional” (Interview No. 21). Yet in the main the evidence for the post-war period is that the confessional was not taken very seriously by either priests or rank-and-file Catholics. Often people would come to confession and rhyme off a verse, a verse that they had known since childhood. Several priests had anecdotes concerning older women who would confess,

"Last week I pestered my little brother and stole from the the sugar pot." [As clergy] we never really did much about this. . . . We more or less condoned this kind of routinization of an important aspect of being a Catholic. If we pushed too hard they may simply not have come at all. . . . It was not a healthy situation. We probably let it continue too long. (Interview No. 23)

The degeneration of confession into a rather perfunctory ritual made it somewhat more akin to superstition than a genuinely religious experience. Yet this element of superstition had its uses for reasons of social control. It was apparently needed by many people and this was reflected not only in their treatment of confession but other practices as well.

In my first years as an assistant in a parish in the Hague [late 1940s, early 1950s] I remember the verger would go trundling around the neighbourhood with a cart selling bottles of holy water—a good business for the verger if I do say so myself—and the people would use it for everything. If there was a storm, for example, people would spray holy water around so that lightning would not strike their homes. (Interview No. 8)

Priests did not fully approve of these practices but condoned them indirectly by catering to some extent to the superstitions of their flock. It was another way which helped the Church maintain contact with people.

In a large parish the pastor would have one or more assistants.
They would often be assigned to particular neighbourhoods to carry out pastoral tasks. The data gathered from their house visits were put on file cards. After the evening meal the pastor would discuss their work and not infrequently check through some of the cards, thus controlling the work of his assistants and the state of his parish. There were also other means by which the pastor maintained contact with his parish. Parishioners would frequently inform the pastor of any unusual events or cases, a parishioner who was ill in hospital for example. One pastor, who lived in a medium-sized city, had an arrangement with the milkman. If a new family moved into the parish the milkman would ascertain whether or not the family was Catholic. If so the pastor paid the newcomers a visit, thus ensuring continuity in their religious observance (Interview No. 8).

Control of the pastor himself came most directly in the form of visits from the local dean. He would drop in for tea two or three times a year and have a chat with the pastor. Visits could also be expected from the administrative officials of the diocese. They would check the financial records, the condition of the buildings, the furnishings and the gold and silver. Authority was also exercised by the bishops in the form of letters and missives, documents which often had to be read to the parish at mass.

Priests could be shifted from their posts at very short notice. Orders to move to another parish would come from the diocese; appealing such a decision would be unthinkable. In those parishes under the control of religious orders, decisions governing the posting of members might be made by authorities as far away as Rome. The behaviour of priests with regard to relations with the community, interaction with female servants
and so on was governed by a document known as the Codex.\textsuperscript{96}

On the whole there was very little in the way of direct personal control of the behaviour of parish priests by higher authorities within the Church. It was not really needed. Provision of a set of rules and expectations appeared to have been sufficient. Though many priests were not always happy with the rules of the Church, they invariably carried out their duties to the letter. When asked if they ever tried to experiment with the mass or to challenge the authority of the Church, most priests responded in a negative fashion. "No that was something you just did not attempt." "You could think about it, but actually doing it? No you would never date!" "If you did ever try to do anything they [the bishops] would soon find out about it and you would be sure of getting rapped across the knuckles" (Interview Nos. 8, 21 and 23 respectively).

There was not only a perception that there would be retribution if they attempted to deviate from the norm but also acute awareness of the minority position of Catholics in the Netherlands. Many undoubtedly believed that unfailing devotion was necessary for the Church's survival in the Netherlands.

Question: Did you ever think of disregarding an order of the bishop, of bucking the system?

Answer: Oh heavens no, you couldn't begin to think of anything like that... But that was well for the best. Unity had to be safeguarded. You couldn't start experimenting. Where would it end. It would have been much too dangerous. (Interview No. 17)

The manner in which candidates for the clergy were recruited and educated all helped contribute to their loyal and rigorous behaviour. Before 1795 candidates for the priesthood received their training outside of the Netherlands, mostly Belgium and Germany. It was not until afterwards that the diocesan priests obtained their own seminaries. Clerical
refugees from Bismarck's Kulturkampf in Germany organized a number of new seminaries in the Netherlands in the late nineteenth century. But it was not until the twentieth century that large scale expansion in the number of seminaries took place. In 1910 there were 52 seminaries; in 1952 there were 139. None was connected with any of the universities. In fact even in the 1950s in the diocese of Haarlem students at the seminaries were forbidden to have any contact with the universities of Amsterdam and Leiden. The aim of the seminary, according to Cardinal de Jong, was to cure students of the habit of thinking critically.

The students themselves were disproportionately drawn from the sons of farmers and shop keepers. The usual route for the aspiring priest began at around age 12 and went via the so-called small seminary. These seminaries were located well away from urban areas. Selection procedures were designed to admit only those who had a good chance of successfully completing the several years of study necessary to become a priest. Starting in the inter-war period many seminaries used the services of psychologists to weed out unsuitable candidates. At the seminary there was little contact with the outside world. While on holiday breaks with their families student priests were encouraged and in many cases required to report to their local pastor for advice, guidance and protection.

The seminary system was responsible for a continuing supply of manpower for the priesthood and for ensuring that Dutch clergy received an education which stressed loyalty to the goals of the Church. It should not be thought, however, that qualities of loyalty and obedience were coupled with low intelligence and lack of common sense. The Dutch clergy for the most part were highly capable people. Up to the late 1950s the priesthood was considered not only an important profession but also a
prestigious one. The brightest, most capable students, particularly those with leadership talents, were considered to be obvious candidates for the priesthood. The priesthood was considered a highly prized means of becoming upwardly mobile especially for families in the less well off sectors of society such as farmers and small shop keepers.

In summary the attitudes of priests toward their parishioners were authoritarian and highly paternalistic. "You had to do everything for them." "They were much too undeveloped to think for themselves." They were very strict when it came to following the rules of the Church, especially with regard to birth control and mixed marriages. Yet there were limits. Many priests now will confess to having given a Church burial to a socialist prior to 1965. In the case of divorce or re-marriage a number of priests were willing to bend the rules. Furthermore, most priests had a reasonably well developed social conscience. In fact it was the lower clergy, many with an acute awareness of the social problems of their day, who were mainly responsible for setting up several of the socio-economic organizations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

*Socio-economic Organizations.* The bishops largely concerned themselves with maintaining the boundaries and keeping alive the ultramontane tendencies within the Church. It was lower level clergy who were deeply concerned with social questions and who provided the leadership which considerably changed the character of the Dutch Catholic subculture. It was mainly they who were responsible for the vast increase in the number and size of Catholic institutions in the twentieth century.

Most of the early Catholic trade unions were started by priests.
Even before the beginnings of a rudimentary trade union organization a number of priests were active in caring for workers, protecting them from undue exploitation and using their influence to prevent the worst excesses involved in the use of child labour. Many Catholic organizations received their start in this era. The Catholic Goat Breeders Association—later to become the source of many jokes—was started by a priest, Father van der Noort, whose aim was to provide some help for poor farmers. Since the keeping of goats was the common denominator among these people, he decided to use this as a basis for organization.

Father Ariens in the eastern part of the Netherlands played an important role in organizing workers in the developing textile industry in 1889. At approximately the same time in the province of North Brabant, Father Mutsaers helped organize Saint Raphaël, a union for railway and streetcar workers. There were also other priests involved in this type of organizational work, mostly in the eastern and southern parts of the Netherlands. The diocese of Haarlem was an exception. Although some work of a social work nature was performed, the bishop was unsympathetic and gave little support.

A number of priests and progressively minded lay Catholics such as P. J. M. Aalberse of Leiden were keenly interested in what was generally referred to as the social question. In 1891 this movement received a boost in the form of a Papal encyclical by Pope Leo XIII. This encyclical, Rerum Novarum, said that it was the task of the Church to help the downtrodden and to confront the evils of industrialism. It recognized the right of workers to organize in order to alleviate their conditions. By 1901 Aalberse and his compatriots had founded Catholic Social Action, an organization intended to help fulfill the promises
contained in Rerum Novarum.¹⁰⁵

None of this, however, was intended to promote class conflict. One of the purposes of founding the Federation of Roman Catholic Trade Unions in 1888 was to help reconcile the interests of the different classes. The emphasis was on harmony. Clergy and Catholic lay leaders explicitly disavowed the notion of class conflict. This disavowal of class conflict was never rejected, but in the years following Rerum Novarum the needs of the less well off received increasing attention. In the early 1900s many Catholic businessmen referred to Catholic Social Action as Catholic socialism.¹⁰⁶

Nevertheless in 1903 Catholic and Protestant workers refused to join other workers during a strike against the railway system.¹⁰⁷ They were praised for their loyalty and at the same time lay Catholic leaders such as Aalberse increased their efforts to improve conditions which had originally led to the strike.

The best example of a farsighted priest who managed to organize a large bloc of Catholic workers is the case of Dr. H. A. Poels in the mining district of south Limburg. Nowhere in Western Europe but the Netherlands did the Church maintain its hold over mining communities. All other coal mining districts, such as those in Belgium (contiguous to those in the Netherlands), France and Germany, became strongholds of socialism and anti-clericalism.¹⁰⁸

The mining industry in Limburg expanded rapidly at the turn of the century. The area of South Limburg was quickly transformed from a mainly agricultural region to one where mining became the dominant influence in terms of employment. Many of the indigenous populace went directly from farming into mining. At the same time the size of several
towns and villages quintupled. The population grew from 69,736 in 1900 to 242,444 by 1935. For the most part this increase was due to a vast influx of outside workers not only from other parts of the Netherlands but also from countries like Germany, Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia. By 1927 native Limburgers working in the mines were in a minority.

The rapid industrialization of southern Limburg had potentially grave social consequences. Well before World War I the crime rate and incidence of immorality was much higher than elsewhere in the Netherlands. In 1910 Poels was appointed as full-time chaplain to the miners, most of whom were Catholic. For the next 20 years he was instrumental in shaping the nature of social and economic life in south Limburg. The Catholic Miners Union was strengthened with financial and moral help from the bishop. Co-operatives for food and clothing were organized.

One of Poels' aims was to avoid the growth of large urban conglomerates. Through the housing society he ensured that at every mine there would be a sufficient number of homes for those working at the mine. At the centre of each community would be the parish Church.

Considerable effort was made to ensure the spiritual and material welfare of miners. Dutch priests were sent to countries like Hungary and Poland to learn the languages of those countries in order to be able to communicate better with foreign migrants. Socialism and liberalism were condemned in no uncertain terms by Poels and his co-workers. The proponents of those ideologies found it extremely difficult to penetrate the bulwark created by the Church in Limburg.

Before World War I the social question was an important, if not the most important factor impelling many clergy and lay Catholics to set up the different Catholic socio-economic organizations. After World War I
the emphasis shifted. It was felt that many of the organizations, particularly the trade unions, had achieved their goals of obtaining social justice and that their protective role was now most important. Catholics were urged by the ecclesiastical hierarchy to safeguard what had been achieved and to maintain their sacred unity.

Subsequent organizational developments were frequently a result of copying the other blocs. The Catholic University (1923) and the KRO (1926) are good examples of this. These two institutions were frequently seen as the jewels of the whole gigantic organizational edifice. Catholic organizational life came to be seen as a testimonial, a monument to the Roman Catholic Church. Nowhere else in the Western world had Catholics managed to achieve all this and it was a source of immense pride.

Spiritual advisors were still very important in the inter-war period. The Papal encyclical Quadragesimo Anno (1931) expounded further on themes first broached in Rerum Novarum: the benefits of capitalism should be distributed more widely; there should be greater co-operation between the different classes; owners should be prepared to let workers and consumers help in the management of their enterprises. These themes were picked up and propagated by a number of Catholic clergy and Catholic intellectuals.¹¹³

Retreats were organized by parishes and the different socio-economic organizations. The people at a retreat would all be of one social group, e.g. housewives, students, butchers or metal workers. They would be lectured as to their particular obligations in society. Thus, for example, Catholic tobacconists at a retreat would receive not only purely religious instruction but would also be told about the evils of unfair competition, price-cutting and similar practices. These edicts
would be based directly on Rerum Novarum or Quadragesimo Anno. \textsuperscript{114}

In the immediate post World War II period after the various Catholic organizations had been revived, the climate changed once again. Much of the religious elan of the inter-war period had disappeared. Many organizations became more bureaucratized, routinely carrying out their functions. Many spiritual advisors for the more important socio-economic organizations, such as the trade unions and the employer federation, deliberately cut back the scope of their role or at least recognized that the lay leadership in these organizations was sufficiently well developed that they could function without continual guidance. In addition, they recognized that these organizations might no longer be willing to tolerate their interference.

In most trade unions at the national level during the post-war period spiritual advisors sat in on meetings but took no or little part in the proceedings. They were called upon to say a special prayer or officiate at burials. On the other hand, in the Catholic Farmers Association spiritual advisors continued to play a strong role. For example, the spiritual advisor to the Catholic Farmers Association in Limburg from 1946-1962 had a degree in agricultural engineering. He virtually ran the organization single-handedly.

Catholic organizations which were organized on a largely diocesan basis were more prone to control from the Church. This could have been the result of a vacuum more than anything else. If a pastor perceived a need for a Catholic harmonica club, in response to the appearance of a non-Catholic harmonica club, more often than not he might have little choice but to organize and run one himself.

What effect did socio-economic organizations have in terms of
influencing Catholics to behave in ways they would not have without the presence of these organizations? They certainly had some effect. William Petersen has drawn attention to an interesting case involving Catholic lay organizations. As has been pointed out the Dutch Church placed a high value on large families. Shortly after World War II the boundary between Germany and the Netherlands was slightly redrawn. As a result a parish which had previously been in German territory became part of the Netherlands and henceforth came under the influence of Catholic lay organizations (the pastor remained under the control of his German diocese). From 1949 to 1959 the birth rate among Catholics in this community rose from 19.5 per 1,000 to 25.0 per 1,000. The birth rate in the adjoining territory in Germany fell from 16.3 to 12.9 in the same period. Petersen attributes most of this increase to the activities of Catholic welfare organizations such as the White-Yellow Cross.¹¹⁵

Catholic organizations undoubtedly played a role in insulating Catholics from the rest of society by limiting their interaction with non-Catholics. Yet the proselytizing or pastoral functions of these organizations should not be overestimated. In many organizations there was very little of this, even in an organization like Catholic Action.¹¹⁶ One of the most important characteristics of Catholic organizations was, and to a large extent still is, that the services and benefits offered were virtually identical to those of the socialist, liberal and Protestant organizations. With the exception of the educational system, most Catholic organizations were social or economic rather than religious in orientation.

This was most evident in the area of trade unions. By the early 1950s the Protestant, Catholic and Socialist trade union centrals had set up a joint council, a forum where joint programs, proposals and positions
were hammered out and presented to the government and employers with regard to wages, taxes and so on. Dues and membership benefits such as insurance, legal aid and other services were virtually identical for the three trade union centrals.  

The Catholic Trade Union Federation (KAB/NKV) cast its appeals to potential members in terms of the useful work it had done and its performance in providing services and benefits. In 1954 after the bishops released their Mandement, Catholic trade union leaders hastened to inform the leaders of the socialist trade union federation (NVV) that this document would not be used by the KAB in membership drives.  

In most spheres of socio-economic life in the 1950s there was mutual toleration among the different blocs. Protestants thought it perfectly natural that Catholics would want their own organizations and would not think of competing for clients among Catholics.  

To a lesser extent this was also true for religiously neutral organizations, both socialist and liberal. Catholic organizations in areas like sports, culture and services, for example Catholic soccer leagues, music federations and health insurance associations, were under little pressure. They met a necessary need for Catholics. The performance of their specific role was rarely questioned, particularly if it did not bring them into conflict with other Catholic organizations. There were certain areas where conflict was inevitable however. The four major groupings in Catholic society whose special interests did conflict were, of course, the Catholic Trade Union Federation (KAB/NKV), the Catholic Employers Federation (NKWV), the Middle-Class Organization (NKOV) and the Catholic Farmers Association (KNBTB).

Over the years a number of structures were set up to reconcile the differing economic interests of these organizations or at least to
mitigate the consequences of conflicting positions taken by them. For example, in 1919, in large part due to the climate created by Troelstra's abortive attempt at revolution, Catholic workers and employers in four different industrial sectors announced the creation of the "Roman Catholic Central Council of Corporate Organization." The goal of this council was to implement an elementary form of workers participation at the level of the different branches of industry (but not at the individual plant level) with regard to the determination of wages and hours. This experiment in co-operation collapsed, however, in 1922, a recessionary period, when the largest industries walked out of the council.

In 1945, as part of the general post-war re-construction plan, Dutch government planners hoped to set up a corporatist society involving the participation of every relevant socio-economic grouping, including consumers, at all levels of industrial enterprise. This concept was known as "Publicly Ordered Enterprises" (PBO) and was influenced by Catholic thought as derived from Rerum Novarum and Quadrogesimo Anno and by social democratic thinking of the 1930s. It was also strongly favoured by Catholic political leaders in the late 1940s. Unfortunately the PBO scheme, which was supposed to cover virtually every type of commercial activity, was unsuccessful except in certain agricultural sectors. Nevertheless PBO illustrated the willingness on the part of many groups in the Netherlands, especially Catholics, to find schemes which would reconcile the different economic interests into one harmonious whole.

Within the Catholic subculture one institution which did enjoy some success in the post World War II period was the "Catholic Council of Discussion" (Raad van Overleg). In this council were represented the leaders of the four major Catholic socio-economic organizations. However,
it was not a decision-making body. During meetings agreements were never
arrived at; not even possible solutions to problems were likely to be
discussed. The major purpose of these meetings was to provide the leaders
of the four socio-economic organizations with a mutual understanding of
their differing positions. The council met no more than two or three
times a year. Meetings stopped completely in the early 1970s.\textsuperscript{124}

A mutual understanding of their respective positions may have helped
leaders in the development of compromises on major socio-economic issues
in arenas outside of the Catholic bloc. One important arena in which
decisions were often arrived at was the Social Economic Council (SER).\textsuperscript{125}
This body was created in the post-war reconstruction period and it still
exists today. All major interest groups in Dutch society are represented
in this council. It is responsible for providing the Dutch government
with concrete advice and proposals on socio-economic questions. Up to
the late 1960s it was the single most important economic policy-making
body in the Netherlands. Generally it appears that during meetings of
the SER in the 1950s and 1960s, Catholic employers and labour leaders
tended to support their Protestant, socialist or liberal counter-par
ters rather than their co-religionists.\textsuperscript{126}

Thus the Catholic Council of Discussion may indirectly have
contributed to helping mute potential conflicts between leaders
of Catholic trade unions and Catholic employers. An additional
factor which may have helped to bring about amicable agreements between
them was the common educational background of at least some of the
Catholic socio-economic leaders. People in the top positions of employer
and middle-class organizations, and to some extent even the trade unions
and farmers association, had often been to the Catholic University at
Nijmegen or the Catholic Higher School for Economics at Tilburg. In a number of cases they may even have been classmates.

What other conflict reducing bodies or co-ordinating agencies existed within the Catholic subculture? There was (and still is) a committee to provide some co-ordination among Catholic organizations active in social welfare, youth work, care for senior citizens and so on.\(^{127}\) The KRO has a policy of drawing its 26 directors from the different sectors of the Catholic subculture. This policy of ensuring that its board represents a cross-section of the Catholic population is enshrined in the KRO statutes.\(^{128}\) The Catholic party, as we shall see in the next chapter, did try, in a more informal fashion, to ensure that major sectors within the Catholic subculture were represented within the parliamentary party.

At the top of the different Catholic organizations there were cases of overlapping memberships. For example a top executive of the Catholic Middle-Class organization, W. Perquin, was simultaneously on the board of the KRO and chairman of the Catholic party. Mr. van der Campen was active in several social welfare organizations such as the Catholic Emigration Bureau, the Catholic Bureau for Internal Migration and the Catholic Council for Social Welfare.\(^{129}\) Yet even these leaders operated within a limited circle. Rare indeed was a leader who was involved in Catholic education, cultural organizations, socio-economic organizations and the Catholic party. Rather they operated within restricted areas such as economic life or cultural life. Leaders from these spheres might meet leaders from other spheres only within organizations such as the KRO or the Catholic party.

On the whole little attempt was made to co-ordinate the activities
of the different Catholic organizations or to enforce a uniform standard. The common denominator was that these organizations were Catholic. Their statutes were all approved by the bishops. Before World War II the bishops were quite stringent in their approval of new organizations and occasionally applications would be rejected. In the 1950s, however, approval from the bishops became a more routine matter. The statutes of virtually every Catholic organization still contain the preamble that the organization is based upon Catholic principles and the Catholic vision of society and that the goal of the organization is to implement these principles in everyday life. Yet after receiving approval the organization, particularly in socio-economic and service areas, would proceed to operate in a manner very similar to that of liberal, socialist or Protestant organizations. There was very little about them that was distinctively Catholic.

4. **Clientele**

Without doubt the bishops, clergy and lay Catholic leaders invested a great deal of energy in ensuring the cohesion of the Catholic subculture. Yet in focussing on the leadership and the role of organizations one should not neglect the other factor in the equation making for subcultural cohesion, namely the clientele. Why did ordinary Catholics willingly follow the instructions of the bishop and the clergy for so many years? The second question concerns the unusual composition of the clientele: insofar as the Catholic population represents a cross-section of Dutch society containing Catholic nobility, Catholic manufacturers and businessmen as well as Catholic workers, how did they reconcile their class or group interests with that of being a member of the Catholic subculture?
To answer these questions one has to examine firstly the general social and economic conditions which allowed the Church to mobilize and encapsulate the Catholic population. Throughout most of the nineteenth century the Dutch economy was basically stagnant. It was based primarily on agriculture, trade and commerce. There existed only a low level of industrialization. Generally the Netherlands had not changed much since the golden years of the seventeenth century. In the nineteenth century the Netherlands was not highly urbanized and in fact never did develop large urban centres on the model of British cities like Manchester or Glasgow. Rotterdam is the only city which comes at all close to this type of model.\textsuperscript{131} In the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries it is even possible to talk of a process of de-urbanization. The population of Amsterdam fell from 241,000 in 1748 to 180,000 in 1815. Cities like Leiden and Haarlem had their populations drop by almost half.\textsuperscript{132} Poor crops and lack of industrial activity resulted in conditions which, according to Petersen, were just as bad, if not worse, as those in Ireland. Perhaps because of this the Dutch working-class throughout the nineteenth century has usually been characterized as docile, grateful to receive work of any kind. The Dutch economic historian Brugmans writes that the Dutch worker was "one dully resigned to his miserable existence, lacking the physical and spiritual strength to rouse himself, with too limited a development to make even the possibility of an improvement in his situation conceivable."\textsuperscript{133}

Employers were often seen as father figures, "philanthropists who gave work to the poor."\textsuperscript{134} This was true of both Catholic and non-Catholic workers. Many of the early trade unions were first conceived of as mutual aid societies and were decidedly non-militant. Their
statutes often contained a preamble denying the notion of class-conflict or noting that their aim of improving the lot of the working-class was done with all due respect for the different classes in society. In 1872 a local of the cigar makers union in Rotterdam (non-Catholic) in a collective letter to their employer thanking him for a raise noted that "workers themselves and not necessarily society were largely to blame for their poverty." A number of commentators in the second half of the nineteenth century make note of the harmonious relations existing between employers and employees in the Netherlands compared with the situation in countries like France.

When industrialization did begin in the late nineteenth century it was still not as rapid or explosive as had been the case in Germany. Secondly many Catholic clergy could draw upon the lessons of history. Many had seen at first hand the consequences of industrialization in other countries and tried to forestall them in the Netherlands by organizing workers. The work of Father Poels in the mining district of Limburg has already been described. In attempting this task priests discovered that many workers were rather unco-operative and lacking in interest. Father Ariens in setting up a trade union for textile workers complained that he often could not entice workers to come to organizational meetings with a view to improving their condition unless alcoholic refreshments and entertainment were provided.

Although the working-class in the Netherlands was generally less militant than in other West European countries, the religious workers were particularly quiescent. Catholic and Protestant workers refrained from participating in the railway strike of 1903. In the case of
Catholic workers their attitudes can best be described as uncritical. These attitudes were in large part due to the influence of the Church and the Catholic educational system. Catholics were taught to accept the authority and guidance of the Church without question. Many Catholic priests thought that acquiring skills beyond elementary reading and arithmetic was their prerogative alone. If ordinary Catholics received any further education it was in a trade school (boys) or a household school (girls).

On an aggregate basis Catholics were less well educated than other blocs in Dutch society. For example in table 2.4 below one can see that Catholics are significantly underrepresented among those holding university degrees. Thus in 1947 while Catholics constituted 38.5 percent of the total population, only 18 percent of those holding degrees were Catholic. Over the years Catholics have been catching up with the rest of the population in terms of educational achievement, though as of 1961 they still lagged behind.¹³⁹

According to Catholic sociologist Matthyssen, this low level of educational achievement in the past can largely be explained by the lack of an extensive Catholic secondary school system. Before 1917 there were virtually no Catholic secondary schools in the Netherlands and Catholic students were discouraged from attending non-Catholic secondary schools.¹⁴⁰ In the 1920s, when the Catholic emancipation movement was at its strongest, a program of building schools was begun which continued right up to the 1970s. By 1950 18 percent of all secondary students attended Catholic schools (Catholic population 35 percent of total). In 1947 26 percent of secondary students attended Catholic schools and in 1964 38 percent of all
Table 2.4

University Degree Holders by Year by Religion (per 10,000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Calvinist</th>
<th>Lutheran</th>
<th>Remonstrants (small Prot. sect.)</th>
<th>No Church</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>982</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>1157</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Population consists of everyone over age 30.

secondary students were attending Catholic schools (Catholics 38.5 and 40.4 percent of total population in 1947 and 1960 respectively). This shows the dramatic increase which occurred in the level of education of Catholics. Nevertheless the important point is that up to the 1960s Catholics were generally less well educated than the rest of Dutch society. This helps to explain why Catholics were less critical than non-Catholics and more open to suggestion and was one reason why clergy spent a great deal of time protecting their flocks from wayward influences. It should not be thought, however, that Catholics were completely undemanding or docile when faced by pressures from within or without their subculture. One can think of the Catholic population in terms of a market for services delivered by the
Church and one of the reasons for the viability of the Church in the Netherlands was the fact that it delivered goods in a satisfactory manner.

In terms of the market analogy one can begin by asking to what degree the Dutch Catholic spirit of Jansenism, so characteristic of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the clergy, was evident in the Catholic population at large. Could one say that there was a market for the rigorous control of the bishops?

In the years following the reformation the practice of Catholicism was forbidden in the northern part of the Netherlands. It took a high degree of motivation for Catholics to overcome their fears and practice their religion by attending mass at the so-called secret churches. According to Thurlings, over the years the less motivated Catholics ceased to be Catholics. Only the more strong willed survived.142 Most Catholics received a stern upbringing wherein not only the local pastor played a role but also the school teacher and the parents.

There is evidence that Dutch Catholics quite willingly accepted many tenets of the Catholic faith and acted upon them. A. E. Diels did a study in 1951 on the attitudes of young women of different faiths as to the number of future offspring they would like.143 She found that both Catholic and Calvinist women wished a significantly larger number of children than other groups. Instructive are some of the responses given by Catholic women when asked how many children they would like:

No occupation, 27 years of age: As many as our dear Lord finds suitable.

Household servant, 21 years of age: As many as God sees fit to send me and I am not afraid of 10.
Nurse, 32 years old: No limit, the more, the better, in the hope that God will bless me with a large number of children.

Cleaner, 23 years of age: Even if there would be 20, each child brings its blessing and every child is a new wonder. I find it beautiful to work with God in the creation of a child; that is why they would all be welcome. God will help us whatever the circumstances. I enter into my marriage filled with joy.14

The Church catered to religious needs which to a large extent genuinely felt. To go to mass, to partake of communion and to receive absolution provided comfort and peace of mind for many Catholics. Although this market for religious needs was in large part created by the Church through early socialization it nevertheless did exist and would not have immediately disappeared if the Church had suddenly ceased to exercise its mechanisms of social control.

What about the market for services less directly linked to religious needs? Did Catholics join Catholic sports organizations or sign up with Catholic health insurance programs purely because they were told to do so by their pastors? The influence of the Church did indeed tend to limit freedom of choice. The important point, however, is that for the most part this did not involve any unusual sacrifice on the part of Catholics. Or to put it another way: there was no particular incentive for Catholics not to join or partake of a service offered by the relevant Catholic organization. As mentioned earlier many Catholic organizations provided services that were identical to or at least competitive with the services offered by their Protestant and neutral counterparts. This was particularly true in the area of trade unions in the post-war period. But it was also largely true in the areas of broadcasting, newspapers, health services and so on where there were no marked differences in the
quality of the services rendered. In fact there is evidence that ordinary Catholics may have felt that the services offered by some of their own institutions were superior in quality—by non-religious standards. In 1960 the KRO did some marketing research asking which programs Catholics recognized. The names of both KRO programs and those of the other broadcasting organizations were included in the survey. The data are presented in table 2.5 below. The question asked of respondents was if they recognized the program rather than if they actually watched it. Nevertheless it is reasonably safe to infer that a high rate of recognition does tend to indicate that people watch the program as well. It is interesting to note that four out of the five top ranked programs were those broadcast by the KRO. Even more interesting is the fact that for the most part these programs can best be described as popular light entertainment. Catholics watched these programs not for religious reasons but because they wanted to be entertained. And it appears the KRO was highly successful in catering to those tastes.

Looking at the history of Dutch trade union development, it is evident that the Catholic unions won a number of crucial economic battles. Father Poels was highly successful in playing upon the sentiments of Catholic workers. He exploited latent anti-north Holland feelings of the miners pointing out that the socialists had their base there. He led protests against mine management complaining that virtually all the higher executives of Dutch State Mines (the mines were operated by a state owned enterprise) were non-Catholic. Yet in the final analysis he was also able to exact decent wages from management. In 1915 the socialist
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>AVRO (Liberal)</th>
<th>KRO (Catholic)</th>
<th>NCRV (Protestant)</th>
<th>VARA (Socialist)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% Rank</td>
<td>% Rank</td>
<td>% Rank</td>
<td>% Rank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention (religious)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Knows Best</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TV Dance Program</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>14</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piste (cabaret)</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Germain des Pres (cabaret)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandpunt (news program)</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rooster (news program)</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday Evening Accords (religious)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly Concert Hour</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>From Our Sports Editor</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Flipje the Sorcerer's Apprentice</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Bennett Sisters</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dutch Evening Lecture</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz Show</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ivanhoe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Top or Flop</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hitchcock (film series)</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memo</td>
<td></td>
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<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

mineworkers went on strike demanding a 10 percent increase. They were joined by the Catholic unions. Mine management proved to be unyielding. Finally leaders of both Catholic and socialist unions asked Poels to intervene on their behalf. Poels talked to management and succeeded in obtaining the full 10 percent raise. According to Th. Wöltgens the influence of the socialist mineworkers union diminished considerably thereafter.\textsuperscript{145}

On a European wide basis the success of the Dutch Church in not alienating Catholic workers has already been noted. Yet this raises a further question: How did the Dutch Church also succeed in not alienating middle and upper-middle class Catholics, Catholics with interests not infrequently in conflict with those of Catholic workers? The answer lies in that the Catholic Church, and the Catholic subculture as a whole, was sufficiently flexible and differentiated to provide a role and status for Catholics of all classes.

During the inter-war period and to some extent in the 1940s and 1950s the parish church would organize retreats for the different classes ensuring that a group on a retreat was homogeneous in terms of socio-economic status. In the parish church itself people could, and did, pay for specially reserved places. Those places nearer the altar were correspondingly more expensive. Weddings and funerals could be arranged on a scale ranging from the austere to the grandiose, again priced accordingly. There were, and still are, several organizations catering to the recreational, professional and economic interests of non-working-class Catholics. In the south the prevailing anti-north sentiments helped reinforce the loyalty of Catholic businessmen and entrepreneurs to Catholic socio-economic organizations. Certain sectors like the pottery
and porcelain industry, which were predominantly located in the south of the Netherlands and in Catholic hands, meant that for such businessmen a Catholic based organization was a natural choice.\textsuperscript{146}

At the organizational level there was always a degree of tension between Catholic employers and Catholic trade unions and this tension did at times threaten to damage the "beautiful unity" of the Catholic sub-culture wrought by the Church. Yet generally the Catholic middle-classes played an important role in helping to maintain the cohesion and viability of the Catholic subculture. Denied entrance to the civil service and many professional activities like medicine, first by law and later by covert and sometimes not so covert discrimination, many Catholics went into commerce and light manufacturing such as the pottery industry, gin making and the making of cigars. Many early Catholic entrepreneurs around the 1800s were newly arrived immigrants from Germany and played an important role in revitalizing the rather stagnant condition of Catholic life at that time. Later in the nineteenth century Bismarck's \textit{Kulturkampf} brought more Catholic businessmen and entrepreneurs.\textsuperscript{147}

Most of the major department store chains in the Netherlands were started by such immigrants and these chains are still in the hands of their offspring.

Firms in the hands of Catholics often provided employment for Catholics, thus helping to provide an environment suitable for insulating Catholics from potentially damaging influences. The Church actively encouraged the development of enterprises owned by Catholics, particularly in areas in the northern section of the Netherlands where Catholics were in a minority.\textsuperscript{148}

The existence of a middle and upper middle-class within the
Catholic subculture, albeit relatively smaller than those of the other blocs, provided avenues for upward mobility. Although vertical mobility among Catholics has been quite low, it did mean that those aspiring to higher goals could for the most part attempt to reach those goals without denying their Catholicism or having to move outside of the Catholic subculture.

Generally speaking in the twentieth century the range of Catholic organizations and institutions was sufficiently extensive to cater to the needs of Catholics whether they were plumbers or sculptors. There was always some tension between working and non-working-class elements; between the Church and certain cultural organizations such as those for artists and writers. However the occurrence of Catholics rejecting their faith because of conflicts of this sort was rare. Most conflicts were contained within the confines of the Catholic subculture.

There is one further aspect of the clientele worth discussing. It is related to the question of social control. The notion of social control usually implies control from above. Thus in the case of the Catholic Church control emanates from the top, filtering down through the clergy onto the laity. Social control, however, can also be horizontal, that is, control from one's peers. One characteristic of Dutch society is the high degree of social conformity, a characteristic often thought to be related to the influence of Calvinism. In several respects Dutch citizens appear to want to show to both God and their neighbours that they are good citizens, that they have nothing to hide. At a minimum Dutch people both Catholic and non-Catholic are very sensitive as to what the neighbours might think of their behaviour. In the evening on a typical street one is able to observe through large picture windows
families going about their business.

Many Catholics in the past undoubtedly conformed to the precepts of the Church not only because of what the pastor might do or say but also because of what the neighbours might think. Particularly in the south, which was entirely Catholic, and in largely homogeneous Catholic villages and towns in the northern half of the Netherlands, one's absence from mass could lead to a good deal of speculation among the neighbours. In more urbanized areas, particularly in cities like Rotterdam, pressure from one's peers, as well as from the Church may have been easier to avoid.

Before the mid 1960s no mass attendance data were gathered, at least not on a systematic and reliable basis.\(^\text{151}\) There are data, however, on the rate of Easter observance for the year 1956. Table 2.6 below gives some indication as to the variation in Easter observance within the Netherlands. The highest rate of observance occurred in the dioceses of Breda, Den bosch and Roermond which basically cover the Catholic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groningen</td>
<td>92.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utrecht</td>
<td>90.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haarlem</td>
<td>78.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breda</td>
<td>94.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Den bosch</td>
<td>95.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roermond</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>87.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: KASKI Memorandum No. 113, Table 20, p. 16.
southern part of the Netherlands. The dioceses of Groningen and Utrecht cover the eastern and northeastern part of the Netherlands which is less populated and urbanized than the western part. In these two dioceses the rate of Easter observance is almost as high as in the south. The rate is lowest in the dioceses of Haarlem and Rotterdam which encompass major cities like Amsterdam, Haarlem, Rotterdam, the Hague and Leiden.

How did the loyalty and willingness of Dutch Catholics to follow the dictates of the Church compare with that of Catholics in other countries? In 1954 53.7 percent of West German Catholics attended mass at Easter. In Austria the figure was 42 percent for the year 1955.\(^{152}\) In contrast in the Netherlands the rate was 87.9 percent for the year 1956.

Rates of Easter observance and even of mass attendance are not the best measures of religious loyalty. It is difficult to partial out the different influences or to judge how much sacrifice is involved in going to Easter mass. The best test for observing the loyalty of Dutch Catholics is to note their behaviour under circumstances of stress. A number of times the allegiance of Catholics was severely tested. Yet in all cases they ended up by obediently following the orders of the bishops. There was never a crisis whereby a substantial number of Catholics revolted against the authority of the Church nor did there ever develop a strong anti-clericalism based upon a pool of disaffected Catholics such as in France, Belgium, Italy or Austria.

The example of the textile workers union, Unitas, cited earlier, is worth describing in greater detail. In 1912 in all the churches of the eastern part of the Netherlands priests read from the pulpit a letter from the bishops to the effect that textile workers were forbidden to
remain as members of the inter-confessional textile workers union Unitas. Father Ariëns, one of the founders of the union, was personally most upset by the decision of the bishops and feared the alienation of the Catholic workers from the Church. Nevertheless he proceeded to help carry out the order. The Catholic workers did give up their membership in Unitas but stubbornly refused to join the new Catholic union, Saint Lambertus. For the next four years the clergy worked to the utmost until the changeover to the new union was completed. Upon the completion of this task Father Ariëns breathed a sigh of relief and noted gratefully "that not a single soul has been lost as a result of the Unitas conflict."\textsuperscript{153}

**Summary**

In this chapter, the discussion centered on the different elements of the Catholic subculture which accounted for its cohesion over time. Of particular importance was an ideology, dating from the time of the reformation, which emphasized rigorous orthodoxy and minimal contact with the rest of Dutch society. Since the re-installation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in 1853 in the Netherlands several generations of bishops perceived Dutch society as threatening and anti-Catholic. At the same time they fostered ultra-montane sentiments hoping that one day all of the Netherlands would once again be Roman Catholic.

While pragmatically pursuing a course of peaceful co-existence with the rest of Dutch society, they also attempted to insulate Catholics from that society. The bishops were aided in this by a willing clergy, a willing lay leadership and a willing clientele.

In part the impetus for the development of the vast organizational network that began to take shape at the turn of the century and which came
into its full bloom in the inter-war period, derived from a heightened social awareness on the part of progressive clergy and Catholic laity. As well, there was the feeling that Catholics needed to be emancipated on a collective basis. However, the predominant theme and role of most Catholic organizations came to be the protection of Catholics from outside influences.

Social control and coercion on the part of the Church were important in ensuring the loyalty of rank-and-file Catholics to the Church. But it should be stressed that loyalty to the Church did not involve an unusual degree of self-sacrifice or voluntarism. There was a strong element of self-interest involved in the behaviour of Catholics. First of all the individual Catholic's spiritual needs and comforts were catered to by the Church. Secondly the services rendered by Catholic organizations in secular areas were of sufficient quality that a working-class Catholic, for example, did not need to join a socialist trade union. Clergy played an important role in obtaining social justice for workers, poor farmers and less well off groups during the period of industrialization. In the post World War II period, when the predominant motive was the insulation of Catholics from the rest of society through the means of Catholic organizations, these organizations nevertheless remained competitive in quality with other organizations. Catholic organizations offered services which were often identical to those of their neutral and Protestant counterparts.

Another point that should be noted is that the Catholic subculture became highly differentiated over the years. There came into existence several highly specialized organizations which had little in common with one another. Many of them operated quite autonomously. This can be seen as a factor contributing to the strength of the Catholic subculture; the flowering and institutionalization of many interests allowed the Catholic
population to operate in numerous ways as a miniature society within a larger society.

There was a certain amount of interaction between the leaders of the major national socio-economic organizations within the Catholic sub-culture. These were also the organizations likely to have conflicting interests. But usually conflicts between, for example, labour and employers remained within certain bounds and were often resolved by agreeing to disagree. Rigid subcultural boundary maintenance, as well as a degree of co-ordination, was provided by a hierarchically structured Church. The bishops acted as overall watchdogs. Chaplains were appointed to national Catholic organizations and at the local level the parish priests acted as spiritual advisers to local or diocesan organizations. And when serving the spiritual needs of Catholics at mass, confession, and during home visits the Church obtained a further degree of control over the behaviour of Dutch Catholics.
FOOTNOTES


6 Lorwin, p. 143.


14 For a critique of the literature on race in the Netherlands see J. P. Kruijt, *De Onkerkelikheid in Nederland: Haar Verbreiding en Oorzaken; Proeve ener Sociografiese Verklaring* (Groningen: Noordhoff, 1933), esp. pp. 311-323.


16 Ibid., p. 60.


19 R. Hoggart, *passim*.


21 For example many Catholic families subscribed to a magazine written in Italian, emanating from Rome. It is highly unlikely that the majority of Dutch Catholics would be conversant with the Italian language in the inter-war period. See Van der Plas, p. 11.

22 Ibid., p. 20.

23 Gadourek, pp. 220-221.


25 Gadourek, p. 221.


30 Ibid., p. 23ff.


32 Ibid., p. 99.


38 Ibid., p. 64.

39 Ibid., p. 77.

40 Rogier, p. 703.

41 Ibid., p. 733ff.


43 Rogier, p. 747.

44 Thurlings, p. 64.

De Katholiek in het Openbare Leven van deze Tijd. Bisschoplijk Mandement van 1954 (Zeist, 1954), passim.

Thurlings, p. 73.

Thurlings, p. 24.

Ibid., p. 25.


Thurlings, p. 27.

Ibid., p. 91.


Rogier and De Rooy, p. 623.


Rogier, Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland, p. 703.


Cited in Van Heek, p. 169.

Ibid., p. 131.

64 Laan, p. 31.

65 Ibid., p. 155.


67 Ibid., p. 36.

68 See, for example, Statuten van de katholiek radio omroep (Hilversum, 1973), pp. 18-20.

69 Laan, p. 188.

70 Van Heek, p. 164.


72 Daalder, p. 208 (fn. 43).

73 Windmuller, p. 23.

74 Rogier and De Rooy, p. 469.

75 Ibid., p. 469.

76 Laan, p. 190.


79 Ibid., p. 27.

80 Stokman, p. 40.

81 A. Manning, "Geen doorbraak van de oude structuren," in Scholten, p. 72.


83 Ibid., p. 410.

84 KASKI, "Enige aspekten van de religieuze en sociale achtergrond van het handement van de nederlandse bisschoppen betreffende de katholiek in het openbare leven van deze tijd," Memorandum No. 7, 1954. This document presented evidence on the under-representation of Catholics in higher strata with particular reference to the civil service.

One pastor had a parishioner with a chip on his shoulder, someone who supported the Catholic caucus in the PvdA. This person was quite argumentative and would have long talks with the pastor. Yet this person was an exceptional case. "If people really disagreed with the Church they just left. You never heard from them again" (Interview No. 23).

The document, *Codex-Juris Canonici*, contains the official Canon law of the Church and was handed down by the Pope in 1918. In 1924 the Dutch Church province revised all its statutes to ensure that all rules and regulations were consistent with the provisions of the Codex of 1918. Among other things the detailed *Codex* of 1924 for the Dutch Church province spelled out the colour of shoes to be worn by priests, the type of bicycle to be used, etc. In order for a priest to attend a play or film, permission from his bishop was required. This latter regulation was changed in 1949 but the document remained essentially the same until 1965. See Laan, pp. 52-53, 174-181.


W. Goddijn, p. 102.

Ibid., p. 102.

In terms of ideology it is difficult to classify these lay Catholics and clergy concerned with the 'social question.' Some, like Aalberse, were definitely in favour of insulating Catholics from the rest of Dutch society as well as helping them in a material sense and thus they can be said to have been under the influence of the isolationist ideology. Others, more concerned with social welfare than isolation, can perhaps be broadly defined as emancipationist in outlook as well as affected by an acute sense of social justice. All, however, took the provisions of Rerum Novarum extremely seriously and the literalness with which they interpreted these provisions can be said to be in part a function of the Dutch Calvinist spirit.
stricter in its interpretation of the rules and regulations of the Church it could see no clear role for Catholic Action. As a result this organization performed mainly technical tasks such as setting up chairs at Church functions etc. See Rogier and De Rooy, pp. 832-836.

117 Windmuller, pp. 135-138.

118 Ibid., p. 125.

119 In the village of Sassenheim, for example, Catholic and Protestant organizations kept strictly to themselves in terms of looking for clientele. Gadourek, pp. 195-214, 238-271.

120 Thurlings, "The case of Dutch Catholicism," p. 133.

121 Rogier, p. 624.


123 Windmuller, p. 137 (fn. 8).

124 As per an interview with an official of the Christian Employers Federation (1976). (Interview No. 3)

125 Ibid., p. 117.

126 R. Singh, Policy Development: A Study of the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands (Rotterdam: Rotterdam University Press, 1972), p. 120.

127 The name of the co-ordinating committee is "Stichting Katholiek Maatschappelijk Beraad." See Pius Almanak: Adresboek Katholiek Nederland 1971 (The Hague, 1971).

128 Statuten van de katholieke radio omroep, pp. 18-20; Omroep ABC (Hilversum: Uitgave van het college van perschefs van AVRO, KRO, NCRV, NOS, TROS, VARA, VPRO, 1971), p. 58.


130 Ibid., passim.


135 Ibid., p. 7.

136 Ibid., p. 11.

137 Ibid., p. 71.


141 De Ontwikkeling van het Onderwijs in Nederland, p. 148.

142 Thurlings, De Wankele Zuil, p. 62.


144 Ibid., pp. 172-173.


146 Petersen, p. 183.

147 Thurlings, pp. 25-26.


150 A. Chorus, p. 79.

151 KASKI did not begin gathering mass attendance data until 1965 when it became evident that attendance was beginning to decline. Some individual parishes and deaneries collected data. But their means of measuring mass attendance varied considerably so as to make these data unreliable.
Cited in Van Heek, p. 167. There are further examples. The mine-workers had at first received dispensation from the Bishops in 1906 concerning the 'Catholics only' rule. By 1918, however, Catholic miners were also asked to become members of 'Catholics only' trade unions. They duly complied. During the 1930s most Dutch Catholics who had joined the National Socialist League (NSB) did give up their membership when asked to do so by the Church. Thus in the vast majority of cases the edicts of the bishops met with a positive response. Windmuller, referring specifically to the Unitas case, notes: "It is indicative of the relationship between Catholic workers and the Church, indeed of the entire relationship between Dutch Catholics in general and their Church, that in this and similar issues the ultimate decisions were made by the highest dignitaries of the Church and were obediently accepted by the faithful" (p. 23). In the case of Catholics and the NSB see Stokman, *passim*; Velenga, *passim*.  

Chapter III

POLITICAL COHESION AS A FUNCTION OF SUBCULTURAL COHESION

Why did the vast majority of Dutch Catholics vote for the Catholic party up to and including 1963? One obvious answer is that the institutionalized elements of the Catholic subculture such as the Church hierarchy, the clergy and various lay organizations had a high degree of control over the behaviour of Catholics, thereby ensuring a solid basis of support for the Catholic party.

Yet such an interpretation by itself would be inadequate. The Catholic party, like the Catholic Broadcasting Organization (KRO) and Catholic trade unions, could not rely solely on the authority of the Church. There had to be some minimal return, there had to be some justification for its existence beyond the call of the bishops that a Catholic party was necessary for the cohesion of the Catholic subculture.

Even assuming that the Catholic population in the Netherlands before 1960 voted simply on the basis of clerical guidance, this still leaves an important question: How did Dutch Catholics manage to field a party in election after election, participate in virtually every government coalition from 1917 onwards and at the same time maintain a semblance of unity at the parliamentary level well into the 1960s? There were conflicting political, social and economic interests within the Catholic subculture which needed to be reconciled. Furthermore, the Catholic party could not

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simply absolve itself of responsibility for the actions of Catholic cabinet ministers and for the behaviour of Catholic party members in the Second Chamber.* If the actions or policies of the Catholic party had been unsatisfactory or detrimental to the interests of Catholic labour, farmers or employers the result might have been splits within the party, defections or withdrawal of support. If such incidents had occurred on a sufficiently large scale then it would have been a difficult matter marketing a viable and cohesive Catholic party. The electorate might have been faced with two or more competing Catholic parties.

Thus in this chapter I want to look first of all at how the Catholic party came into existence, how it maintained a semblance of unity and the role it played in reconciling differing interests. I will show that the Catholic party was never important in terms of advancing the interests of the Catholic subculture; its role was primarily a defensive one. Furthermore the load placed upon the Catholic party with regard to being responsible for reconciling interests and for policy was never excessive. As well I will examine the role of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in maintaining the unity of the Catholic party, in ensuring that the number of defections and breakaway factions were kept at a minimum.

Secondly, I want to look at the manner in which the Catholic party and the Church were able to deliver the Catholic vote, the agencies involved and the techniques used, and the changes which occurred in these processes

* The Second Chamber constitutes the elected legislature in the Netherlands and is thus the most important of the two chambers. The equivalent in a Parliamentary system based on the Westminster model would be the House of Commons.
over the years. And I want to examine how the Catholic population at large responded to these mobilization techniques, how they reacted to appeals over the years to remain true to the Catholic party, to maintain unity at all costs. I intend to argue that although a fair amount of energy was spent by the Church and other institutions, these efforts at mobilization were not unusually extravagant. In fact, particularly after World War II, the indirect use of the Church's authority was often sufficient to ensure that unity was maintained at election time.

1. The Catholic Party as a Political Organization

To what extent could the Dutch Catholic party be described as a well organized and disciplined political organization with a well-defined program, an organization which energetically and systematically tried to advance and implement the goals of the Catholic subculture? In most respects the picture that emerges of the Catholic party is the exact opposite; as a parliamentary party it bordered on being a loose coalition of individual and group interests even at the best of times. In terms of policy the party's major role was the defence of the subculture's position vis-à-vis Dutch society. The behaviour of the Catholic party with regard to the other parties was marked by definite feelings of inferiority. Furthermore, there was often a wide gulf between Catholic ministers in the cabinet and members of the parliamentary party and between the parliamentary party and the grass-roots level.

At the same time the parliamentary party, from the late nineteenth century on, was usually blessed by the presence of a strong leader. This leader was usually in close touch with, and in turn highly dependent upon, the ecclesiastical hierarchy for maintaining the unity of the party, to
minimize the damage that breakaway factions could inflict upon the party. All these characteristics in turn reflect elements of Dutch Catholic ideology described in the previous chapter. The significance of these characteristics will be discussed after a historical overview.

**Origins.** Attempts to establish a Catholic political presence can be traced back to the efforts of Le Sage ten Broek in 1813. Catholics had recently been given full citizenship rights. His efforts were aimed not so much at political organization as political education. Through his newspaper, *De Ultramontaan*, he tried "to awaken even the most primitive feelings of political confidence among Catholics."²

In 1848 King William II granted responsible government. There were to be direct elections for municipal councils, provincial legislature and the Second Chamber.³ The elections for the Second Chamber were to be based on the district system. In that year Dommer van Poldersveldt proposed an "electoral organization for Catholics."⁴ A central co-ordinating committee came into being but after a short period of time it was disbanded by the organizers themselves. The reason given was that "awareness by the general public of the existence of a Catholic electoral organization would place our fellow Catholics in physical jeopardy."⁵ This fear of non-Catholics and their reactions was to continue for well over a century.

After 1848 Dutch electoral organizations of all kinds began to develop at the district level (there were 50 districts in all), usually dominated by local notables. Along with the various liberal and conservative organizations there was a handful of Catholic ones. Many Catholics, however, tended to support the secular Liberals especially in the provinces of North and South Holland. These Catholics, mainly young intellectuals centred around the Amsterdam newspaper, *De Tijd*, saw their support for
liberalism as a means of securing their religious institutions. Specifically, they hoped it might serve their cause of re-establishing the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy. They managed to obtain the support of the clergy in the south, who were important in mobilizing the vote, and as a result many of the Catholics elected in the south were liberal in orientation. Aside from helping to mobilize the vote the clergy as a whole remained aloof from politics.

There was no Catholic party as such although Catholic politicians did tend to coalesce on certain issues such as those concerning parochial schools. One Catholic politician, Nuyens, writing in 1857 noted:

If one understands the word "party" to mean a certain number of men, who share the same principles, and who defend similar interests then indeed there does exist a Catholic party. However, if one understands this word to mean an association, organized with the aim of obtaining certain objectives, disciplined and led by a recognised leadership. . . . no! then there exists in our group no such party.

In 1853 the Catholic-Liberal coalition, the Papo-Thorbecke coalition, was successful in re-establishing the Catholic hierarchy. However, the Liberals had not been so favourably disposed towards parochial education as had first been hoped. As well, many secular Liberals were rather snobbish which tended to offend Catholics. In 1864 the papal encyclical Quanta Curia demanded that all Catholics do their utmost to ensure their children received a Catholic education and warned against the dangers of liberalism. In 1868 the Dutch bishops reaffirmed the intent of Quanta Curia. This contributed to a falling out between the Catholics and the Liberals.

In 1870 the Roman Catholic Electoral Association "North Brabant" was organized under the leadership of J. B. van Son. It attacked the Liberal-Catholic coalition, thereby obtaining the support of
local clergy who were strongly influenced by Quanta Curia. It had immediate electoral success taking virtually all the seats in that province.\textsuperscript{11} This marked the shift away from the Papo-Thorbecke coalition of the 1840s, 1850s and 1860s. This shift occurred largely at the urgings of the clergy in the two southern provinces. As well, manufacturers in North-Brabant began to oppose the Liberals for economic reasons, namely the tariff law of 1862 which had placed them at a disadvantage.\textsuperscript{12} There was still no national level organization or federation of Catholic electoral associations, however.

It was the example of the Calvinists under the leadership of Groen van Prinsteren and Abraham Kuyper that gave the Catholics impetus towards developing some sort of party organization. Just as the Catholics were rebelling against the Liberals, the orthodox Calvinists were rebelling against the Conservative party. Appealing to the 'small people' (\textit{kleyne Luyden}) with the claim that government institutions and schools were no longer sufficiently Protestant in character, Van Prinsteren and Kuyper began organizing the Anti-School Law League in 1872.\textsuperscript{13} In that same year they also started the daily newspaper, \textit{De Standaard}. In 1879 the League, having enjoyed phenomenal growth, transformed itself into the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) (by 'revolution' they referred to the centralizing and secular principles of the French Revolution).\textsuperscript{14}

In 1880 Father Herman Schaepman was elected to the Second Chamber and came to play a crucial role over the next 23 years in nurturing a nascent Catholic party. He perceived that there was a common cause to be made between Catholics and Anti-Revolutionaries with regard to the schools issue; both groups wanted control over their own educational system.

Schaepman, inspired by the proposed Anti-Revolutionary Program of
1878, designed a similar document for Catholics and in 1883 introduced "The Catholic Party: A Proposed Program." Although an extremely energetic and imposing figure, Schaepman's efforts yielded only large scale criticism. A number of Catholic politicians felt that the needs of Catholics were best served by supporting the Conservative party. Within the Second Chamber there was a time during the first few years of the 1890s when there were actually two Catholic factions: a conservative faction led by Ballmann from North Brabant and the democratic faction led by Schaepman. The two factions had meals in separate sections of the parliamentary dining room; there was little interaction between them. The point at issue between the two factions was not so much their views on Catholic interests with regard to schools, for example, but rather their views on the extension of the franchise and on how aggressive Catholics should be in pursuing their goals. Conservative Catholics tended to reflect the interests of Catholic businessmen. As well, they felt that Catholics should maintain a low profile in politics. Schaepman, in contrast, had connections with the already developing Catholic trade union movement and was quite willing to use political means to achieve his aims.

It was during this period that Schaepman engineered the alliance with the Anti-Revolutionaries. With an electoral system based on district representation Catholics were at a disadvantage in districts outside of the south. Schaepman persuaded a number of Catholic electoral associations and clergy to support ARP candidates, thus allowing the election of several ARP members where they normally would not have won. This meant that Anti-Revolutionaries tended to be over-represented in the Second Chamber compared with the Catholics. As well, since the ARP was better organized and more militant it tended to take a leading role in the battle for
confessional schools. Concessions were obtained in 1889 and 1891 giving partial state support to confessional schools.

These concessions were due to the fact that the Catholic-ARP coalition had obtained an absolute majority within the Second Chamber in the election of 1888. And this victory in turn was largely due to the fact that the franchise qualifications had been lowered in 1887. Most of the new voters turned out to be anti-Liberal.

In 1896 the franchise was extended once again. Schaepman's influence grew in the 1897 election. As well, he was helped considerably by the progressive papal encyclical Rerum Novarum. In 1896 the Catholic members of the Second Chamber gathered in the city of Utrecht. They promised to accept faithfully all papal encyclicals in the formulation of their programs and in particular to use Rerum Novarum as the basis for their program with regard to social questions.

The acceptance of a common program by Catholic members of the Second Chamber did not imply the development of a national party organization. That event did not occur until 1904—one year after Schaepman's death—when the General League of Roman Catholic Electoral Associations came into being. This league consisted of a central office and all Roman Catholic electoral associations who were considered co-equal with the central office. In spite of attempts to provide as much autonomy as possible for individual associations, the North Brabant association refused to join the league. At this point the bishops were still ambivalent about Catholics participating in politics and thus made no efforts to ensure a cohesive Catholic party.

There were annual meetings of the League with representatives from the individual associations as well as an executive. The League for the
most part remained a purely electoral organization. In the Second Chamber Catholic members were not a very cohesive group. From the available evidence it appears that they were highly undisciplined when it came to voting on different bills.\textsuperscript{21}

In 1917 the joint efforts of the ARP and Catholics came to fruition with the so-called "Pacification." This agreement, the result of a bargain among the Liberals, ARP and Catholics, with the Social Democratic Party (SDAP) playing a supporting role, resolved an unusually severe cabinet crisis. Pacification not only gave full state support for confessional schools but also full suffrage for all males over 21 (women received the vote in 1919) and a direct proportional electoral system.\textsuperscript{22}

The new electoral system had two effects on the cohesiveness of the Catholic party. For one, the list system, as required by the proportional electoral system, meant that a greater degree of centralization and co-ordination was necessary on the part of the League in order to present a single list to the entire country. On the other hand, the possibility of a unified party was threatened by the ease with which Catholic splinter groups could enter parliament by virtue of the extremely low threshold requirement. The League was helped, however, by the Church hierarchy. The bishops in 1918 forbade Catholic social organizations from participating in politics and ruled that the R.C. League was the only appropriate political organization for Catholics. Smaller Catholic parties which did compete in the electoral arena were effectively cut off from such significant bases of direct support as the Catholic trade unions and the clergy.\textsuperscript{23}
The most powerful competitor of the Catholic party in the early 1920s was the Saint Michäel's League, a left-wing Catholic political movement attracting the support of many young Catholics and Catholic workers. It did not actually run in elections but threatened to do so and proved to be a demoralizing force for the Catholic party. At the request of the bishops, negotiations were begun between the R.C. and the Saint Michäel's Leagues. In 1923 an agreement was reached. Saint Michäel would be incorporated into the main R.C. League with the understanding that the R.C. League would transform itself from a mere league to a genuine democratic national Catholic party. A committee was named and the Roman Catholic State Party (RKSP) was born in 1926. The re-organization involved a central party council and greater supervision of the 18 riding associations. A research bureau was set up which was responsible for drafting election programs and consulting Catholic social organizations as to their interests and demands.

This did not end centrifugal tendencies within the party or the rise of competing Catholic political organizations. However, the Catholic party from then on demonstrated a remarkable capacity to contain conflict within the confines of the organization and to absorb or co-opt the competition. These central features of the Catholic party endured well into the late 1960s when significant elements of the party walked out never to be re-absorbed.

The Instrumentality of the Catholic Party. What explained the unusual capacity of the Catholic party to contain and absorb conflict? In part the party did not require rigid adherence to a set of principles and rules on the part of the membership. The bishops merely said that there should be only one Catholic party. This allowed for a
great deal of flexibility which was enhanced by the fact that most people viewed the party, and the need for a party, in instrumental terms.

Much of the literature on political parties and political processes focusses not only on the concrete functions they perform but also on their affective or symbolic roles.\(^{25}\) Not only mass publics but also elite members of societies tend to develop loyalties and emotional ties to their party. In the case of Dutch Catholics and the Catholic party it would be false to say that the Catholic party was totally without emotional significance or that those involved in the Catholic party did not take pride in their work. A common denominator, however, among many Catholic political leaders, as well as the bishops, was their ambivalence about the very need for a Catholic party. The only emotional significance of the party lay in its contribution to the unity of the Catholic subculture.

Schaepman himself, usually seen as the father of the Catholic party, favoured an inter-confessional party.\(^{26}\) He had hoped that co-operation with the ARP would lead to the development of a single Christian party. For Schaepman, the development of a Catholic party was necessary only insofar as there was no alternative. In his view Catholic interests needed political representation and goals such as state support for confessional schools could only be obtained through political action. For these functions, in Schaepman's view, a centre party with an inter-confessional basis was sufficient and therefore preferable. But since the ARP was unwilling to join in such a venture a strong Catholic party remained necessary.

Schaepman's feelings were not unique. The position of most Catholic politicians during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was to look to existing parties as vehicles for promoting both Catholic interests and
their own personal socio-economic interests and those of the special interest
groups to which they belonged. Thus we have Catholic political leaders
first supporting the Liberals; then flirting with the Conservatives; and
then supporting the ARP.

In the years immediately following the introduction of a propor­
tional electoral system in 1918 the proposal for a more centralized
Catholic party received considerable opposition from certain Catholic
political leaders. P. J. M. Aalberse, considered to be one of the more
outstanding figures in Dutch Catholic history, protested this development.
He thought a Catholic party unnecessary and even dangerous. A Catholic
political party would have to take at least some responsibility for un­
popular government measures. Blame might fall on the Church thus doing
irreparable damage to its position in Dutch society. Finally, it might evoke
retaliatory measures by non-Catholics against Catholics.27

Aalberse was one of the most active, intelligent and socially
progressive of Catholic leaders. Furthermore, he was an avowed Catholic
and proud of it. As a student at the University of Leiden he was instru­
mental in organizing the Catholic Student Society as a reaction against
the secular, liberal oriented Leiden Student Corps. He was a strong
proponent of national Catholic trade unions. In fact he was an advisor
to, and a supporter of, the bishops in their decision to order Catholic
workers to abandon the textile workers union, Unitas. Yet when it came to
defining the Catholic position vis-à-vis the political world, Aalberse
stopped short. In part his views were based on perceptive analysis but
also in part they were influenced by the isolationist tendencies of Dutch
Catholicism and the collective inferiority complex from which the Dutch
Catholic subculture suffered.
Generally the Catholic party lagged behind other Catholic organizations in terms of institutional development. When it did achieve a formal existence in 1926 it tended to be overshadowed in importance by the newly formed KRO and the Catholic University. These institutions, during the inter-war period, were much more likely to stir feelings of pride in the hearts of Dutch Catholics. And Catholic trade unions and employer associations were much more advanced when it came to obtaining approval and support from the bishops.\textsuperscript{28}

The period immediately following World War II is also illustrative. The German occupation had brought many people from the different blocs together, especially within the resistance movement. And it was during this time that several Catholics decided that the pillarized structures in Dutch society were unnecessary and wasteful. The post-war Labour party (PvdA, based on the pre-war SDAP) made a point of guaranteeing freedom of religion and religious institutions. Several left-wing Catholics joined the Labour party.\textsuperscript{29} The Catholic hierarchy, however, led by Cardinal de Jong, made known its wish to see resurrected not only Catholic social institutions but also the Catholic party. This process of re-building Catholic institutions received a head start by the fact that the southern Catholic part of the Netherlands was liberated first by the Allies and was thus a fertile area for the re-establishment of these institutions.\textsuperscript{30}

Those left-wing Catholics who were committed to \textit{not} resurrecting the Catholic party were for the most part located in the northern part of the country and unaware of what was happening in the south. One of the more prominent leaders within the post-war Catholic party described what happened:
During the war I was active in the "Nederlandse Volksbeweging" [a resistance movement] . . . I intended to become a member of the PvdA. . . . On thinking back I remember being quite upset when I saw all these Catholic party bureaucrats from before the war come down from Tilburg and Den Bosch [cities in the south of the Netherlands] setting up shop in the Hague as if absolutely nothing had changed. I asked, "Where did you guys come from? I haven't seen you for years?" In the end I became involved with the Catholic party [KVP] because after all I was Catholic. I was a rather unwilling recruit, however. (Interview No. 4)

Commitment to the Catholic party before the war was low. Among several Catholics at the end of the war, this commitment had been lowered even further, largely because of their experiences of co-operating with non-Catholics during the German occupation. Most politically active Catholics, however, did rejoin the new Catholic party. In part the leverage used by Catholic party leaders was emotional. They cited the moral reasons given by the bishops, namely to safeguard the Catholic religion to ward off the evils of communism. However, the three important Catholic leaders who did the actual work of resurrecting the party—Romme, Stokman and Witteman—also stressed pragmatic aspects. They were successful in recruiting not only older Catholics but also a number of young Catholic intellectuals by emphasizing the proposed socially progressive orientation of the new Catholic party. The party name was changed from the Roman Catholic State Party to the Catholic People's Party (KVP). The party's research bureau was given a new label and a non-partisan air.31 One such new recruit, hired to work in the research institute, noted: "For me the programmatic aspects were extremely important. I had to be convinced that the new party would be socially progressive, that it would co-operate to the utmost with the PvdA. . . . My commitment was to the program not really to the party" (Interview No. 16).
There were other practical aspects as well. The ARP had firmly re-established itself as had the Christian Historical Union (CHU). The situation was uncertain and the safest prediction one could make in the early post-war period was that the pre-war social and political structures would re-assert themselves. For many politically active Catholics it seemed best to rejoin the Catholic party.

A commitment to the Catholic party based on a strong loyalty to the Church and a pragmatic commitment to the party meant that no unusual loads were placed upon the party—at least for the time being. There were no rigid principles to be upheld or to define beyond a commitment to uphold the integrity of the Church. This resulted in a high degree of flexibility and the ability to co-opt diverse political tendencies.

*Policy and Programs.* The Catholic party's flexibility with regard to different political attitudes amongst the membership is also reflected in its policies and orientations towards the other parties.

The major stimulus which originally brought Catholics together in the political arena was the schools issue. The agreement which resolved the demands involved in that issue, the Pacification of 1917, served as a template for the resolution of similar issues as they came up. Broadcasting was organized on socio-religious lines and state funds for health-care were channelled to socio-religious health-care agencies. The issues which were pushed by the Catholic party that could in some sense be defined as Catholic were precisely these issues. Since the major goals had been achieved in 1917 the tactics employed on most of the other issues can best be described as defensive ones aimed at safeguarding what had been won.

For example, at various times attempts were made (mostly by the Liberals) to do away with the pillarized nature of broadcasting and to
substitute an organization based on the model offered by the British Broadcasting Corporation. Each time this topic was broached, the Catholic party, as well as the other confessional parties, made it known that they strongly opposed such a change. In 1965 when this issue arose, the cabinet fell because one of the Liberal ministers resigned when he failed to get his way in drastically revamping the broadcasting system.

The inter-war period (1918-1940) is usually referred to as the heydey of the confessional parties. At election time the three parties (ARP, CHU and RKSP) polled between them 50 to 60 percent of the vote. They dominated the cabinet usually taking the most important portfolios. Yet the Catholic party was never successful in obtaining even modest religious goals such as the repeal of the ordinance against religious parades in the northern section of the Netherlands.

In part, this was because the confessional parties were largely concerned with the problems of running a government. Especially during the depression years the RKSP was pre-occupied with the debate about what to do with the overwhelming economic problems of the day. There were battles within the Catholic party between the left and the right wings as to what policies to support. The flexibility of Catholic party ideology, however, permitted the party to flow with the general tide of opinion, whose tenor was set by the ARP. During the 1930s the RKSP supported, for the most part, fairly conservative fiscal policies aimed at balancing the books and maintaining the value of the guilder. Religious issues remained in the background.

In the post-war period Catholic party policy, again demonstrating a high degree of flexibility, supported the Labour party. The emphasis in the immediate post-war period was on co-operation, the rebuilding of the economy and a high degree of social justice so that people would never
have to suffer again as in the depression of the 1930s. In this atmosphere a series of coalition cabinets were formed in which the PvdA and the KVP were the major partners. The KVP stressed bread and butter issues such as increasing the stock of housing and family allowances. They noted that the resulting government policies were policies for the household, a theme which dovetailed nicely with Roman Catholic beliefs concerning the sanctity of the family. The only action by the KVP which was directly related to religious beliefs was their veto of a proposal to give a government grant to the humanist association, allegedly a group of atheists whom the KVP felt were determined to undermine the Christian basis of Dutch society.\textsuperscript{35}

It was in their relations with other parties that the general lack of self-confidence and uncertainty on the part of the Catholic subculture becomes evident. It was the ARP which had taken the initiative in fighting for full state support for confessional schools. According to I. Schöffer in the inter-war period, in examining relations between Catholic and Protestant leaders, it was plain to see who were the leaders and who were the led.\textsuperscript{36} The fact that in 1920 Rhuis de Beerenbroeck became the first Catholic prime minister had a certain symbolic value, but he was generally conceded to be a rather weak figure. He was a kindly diplomatic person but had no strong leadership qualities. The ARP political leader, Colijn, who later became prime minister, was considered a much stronger (some would say obstinate) figure.\textsuperscript{37}

It was not that the Catholic parliamentary party lacked strong figures. P. J. M. Aalberse did outstanding work in his cabinet portfolio of social affairs, pushing through much needed social welfare legislation in the 1920s. He was considered a centrist and not part
of the RKSP's left wing. Yet his one term cabinet appointment was not renewed though it was known he would have continued in that post if it had been offered to him again. Furthermore, he was never seriously pushed by the RKSP as a candidate for the prime ministership.  

On the other hand, the Catholic party was never unrepresented in the cabinet, a record equaled by no other party. From 1918 to 1976 there was, with one exception, never a cabinet without Catholic representation. The one exception occurred in 1939 but this cabinet lasted only 15 days, demonstrating that a cabinet without Catholic representation would not have a very long life expectancy. As Daalder points out it has been more or less axiomatic in Dutch politics that one can not build a cabinet without the Catholic party.

The refusal to take a strong position in government, and the fear of being left in opposition, indicated both the Catholics' lack of self-confidence and their pragmatic, cautious approach. As well, the behaviour of Catholic political leaders was indicative of the difficulties involved in balancing the different socio-economic interests within the Catholic subculture. By taking responsibility for controversial decisions there was considerable chance of alienating one or more of the factions within the party. And during the 1930s the Catholic Trade Union Movement did in fact withdraw their support from the Catholic party. The constant Catholic presence in cabinet was frequently cited by Catholic party leaders as a reason why different interests should support the party: they would always have some voice in and connection with government. Thus although the Liberals or SDAP/PvdA may have appeared to be more in tune with their interests Catholics were told that those parties
or any new Catholic splinter parties could do little for them if they were in opposition.

Leadership. If the Catholic party had the reputation of delivering weak and vacillating cabinet members the exact opposite was true of parliamentary leadership. Since 1880 when Schaepman first entered the Second Chamber, the Catholic party always had a strong, authoritarian leader within parliament who stood head and shoulders above his colleagues. This person played a crucial role in dampening conflict within the Catholic party, in putting together coalition cabinets with leaders of the other parties and in leading and controlling the Catholic party caucus in parliament.

A companion of the unwritten rule that no cabinet shall be formed without Catholic representation is one that the Catholic party parliamentary leader never enters a cabinet himself. At first it was a general perception among Catholics, probably an accurate one, that non-Catholic Dutch society would never be able to accept a priest as a cabinet minister. Both Schaepman and his successor, Nolens, were priests. This tradition of remaining outside of the cabinet was maintained by non-clerical Catholic leaders following them.

Undoubtedly strong leadership was necessary to help maintain some semblance of control within the Catholic party caucus. However, the role of the Catholic party leader is also indicative of the ambivalence of the Catholic subculture towards the rest of Dutch society; a subculture remaining isolated, communicating with the non-Catholic world through a leadership which remained aloof, never fully participating in the affairs of state.
The three major Catholic party leaders, who between them controlled the parliamentary party for well over 60 years, were stern, authoritarian figures. Schaepman, Nolens and Romme were not well liked by their fellow Catholics. Yet they were effective. For example, a member of the Catholic parliamentary caucus during the 1950s noted:

Yes at times there was a great deal of discussion and argument. But usually at a certain point Romme would stand up, everyone would become still, and Romme would say, "We are going to do so and so . . . ." and that would be it. No one would dare cross words with Romme. . . . If he did he would pay for it dearly. (Interview No. 16).

Relations between Cabinet and the Parliamentary Party. In parliamentary systems the link between the government parliamentary party and the cabinet receives considerable attention from those concerned with questions of responsible government. The party in power is, in the public mind at least, perceived as being responsible for government policies. The cabinet is supposed to pay some attention to the wishes of the caucus. The parliamentary caucus in turn is obliged to support the cabinet; to defend government policy in parliament and in committees and to vote in favour of government bills. There is often considerable tension between cabinet and the parliamentary caucus. Whips play an important role in maintaining party discipline. A break in government ranks usually indicates a political crisis of some significance.

The Dutch political system also enjoys responsible government. However, in the Dutch system the relationship between the parliamentary party and the cabinet is much more muted. This has the consequence of helping parliamentary parties, in particular the Catholic party, to avoid major rifts or splits since they are to some degree absolved of the responsibility for the cabinet's behaviour. All Dutch cabinets have been
coalition cabinets usually incorporating anywhere from four to eight parties. Parties are rarely regarded as responsible for policies collectively decided upon by cabinets, although individual parties have occasionally been seen as being responsible for the fall of cabinets. The fact that there is little or no sign of a party's platform or program in government policies can be explained away by references to compromises that had to be made upon entering a coalition. Cabinet building in the Netherlands is usually a long and arduous process often lasting for several months after an election. Not infrequently an emergency cabinet will govern the country while the cabinet building process takes its course. Often a party's justification for entering a cabinet is that it does so in the national interest, as a means of resolving a deadlock.

Another feature of the Dutch cabinet system is the rather non-partisan manner with which the cabinet is regarded compared with the British and the Canadian systems. In order to enter the cabinet a member of parliament must resign his seat in the Second Chamber. He or she is no longer a member of either parliament or the party caucus. A cabinet position is seen in very statesman-like terms, a role that must be performed in very proper, dignified and at the same time business-like fashion. Certain cabinet members remove themselves almost entirely from party affairs. In a somewhat different way Daalder has described these attitudes and values as the "regents' mentality" in government. He cites tendencies toward rejection of criticism, secrecy and an inflated sense of self-importance by Dutch cabinet ministers as evidence of this mentality.

The parliamentary caucusses tend to assume a fairly critical, often ideological stance in parliament, even when their party is participating in the cabinet. But they are usually reliable in their support for
government bills. Withdrawal of support by a participating party is extremely rare.

The fact that the Catholic party was never dominant within cabinet aided in dampening conflict and maintaining cohesion. In a different situation, where, for example, the Catholic party had a majority of seats and full control over cabinet appointments, the demands and expectations within and without the party would have been too much of a load for the party to bear. As it was, the ability of the Catholic party to disclaim responsibility for many of the affairs of state helped considerably to placate the widely different interests within the party. At the same time the Catholic party at election time usually claimed credit for the performance of individual Catholic party cabinet members, particularly for those in the portfolios of housing and education which often went to the Catholic party in coalition cabinets.

Relations between the Parliamentary and Non-Parliamentary Party. Another potential source of strain within any political party lies in the linkage between the party leadership, particularly in parliament, and the grass-roots organization. Rank-and-file members and local party officials often have particular local or regional concerns and they may want to ensure that these receive preferential treatment. Dis-affection in the ranks or supporting organizations may result in the withdrawal of support, a factor which could seriously affect a political party at election time.

The Dutch Catholic party in the period up to the mid 1960s never lost the support of its local level organizations. Yet the gulf between
the leaders and the rank-and-file was extremely wide. I. Schöffer, writing on the confessional parties of the inter-war period notes:

Inside the Roman Catholic State Party there was a broad and virtually unbridgeable gap between the party leadership which was then more or less in the hands of Catholic nobility and proper middle-class citizens from "above the rivers", and the Catholic population consisting of fairly simple people in large part living "south of the rivers".45

In the post-war period the party leadership was more representative in terms of social origins. Greater efforts were made to place representatives from labour on the executive and in parliament. But there was still a large gap between leaders and led.46

The relationship between lower-echelon party officials and the leadership can best be described as deferential. The party leadership was more or less left with a free hand; very few demands were placed upon them from the lower echelons.

Nationally the Catholic party was organized in terms of the 18 national electoral districts (at election time the same candidate list is presented in each of these districts). Each electoral district (kieskring) had a separate organization with an executive. These kieskring organizations were subdivided into smaller units (statenkringen) and these in turn were subdivided into local organizations often using parish boundaries as a basis, particularly in the south.47

The chairmen of the kieskringen wielded considerable power. They were more or less in charge of election campaigns and collectively the 18 chairmen in the post-war period were responsible for putting together approximately half the election list, that is, they determined in large part who would get into parliament (central party headquarters was responsible for the remainder of the list). They always tried to obtain some regional representation but the main emphasis was on quality.
Potential candidates were those who had done outstanding work either at universities or in community affairs. There was little overt competition. Potential candidates would be asked by the chairman of a *statenkring* or *kieskring* if he or she was willing to let themselves be considered for a position on the list. It was considered in very poor taste to actually let it be known that you were willing to be a candidate or worse yet, that you wanted to be a candidate.

There was a fair amount of competition for places on lists for municipal and provincial elections, especially in the south where the KVP was the only party. But this did not occur for places on the Second Chamber lists. "There were only one or two places on the list (for each *kieskring*) and everyone in the district realized who would be the best qualified" (Interview No. 43). Statesman-like qualities were preferred; those who could fill a cabinet position if need be or act as a responsible critic of a particular portfolio would be seen as good candidates. As well as regional representation there was also a demand for "specialist" or "expert" qualifications. And if both regional and "expert" criteria could be met in the same person so much the better. Specialists would be, for example, a high ranking military officer for defence matters, professors in various specialities such as agriculture, social welfare, or economics. This penchant for "expertise" has not been restricted to the Catholic party. All parties place a great deal of emphasis on expertise. For example, as of 1976 the last two ministers of education (one KVP, the other PvdA) have been professors of education.

Once the candidates had been selected, the list finalized (through joint bargaining between the *kieskring* chairmen and party headquarters) and hopefully elected to parliament, the newly elected members of the
legislature were more or less left to their own devices. They were rarely called upon to fulfill obligations to kieskring chairmen or others. The kieskring chairmen themselves were mostly volunteers with full-time occupations outside of politics (many of them were school teachers) and were involved not only in organizing national elections but local and provincial elections as well. To have influence over local party affairs with little outside interference may have been a sufficient reward in itself for kieskring chairmen. The expectations in the Catholic party were that members of the Second Chamber were in Parliament to defend Catholic interests when the relevant issues came up, but their primary task was to help administer the affairs of state in the interest of the country as a whole.

This ethos generally helped reduce the pressure placed upon the parliamentary party. They were neither expected to advance militantly the ideological interests of Catholics nor to deal constantly with particularistic interests of Catholic individuals or groups.

The Party and Pressure Groups. What were relations like between the Catholic party and organized groups? In 1918 the bishops expressly forbade Catholic social organizations to participate in politics or even to formally nominate candidates to the Catholic party. The Catholic party, however, did develop as one of its principles that all interests within the Catholic subculture had to be consulted in the drawing up of party programs and in the selection of candidates for the Second Chamber. This consultative process came to mean that specific people from the different socio-economic organizations would be asked to become members of the party executive or to become candidates on the Second Chamber electoral list. Efforts would always be made to ensure that two or more candidates would
be from the major socio-economic organizations, as well as from the military, banking, education and so on. These people would usually be referred to not as representatives but, again, as specialists. Thus Father Stokman, a priest and a member of the parliamentary party in the post-war period, was always referred to as the KVP's specialist on religious affairs, "in case any questions arose in the house on religious matters."

The socio-economic organizations closest to the Catholic party were always the Catholic Middle-Class Association and the Catholic Farmers Association. Mr. W. Perquin, for example, was for several years chairman of both the Catholic Middle-Class Organization and the KVP. Officers of the Catholic Middle-Class Organization were often seconded to the campaign committee of the KVP and the organization also served as an important conduit for election funds. The Catholic Farmers Association was also tightly linked to the KVP, supplying many members of the executive and the First and Second chambers. Of all the organizations it was considered the Catholic party's strongest supporter. The Catholic Employers Association was also a loyal supporter although they did not have as many direct links with the party.

The weakest link was always between the party and Catholic labour. In 1934 the Catholic Workers Movement (RKWV) actually withdrew its support from the RKSP because of the government's policies during the depression. In the post-war era relations between Catholic labour (KAB, later NKV), and the KVP were always, if not cool, at least distant even during the Roman-Red (KVP-PvdA) coalition period. The KVP always had trouble in obtaining enthusiastic representatives from Catholic labour, especially in later years. In 1966 the NKV was the first and only major Catholic socio-economic organization to break with the Catholic party. One strong KVP supporter,
formerly of the NKV and later a member of the Second Chamber for the KVP, notes he had always urged his colleagues in Catholic trade unions that they could have had much more influence within the KVP if only they had participated more in its activities (Interview No. 32).

Thus the picture that emerges is one where demands placed upon the Catholic party from its regional, lower level organizations were limited. In large part this was because of the deferential ethos which stressed giving central leadership a free hand in handling the affairs of the nation and because central leaders, in turn, gave a free hand to local leaders with regard to municipal and provincial affairs. The emphasis on statesmanlike qualities, the transformation of interest representation into the giving of 'expert' opinions by 'specialists' all helped maintain the cohesion and stability of the parliamentary party. Special interests like agriculture, the self-employed middle-class and businessmen and industrialists were solidly entrenched within the party and were reasonably satisfied with the way their demands were handled. Communications between these organizations and their 'specialists' in the Second Chamber were good. Conflict between these three organizations was minimal.51

The potential for conflict lay in the relationship between Catholic labour and these three interests. Nevertheless, although Catholic labour as a whole tended to be aloof from the Catholic party, representatives from Catholic labour in the Second Chamber were usually committed to the party and got along well with their party colleagues. Catholic labour leaders both within and without the party frequently received appointments to the First Chamber (roughly the equivalent of the Canadian Senate) or to provincial senates. Perhaps because those in the Catholic trade unions less favourably disposed to the Catholic party did not in fact
enter the party, centrifugal pressures within the party itself were minimized. From 1946 to 1958 the KAB/NKV supported the KVP in part because of loyalty to the Church and in part because the KVP was in a series of coalition cabinets with the PvdA. The interval from 1958 to 1965, when the KVP ruled in conjunction with the Liberals and the other confessional parties, was a period of economic growth (stimulated by the discovery of natural gas in the North Sea in 1959) and saw the removal of rigid wage controls much to the benefit of Dutch labour as a whole. Even though the PvdA was then in opposition the KAB/NKV was reasonably satisfied with government policies and economic conditions. Furthermore, the KVP parliamentary leader Romme in 1958 stressed that he was not ruling out any future coalitions with the PvdA.

The Church and the Catholic Party. The above factors were all important in helping to impose a degree of stability and cohesion upon the parliamentary party. Yet these factors in themselves would have been insufficient. It was the influence of the Church hierarchy which insured that the Catholic party was not rent asunder. According to Schöffer it would have been virtually impossible for the RKSP during the inter-war period to have stayed in one piece if it had not been for the official blessing and support of the Church hierarchy.

As well as making public statements as to the need to preserve unity in the political arena the bishops also operated on a less public level to try to ensure that their wishes were implemented. In the 1920s the bishops were important in bringing the Saint Michäel League and the League of R.C. Electoral Associations together, a reconciliation of which the RKSP was the fruition.
In 1922 a dissident left-wing Catholic party calling itself the Roman Catholic People's Party made its appearance. It was publicly condemned by the bishops and never obtained more than 1.19 percent of the total popular vote. In 1926 the leaders of this party tried to obtain, if not the approval then at least the tolerance, of the hierarchy. The leaders of the party received back a letter from Mgr. Callier of the diocese of Haarlem writing on behalf of the bishops: "The R.K. Volkspartij is located outside of the RKSP. As such it causes a division among Catholics. We cannot comprehend how a good Catholic could even possibly think of helping to foster such a division let alone be the cause of it."

RKSP leaders frequently consulted the bishops on various political issues. Furthermore, Father Nolens, parliamentary leader of the RKSP, and Father Stokman, KVP member in the post-war period, would as priests certainly have known what constituted appropriate behaviour. Through these channels the bishops undoubtedly made their feelings known.

It is difficult to know how often the bishops intervened directly in particular situations. In all likelihood they did not often intervene directly on a personal level. Usually it was the case that the bishops might respond to a particular request for dispensation or some sort of action rather than act on their own initiative. Initiatives made on their own would invariably be of the more general, public kind such as a statement indicating their wishes and hopes. Thus in 1945-46 the bishops expressed a fervent desire to see the various Catholic socio-economic organizations and the Catholic party resurrected but did not issue specific directions to particular individuals.

In the early 1950s the bishops, in particular Cardinal de Jong, were disturbed at a number of developments. The Catholic caucus in the
PvdA, those Catholics who helped found the PvdA in 1946, had up to that time refused overtures by the KVP to return to the fold. Secondly, in 1948 a former pre-war Catholic party minister of colonial affairs, Ch. Welter, left the KVP and founded the Catholic National Party because of dissatisfaction with the KVP's decolonization policy (carried out in conjunction with the PvdA). In 1948 the KNP received only 1.26 percent of the vote and in 1952 a little more than 2 percent. As well, in 1952 it appeared that the PvdA had increased its vote somewhat in the solidly Catholic south.

All these developments caused consternation within Catholic circles. In January of 1953 the KVP set up a special commission, "the commission Van der Grinten," to study the possibilities of political unity among Catholics. The commission returned a few months later with a report which concluded that political unity among Catholics was indeed both desirable and necessary and that the KVP was the appropriate vehicle. In May 1953 Cardinal de Jong, on the occasion of the centennial of the re-establishment of the episcopal hierarchy, launched an appeal for the political unity of all Catholics. In July of that year the KVP invited Welter of the KNP and Ruijgers of the Catholic PvdA caucus to a meeting to discuss the Cardinal's declaration and the contents of the Van der Grinten commission report. Discussions continued throughout that year and into the next. On May 1, 1954 the bishops came out with their Mandement which again explicitly stated the Church's wish for political unity among Catholics. The Catholic caucus of the PvdA, after studying the consequences of the Mandement for some time, rejected the idea of entering the KVP. The KNP, however, announced that in view of the wishes of the bishops they would be willing to rejoin the KVP.
These public calls of the bishops were the most direct forms of political intervention. They were not direct orders but attempts to delineate general guidelines or boundaries, to define what was appropriate and inappropriate behaviour without necessarily calling specific individuals to task.

In the post-war period the KVP tried to develop itself as a programmatic party rather than a purely religious party, to sell itself on the basis of its platforms rather than relying on the exhortations of the bishops. Romme, leader of the KVP from 1946 to 1958, publicly defended the calls of the bishops such as the 1954 Mandement, but personally was reported to have been made most unhappy by these interventions. Yet without the urgings of the bishops it is doubtful whether the Catholic party would have been revived in 1946, the work of many lay Catholics notwithstanding. And without the continuing support of the bishops, the KNP splinter party may have been a prelude to further defections in the 1950s. For example, during the 1950s as well as the "Welter" group there was another element in the party, the "Steenberghe" group, which publicly announced that the KVP was going too far to the left and was neglecting the interests of large business in the Netherlands. As a reaction against the "Steenberghe" group the "De Bruyn" group, centred around the KAB representative De Bruyn, threatened to leave the KVP and form a Catholic labour party. Protracted negotiations with the two groups finally resulted in the promise that the interests of the Steenberghe group would be given greater attention but that the partnership with the PvdA would not be broken off in the foreseeable future. Throughout these negotiations KVP leaders made continual references to the expressed wishes of the bishops.62

At the same time there is evidence that the Church was quietly
beginning to extricate itself from political affairs after the death of Cardinal de Jong in 1955. For example, in 1961 Father Stokman retired from the KVP and the Second Chamber. The KVP requested the Church to appoint another priest to replace Father Stokman. The bishops refused to do so implying that the KVP could easily find a lay person to handle the chores of KVP religious specialist in the Second Chamber. The ecclesiastical hierarchy did not, however, begin publicly redefining the nature of authority or the basic parameters upon which the KVP depended until much later.

Obedience to the concept of political unity among Catholics as outlined by the bishops was one reason why potential splinter groups returned to or remained within the Catholic party. The idea of being Catholic imparted a sense of common purpose. One Catholic party politician during the 1960s noted that when discussions within the KVP became protracted, "there was always the thought 'Well we're all Catholic thus we have to come to some sort of solution.' And we usually did" (Interview No. 4).

There was one additional factor which undoubtedly preyed upon the minds of those contemplating setting up a competing party: Catholic splinter parties in the past enjoyed remarkably little success. Even if Catholic leaders did not heed the call for the maintenance of political unity then this call was usually much more successful among the Catholic populace at large. This raises the question as to how the authority of the Church was used in the mobilization of the Catholic vote.
2. Mobilization

One can state with reasonable confidence that the authority of the Church was the most important force in impelling Catholics to vote for the Catholic party. Yet one has to be careful in specifying the manner in which this authority was used and the paths along which it travelled. As in the case of the Catholic parliamentary party, the authority of the Church was not always used directly.

The Inter-war Period and Church Mobilization. It was during the inter-war period, the time of the 'Rich Roman Life,' when the Church intervened most directly. At election time the bishops would issue a pastoral letter warning Catholics to remember their duty, to remain one in order to safeguard their sacred unity. This message would be read from the pulpit by the pastor at mass. This occurred for national, provincial and local elections. As well there would be warnings directed against the evils of socialism (i.e. the SDAP), the Communists, and, in the 1930s, the National Socialist Party. Thus there was a constant stream of directives from the clergy as to the need to remain within the fold and to keep other political parties or movements at arm's length.

In many cases the clergy did far more than merely preach from the pulpit. S. Vellenga reports that in Limburg before World War II the RKSP asked the local clergy directly for help in mobilizing voters. Pastors and their assistants responded by holding special classes for their parishioners, many of whom were only semi-literate, on how to fill out election ballots (the lists on the ballots did not use party labels but numbers and the numbers often varied in the different election districts).63
The parish newspapers contained considerable political propaganda for the Roman Catholic cause. Father Poels, the major force behind the Catholic mineworkers union, was highly active at election time. He urged his fellow priests to participate saying he had no use for "supra-naturalists," those priests who put their trust in God but did no practical work.64

Post-war Period and Church Mobilization. In the immediate post-war period messages from the bishops were read from the pulpit before the elections of 1946 and 1948. Thus on May 4, 1946 just before the oncoming elections the Dutch bishops declared: "It belongs to the authority of the Church to explain to the faithful the moral obligations which result from the right to vote." It went on to say that it was a Catholic's duty to elect persons who were guided by the norms of Christianity. The bishops never actually said "vote KVP" but advised Catholics to maintain unity and indicated that the KVP offered the best guarantee for this.65

The election of 1948 was the last time that the bishops specifically made statements on behalf of the KVP during an election campaign.66 In 1953, a non-election year, Cardinal de Jong urged the Catholic population to "remain one" socially and politically and this appeal was made again in greater detail in the Mandement of 1954. The KVP used these instructions and documents in their propaganda material. But after 1948 the pulpit was no longer used by the bishops as a direct means of influencing Catholics at election time.

More importantly, there is little or no evidence that the rank-and-file clergy were as involved in mobilizing Catholics as was the case before the war. A chairman of a KVP local, who had been active in his village in the eastern part of the Netherlands since 1947, noted that his local never
had a spiritual advisor. Furthermore, the respondent claimed that the pastor never said anything about politics from the pulpit. "It was not necessary" (Interview No. 34).

After World War II virtually no KVP local had a spiritual advisor. Although pastors were always very active in organizations such as the local Catholic Farmers Association, they rarely intervened in the operations of the KVP.

Another KVP activist described a KVP meeting he chaired just after World War II in Rotterdam.

At one point during the meeting the local dean came in and sat down. . . . I didn't say anything. After the meeting a number of people came up to me and said that I had shown Father _____ a discourtesy in not introducing or welcoming him and in not having invited him to say a few words. I disagreed with them for several reasons. . . . A few days later I saw the dean again and he told me I had done the proper thing; that he was to be treated like everyone else. He felt the KVP had to stand on its own two feet. . . . (Interview No. 29)

A priest, 82 years of age, retired in 1972, and who had had parishes in various towns and villages in the northeastern part of the Netherlands, noted that he treated political matters differently.

To tell people squarely that they had to vote KVP—that I did not dare do. . . . With politics you had to be a little more careful. Just after the war, from the pulpit once or twice I said 'support our party'. . . . Until perhaps 1960 I would tell people to vote KVP if they asked for advice. . . . But people never asked much. People were not so political. They were much less developed. . . . 50 years ago, of course, you could do everything. (Interview No. 17)

No direct pressure was applied by priests in part because of diffidence, that is, not wanting to become involved in political matters, and in part because it was not necessary. Parishioners rarely asked how they should vote, and if they did they knew what the answer would be.
These expectations of voting KVP were not actively fostered, at least not by the clergy, but they were there nevertheless and nothing was done by priests to disabuse parishioners of their appropriate duties. With two exceptions, all 15 priests interviewed believed that the Mandement of 1954 had specified that voting for a party other than the KVP could lead to the denial of the sacraments.  

**The Catholic Party and Mobilization.** What role did the RKSP/KVP play in mobilizing voters, in ensuring that the vast majority of Catholics voted for the one and only Catholic party? It should be remembered that their role was greatly facilitated by the compulsory voting law that existed in the Netherlands up to 1970. The task, therefore, of actually getting voters to the polls was in large part resolved. Furthermore, their dependence upon the Church, especially before World War II, also lightened their work load.

Before the war the running of election campaigns was the responsibility of the 18 different kieskring associations. They restricted themselves to pamphleteering, the painting of slogans and the organization of election rallies. Since parades and processions were forbidden by law, bicycle rallies at election time were very popular. Large numbers of Catholic youths—bicycles festooned with streamers, flags and slogans in Catholic party colours (yellow and white)—would pedal furiously through town and country. Catholic party leaders would talk over the radio and address special meetings. The strongest language was reserved not for attacking their major opponents such as the SDAP but Catholic splinter parties such as the New Catholic Party and the Roman Catholic People's Party, those parties which would "dare to damage our beautiful unity."
The post-war KVP took over much of the RKSP machinery. The 18 kieskring organizations were reactivated and the pre-war weekly party newspaper, *De Opmars*, was revived under the same name.

Between national elections the machinery of the KVP was kept ticking over. Besides national election campaigns there were also provincial and municipal elections which required the organizational resources of the KVP. The KRO provided ample broadcasting time. According to an official of the KRO, "You could say that up to the early 1960s the KRO was more or less the mouth piece of the KVP" (Interview No. 14). Romme, leader of the KVP, had a bi-weekly radio program at prime time on Friday evenings until 1955. From 1956 to 1961 the KVP had a special political program on the KRO entitled "Are you also a member of the party." Romme was also political editor of the largest Catholic daily newspaper, *De Volkskrant*.

The party frequently held membership drives. At one time membership in the KVP totalled over 400,000. The vast majority of these people, however, were members in name only, although theoretically they were eligible to participate in meetings and to vote in primaries to help determine the order of candidates on election lists. Memberships were sold on a door-to-door basis or in blitzes in shopping areas. They were marketed much like other Catholic items, for example, calendars for missionary work. "To tell you the truth most people probably did not know the difference. To them it was all for the 'Roman business'" (Interview No. 44). Some rural party officials claimed in the 1940s and 1950s to have virtually every adult signed up as members in their locality. These claims were probably not too far fetched in that there were instances of villages where the number of KVP members tallied perfectly with the number of votes
cast for the KVP. Memberships were a prime source of funds for the KVP and those who took out a membership were referred to as betalers, which means, literally translated, "those who pay."

For each election campaign a special national "Propaganda Council" was set up drawing upon expertise outside of the full-time members of the party organization. Thus, for example, J. Schaferen, parliamentary reporter for De Volkskrant, and Dr. Kusters of the Catholic Social Research Institute (KASKI) were both members. Full-time members of the central party office organized a special blue book denoting various speaking engagements, placement and timing of advertisements and related matters.

Several months before the election there would be appeals for contributions in the party newspaper, De Opmars. Up to 1952 party workers would actually stand outside of the Church to solicit parishioners for contributions to the cause. Contributions were also received from Catholic firms, particularly the large department store chains. The Catholic Middle-Class Organization was usually heavily involved in fund raising as well as acting as a funnel for funds generally.

Those involved in helping to organize KVP election campaigns characterized their efforts as amateurish. Public relations firms were not consulted until the 1960s. The party was heavily dependent upon volunteer labour. And much of the responsibility for the campaign fell upon the shoulders of the kieskring organizations. Every kring would have a propaganda committee which was responsible for formulating the party program in its particular electoral district as well as helping to draw up the candidate list. The kieskring propaganda committees were given a large proportion of the available election funds and were responsible for spending it.
The *kieskring* program was usually based upon documents and guidelines sent out from party headquarters. Thus party programs would not vary much from region to region. Decisions as to how to spend available funds involved questions like what sort of give-away items to buy, e.g. ballpoint pens, balloons, how much to spend on placards and pamphlets and whether or not to invest in a sky-writing plane. After 1956 there was more and more emphasis on the frills of electioneering with campaign buses, pompom girls, flowers and illustrated folders.

During the 1950s the party was reasonably successful in mobilizing volunteers in handing out handbills and pamphlets, distributing placards for display in windows and so on. In 1952 the KVP claimed to have at least 10,000 hardcore activists. In the smaller villages virtually every Catholic would be assured of receiving something in the mailbox from the KVP. In larger cities the Catholic Action would often be utilized for this sort of work. One party worker in one of the large Western cities was chairman of both the KVP local and the Catholic Action local. He called the Catholic Action a "purely technical organization" specifically designed for tasks such as helping to set up chairs for a Church meeting and in the case of elections to help distribute pamphlets and placards.

At special election meetings there would be speakers and films. The KVP was reasonably successful in attracting substantial crowds. In the first number of years these meetings would be mostly local affairs. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, probably because of American influences, there was much more emphasis on large-scale meetings drawing up to two or three thousand people.

Yet curiously enough there was not much personal contact. The KVP, like most other political parties in the Netherlands, did no door-
knocking or canvassing in order to get out the vote (only the PvdA experimented with this). The closest thing to this style of electioneering by the KVP would be a small pamphlet entitled "A morning greeting" put in mailboxes on the morning of the election. Even in small villages very little direct pressure was put upon people to vote KVP. But then as one party official described it: "It was not really needed" (Interview No. 34).

The KVP depended heavily upon the media for influencing Catholics in their voting behaviour. There would be talks on the KRO by the "list leaders" on the KVP election list and Romme would remind Catholics of their duty in his newspaper column in *De Volkskrant* and on his radio talk show. Publications of organizations like the Catholic Middle-Class Organization and the Catholic Farmers Association urged their members to vote for the KVP. As well, members of the Catholic Farmers Association were given personal reminders at meetings.

The KAB/NKV was much less enthusiastic in mobilizing support for the KVP but nevertheless still suggested to its membership to vote KVP. This would be done through trade union publications with statements to the effect that the chairman had approved the KVP program. But little was done beyond this. "To tell you the truth the climate in which to do that sort of thing (telling Catholic workers to vote KVP) was lacking. They would have resented it. . . . There were a number of study days for NKV members on political matters to the effect that one was a citizen and should vote. But the implication of these sessions was that the choice of party was a member's own responsibility" (Interview No. 32).

To what extent did the KVP appeal to the voters on strictly religious or ideological issues? To what extent did the KVP play upon
the Catholic identity of voters? In the early post-war period De Opmars makes several references to the need for cohesion evoking images of dikes, walls and fortresses. The chairman of the KVP wrote that, "The KVP stands there as the political bulwark of Catholic might, a stable might which gives strength to the Dutch nation." Just before the election of 1948 De Opmars warned about evil outside forces "against which we have to form a front, in which no breach can be formed, on which all attacks will fail." 

In the mid 1950s at election time De Opmars contained statements that the emancipation of Catholics was not yet complete and that a great deal of work remained to be done. However, the Catholic voter was not inundated with this sort of electioneering propaganda. At election time there were no direct references to discrimination against Catholics. Rather the programmatic aspects were stressed, often in the form of outlining the records of KVP cabinet ministers. The positive aspects of the diverse socio-economic base of the KVP was emphasized. The KVP was depicted as the only genuinely balanced political party because its support base represented a virtual mirror image of Dutch society in terms of class and region.

This does not mean that appeals based on the Dutch Catholic identity were lacking. It was not at election time but in between elections that the KVP often played upon the fears and religiosity of Catholics. De Opmars contains several references to the alleged second-class citizenship status of Catholics and to the idea that the KVP was the one and only party for Catholics. Parallels would be drawn between battles from the past and contemporary conflicts. Thus in the 18 March 1956 issue, De Opmars headlined an article criticizing a non-Catholic cabinet minister
for refusing funds for a second Catholic hospital in Amsterdam as follows: "After the struggle for schools, the struggle for hospitals." In the 24 September 1954 issue of De Opmars there is an article on the KRO stating boldly that the existence of the KRO was conditional upon the existence of the KVP. "Without the KVP there would be no KRO." In the 21 January 1955 issue of De Opmars there is an article alleging that Catholics were deliberately being discriminated against in the province of Gelderland with regard to civil service appointments. In the October 1957 issue of De Opmars an entire page is devoted to the theme that the Dutch Catholic was still a second-class citizen and that there were still strong anti-Catholic sentiments. It gave the example of a ceremony involving the laying of the first stone of a new Church. The ceremony took place behind a screen which the article claimed was used for fear of evoking the wrath of non-Catholic Holland if the ceremony were to be held in the open.

Much was made of the Catholic connection. Reports on party congresses usually included detailed descriptions and illustrations of the special masses held for the participants. The 20 January 1956 issue of De Opmars contains a number of photographs of Cardinal Alfrink with various leaders of the KVP at a special banquet commemorating the tenth anniversary of the KVP. A gigantic motorized bicycle rally, organized by the KVP just before the election of 1956, ended in the city of Assen with an open air mass. 78

Members of the Church hierarchy were often cited with regard to political matters. In the 4 March 1955 issue of De Opmars Mgr. Hanssen is quoted as saying that although the socialism of the PvdA had become "more moderate it was still unacceptable." The religious bond between Catholics was used as a direct justification for political unity. Thus
Romme in *De Volkskrant* (2 December 1955) noted that "The individual members of the different classes do not sit together only on Sundays within the same room. It is also in daily life that they are obliged to remain conscious of their Christian unity."

The persistent use by the KVP of religious and ideological issues can in part be explained by the intervention of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The KVP had to provide some sort of reaction to the public statements of the bishops such as the Mandement of 1954. In contrast to Catholic organizations such as the KAB, which paid little attention to this document and downplayed its importance, the KVP vigorously defended the Mandement. Since they were in a sense "the ministry of external affairs" for the Dutch Catholic bloc, KVP leaders undoubtedly felt it was their responsibility to defend the document.

However, the uncritical and enthusiastic acceptance of the document by the KVP indicates that many of the leaders genuinely did believe that they were still second-class citizens and that it was their duty, and the duty of all Catholics, to faithfully follow the directions of the Church hierarchy. KVP propaganda undoubtedly articulated the feelings of many other Catholics and at the same time reinforced those feelings. *De Opmars* (11 June 1954) heralded the Mandement in large type.

Catholic Holland can with a great deal of justification feel enriched. It is a genuine Catholic gift given to us by men who are deeply conscious of their great responsibility of carrying out their pastoral role. Those . . . who do not understand that Catholics accept this Mandement as among the most beautiful of all possible gifts and those who complain about the infringement of liberty, do not know what it means to be Catholic and even less what true liberty is for a Catholic.

Professor Gielen, the minister of education (KVP) at the time, in interpreting the Mandement, stated that as Catholics, "We cannot entertain thoughts which in large measure go against the wishes of the bishops."
And even before the appearance of the Mandement the leader of the Catholic party, Romme, asked rhetorically in *De Volkskrant* (19 July 1953) if one could still talk about freedom of choice if Catholics were morally obliged to vote KVP. "Yes certainly because one is not compelled to be Catholic, that is to say, one has the freedom to leave the Church if one wants."

Whatever the personal feelings of KVP leaders, the 1954 Mandement undoubtedly had the effect of stimulating greater activity within the party. Jean Beaufays has demonstrated that KVP membership had gradually dropped from 409,084 members in 1948 to 269,376 in 1954. In 1955 the figures jumped to 429,939, the highest membership figure ever. After this high point membership started to drop again, falling to 218,374 in 1965. Since most memberships were sold on a door-to-door basis the sudden increase probably indicated greater energy on the part of KVP activists in a more receptive market. Although the party had suffered some losses in 1952 it was not until 1955, after the appearance of the Mandement, that the KVP did further spade work to ensure that the party was in better shape for the election in 1956.

Thus in the post-war period the KVP was still highly dependent upon the authority of the Church both in providing a basis for mobilizing support and in giving the party a necessary jolt at appropriate times to keep party workers active, thereby helping to ensure electoral success.

3. The Vote

What specific propositions can be put forward concerning the behaviour of Catholic voters up to 1963? I have shown that the influence
of the Church had made most Catholics highly dependent upon the Church for guidance. (1) The first proposition, therefore, is that Catholics tended to view voting for the Catholic party as being little different from going to mass, attending Catholic schools and reading Catholic newspapers. More specifically, the expectation is that Catholics behaving in an appropriately confessional manner would also have voted for the Catholic party. Catholics would tend to fuse all this behaviour under one rubric, making little or no distinction between different modes of behaviour. It is unlikely that they would have chosen a Catholic organization in one context and a non-Catholic organization in another context. (2) Secondly, Catholics would have had the feeling that they were receiving some minimal return for their support. There was a pragmatic or rational element in their behaviour. Significantly, their loyalty to the Catholic cause, including the policies of the Catholic party, did not undermine their economic or social interests.

The Church attempted to make its influence felt all across the Netherlands. Yet there are a number of factors which made the social control of the Church much more effective in some areas than in others as illustrated by the regional differences in observance of Easter mass (see table 2.6, p.89). The following propositions concern these factors: (3) Catholics were more likely to vote KVP in the Catholic south where the high concentration of Catholics provided an additional means of social control. (4) Catholics living in non-urbanized or less urbanized areas outside of the Catholic south are also more likely to vote KVP. (5) Catholics living in major urban areas, where conditions for social control were less
favourable and exposure to non-Catholic influences greater, were less likely to vote KVP.

In testing these propositions some reference will be made to the RKSP of the inter-war period. However, the availability of data will restrict much of the discussion to the post-war period, particularly with regard to propositions three to five.

Religiosity, Associational Life and Voting. High quality measures of religiosity are lacking. It can be demonstrated, however, that Catholics who regularly attended mass also participated in Catholic organizational life or were at least members of Catholic organizations. It can also be demonstrated that those who regularly attended mass also tended to vote KVP. Reference will be made to studies made at the national and local levels.

A study done in Amsterdam in 1963 of young parishioners between the ages 13 to 19 noted that those who "fell out," that is, stopped going to mass, quickly lost all contact with Catholic organizational life. Those who continued to attend mass regularly remained loyal. The difference is quite clear cut as can be seen in table 3.1 where the two groups, those who attend mass and those who do not, are compared. Table 3.1 illustrates the degree of difference between the two groups. Mass attenders remain largely insulated within Catholic organizations; the latter are almost completely cut off from Catholic organizational life. Since this sample is drawn from Catholic youth in Amsterdam only, it is not representative of the entire population. Nevertheless, a 1955 national survey found that 69 percent of all practicing Catholic males belonged to Roman Catholic organizations only, versus 9 percent for those who did not attend mass
Another study of a medium-sized northeastern city in 1960 reports that 77 percent of all Catholics in that city were "organized" with each such Catholic boasting an average of 1.42 memberships.84

Table 3.1
Type of Organization by Mass Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attend Mass</th>
<th>Do Not Attend Mass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member of R.C. organization only</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of both R.C. and non-R.C.</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of non-R.C. only</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: KASKI, Rapport No. 293, 1963, p. 64

There are no studies or surveys of that era combining information on religious practice, organizational membership as well as voting behaviour. There is evidence, however, that those Catholics who attend mass regularly also voted KVP. Wolinetz, analyzing a 1956 national public opinion poll originally used by Lijphart, found that 90 percent of Catholics who attended mass regularly voted KVP (N = 346) versus 41 percent of Catholics who went to mass irregularly (N = 41).85 It is worth noting that nearly 90 percent of Catholics were "practicing" Catholics, thereby ensuring that 85% of all Catholics in the sample voted KVP.86

What further evidence is there that voting behaviour and religious orthodoxy among Catholics are closely linked together? It was noted in
chapter II that the Dutch Church placed a very high value on those marriages which resulted in families with several children. It was further documented that parish priests during visits to the homes of families would inquire into the number and ages of children. One would expect, therefore, that in areas where the birth rate among Catholics was very high the KVP vote would be very high. In table 3.2 below the different degrees of political orthodoxy of municipal districts in the largely Catholic provinces of Limburg and North Brabant are related to the annual birth rate. The data show a definite relationship between political orthodoxy among Catholics and the birth rate.

Table 3.2

KVP Vote by Birth Rate by Province
(No. of births per 1000 married women)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% KVP Vote among Catholics (1952)</th>
<th>North Brabant (1952)</th>
<th>Limburg (1952)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95% +</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-94</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-88</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-82</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-76</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69 and less</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: KASKI Rapport No. 171, p. 60.

Perhaps the best evidence that confessional loyalty, organizational membership and voting behaviour were highly interrelated is that the Church itself used voting statistics as a measure of Church loyalty on the part of Catholics. For the Church a low level of political orthodoxy among
Catholics in any area of the country was cause for anxiety. Not only was the goal of political unity of concern but, more importantly, the spiritual and social well-being of the Catholics within such areas would be open to question.

The Catholic Social Research Institute in the Hague (KASKI) was frequently called upon by the different dioceses to do studies of problem areas where there was concern over high levels of unemployment, crime and immorality among Catholics. One of the first tasks performed by KASKI, in examining such an area, was a detailed analysis of the voting patterns, often on a poll by poll basis. Using this technique they could quickly identify particular neighbourhoods or pockets where social conditions were likely to be particularly bad. These data would be collated with reports from parish priests, social workers, data on unemployment, disease and so on. KASKI reports of this nature would lead to recommendations such as increased welfare services or the encouragement of Catholic enterprises both to provide jobs for unemployed Catholics and to insulate Catholics from secular influences. Thus for the Church, examining the voting behaviour of its flock was a way of checking the pulse rate, a way of keeping an eye on the spiritual as well as the social and economic well-being of the Catholic population.

As noted in chapter II, most Catholics did not join Catholic organizations for purely spiritual reasons. Nor did these organizations perform or attempt to perform any spiritual or apostolic functions, not even organizations such as Catholic Action. Catholics joined such organizations because it was expected of them—it defined the essence of being Catholic. Most Catholics accepted this duty uncritically and there is no
evidence that their attitude towards the Catholic party was any different.

Gadourek reports that Catholics residing in the village of Sassenheim displayed a level of knowledge concerning political affairs that was lower than that of Protestants and those having no religion.\textsuperscript{88} A 1958 indepth study by KASKI of the political beliefs and attitudes of Catholic workers revealed that these workers were barely, if at all, acquainted with the KVP party program, even though this document was widely distributed at election time and publicized in the Catholic and KVP press. A little more than half of the sample of 105 knew of the existence of a party program but were unaware of the contents. The remainder of the sample knew nothing of a KVP program.\textsuperscript{89}

There is also evidence that Catholics did not really perceive politics and support for the KVP as a distinct form of behaviour. Gadourek notes that for Catholics in Sassenheim it was very difficult to distinguish political activities from other Church, social and cultural activities. "The lack of differentiation between the sphere of religion and that of politics was thus repeatedly affirmed by our research."\textsuperscript{90}

\textbf{The Catholic Vote and Rationality.} Catholics voted for the Catholic party in large part because of their uncritical acceptance of strong Church pressures. Catholics as a whole tended to be over-represented in the less well off sectors of Dutch society. There is evidence that they were less interested and less well informed about politics in comparison with non-Catholics. On the basis of this evidence a Marxist might argue that in voting for the Catholic party Catholics were behaving in less than rational fashion, that is to say, voting against their own
economic interests.

Let us begin with the Catholic working-class. One could make the case that the highly conservative fiscal policies of confessional cabinets during the 1930s were in part responsible for keeping unemployment at very high levels causing hardship for both manual and non-manual workers. Catholic workers might have been better off if they had given their support to the SDAP. The SDAP had policies and programs with strong Keynesian overtones designed by economists of the calibre of Jan Tinbergen.

Yet one must remember that the year 1918, the year that SDAP leader Troelstra made a call for revolution, was still strongly imprinted on the memories of both Catholics and non-Catholics. Furthermore, even accepting the fact that after 1918 the SDAP had quickly changed its position and become more moderate and responsible, many Catholics may not necessarily have perceived the election of an SDAP government as leading to an improvement of their objective conditions. In view of what happened in France (e.g. the popular front government of Léon Blum) and the conservative policies of Ramsay MacDonald in Britain, such a view would have been realistic. As well, even if the Catholic working-class had decided en masse to support the SDAP this would not necessarily have meant electoral victory for that party.

It is impossible to reconstruct the mental processes of Catholic workers of that time. Certainly the Church was worried that the SDAP, as well as the National Socialists, would be making inroads into Catholic support, particularly in the mining areas and large cities like Rotterdam. However, given the effective work done on behalf of Catholic workers by Catholic political and social leaders many workers may well have concluded that their fate was at least more secure in the hands of Catholic leaders.
In the post-war period the KVP and the PvdA were the two major participants in a series of coalition cabinets lasting from 1946 to 1958. The two parties are usually considered the major architects of post-war economic recovery programs which involved rigid wage and price controls. The KVP in its propaganda sold itself as the 'social party' that was strongly attuned with the needs and wishes of Catholic workers. The 1958 KASKI study cited earlier, concerning the political beliefs of Catholic workers, noted that both KVP and non-KVP voters were highly suspicious of the government's wage and price control policy. They voiced the opinion that unspecified "powerful groups in society" were being given undue advantages. Yet at the same time both KVP and non-KVP voters were in favour of the Red-Roman coalition and were strongly against the coalition breaking up. The KVP voters in the sample were all reasonably concerned with their economic position in life and alleged that their support was in part contingent upon the continuation of the Red-Roman coalition or at least that a break with the PvdA would result in a great deal of consternation on their part.

During this period the KVP also emphasized that it represented all classes. Since the only non-confessional business oriented party, the Liberal party, was in opposition for a large part of the time, the KVP could claim with some validity that their party was a highly suitable conduit for Catholic business interests to communicate with government and have some influence on government policy. This argument was credible since the Catholic party was represented in virtually every cabinet in the period from 1948 to 1972. On an aggregate basis it received a higher number of cabinet positions in proportion to its numerical support in comparison with the other parties.
In 1958 as a result of changes in leadership the PvdA decided to take a more left-wing stance breaking the Red-Roman coalition. For the next seven years the KVP ruled in a coalition with the Liberals and the two other main confessional parties (ARP and CHU). During this period large reserves of natural gas were discovered in the North Sea which were successfully exploited much to the benefit of the Dutch economy. Real income rose, particularly after 1963 when price and wage controls were finally phased out. At the same time KVP leaders emphasized that they would not rule out future coalitions with the PvdA and in 1965 the KVP once again participated in a coalition cabinet with the PvdA.

In short the position of the Catholic party was usually competitive vis-à-vis the other parties. In the post-war period the natural inclination on economic grounds of Catholic workers may have been to support the PvdA and that of the middle-classes to support the Liberals. However, their support for the KVP, as a result of their loyalty to the Church, involved no economic sacrifices. There was no basic inconsistency in voting KVP and being concerned with one's economic self-interest. As with the case of the KRO, Catholic trade unions and other Catholic institutions and organizations, there was no incentive for Catholics to switch their support to an alternative political party in order to gain satisfaction or in the hope of obtaining significantly better conditions. Conversely, there were no losses involved in obeying the wishes of the Church and supporting the Catholic party.

*Homogeneity, Urbanization and Church Influence.* Two basic sets of factors, boundary maintenance and pressure by the Church, and the provision of adequate services by the socio-economic institutions of the Catholic
subculture, were important in ensuring that the vast majority of Catholics voted for the Catholic party. Nevertheless, the operation of these two sets of factors was governed to some extent by certain basic structural characteristics.

There was some leakage from the Catholic subculture as evidenced by the gradual decline over the years in the proportion of Catholics who voted KVP. Thus in 1948 89.0 percent of all Catholics voted Catholic. By 1963 this percentage had gradually dropped down to 84.8 percent.\(^{98}\) However, this was not a major decline. Moreover, there is no evidence that the KVP paid much attention to it or were even aware of it. During this period the Catholic proportion of the total population grew from 38.5 percent (1947 census) to 40.4 percent (1960 census).\(^{99}\) This explains the fact that although the percentage of Catholics voting KVP slowly declined the percentage of the total popular vote for the KVP remained relatively constant.

Looking at where this leakage occurred, however, can tell us something about the conditions which facilitated or hindered the effectiveness of the Church and the institutions of the Catholic subculture. I will now proceed to demonstrate the effect of two variables; urbanization and the degree of Catholic concentration.\(^{100}\)

In chapter II data were presented on the rate of Easter observance by Catholics in the different dioceses. Unfortunately a broad category like diocese covers up important variations such as the degree of urbanization, for example. For the period 1946 to 1963, however, there are available data at the municipal district level concerning urbanization, proportion of the population which is Catholic and the voting returns for the different parties.\(^{101}\) These data allow one to test propositions
concerning urbanization and Catholic concentration in some detail.

The first important factor is that of urbanization. The rural-urban distinction is especially important in the area above the rivers. It was in the large urban centres like Rotterdam where the socialists made considerable effort to wean Catholics away from the Church. As well modern, cosmopolitan influences had an effect. And those who were less than enthusiastic about the Church would find it easier to escape the social control mechanisms of the Church and the influence of friends and family.

In the non-southern, non-urban areas one might well expect the KVP vote to have been higher than in urban areas (e.g. in terms of orthodoxy of Catholics). In villages and towns where life tends to be quite traditional the Church would be well entrenched and there was less likelihood of escaping control from the Church. As Goddijn has noted the Church made considerable effort to ensure that Catholics outside of the south, especially in the so-called diaspora areas where there were few Catholics, would remain within the fold.\textsuperscript{102}

The rural-urban difference can also be of relevance within the Catholic south. In the south are a number of urban centres and a great deal of the urbanization which occurred in the Netherlands during the inter-war period and the post-war period took place in this region.\textsuperscript{103} For example the multi-national Philips Corporation began life in the late nineteenth century in the North Brabant town of Eindhoven with a handful of employees. By 1937 the concern employed 19,500 people and by 1955 it employed 56,000. The rapid expansion of the firm had a significant impact on the province drawing scores of Catholics from the rural hinterland to the city of Eindhoven.\textsuperscript{104}
The second factor is that of Catholic concentration. A higher proportion of Catholics within a given area offers an additional means of social control. There would be fear of gossip, pressure from neighbours and friends and so on which would persuade people to be good Catholics or at least give the impression of being good Catholics and this could carry over to the ballot box. This factor would be especially important in the solidly Catholic areas below the rivers. It would also be important in those pockets of Catholicism above the rivers where often entire villages would be solidly Catholic.

One way of looking at the effects of urbanization and Catholic concentration is to look at the political orthodoxy, over time, of Catholics located within the categories resulting from combinations of the two variables. The data are shown in graph form in figure 3.1. One can see that the greatest difference results from the rural-urban cleavage (categories 1, 2 and 3 versus 7 and 8). Catholics residing in non-urban areas were much more likely to support the KVP even outside of the Catholic south. Thus it appears that Church control was much more effective in non-urban areas.

Catholics residing in the area below the rivers, the Catholic south, gave on the whole more support to the KVP than those residing in the area above the rivers (compare category 4 with category 6). In the south the mutual reinforcement of fellow Catholics, along with Church influence, probably helped to ensure a high vote for the KVP. Breaking down the data further, however, reveals some interesting differences. Catholics most likely to vote KVP were those residing in non-urban areas in the north where the majority of the population within a village or town was Catholic (i.e. at least 60 percent). In northern communities of this
Figure 3.1 Percentage of Catholics Voting KVP by Context
(Source: Houska and Leiden Ecological data sets.
For details see Appendix III)
Key to Figure 3.1

1. Catholics in non-urban municipal districts in the north (area above the Rhine) which are at least 60% Catholic (non-urban = population less than 30,000).

2. Catholics in non-urban districts in homogeneous Catholic south (area below the Rhine encompassing provinces of North Brabant, Limburg and part of Gelderland).

3. Catholics in all non-urban districts in the north.

4. All Catholics in the south.

5. Catholic population as a whole.

6. All Catholics in the north.

7. Catholics in urban districts in the south (urban = population more than 30,000).

8. Catholics in urban districts in the north.
type, where the Calvinist penetration and the isolationist mentality were much more important, vigilance of the clergy and past traditions (combined with mutual support from local Catholics) probably account for the very high vote for the KVP among Catholics.

It should be remembered that within some of the above-listed categories there is also considerable variation. Thus the Catholic vote in Rotterdam (60 percent) was much lower than that in Amsterdam (74 percent). The Catholic vote in the mining areas of Limburg was also somewhat lower than in other areas in the south. Strong local historical traditions appear to be at work in these cases. It was in Rotterdam at the turn of the century where the Church was least effective in handling the problems of an industrializing society involving large-scale migration of workers. The consequences of those failures appear to have been carried well into the post-war period.

Thus structural variables such as the rural-urban cleavage and the degree of Catholic concentration do appear to have had an effect on the KVP vote. There is a spread of more than 20 percentage points between Catholics residing in northern, urban areas and those in northern, non-urban areas where Catholics were in a majority (category 1 versus category 8). Factors such as urbanization and lack of Catholic concentration tended to hinder the efforts of the Church in insulating and mobilizing Catholics.

The data shown in figure 3.1 reveal further aspects of the role played by the Church in Catholic political life. In 1948 the bishops intervened directly by asking Catholics just before election day to support the KVP. The bishops had not done so in the 1946 election. One can see the increase in support for the KVP in the election of 1948. In the 1952 election the bishops did not intervene and as well the dissident
KNP under the leadership of Welter competed with the KVP for Catholic votes. Support for the KVP in 1952 dropped by more than five percentage points. In 1954 the bishops issued their Mandement urging Catholics to maintain social and political unity. This resulted in increased organizational activity by the KVP and in the return of the KNP to the KVP. Support for the KVP in the 1956 election was at its highest level ever, higher even than levels attained by the pre-war RKSP.

Finally, it should be noted that in spite of significant differences between the various categories as shown in figure 3.1, the support for the KVP in all categories was very high in terms of cross-national criteria. Even the support shown by Dutch Catholics residing in northern urban centres was substantially higher than the overall support given by Catholics to Catholic parties in other nations. One of the more important conclusions one can draw from these data is that the Catholic subculture was remarkably successful in maintaining political cohesion among Catholics in all sectors of Dutch society.

4. Summary

The dominant theme that comes through is the overwhelming importance of the Church in determining all aspects of Catholic political life. It was the ecclesiastical hierarchy which was responsible for keeping the Catholic party intact and holding defections and splinter parties to a minimum. It was the hierarchy in combination with a willing and able clergy which ensured that Catholics voted *en masse* for the Catholic party.

The major goal of the bishops was to maintain "the sacred unity" of the Catholic subculture. In the 1920s the bishops expressly forbade Catholic socio-economic organizations from participating directly or even
indirectly in politics and permitted the existence of only one Catholic political organization. At the behest of the bishops the Saint Michaëls League and the League of R.C. Electoral Associations coalesced to form the R.C. State Party. Other Catholic splinter parties in the inter-war period were condemned both publicly and privately in no uncertain terms. As a result such parties did extremely poorly at election time. In the post-war period the Catholic party was resurrected largely at the request of the hierarchy. Again pressure was applied by the bishops, mostly in the form of public statements, on dissident Catholic parties and movements to return to the fold.

During the inter-war period the Church was directly involved in mobilizing the Catholic vote for the Catholic party. Messages from the hierarchy were read by priests from the pulpit at election time. The clergy actively worked to help deliver the vote including the holding of special classes in order to instruct parishioners on how to fill out the ballot. In the post-war period the Church was less directly involved in mobilizing the vote. Nevertheless they actively fostered the ideology of preserving unity including the expectation that parishioners should and would vote KVP.

In the post-war period the Catholic party was still highly dependent upon the Church in spite of its aim to turn itself into a programmatic party. Yet at the same time precisely because the Church was responsible for maintaining the political cohesion of Catholics, the Catholic party was able to be extremely flexible in carrying out functions such as interest group representation and regional representation. Since the party's role was not to proselytize it needed only to act defensively when issues involving the Catholic subculture such as broadcasting and education came
into the political arena. Furthermore, the party was sufficiently competitive, catering to the needs of both working-class and non-working-class Catholics. The Catholic party was aided in this by the relative size of competing parties (i.e. their probable lack of success) most likely to prove attractive to Catholic voters (the SDAP/PvdA and the Liberals). The situation was such that most Catholics could give their support to the Catholic party and remain loyal to the Catholic subculture while at the same time not doing violence to their economic interests.

Contextual factors such as urbanization and concentration of Catholics had an effect in varying the vote among Catholics. This was attributed to the way the social control of the Church was affected by these variables, social control being more difficult in heavily urbanized regions of the Netherlands. At the same time the overall vote remained extremely high.

By the early 1960s the KVP was complacent. After the difficulties in reconstructing the party in the early post-war period and the problem of the KNP in the early 1950s, things were going smoothly. In the 1963 election the KVP obtained 31.9 percent of the total popular vote, its best ever result. One prominent KVP politician described a special celebration which was held in the city of Den Bosch just after the 1963 election. It was apparently very pleasant. The KVP prime minister De Quai had just finished presiding over a very successful cabinet over a four-year period. They had done very well in the election. At the same time everyone at this party gathering was blissfully unaware of what lay in store for them in the next few years (Interview No. 16).

In the following chapters I will examine the changes that occurred in the 1960s. I will discuss how changes within the Church resulted in a
significant redrawing of the boundaries of the Catholic subculture, how this affected the KVP, the response of voters to these changes and the attempts made by the KVP to rescue the situation.
Footnotes


4 De Jong, p. 279.

5 Ibid., p. 279.


7 Ibid., p. 566.

8 Ibid., p. 566.


12 Van Tijn, p. 574.

13 De Jong, p. 295.


15 Steenhof, p. 12.

16 De Jong, p. 309.

17 Van Tijn, p. 576.

19 De Jong, p. 308.

20 Ibid., p. 310.

21 Bornewasser, pp. 32-37; De Jong, pp. 308-314.


23 Steenhof, p. 44.

24 De Jong, p. 357.


26 Steenhof, p. 118.


28 Steenhof, pp. 66-85.


31 Ibid., p. 83.


34 Ibid., p. 44.


36 Schöffer, p. 46.

37 Ibid., p. 59.

38 Gribling, p. 289.

39 Daalder, p. 224.

For example, one prominent Catholic politician when asked for an interview, refused explaining that, "On account of my responsibility as minister of . . . and as . . . I always bore in mind as a ruling principle to abstain from any direct activity in a political party." Correspondence to the author, dated June 20, 1976. See also Daalder, p. 221.


Unfortunately there is no systematic study of the socio-economic origins of the leaders and parliamentarians of the Catholic party over the years. Most sources seem to indicate, however, that members of the upper echelons were largely of middle-class origins. Evidence of this can be found by looking at the brief biographical sketches of the members of the Second Chamber in the parliamentary guide published annually. Thus in 1963 of the 48 KVP members in the Second Chamber, two appeared to have had no secondary school education. Both were from the Catholic trade union movement. The remainder had either a classical secondary school education (usually an indicator of "middle-class upbringing") or a post-secondary school technical training (e.g. engineering). Twenty-three of the 48 KVP parliamentarians had at least six or more years of education at a university; eight of them had doctorates. P. Goossen, *Parlement en Kiezer* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964).


Referring again to the 48 KVP members of the Second Chamber in 1963 the breakdown of the group in terms of organizational membership is as follows: Labour (including white collar unions and the Catholic Women's Labour Federation), 5; Employers, 3; Social culture-education (including hospital insurance associations, White-Yellow Cross, etc.), 11; Agriculture, 6; Middle-Class, 5; Academia, 5; Military, 2; Journalism, 2; Miscellaneous (includes chairman of Catholic Mayoralty Association, 2 high ranking executives of Phillips Electronics, lawyers and government bureaucrats), 8. All organizations in which KVP parliamentarians had memberships were Catholic with the exception of certain international organizations. Source: Goossen, *passim*.


Van Eekeren, p. 241.
In part this was due to the fact that the very largest corporations like Shell, Unilever and Hoogovens steel mills were not members of any of the confessional employer associations like the Catholic one. This allowed the Catholic Association to be closer to the Middle-Class and Farmers organizations on a number of issues by not having to defend the interests of the large corporations (Interview No. 41).


Ammerlaan, p. 75.

Schöffer, p. 75.

Beaufays, p. 583.


Manning, pp. 62-70.


Beaufays, pp. 602-603.


Van Eekeren, p. 83.

*Ibid.*, p. 83. The appeals made by the bishops in 1948 were stronger than the ones made in 1946. Furthermore, in 1948 the bishops intervened during the election campaign itself, not before as in 1946.

The Mandement stated that since the Netherlands was a democracy the hierarchy could not order its flock to vote for the KVP. Nevertheless, the bishops did note that it was their sincerest wish that Catholics would indeed support the KVP. *De Katholiek in het Openbare Leven van deze Tijd. Bisschoppelijk Mandement van 1954* (Zeist, 1954), pp. 35-36.

No. 3 (October 1974), pp. 292-315.


70 Communication from KRO to the author, dated April 2, 1976.

71 Beaufays, p. 420.

72 De Opmars, 24 September 1954.

73 De Opmars, 18 April 1952.


75 De Opmars, 7 November 1947.

76 De Opmars, 28 May 1948.

77 De Opmars, July 1957.

78 De Opmars, 18 May 1956.


81 Beaufays, p. 420.

82 One full-time KVP party worker in the 1950s was sent from the Hague to the province of North Brabant in 1955 in order to do organizational work, setting up committees in communities to study economic problems, sending back reports to the Hague and so on (Interview No. 43).


86 Ibid., p. 97.

87 E.g. KASKI, "De politieke structuur van Utrecht in vergelijking met de religieuze en maatschappelijke structuur," Rapport No. 90b.1, 1953.


Gadourek, p. 392.

See Schöffer, p. 59.


Even if all Catholic workers had voted for the SDAP this would have given the socialists only 42 percent of the total popular vote.

KASKI, p. 25.

Ibid., pp. 25-27.

This is due almost entirely to the fact that the Catholic party was the only party which was represented in virtually all coalition governments in the period 1918-1972. All the other parties had been left out in the cold, so to speak, at some time or other for significant periods of time, particularly the Liberals (VVD) and the Socialists. One way of examining the amount of leverage enjoyed by the Catholic party in coalition cabinets is to look at the extent to which it was able to initiate and/or affect the outcome of decisions. R. Rogowski, drawing on the literature on coalition behaviour and welfare economics, has calculated the "probabilities of unique determination" for factions or blocs (i.e. Catholics, Socialists) in a number of countries including the Netherlands. The "probability of unique determination" is defined as the odds that a given faction will either be able to introduce and pass a proposal, or will be decisive in defeating a proposal that it opposes (and, assumedly, has not introduced). R. Rogowski, *Rational Legitimacy: A Theory of Political Support* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 138. His calculations for the Netherlands are presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faction</th>
<th>Probabilities of Unique Determination</th>
<th>Percent of Popular Vote</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholics</td>
<td>.354</td>
<td>30+</td>
<td>~1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialists</td>
<td>.276</td>
<td>30-</td>
<td>~ .89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestants</td>
<td>.193</td>
<td>~20</td>
<td>~ .97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberals</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>~10</td>
<td>~ .82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For details as to how the Probabilities of Unique Determination are calculated, see Rogowski, pp. 138-141.
(Note the difference between the Catholic bloc and the other blocs. Thus, the amount of leverage enjoyed by the Catholic party in parliament may well have enhanced the credibility of the party in the eyes of its electorate.)


100 Contextual variables such as these have not been well discussed in the literature. The best single work is H. Tingsten, Political Behavior (Totowa: Bedminster, 1963). See also D. J. Elkins, "Regional Contexts of Political Participation: Some Illustrations from South India," Canadian Journal of Political Science, Vol. 5, No. 2 (June 1972), pp. 167-189.

101 See appendix III for details on these ecological data.


105 Note: There are no northern urban districts where Catholics constitute more than 60 percent of the population.
Chapter IV

THE THEOLOGICAL REVOLT AND CHANGES IN THE CATHOLIC SUBCULTURE

Without the authority of the Church the Catholic party would not have enjoyed such a high level of support among Catholics in the Netherlands. And without the intervention of the Church the Catholic party itself would have been rent asunder. The emphasis on unity among Catholics in both social and political life was maintained largely at the behest of the ecclesiastical hierarchy who could rely on a willing and able clergy to help foster appropriate expectations and, if necessary, apply the necessary sanctions.

Yet in the 1960s a number of remarkable changes occurred in Dutch Catholicism, changes initiated by the Church itself. Catholics were given much greater individual responsibility in deciding what was appropriate and what was inappropriate behaviour making it much more a matter of individual conscience. Catholics were asked by the Church for advice in revising the liturgy and the catechism. In many parishes Catholics were asked to aid in running the affairs of the parish. In 1965 the sanctions contained in the Mandement of 1954 were publicly repealed. And in 1967, just before the national election, one of the bishops announced on television that in his opinion it was no longer necessary to vote for the Catholic party in order to be a good Catholic.¹

What was the nature and scope of the change in the Dutch Catholic Church? What caused this re-orientation on the part of the Church hierarchy and clergy? What were the consequences for subcultural cohesion?
1. Changes Within the Church

Theological Changes. The papal encyclical of 1891, Rerum Novarum, had a profound influence on many clergy and lay Catholics with regard to the challenges of industrialization. The impetus for designing and implementing solutions to deal with social problems came from these people rather than the hierarchy. A number of reform minded priests and lay Catholics met together in the Klarenbeekse Club, to discuss ideas on social reform. In the inter-war period the work of progressive Catholics was largely overshadowed by the triumphalism of the Rich Roman Life. Yet in spite of this, progressive minded priests and laity continued with their work. In addition there developed, as a reaction to the cultural spirit of the Rich Roman Life, a group of young Catholic writers who were highly critical of many aspects of Dutch Catholicism. This rather amorphous group formed what Thurlings has referred to as an undercurrent in Dutch Catholic life. This undercurrent, though having no immediate impact in changing Catholic public opinion, nevertheless had long term consequences.

This undercurrent persisted in the post-war period. In 1947 a group of priests, mainly because of their experiences during the war, wanted to see a changed Church. Particularly they wanted the Church to relax its attitude on matters such as family planning and political affairs. In 1954, however, the bishops in an effort to ensure the political unity of Catholics invoked the spectre of severe Church sanctions with the Mandement. This action stifled what few creative tendencies did exist in institutions such as the KVP. Instead of a general change within the Catholic subculture towards openness the opposite occurred.

Yet within the Church itself, in spite of the 1954 Mandement, or
quite possibly because of it, the undercurrent flourished, particularly in many of the seminaries and the new theological faculty at the Catholic University in Nijmegen. A Catholic priest, currently a dean and formerly a teacher at a seminary, noted: "When the Mandement came out in 1954 I was furious. I strongly disagreed with it and said as much to my students" (Interview No. 36).

In a number of Catholic publications such as De Basuin and Ter Elfder Ure, aimed mainly at intellectuals, people who were critical of the conservative theology of the Dutch Church aired their views. A magazine for Catholic servicemen, G-3, also acted as a forum for those critical of the tenor of Dutch Catholicism. Catholic theologians in the Netherlands generally were quite unhappy with what they saw as a dangerous physicalism or literalism which had developed, and worked actively in their research and teaching to re-interpret many of the doctrines and symbols of the Church. In 1957 Edward Schillebeeckx, a well known reform minded Catholic theologian from Belgium, arrived at the Catholic University in Nijmegen to take up a post in the theological faculty. Schillebeeckx, along with Dutch theologians such as Piet Schoonenberg, played an important role in revising Catholic doctrine. Evidence of their work and thinking can be seen in the contributions of the Dutch bishops to the Second Vatican Council.

These reform minded theologians emphasized more worldly concerns as opposed to the supernatural. They were unhappy with the pre-Vatican II formulae of transubstantiation, the immaculate conception and papal infallibility. Dutch theologians re-interpreted these doctrines as being symbols rather than concepts to be taken literally. There was a general attempt to demythologize the Church. Prerogatives which the Church held
to be exclusively their own, were watered down. For example, the body of Christ came to be seen as "subsisting in" rather than identical with their own Church.

The Church itself was demythologized. The classical marks of the true Church—unity, holiness, Catholicity and apostolic faithfulness—were seen more as eschatological expectations and challenges than arrogant presumptions of faith.7

Two points should be made concerning changes in theological thinking. The debate and possible revisions concerning Catholic theology occurred at an elite level. It was in the main restricted to Catholic theologians and intellectuals and published mostly in scholastic journals. Very little of this filtered down to the mass public. Secondly, the Netherlands was not unique in having a prolific group of progressive minded theologians. In both France and Germany there were progressive theologians with outstanding reputations. As well these countries also had journals like *De Bazuin* which involved lower clergy and lay elites in redefining Church doctrine. The "new theology" of French thinkers like Congar and Lubac is often said to have become the theology of Vatican II.8

The Role of the Bishops. The major difference between the Dutch Church and the Church elsewhere did not lie so much in currents in theological thinking but in the role that the Church hierarchy took upon itself. According to Coleman the Dutch bishops are unique in that they decided to deal with the pressures for change in an open and conciliatory manner thereby commanding broad support from clergy and laity.9

In 1958, only four years after the infamous Mandement, the bishops instituted a commission to look into problems of preaching and the catechesis which were seen as the weakest points within the Church.10 This commission lasted from 1958 to 1965. Although only an advisory body
to the bishops, it had broad terms of reference. In one of its earlier reports the commission suggested that clergy should concentrate their efforts in a more pastoral and religious direction while laity should become less dependent upon the support of spiritual advisors in the realm of socio-economic life. They offered a redefinition of tolerance which no longer implied persons outside of the Church were by definition evil. Rather they argued that tolerance should mean acceptance of a person because of the unassailable worth of any human being, regardless of religious persuasions. This redefinition was significant in that it indicated a decline in ultramontane sentiments, sentiments which were still evident in the Mandement of 1954.

In 1965 when the work of the commission was concluded, the bishops, acting on the advice of the commission, publicly rescinded all the negative sanctions applied to Catholic membership in so-called socialist organizations as outlined in the Mandement of 1954. Although it was this statement in 1965 which most clearly indicated the changed position of the Church with regard to the use of the Church's role in society, there had been prior public indications that changes were in the offing. Thus in the spring of 1959 in their Lenten message the bishops stated: "While the hierarchy claims the teaching role in the Church and determines what belongs to the treasury of the faith, the hierarchy only teaches what is already to be found living within the community of the faithful." The nuances of this carefully worded statement may not have been evident to ordinary Catholics. Nevertheless, argues Coleman, the message contained within it the "seeds of a view of authority involving a dialogue between shepherd and flock." In their Christmas letter of 1960 the bishops asked for lay
suggestions on both liturgical renewal and revision in the catechism. A new organization, the Advanced Institute for Catechetics in Nijmegen, was commissioned to write a new catechism "which would speak to the faith of modern man." Many of the initiatives taken by the bishops were done so in anticipation of the Second Vatican Council called by Pope John XXIII in 1959 to be convened in 1962. Through Dutch theologians both in the Netherlands and in Rome the Dutch bishops were kept informed of the preparations that were being made for the Council.

The most important contributions of the bishops were to popularize the reforms implemented throughout the decade of the 1960s and to give them practical effect. In 1960 a new bishop, Wilhelmus Bekkers, was appointed as head of the diocese of Den Bosch, one of the three southern dioceses. Although previously quite conservative, upon his installation he announced that the Church had found itself in a changed milieux and called for a new openness. He proceeded to introduce a number of experiments within his diocese. Every parish in his diocese set up a lay advisory board. The finances of the diocese and parishes were entrusted to competent groups of laymen. This was in keeping with Bekkers' deliberate aim to downgrade the status of the priest: "The priest of the future must remain an ordinary human being . . . a fellow man of the faith within the community of the faithful."

When Vatican II began Bekkers instituted discussion groups of lay Catholics and clergy within his diocese to debate the various issues as they came up in the Council. Bekkers was probably the most active of the Dutch bishops in Vatican II. Through the mechanism of the discussion group he kept in touch with the opinions of both ordinary lay Catholics and lower level clergy. As well he was very close to theologians, in
particular to Schillebeeckx.

In spite of his contributions to Vatican II, Bekkers was neither a deep thinker nor an outstanding theologian. Rather he had the great gift of being able to synthesize complex ideas, demands and opinions, popularize them and implement them. In 1964 he de facto did away with the confessional, which had become an odious practice in his view, and introduced the use of the para-sacramental collective confession.\textsuperscript{16}

The other bishops watched with interest the experiments in the diocese of Den Bosch and within a short period of time the new practices were adopted in the other dioceses. Thus the collective confession spread to virtually all parishes in the Netherlands shortly after it was introduced in the diocese of Den Bosch. By 1966 over 60 percent of Dutch parishes had instituted a parish council and half of the parishes had their own liturgical commission.\textsuperscript{17}

The other bishops also spoke out in favour of changes although they did not have the same flair as Bekkers. Mgr. De Vet of the southern diocese of Breda and Mgr. Dodewaart of the diocese of Haarlem both considered themselves to be supporters of Bekkers. Ironically enough the bishops themselves, including Bekkers, did not really see themselves as innovators. Rather they called themselves "bridge-builders," managers and conciliators of conflict between conservative and progressive Catholics which resulted when changes took place.

His self-image notwithstanding, Bekkers was an innovator par excellence. His influence was restricted neither to the diocese of Den Bosch nor just to Catholics. Bekkers had a direct link with Dutch citizens through the medium of television. Up until his death in 1966 he became a well-known figure through his frequent appearances on a popular Saturday
evening television program. He held regular fireside chats discussing the theological changes of Vatican II and the implication of these changes for Catholics. The proposed changes were discussed with considerable latitude in interpretation on Bekkers' part. On March 21 he told his audience that the biological aspects of marriage were of concern only to couples themselves; they were of no concern to the Church. This statement was probably the most far-reaching that any member of an ecclesiastical hierarchy had ever made on the topic of birth control.

The effect of the changes popularized by Bekkers and others were important in two respects: they permitted the liberation of Catholics both spiritually and physically (e.g. with regard to birth control); they helped break down the boundaries between the Catholic bloc and other socio-religious groups in Dutch society. In 1965 Bekkers began friendly discussions with the Dutch Society for Sexual Reform, an organization advocating family planning which pejoratively had been referred to by Catholics as the Neo-Malthusian society. As recently as 1958 Bekkers himself had condemned this organization in no uncertain terms. In 1966 a Catholic priest actually became the editor of the official magazine of the Society for Sexual Reform. The same priest, Father Nico van Hees, had previously been appointed as editor of the major socialist daily newspaper Het Vrije Volk which had been officially banned by the Church until 1965 in terms of the Mandement of 1954.

Many of the major changes in Dutch Catholicism occurred in the first half of the 1960s. Yet the changes ended neither with Vatican II (1965) nor with the death of Bekkers (1966). In 1966 the bishops announced plans for a nation-wide Pastoral Council in order to decide how best to implement Pope John's call for aggiornamento (renewal of the Church).
The proposed Council was to involve not only clergy, theologians and lay Catholics but also Jews, Protestants and non-believers. A series of post boxes was set up across the country in order to allow all Catholics to make submissions to the Council. An extra effort was made to obtain submissions from those baptized as Catholics but who had ceased to regard themselves as such.  

The Council itself consisted largely of democratically selected delegates from the different dioceses as well as from the different Catholic socio-economic organizations. The bishops themselves reserved the right to appoint a certain number of delegates. They exercised this right in the spirit of bridge building by appointing members of conservative groups to ensure that they would not be left out or overwhelmed by the progressives. Lay Catholics on the council were in the majority (there were 95 all told). As well, there was a central commission of eleven members, again representing a cross-section of the Catholic sub-culture, presided over by Cardinal Alfrink. Finally there was a college of experts, 135 people from all walks of life who could give advice on various matters as they arose. Non-Catholics could deliberate in the proceedings but they had no voting rights. The Pastoral Council lasted from 1966 to 1969.  

Several questions were left unresolved by the Council (e.g. the celibacy rule). But as well several concrete changes were undertaken by the Church which stemmed directly from Council deliberations. The seminary system of education for priests was abolished in 1967 and the hundred some odd seminaries were replaced by five theological schools for the most part connected with universities. The principle of collegiality was introduced at the level of the parish, deanery and diocese. The
placement and transference procedure for parish priests was changed. Prior to 1969 priests could be placed or transferred at only a few days' notice regardless of the feelings of either priest or parishioners. The new system required all vacancies to be advertised. Candidates for positions had to apply on their own initiative and be interviewed by a lay committee from the parish. Priests were no longer required to wear clerical garb. Changes were introduced regarding interfaith marriages, divorce and re-marriage. Fasting rules were discarded.

Pressures Within Clerical Ranks. Compared to the Church elsewhere the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the Netherlands clearly took the initiative in introducing changes and allowed extraordinary latitude in the interpretation of the implications of Vatican II. To what extent were the Dutch bishops responding to pressures from rank-and-file priests? To what extent was there resistance among the clergy to the new changes?

According to Thurlings, in former times the Dutch priest in foro externo, that is, "in the open," had to hold firmly to the official teachings of the Church. In foro interno, "in private," which usually meant the confessional, the priest could let himself be governed by his concerns for the well being and happiness of the individual person. Thus a Catholic who violated one of the teachings of the Church could be forgiven within the sanctity of the confessional.

This distinction, however, had considerable potential for hypocrisy. Violations on a large enough scale would make a mockery of the official teachings of the Church. In the post-war period the gap between the actual behaviour of Catholics and the teachings of the Church widened. Dutch clergy, who tended to be more literal in their interpretation of Church
edicts than clergy elsewhere, were unhappy about this. Furthermore, the distinction *in foro externo— in foro interno* did not really hold since many parishioners did not take the confessional seriously. As noted in chapter II, it was treated more as a ritual. This served to increase the unhappiness of clergy who were concerned that in their pastoral work the teachings of the Church could not be made to fit changed conditions.

In 1947 a group of Dutch priests urged the bishops to soften its stand on issues like birth control. These appeals, however, were unavailing. The bishops, under the leadership of Cardinal de Jong, insisted on a strong, hierarchically structured Church and an obedient following insulated from the rest of Dutch society. Clerics continued to follow the directives of the Church.

There were, however, a number of indirect signs which, with hindsight, can be seen as indicators of major problems to come. The Dutch Church had always had one of the best, if not the best, recruitment rates to the priesthood in the world Church. The Dutch Church depended upon the large number of clergy available to help maintain the cohesiveness of the Catholic bloc. However, in the post-war period the recruitment rate began to drop. For the period 1943-47 the number of Catholic men admitted to the priesthood per 100,000 of the Catholic population was 160. This figure began to decline so that by 1958-1962 it was only 100 per 100,000. There was an increase in the intake of students into seminaries. However, in 1952 a KASKI memorandum estimated that the proportion of seminary students who successfully completed their studies and entered the priesthood had dropped 40 to 50 percent compared with the pre-war completion rate.

This decline in the number of new priests entering the priesthood may have entered the calculations of the bishops in the late 1950s when
they first began tentatively to prepare for changes. What did make an impact upon them, however, was the departure of priests already ordained. A number of priests were showing their displeasure with the restrictions placed upon them (for many it concerned the celibacy rule) by voting with their feet. What confounded the situation, however, was that in several instances priests upon exiting the priesthood voiced their complaints in public or announced that they were leaving their calling in order to get married. In an interesting variation on the 'exit-voice' theme some priests married and then refused to leave their posts. In certain cases priests involved in controversies of this sort had the support of their parishioners. The total number who left the priesthood between 1960 and 1965 was relatively low (though considerably more than had occurred in the previous 25 years), 56 in 1965 including brothers and sisters. But the publicity these departures attracted was considerable.

There were other forms of protest. In 1962 Father Jan Kilsdonk, moderator of the student parish at the University of Amsterdam in a speech denounced the Roman Curia claiming that its authoritarian and reactionary attitude was what was alienating large numbers of Catholics from the Church. It was incidents like these which forced the bishops to either condemn the participants out of hand or to meet the demands in some way. The response of the bishops was sympathetic.

In the Kilsdonk incident the authorities in Rome reacted by demanding the removal of Kilsdonk from his post. The local bishop, Mgr. Dodewaard, consulted with the Holy Office in Rome which later issued a statement that it was leaving all disciplinary action to the Dutch Church authorities. Mgr. Dodewaard informed the public that Kilsdonk was being left in his post of moderator. In a parish in the diocese of Den Bosch
the parish priest and one of his assistants decided to leave the priesthood in order to get married. Mgr. Bekkers himself took the pulpit in the parish to announce the event and to plead for special understanding from the parishioners.\(^3\)

The incident having the greatest ramifications was one involving a major Catholic newsweekly called *De Linie (The Line)*. This magazine was until the early 1960s a Jesuit publication. However, the Jesuits responsible were publishing articles which were becoming increasingly flamboyant. They were critical of the Church in general and the Roman Curia in particular. In 1962 the magazine changed its name to *De Nieuwe Linie (The New Line)* and opened its board of directors to laymen. The Director-General of the Jesuits in Rome ordered the three Jesuits involved to withdraw from the magazine. They refused and left the order. Mgr. Bekkers stepped in and offered the three ex-Jesuits positions as regular priests in the diocese of Den Bosch.\(^3\) The Dutch Church province was going to considerable lengths in risking an open schism with Rome in order to deal with the protests and demands of clergy within the Netherlands.

Did clerics pushing for change, particularly the younger ones, have well developed organizations to promulgate their views? The so-called "undercurrent" referred to earlier did not really have an organizational structure as such. They can best be described as groups of like minded priests (and lay Catholics) centred around publications such as *Ter Elfder Ure* or on staff at the theological faculty at the Catholic University at Nijmegen. Within many seminaries there were progressive clerics, particularly in the diocese of Haarlem. Certain seminaries came to be known as being totally dominated by the progressive spirit. By the early 1960s the term "undercurrent" ceased to be meaningful since it had
in fact become the dominant stream.

In 1968 a number of priests in the diocese of Haarlem started an organization called Septuagint. It took an uncompromising left-wing position. Its goals were a change in the celibacy rule and a completely democratized Church having no institutional format whatsoever. Around the same time a group of conservative priests based in the southern diocese of Roermond (located in the southern part of the province of Limburg) started a group called Catholic Life which stressed unity of the Church, faith and obedience to Rome. Neither organization had a very large membership and more importantly neither group came into being until the late 1960s well after many of the changes in theology and Church organization had occurred.

The bishops were not the subjects of a well organized attack by a specific group or movement. The forces that the bishops were responding to were much more diffuse. How representative were the opinions of the more vocal progressives of the feelings among priests generally? To what extent had the Dutch priesthood changed with regard to attitudes on Church doctrine and the carrying out of pastoral functions?

Partial answers can be found in a 1968 survey of Dutch priests concerned mainly with the question of celibacy. The survey was in the form of a questionnaire mailed out to virtually all Dutch priests residing in the Netherlands. The response rate was over 85 percent making for a sample of 7,381. The question on the celibacy rule permitted a variety of responses such as "abolishment of the celibacy rule with certain restrictions" or "maintenance of the rule but no opinion as to restrictions." Although some of the response categories were ambiguous certain results were clear: only 5 percent of the sample were in favour of
maintaining the celibacy rule for all priests. Forty-six percent of priests were definitely in favour of lifting the celibacy rule for at least "certain categories of priests."

In the same survey priests were asked their opinion on the 1968 Papal Encyclical Humanae Vitae which re-affirmed the papal prohibition against any and all forms of birth control. Forty-five percent of priests disagreed with the encyclical while 35 percent had no clear opinion on the document. The notion that 95 percent of priests would not be opposed to changes in the celibacy rule and that only 20 percent of priests were in favour of the Pope's stand on birth control would have been unthinkable in the 1950s.

As shown in table 4.1 below, the younger priests were most likely to have liberal attitudes on the celibacy question. Older priests are more likely to favour more ambiguous categories such as "no clear opinion." The authors of the report interpreted this to mean that while older priests may not have favoured changing their own behaviour they were quite willing to tolerate other priests changing their celibate status. The push for reform was more likely to come from the younger generation of priests while at the same time older generations were receptive, or at least not unalterably opposed, to change. This is reflected in their reactions to the reforms as they were introduced.

Most clerics welcomed the changes. They sensed that over the years their parishioners had changed. "The people were unhappy; we were unhappy. . . . Fewer people come to mass nowadays that is for certain. But now people who attend mass come because they really want to come" (Interview No. 12). The secularization of the mass and the new catechism introduced in 1966 gained universal acceptance. One priest 82 years old
Table 4.1
Position on Celibacy by Age Cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Cohort</th>
<th>70+</th>
<th>66-70</th>
<th>61-65</th>
<th>56-60</th>
<th>51-55</th>
<th>46-50</th>
<th>41-45</th>
<th>36-40</th>
<th>31-35</th>
<th>26-30</th>
<th>&lt;25</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain celibacy for all</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain celibacy with no opinion on exceptions</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain celibacy with exceptions</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No clear choice</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lift celibacy with exceptions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lift celibacy with no opinion on exceptions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N:</td>
<td>(527)</td>
<td>(332)</td>
<td>(598)</td>
<td>(767)</td>
<td>(992)</td>
<td>(898)</td>
<td>(924)</td>
<td>(891)</td>
<td>(756)</td>
<td>(605)</td>
<td>(76)</td>
<td>(7366)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

still considered himself a staunch supporter of a hierarchical Church and believed that faith was something that could be adequately safeguarded only by the priests. Nevertheless he felt that through the new catechism and the use of the vernacular the Church spoke much more directly to the people (Interview No. 17).

The introduction of collegiality at various levels of the Church often meant a change in the personal lives of priests. Previously priests in different parishes had very little contact with one another. Instructions were received by mail and there were occasional visits from the dean or an official from the diocese. Upon the introduction of collegiality most deaneries began having meetings of all priests in the deanery, some of them on a monthly basis. These meetings provided opportunities for mutual support which stood in contrast with the isolation and independence of earlier times.

Many of the changes that occurred in the Church did not happen by fiat from the bishops. Particularly in the beginning stages there was a general sense or perception that the rules had been relaxed, that a great many things were now permissible. "Take the structure of the mass, for example. Before everything had to be extremely precise. Then, I remember, in the early 1960s one would start changing certain aspects of the mass, leaving things out, experimenting a little. I am not quite sure why; there were no directives to that effect. One just felt somewhat more free to do these sorts of things" (Interview No. 18).

For priests the changes were not an unmixed blessing. They were the ones responsible for the difficult task of implementing the idea of parish councils with lay participation. Many priests discovered that it was very difficult to obtain a suitable level of participation or to find
lay representatives who did in fact represent larger interests within the parish. Alternatively the pastor may have been faced with feuding lay factions, those in favour of changing the Church and those who wished to preserve the traditional format of the Church. In such cases the pastor had to play the role of conciliator or bridge-builder to ensure that neither side felt aggrieved or left out.

This type of role where the priest was involved in implementing change or dealing with the consequences of change was in many ways much more demanding and time consuming than his previous traditional role. The new sense of liberation also had its drawbacks. Although preferring the new openness to the old closed, hierarchical system many priests nevertheless wished for more direction from the bishops. As well there was the feeling that perhaps the changes had come too quickly. One priest noted: "The time of the Pastoral Council (1966-1970) was particularly bad, what with the conflict with Rome and so on. There was a lot of confusion among people, myself included. Many had the feeling of being left behind" (Interview No. 19).

Yet there was no question among the clergy of ever turning the clock back. A highly conservative group of lay Catholics Confrontatie (Confrontation) who want to do precisely that, to return to the times of old, have had a great deal of difficulty in finding sympathetic priests to accompany them on their retreats. A small number of clergy who were highly disturbed by developments in the Netherlands moved to West Germany where they were taken in by some of the more conservatively oriented German bishops.

It would be misleading to say the bishops allowed changes to take place because of overwhelming pressure from rank-and-file clergy. The
bishops probably saw a somewhat different situation, a situation where there had been a drastic drop in the amount of clerical manpower available and a virtual certainty that this would drop even further in the future. The Catholic population had risen from 3.7 million in 1947 to 5.2 million in 1971. The number of priests had declined so that by 1971 the ratio of Catholics to priests in the Netherlands had risen by about 50 percent. As can be seen in table 4.2 the defection rate rose dramatically in the 1960s and the recruitment rate dropped. While in 1955, 345 priests entered the priesthood, only 42 did so in 1971.

Not only were their numbers growing fewer, particularly in proportion to the rest of the Catholic population, but the age structure had become skewed. The mean age level of priests in 1971 was in the mid fifties rather than the low forties a decade previously. This means a large age discrepancy between priests and their parishioners, a discrepancy which would continue to grow. Even if the bishops had wanted to maintain a rigorous, traditional posture on the part of the Church this would have been extremely difficult given the lack of adequate manpower.

2. Changes in the Clientele

Was the re-orientation on the part of the Church merely a change in order to keep up with changes occurring among Catholics generally in the Netherlands? Or alternatively to what extent did the Church stimulate, initiate or mould changes among Catholics?

The Dutch Catholic population in the late 1960s was definitely different from that of the early post-war period. The Catholic population in 1971 was generally better educated. In 1947 only 14 percent of all
Table 4.2
Clerical Defection and Recruitment 1955-1971

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Entering the Priesthood</th>
<th>Leaving the Priesthood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dutch secondary school students were Catholic. In 1971 35 percent of secondary students were Catholic while the Catholic proportion of the school age population rose only slightly. The clergy sensed that people were becoming increasingly unhappy with required practices like compulsory attendance at mass and, of course, the Church's stand on birth control. Church officials noticed that there was a drop in Church attendance particularly among the young. As can be seen in table 4.3, there is a distinct generational difference in attendance at mass.

Increasing affluence had altered recreational practices. Figure 4.1 below shows the rise in prosperity in the Netherlands in the period 1946-1969. Note that this rise began in the late 1950s and accelerated rapidly throughout the 1960s. The advent of television allowed people to stay at home and at the same time be exposed to wider influences. In 1956 there were only 99,000 television sets. This number grew to 1,040,000 in 1960 and 2,113,000 in 1965. By 1974 there were 3,086,000 registered television sets in the Netherlands.

With the rise in affluence and the number of television sets there was a concommitant decline in attendance at sporting events and cinemas. Car ownership rose dramatically as well. In 1955 there were only 25 passenger vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants. This figure rose to 254 by 1974. By the early 1960s Catholics were better educated, more affluent, less dependent upon the Church for spiritual and practical help and more dependent upon their recently acquired consumer goods. One priest noted difficulties in making visits to the homes of parishioners: "If there is a soccer game on television you know for sure that you would not be welcome" (Interview No. 22).

The occupational structure of the Netherlands changed as well.
In 1947 19 percent of the labour force was employed in agriculture. In 1960 only 11 percent were so employed. Much of the Netherlands' recent prosperity has been based on continuous industrialization throughout the post-war period, particularly in the southern provinces. Thus the labour force in the province of North Brabant grew by 25 percent in a relatively short period of time (1953-1960).

The massive population increase in the post-war period had to be housed somewhere. The housing built to handle this increase was largely put down in non-urban areas leading to the suburbanization of large amounts of rural land. Thus in the Western provinces where the major cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam are located the population in the agricultural areas grew by 22.9 percent between 1951 to 1963. The major cities in this area grew by only 13 percent. The development of large apartment block complexes helped lead to the attenuation of the relationship between the priest and his parishioners in urban areas. Pastors residing in urban areas noted that it was now impossible to visit parishioners on a regular
The upper line indicates the rise in the wage index (1946 = 100), the lower line that in the price index. The darkly shaded area shows the actual growth in prosperity.

Figure 4.1. Dutch Wages and Prices, 1946-1969
basis. They lacked the manpower and cited the large turnover rate among parishioners living in large apartment buildings.

Yet in spite of these developments in Dutch society there have been no massive dislocations of the sort that occurred when the Netherlands first began industrializing. There have been no large scale flows of Catholic migrants to Western cities like Amsterdam and Rotterdam in the post-war period. A detailed study has been done by both inter- and intra-provincial migration since the turn of the century. During the 1920s the migration index (measuring both intra- and inter-provincial migration) was around 120 reaching a high of 130 in 1930. During the depression period the figure dropped down to around 100. However, during the 1950s the figure was only around 80. In 1964 the figure began to rise again reaching 100 in 1969. Virtually all of this increase was due to intra-provincial mobility. Inter-provincial mobility remained constant at 80. The authors of the report attribute most of the increase since 1964 to the movement of people to the suburbs, increasing affluence making it possible for people to purchase their own homes.

An improved transportation system and access to the automobile made it possible for people to commute to work. In the inter-war period a Catholic in the province of North Brabant who wished to work in the harbour in Rotterdam had to move himself and his family to Rotterdam. Presently such a worker can remain in his local community and commute to work.

What is the significance of this pattern of geographical mobility in the post-war period? It is this: one cannot attribute the process of deconfessionalization to the occurrence of massive social dislocation. Geographical mobility on a large scale occurred mainly between 1890 and
1930. And during this period the Church managed to maintain its hold over most of their flock. When mobility did begin to rise in 1964 this was after the bishops had begun to take several important steps in re-orienting the Church. The rise in consumerism as well as the general level of education was important in helping to attenuate the relationship between the parish priest and his parishioners. This manifested itself in a decline in Church attendance and visits to the confessional. Yet there was no organized movement of revolt. Lay Catholics who were critical of the Church and many of the institutions of the Catholic subculture had been critics of long standing. These were people who were members of the PvdA Catholic faction, intellectuals and people who wrote for and read journals like *De Bazuin* and *Ter Elfder Uren*.

In the 1960s a number of groups organized by lay Catholics did come into being. The more militant groups, however, have tended to be conservative. In 1964 the group calling itself *Confrontatie* was formed by two lay Catholics. Estimates of its membership has varied between 900 to 10,000. Its supporters tend to be older and middle-class, residing in the southeastern part of the Netherlands. In publications and speeches members of *Confrontatie* have attacked the bishops and institutions like the KRO and the KVP. *Confrontatie* makes frequent references to the pre-war Church in the era of the Rich Roman Life. When the new Catechism was announced in 1966 members of *Confrontatie* circulated a petition destined for the pope claiming that 80 percent of the new Catechism was false.\(^50\) The very name of the group, however, is indicative of its character and the way it relates to the rest of Catholic society. Its aims appeal to only a very small minority and *Confrontatie* feels the need to use shock tactics in order to get its point across.
In 1968 a lay Catholic who was formerly a promoter of devotions to visions of the Blessed Virgin, founded an organization called the Saint Michaël Legion. This organization is even more reactionary than Confrontatie. The latter organization has disavowed any connection with the former. The Saint Michaël Legion regularly attacks the ecclesiastical hierarchy in a virulent fashion. It has tried to set up its own broadcasting organization and political party but so far it has not been successful.\textsuperscript{51}

A group calling itself Action Group World Church came into being in 1969. According to Coleman this group is moderately left-wing but has no clear profile.\textsuperscript{54} It is not seen as an important organization nor does it serve as a focus for promoting change. In 1972 an organization calling itself Action Group Open Church was founded. Its general aim is to promote democratization within the Church but its specific aim is to provide support for the Dutch bishops in what the group sees as a battle between the Church in Rome and the Dutch Church.\textsuperscript{52}

The latter aim of the Open Church group is indicative of where the hierarchy stands with respect to most Catholics in the Netherlands. The actions of the bishops during the 1960s have evoked the reaction of a number of traditional older Catholics. But on the whole the bishops have enjoyed the acceptance of most Dutch Catholics. A public opinion poll in 1969 indicated that 88 percent of Dutch Catholics had "strong confidence in the leadership of the bishops."\textsuperscript{53}

When asked what they thought of their local parish priest 73 percent of the same sample indicated that they were either satisfied or highly satisfied. Exactly the same percentage said they were satisfied with the changes in the liturgy. Interestingly enough a fairly high proportion of the sample considered themselves to be "conservative
Catholic," 41 percent, while 54 percent saw themselves as "progressive Catholics" (5 percent gave no response). 54

One of the greatest changes introduced by the Dutch Church was the new set of guidelines on birth control. To what extent did these new guidelines coincide with the wishes of Catholics? Table 4.4 shows data on attitudes towards birth control for 1965 and 1968. Only a small minority held to the viewpoint that birth control of any sort was objectional. As well, it is worth noting the shift in attitudes that occurred in the three-year period. The minority of those objecting to birth control dropped from 10 percent to 3 percent. The proportion of those having no objection rose from 46 percent to 58 percent. As time went on more and more Catholics came to adopt the more liberal attitudes on birth control.

Table 4.4
Attitudes of Dutch Catholics Towards Birth Control, 1965 and 1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1965</th>
<th>1968</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opposed to contraception under any circumstance</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissible under certain circumstances</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No objection whatsoever</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1968 a further survey on attitudes towards birth control was done shortly after the Papal Encyclical *Humanae Vitae* appeared which condemned the use of all forms of contraception except the rhythm method. Eighty-one percent of Dutch Catholics disagreed with the statement "the Pope has brought great joy to Catholics with this encyclical." Seventy-two percent of the sample agreed that "the Pope has set the clock back several years." Eighty-nine percent of the sample agreed birth control methods other than the rhythm method should be permitted. Of those who actually did use a method other than the rhythm method such as the pill (61 percent) 93 percent said that the encyclical would have no effect on changing their behaviour. Dutch Catholics preferred the leadership of their bishops to that of the Pope.

The concerns of many Catholics were ordinary ones and usually not related to questions of high theology. The content of the letters sent in to the post-boxes instituted by the Dutch pastoral council indicated this. The most serious problems for individuals were caused by re-marriage after divorce. Other letters came from groups in villages wanting another parish priest. The change in discipline caused by the dropping away of the many compulsory rituals was a psychological relief for Catholics. One of the more popular figures in the 1960s was a cabaret artist by the name of Fons Jansen. His speciality was the pre-Vatican II Catholic Church and he had Catholic audiences rolling in the aisles with his routines on Roman Catholic moral teachings.

Although the changes were generally welcomed, the lack of constant guidelines and the falling away of many traditions left many people with the feeling of being lost. This was particularly true for older persons. Older generations tended to remember with a certain fondness the cultural
trappings of a bygone era, pushing the harsher aspects of that era into the background. One parish priest noted that he occasionally conceded to the demands of older women in his parish to hold prayer sessions for the Virgin Mary (Interview No. 8).

In the pre-Vatican II Church an ordinary Catholic who more or less lived by the rules of the Church received a certain comfort and a high degree of predictability in his life. In several ways the new Church with the emphasis on personal responsibility is a lot more demanding. It requires active participation on the part of lay Catholics. A number of pastors reported difficulties in obtaining a sufficiently high level of enthusiasm among parishioners to keep committees and parish councils operating.

The main form of participation in religious life is still the mass. However, if mass attendance is an indication of how much of their time and energy Catholics are willing to devote to their religious life then the prognosis is not good. Mass attendance in the Netherlands has been in a constant decline as documented by KASKI statistics. Table 4.5 shows this steady decline year by year. Mass attendance in the Netherlands in 1974 was similar to that of Catholics in West Germany and Belgium also for the same year although in the latter two countries mass attendance was always much lower.\(^57\)

Mass attendance has remained relatively high only in the rural areas where older Catholic traditions still persist (56.4 percent in rural areas versus 18.3 percent in major cities in 1974).\(^58\) These traditions persist in the more rural, isolated areas not so much because of the Church but because of the wishes of the local population. A parish priest in a largely Catholic village in the northeastern part of the Netherlands told
Table 4.5
Mass Attendance by Year, 1966-74

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>64.4%</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1967</td>
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<td>1969</td>
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<td>1970</td>
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<td>1972</td>
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<td>1973</td>
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<td>1974</td>
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Note: Data based on counts taken in 1608 of the 1810 parishes in the Netherlands. Counts represent average of counts taken on two separate weekends in month indicated.

of considerable difficulty in changing old practices. When he arrived in the parish in 1971, incense and Latin were still being used in the mass. It took some time for him to phase out these practices and introduce parishioners to some of the changes brought about by Vatican II (Interview No. 12). Such traditional parishes, however, are rather few in number. Most Catholics were introduced to the changes well before that time.

Ordinary Catholics accepted and felt liberated by many of the post-Vatican II changes but as well there is probably a degree of alienation from the Church. Thurlings sees this alienation resulting from conflicts within the Catholic subculture between groups like Confrontatie and Septuagint and between the Dutch Church and Rome.

The conservatives are now obliged to advocate the maintenance of the strict norms and in so doing give the impression that they
are in favour of a rigorism that was unknown in the traditional Catholic Church. And though the progressives reject many burdensome traditional norms, they demand at the same time a personal commitment that the rank and file is incapable of producing.\(^5\)

3. MOBILIZATION

The decline in attendance at mass must be seen largely as a result of the abolishment of social control by the Church and the substitution of an individualized form of authority as the rationale for participating in religious activities. The Church took the initiative in instituting these changes. Yet the rapidity with which these changes were accepted and the impact they had requires further explanation.

One can say there was a ready market for many of these changes, e.g. those concerning birth control. However, the attitudes of Catholics were also in part shaped by the Church and the impact of the changes was magnified because of the mobilization resources that were available. The very institutions which, in the previous era, helped insulate Catholics from the rest of Dutch society during the 1960s helped expose Catholics to outside influences generally and the influences of a new Church in particular.

The Catholic Broadcasting Organization (KRO) did not become committed to the new theology the way certain periodicals did. It merely provided detailed coverage of events and changes as they came up. Mgr. Bekkers used the medium of television in an extremely effective way. His message, couched in the terminology of love and understanding and containing concrete guidance, was beamed into millions of homes. From 1962 to 1965 the proceedings of the Vatican Council received intensive coverage. A full time studio with staff was located in Rome on a permanent basis.
during that period. No other television network in other countries provided a similar service to viewers. The Dutch Pastoral Council (1966-70) also received considerable attention. Many of the letters that had been sent in by Catholics to the post-boxes were read and discussed on the air by the KRO.60

The Dutch Catholic daily and weekly press also provided extensive coverage of matters related to change. Since virtually every Catholic home received at least one Catholic daily, there was very little chance that anyone would be unaware that something was afoot in the Church. Catholics would have found it difficult to insulate themselves from events by switching to the media of the other blocs since they also provided extensive coverage of both Vatican II and events in the Catholic subculture.

Many of the problems discussed such as the celibacy question were of a very topical nature and provided considerable publicity value. A housekeeper to a priest wrote in the official weekly of the diocese of Breda that the question of celibacy was at best an academic one because most priests were not fit to marry anyway. "They do not even notice that somebody looks after them, let alone that it is a woman who does it all."61 This unleashed a storm of protest from clergy many of whom were convinced that they would make excellent husbands. This incident was greatly amplified in the press and provided cartoonists with ample material for several weeks as priests went overboard in pressing their case.

The highly centralized structure of the Dutch Church and the long standing tradition of collegial decision-making among the bishops themselves helped ensure that changes spread quickly to all parts of the Dutch Church province. Many of the changes in the 1960s involved the lifting of sanctions and a degree of democratization. Yet there is still a large
element of control from above with regard to the behaviour of clergy. While in the previous era the object was to ensure that the priest did not deviate from Church doctrine and ritual, currently there is pressure on many priests to ensure that priests do in fact implement or try to implement the changes accepted by the bishops and the Dutch pastoral council. The pressure may no longer be as direct and may also involve peer group pressure from fellow priests. Nevertheless, there is a perception among some of the clergy that they would be "rapped across the knuckles" (Interview No. 8) if they, for example, tried to prevent lay participation in parish affairs.

Thus many of the very structures that were critical in maintaining the unity of the Catholic subculture up to the early and mid 1960s became important in the period of change when they were used to make Catholics aware of their changed status vis-à-vis the Church.

Continuity with the Past. The implication so far has been that the Dutch hierarchy deliberately broke with the past to set the Dutch Church on a new course. The Dutch Church which was formerly seen by Rome as among the most loyal of all the ecclesiastical provinces, has since the early 1960s been seen as one of the most rebellious. In Ireland the bishops announced in 1965 that people need have no fear of what was discussed at Vatican II. The orientation of the Irish Church would remain unchanged. In West Germany as well, the bishops remained conservative. The secularization of the liturgy was accepted by most of the world Church. But at the same time most bishops in the world Church still held to the principles of hierarchy. The question remains why the Dutch bishops took the course they did.
The Dutch bishops faced pressures from rank-and-file Catholics. It was obvious that Catholics were drifting away from the Church, that the teachings of the Church were becoming less and less relevant. The bishops faced more direct pressure from clergy and theologians. But this still does not explain the course taken by the bishops. There was a generational change among members of the hierarchy. By 1962 Cardinal Alfrink was the only member of the hierarchy who had been involved in the 1954 decision concerning the Mandement. Yet it must be remembered that new members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy prior to their appointment were usually considered to be quite conservative. For example, Bekkers, the television bishop, was considered very traditional up to 1958. Most members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy changed their views quite late in their career.

There is evidence which suggests that the behaviour of the bishops in their policy of Church renewal was consistent with many of the cultural traditions of Dutch Catholicism. This can best be illustrated by putting forward a number of the alternative courses of action that were open to the bishops at that crucial threshold in the late 1950s and early 1960s. First the bishops could have maintained the posture of the Church as outlined in the Mandement of 1954. Sanctions would be applied against those who transgressed the rules. Those Catholics who did not wish to follow the wishes of the Church could, as Professor Romme noted in the 1950s, leave the Church. The second option would have been to have, at least officially, held to orthodox doctrine but in practice to have been lenient in the application of sanctions, to have turned a blind eye to many of the transgressions. This would have involved bending the rules rather than breaking them.
If the bishops had taken the first option, large numbers of Catholics would have left the Church. A schism within the Church would have been a very real possibility. At a minimum the Dutch Church would have been left with an aging clergy rapidly diminishing in size. The clientele would become restricted more and more to the older age groups. Younger generations would basically have been lost to the Church.

In 1954 Alfrink had strong misgivings about the Mandement. His misgivings were confirmed by the reactions that the document evoked. It is highly likely, therefore, that Alfrink as well as the newer bishops would be aware of the practical consequences of a firm position. Those consequences would be difficult to reconcile with traditions emphasizing the unitary nature of Dutch Catholicism. The faith which had been carefully nurtured over the centuries by previous generations of bishops and clergy would be snuffed out in a large proportion of the Catholic population.

To have taken the second course, leniency in enforcing official doctrine, would have been even more inconsistent with Dutch Catholic cultural traditions. As was noted in chapter II Dutch Catholics have always been noted for their literalism in applying rules and edicts, a tendency often associated with the Calvinist and Jansenist influences. As Thurlings has argued, to a Dutchman rules exist either in order to be followed or to be broken. Rules are never bent.

In the case of the Dutch Church an alternative to breaking the rules was to revise them. The initiatives taken by the bishops have a distinct affinity with the past. Their concept of bridge-building, that is, maintaining links with all elements within the Catholic subculture, can be seen as a more modern version of maintaining unity among Catholics.
The democratization of the Church generally and the demythologizing of the clergy in particular is not inconsistent with Calvinist and Jansenist tendencies that have always been present in Dutch Catholicism. The much greater stress on personal responsibility, personal commitment and lay participation also falls into this category.

The various objectives of the Catholic subculture had long been met. Catholic institutions were safe. In terms of educational achievement Catholics were virtually equal to the rest of the population. Institutional emancipation which was particularly important during the inter-war period gave way to a more personal sort of emancipation whereby Catholics were expected to achieve their aims as individuals in the wider society rather than as part of a collectivity. This can be seen as being more akin to the sort of emancipation a number of liberal Catholic intellectuals had in mind during the first half of the nineteenth century.

The events of the 1960s can also be seen as a reversion to an earlier type of isolation. The Catholic progressive movement had a curiously apolitical cast to it. Many made the argument that the Church should retreat to a safer position, that it was harmful for the Church to venture into the realm of political controversy. This is not unlike the theme prominent in the ear before World War I. Then it was argued that direct interference by the Church would only evoke negative reactions from non-Catholics in the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{65}

At Vatican II the Dutch bishops were probably most active in attempting to redefine Church doctrine, to make the doctrine of the Church more relevant and applicable to modern conditions. Rather than bending rules, or attempting to apply rules no longer relevant to changed conditions, or breaking them and thus risking their relationship with Rome,
the Dutch bishops chose deliberate action to remedy a difficult situation. The Dutch bishops had taken deliberate courses of action before; for example, at the time of massive social dislocation during industrialization and at the time when National Socialism posed a threat.

4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS AND DECONFESSIONALIZATION

When the winds of change blew through the Catholic Church and the Catholic community how did this affect Catholic socio-economic life? We noted a definite re-orientation on the part of the hierarchy concerning sanctions applied in the past in order to ensure that only Catholic organizations were patronized. As well, there was a definite psychological change among Catholics. Many no longer felt compelled to attend mass on a regular basis or to embark upon the formation of large families.

In order to assess the effect of these changes on various socio-economic organizations it would be useful to look at some figures. Below are the membership figures for the major radio and television broadcasting organizations (table 4.6). The KRO has declined somewhat in membership but the decline is not severe. The socialist VARA has also undergone a decline and the libertarian VPRO has declined the most sharply. Since the basic threshold for broadcasting organizations in order to obtain "A" status is 400,000 members the KRO is in no danger of disappearing.66

The figures for trade union membership reveal a similar pattern as can be seen in table 4.7. In the period 1947 to 1973 the Catholic Trade Union Federation (NKV) managed to expand its membership, thus keeping up with the growth in the industrial labour force. However, its growth
Table 4.6

Broadcasting Organizational Membership by Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>KRO (Catholic)</th>
<th>NCRV (Protestant)</th>
<th>VARA (Socialist)</th>
<th>VPRO (Libertarian Protestant)</th>
<th>AVRO (Liberal)</th>
<th>TROS (Neutral)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>160,791</td>
<td>126,000</td>
<td>108,571</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>196,699</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>84,566</td>
<td>101,072</td>
<td>101,146</td>
<td>46,000</td>
<td>86,394</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>604,243</td>
<td>435,945</td>
<td>533,678</td>
<td>214,875</td>
<td>405,994</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>566,713</td>
<td>465,448</td>
<td>484,713</td>
<td>160,000</td>
<td>385,172</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>545,262</td>
<td>476,000</td>
<td>485,652</td>
<td>139,215</td>
<td>835,000</td>
<td>250,000*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Thurlings, De Wankele Zuil, p. 139; Omroep ABC, p. 110

* as of 1971
Table 4.7
Trade Union Membership by Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NVV (Neutral)</td>
<td>300,300</td>
<td>381,600</td>
<td>463,100</td>
<td>486,000</td>
<td>526,400</td>
<td>562,500</td>
<td>656,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NKV (Catholic)</td>
<td>224,900</td>
<td>296,400</td>
<td>361,000</td>
<td>400,400</td>
<td>406,700</td>
<td>400,000</td>
<td>396,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNV (Protestant)</td>
<td>119,000</td>
<td>155,000</td>
<td>199,000</td>
<td>219,000</td>
<td>228,900</td>
<td>238,500</td>
<td>234,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, *Statistiek van de Vakbeweging*, 1973, p. 2
rate was not as high as that of the neutral NVV. Nevertheless, like the KRO the NKV is holding its own and membership figures by themselves offer only some evidence that the changes in Dutch Catholicism have had an impact on Catholic trade unions.

There are a number of Catholic organizations whose rate of growth equaled or exceeded those of their neutral and protestant counterparts. For example, the Catholic health care organization, the White-Yellow Cross, had a growth rate, in terms of members, of 30 percent in the period 1958-1967. In comparison the neutral Green Cross had a growth rate of 25 percent.\textsuperscript{67}

The circulation of Catholic newspapers has grown in direct proportion with the Catholic population. In 1955 76 percent of all Catholic households subscribed to a Catholic newspaper. In 1969 the figure was 75 percent.\textsuperscript{68} With regard to Catholic schools Van Kemenade noted in 1969 that virtually every Catholic child at the kindergarten and grade school levels attends a Catholic school. This figure of 100 percent has remained constant over the last four decades. At the academic secondary school level the figure was estimated to be circa 80 percent in 1969, an increase from the level of 60 percent in 1947.\textsuperscript{69}

The Catholic Farmers Association has had a drop in membership from 76,181 in 1960 to 59,989 in 1976.\textsuperscript{70} This drop, however, is consistent with the general drop in the percentage of workers employed in this sector.

The figures for some of the Catholic organizations and institutions mentioned above give some indication as to their economic viability and chances for survival in the future. However, they say very little about the character of these organizations and the changes they underwent during the period of Church renewal. Thurlings described those running many of
the Catholic socio-economic organizations as loyal bureaucrats with little imagination. According to Thurlings many of these bureaucrats were caught unawares by the change in Catholicism and as a result were unable to adapt themselves to changed conditions. However, the distribution of these 'bureaucrats' varied from organization to organization. Furthermore the amount of adaptation required on the part of different organizations varied depending upon the services offered, that is to say their role in the social, cultural and economic marketplace.

Some Catholic institutions took to heart the reforms of Vatican II and the Dutch Pastoral Council. One of the first institutions to embrace the spirit of ecumenicalism was the Catholic marriage bureau. In 1967 it joined with the humanist, Reformed and Calvinist bureaus to form one single agency for the purpose of bringing potential marriage partners together.

In 1967 the White-Yellow Cross along with the other two cross organizations set up a Foundation for Co-operating Cross-Associations. The object was that in areas where the existence of more than one cross organization meant unnecessary duplication of facilities, the cross organizations in that locality would merge or one or more of the organizations would be disbanded. The slogan became "Co-operation wherever possible. Separation only when necessary."

A number of other organizations merged or federated, or attempted to do so, with their neutral or protestant counterparts. These mergers or attempted mergers were due not so much to the spirit of ecumenicalism as much as economic pressures. The influence of deconfessionalization meant that members no longer felt morally obligated to support their Catholic organization, particularly when it seemed less relevant or inefficient. With the withdrawal of Church support such organizations
were now subject to the forces of economic rationalization.

For example, the Catholic Middle-Class Organization suffered a decline in membership during the 1960s. A number of member organizations such as the Catholic Plumbers Association had already merged with their neutral and Protestant counterparts. Members balked at paying higher membership fees. In 1971 the Catholic Middle-Class Organization decided to enter into a federation with the Protestant Middle-Class Organization. Unfortunately within a few months the executives of the two organizations discovered that they could not get along with one another. After six months the two partners in the Christian Federation of Middle-Class Associations decided to part company. The building which they had newly acquired was divided into two and the Catholics and Protestants reverted to their original organizational formats. The financial pressures on the Catholic organization did not subside, however. Economic rationalization and the decline in small retailers continued to diminish the number of potential members. In 1976 the Catholic Middle-Class Organization and the Royal Middle-Class Organization (the neutral organization) had decided upon a formula for merger. The merger came into effect in 1977.74

The Catholic Employers Federation faced similar economic pressures. During World War II a number of the larger industrial organizations had merged into single organizations at the behest of the German occupiers. After the war many of these mergers remained in force although when the separate federations re-appeared these single inter-confessional organizations would often join two or perhaps all three of the employer federations. In the 1960s many of these organizations began dropping one or both of their confessional memberships. And, as in the case of many small businessmen organizations, the larger organizations who had not already
done so, also began federating or merging. In 1970 the Dutch Christian Employers Federation (NCW) came into being, a result of the merging of the Catholic and Protestant Employer Federations.75

A number of the 62 organizations affiliated with the NCW are also members of the neutral federation. This may be done in part out of loyalty to the confessional federation but also in part because the two federations do offer somewhat different services. In fact the clientele of the NCW is different in character. The neutral federation counts large multi-national firms like Shell and Unilever among its membership. The NCW caters to small and medium-sized firms and claims to help protect their interests against those of the multi-nationals. Thus aside from its confessional character the NCW also has a definite economic function to perform which helps explain its viability. The NCW, in fact, until 1976 was the only example of a successful merger between a major protestant and Catholic socio-economic organization.

In the trade union sector matters took a different course. In the post-war period the three trade union federations had developed a very close working relationship. By 1967 they had come out with a common program. However, in spite of the growing co-operation between the three, there was a divergence in views as to the form and intensity of future co-operation. The leader of the Protestant Trade Union Federation (CNV) called for closer co-operation in terms of the existing structures. Mertens, leader of the Catholic Trade Union Federation (NKV) indicated that his organization favoured a federation of the three. Only Kloos, leader of the neutral Trade Union Federation (NVV), urged that a complete merger take place.76

Within the NKV there was a distinct difference between the
leadership and the rank-and-file on the merger question. A survey in 1968 commissioned by the NVV of members of all three federations indicated that among rank-and-file members 70 percent of NVV members favoured the idea of a merger, 61 percent of NKV members and 56 percent of CNV members.\textsuperscript{77} Another survey done by the NKV among its own members showed that 66 percent of the rank-and-file wanted a merger.\textsuperscript{78}

The NKV leadership, however, persisted in pursuing the federation rather than fusion plan and starting in 1968 commissioned a series of committees to look into the question of the NKV, its Catholic identity and the meaning of deconfessionalization. They concluded that the NKV did indeed have a separate identity which was worth preserving though they admitted not knowing precisely what this identity was.\textsuperscript{79} Undoubtedly what preyed heavily upon the minds of NKV leaders were the problems associated with a smaller organization (NKV) being merged with a larger one (NVV). They may well have wondered what kind of influence they were likely to have in the new scheme of things. As well there were conflicts between individual Catholic and NVV trade unions. Thus in the period 1971 to 1972 there was a rather prolonged conflict between the leaders of the Industrial Unions of the NKV and NVV. The conflict centred around disagreement concerning a collective agreement in the metal industry.\textsuperscript{80}

The NKV leadership also faced pressure from certain member unions not to proceed with merger plans. The Catholic Policeman's Union and the Catholic Civil Service Union threatened to leave the NKV if it continued its courtship with the NVV. These two unions did in fact leave the NKV in 1975 when a federation between the NKV and the NVV appeared inevitable. At the same time the NKV was faced with other developments. Much of its strength lay in the porcelain and textile sectors which were in decline.
Thus while the membership of the NVV in the 1970s was still growing NKV membership growth was stagnant (see table 4.5). The NKV was bypassed when new sectors in the Dutch labour force became unionized. Thus in the early 1970s school teachers became fully unionized. The Catholic school teachers, however, became affiliated with the NVV but not the NKV.

The NKV leadership was in a dilemma. The majority of rank-and-file members were in favour of a merger with the two other trade union centrals. A significant minority, however, did not want to do so. At the same time NKV leaders were concerned about their own futures if the NKV should merge with the NVV. There was also a hesitancy in going ahead with a merger which did not include the CNV. It was clear that the CNV was cool towards the idea of a federation let alone a merger. A NKV-NVV merger would leave the CNV isolated and would serve to split the Dutch labour movement rather than enhance co-operation.

The NKV, in the fall of 1970, officially proposed a federation of the three trade union centrals. The negotiations that followed were long and protracted and were not helped by conflicts between particular NKV and NVV unions. By 1974 the CNV made it clear that they were no longer interested even in a federation. By the fall of 1975 an agreement was finally reached between the NVV and NKV to form a federation based on equal partnership. The path to this successful union of the NKV and NVV was a difficult one and illustrative of the myriad of conflicting interests involved in such a procedure. In spite of virtually identical interests, structures, programs and services, and a membership the majority of which favoured a merger, there were still sufficient incentives for NKV leaders to maintain the NKV as a separate organization. In spite of deconfessionalization NKV leaders managed to preserve their influence as well as
to hold on to the clientele of their organization.

The leaders of the Catholic Farmers Association (KNBTB) never had any doubt about their position on mergers. Even though declining in size because of the decline among those employed in agriculture, the membership could be relied upon to continue supporting the organization. Since most members were from the rural areas where Catholics tend to be more traditional it would have been very difficult to sell the idea of dropping the title Catholic to the members even if the leadership had wanted to. A spiritual advisor to one of the regional organizations felt that many Catholic farmers were unhappy and considered themselves to have been bypassed by the changes in Dutch Catholicism (Interview No. 7).

The areas where deconfrssionalization made the least impact in terms of diminishing support or altering organizational structures were broadcasting, the press and education.

During the late 1950s and early 1960s the KRO came under criticism from radical periodicals like *De Nieuwe Linie*. The KRO had always been one of the crown jewels of the Roman Catholic edifice and for the most part it faithfully catered to the wishes of both the Church and the Catholic population. At the same time in the post-war period it distanced itself from some of the excesses of the Dutch Church. For example, the Mandement of 1954 was never mentioned or discussed on the air. By 1960 the KRO had phased out all programs which basically provided free air time for the KVP. During the 1960s the KRO never took a distinctive progressive or conservative stance on issues. It remained relatively neutral but broadened its coverage of events as they unfolded. The more progressive elements were given ample air time to discuss their views. Bishop Bekkers' monthly appearances on the Saturday evening *Brandpunt* program has already been noted.
Among KRO employees and executives the need for maintaining the KRO as a separate organization was never questioned. "There were some discussions within the organization about taking on a sharper profile. But they never got very far. I'll tell you frankly that a major reason was one of employment" (Interview No. 3). A sharper profile would have meant fewer members resulting in fewer subsidies from the government and therefore a cut in staff. Given the system of broadcasting in the Netherlands there is no incentive to merge with other broadcasting organizations if one's own membership figures are reasonably healthy. There would be no gains and considerable losses. The minimum number of members required for maintaining "A" status is 400,000 and the KRO is well above that figure.

Catholic newspapers have also fared quite well although deconfessionalization has led to a de-emphasis of their Catholic identity. The Catholic daily national newspaper stopped calling itself the 'Catholic' Volkskrant and is now known simply as De Volkskrant. The major single characteristic which indicates the Catholic origins of De Volkskrant are the names of priests, brothers and nuns that tend to predominate among the death notices. Although De Volkskrant portrays itself as a secular non-confessional newspaper, approximately 80 percent of its readership is still Catholic.84

Catholic journalism has had a long and honourable tradition. The Catholic newspaper De Tijd played an important role in starting the emancipation movement in the first half of the nineteenth century. The sociologist Marsman claims that the healthy position of the Catholic press is largely due to the fact that their quality improved when the protection of the Church dropped away.85 Of the quality daily press De Volkskrant is one of the few papers that suffered no financial difficulties in the 1960s.
The socialist national daily newspaper Het Vrije Volk underwent a severe decline in its circulation and its readership is now centred only around Rotterdam. The two quality liberal newspapers, De Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant and Met Algemeen Handelsblad merged in 1971 in order to resolve their respective financial difficulties.

Aside from the Church itself the Catholic educational system has always been considered the most precious of Catholic institutions. It was the issue of Catholic schools which acted as a catalyst for Catholic political organization. Catholic schools were crucial in socializing children into the Catholic culture. In several respects the Catholic educational system was the cornerstone of the Catholic pillar. And it is still the institution to which Catholics have the greatest attachment.

Van Kemenade did a study in 1967 of Catholic parents, school teachers and school principals. Of the three groups the parents showed the strongest attachment to the school system. Thus 57 percent were strongly in favour of the Catholic school system while 30 percent and 52 percent of teachers and principals, respectively, were in favour.

Contrary to the case of Catholic trade unions, in the case of the Catholic school system the clientele is more inclined to favour continuation of the institution than are those running it. Respondents in the study were also asked about their attachment to other Catholic institutions such as the Catholic press. The school system was the institution most favoured (59 percent). In contrast only 12 percent of the parents favoured the maintenance of separate Catholic sports organizations.

In spite of the more traditional conception of Catholic education on the part of the parents, the orientation of Catholic schools changed considerably during the 1960s. Catholic schools adopted a new revised
Catechism before the official revised one came out in 1966. Former priests and nuns were often hired by Catholic schools to teach the Catechism and other subjects long before it became socially acceptable. Until the early 1970s there was still a fair amount of stigma attached to those who left the priesthood and as a result had difficulty in finding employment related to their previous duties (e.g. social work). Many of the traditional hallmarks of Catholic education such as the retreat have fallen away. A number of the Catholic party politicians interviewed alleged that many teachers in the Catholic school system were propagandizing on behalf of left-wing parties such as the PPR or the PvdA. Thus the image of the stern schoolmaster helping the parish priest in inculcating orthodox Catholic values is certainly not applicable to the post-Vatican II school system.

At the same time the Catholic school system is the institution, other than the Church, which is least likely to disappear.

Catholic institutions of higher learning are also not likely to disappear. Since 1965 they have been open to non-Catholics. At the Catholic University at Nijmegen there was considerable discussion about dropping the title "Catholic." The bishops, however, indicated that they wished to see the title retained. The same was true of the Catholic Higher School of Economics at Tilburg. In spite of the fact that these institutions have been opened up to non-Catholics most students are still Catholic. Both institutions are located in the south and tend to draw students from that area. The theological faculty at the Catholic University at Nijmegen played a crucial role in changing the nature of Catholicism in the Netherlands. There is considerable turmoil at both Nijmegen and Tilburg, but this relates to conflicts between Marxists and non-Marxists and not to the question of the Catholic identity of these institutions.
It is highly unlikely that Catholic institutions of higher learning would cease to regard themselves as Catholic or not play a role in future developments concerning the Church and Catholic life in the Netherlands.

The Search for Identity. Catholic socio-economic institutions in the period up to the 1960s remained viable because, in part, they catered to the social and economic needs of Catholics. Many organizations and institutions put a great deal of emphasis on providing a high level of service. They employed large numbers of people. Leaders and employees had a direct incentive to ensure their organizations were viable in socio-economic terms. The title "Catholic" was used as an additional lever to ensure that most Catholics would patronize only their institutions but the meaning behind the title was often taken for granted.

In the 1960s, however, many organizations were forced to question their Catholic identity. Certain organizations like the Catholic Farmers' Association could still rely on traditional bases of support since many of their clientele still held to a traditional conception of Catholicism. Many organizations, however, felt compelled to start examining what it meant to be a Catholic organization either because of the spirit of Church renewal and Vatican II or because they could no longer place a high degree of reliance on their Catholic identities in order to maintain high levels of support.

The attitude of the ecclesiastical hierarchy toward Catholic organizational life was highly ambiguous. The bishops removed the sanctions against patronizing non-Catholic organizations. However, they did not deliberately go about informing Catholics that they no longer needed to support Catholic organizations. The closest they came to doing
this was in the case of the Catholic party. The bishops were quite well aware of the fact that the numerous organizations employed thousands of people. To have suggested on a large scale, in the spirit of Church renewal, that these institutions were no longer necessary might have had an adverse effect on the market for services provided by Catholic institutions. The Pastoral Council (1966-70) deliberately left off the agenda the question of the need for specifically, Catholic socio-economic institutions.

Several organizations, however, did remain uneasy, wondering what it meant to be a Catholic organization and how the new Catholic values were to be implemented and reflected in their work. In 1970 the bishops, specifically responding to requests from the confessional organizations, called into being a special commission entitled "Church and Everyday Life" to look at their problems. The commission, however, had a very difficult existence. An organizer described one of the meetings, in which virtually all Catholic organizations were represented, as a gigantic babylonian talk festival. "We had the complete works; the women's groups, the unions, the social welfare organizations . . . and they could just not understand one another" (Interview No. 41). After two years a report appeared which essentially concluded that it was no longer possible to have one vision on Catholic organizational life.

The report satisfied no one. After the Church and Everyday Life Commission a much smaller committee was set up in late 1975 by the bishops to continue grappling with the problem. Only the major organizations such as the NKV and the Catholic Social Welfare Council were represented and representation was unofficial so as not to bind organizations to decisions made by the committee. As of late 1976 the committee was still continuing its deliberations.
In spite of the efforts of these two bodies, organizations remained in a quandary. Before Vatican II the Church provided the over-arching umbrella and the justification for the existence of Catholic socio-economic organizations. Many officers of Catholic organizations were psychologically uneasy about the disappearance of the umbrella. Some of them spoke of an authority crisis or noted that they would like a more positive stand from the bishops. "We would prefer closer contacts with the bishops. We really feel that they have let the bonds become too loose" (Interview No. 41). For some, however, the concerns were more concrete. The Christian Employers Organization (NCW) undoubtedly hoped that an affirmation of some sort of Catholic identity by all organizations would mean closer co-operation between themselves and Catholic trade unions. In fact the work done by bodies like the Everyday Life Commission probably increased the problem of co-operation by bringing home to the different organizations that there was no one Catholic vision and that their own vision differed drastically from some of their fellow Catholic organizations.

As the authority of the Church receded with regard to socio-economic life the debate between organizations with conflicting socio-economic interests became more acrimonious. The Council of Discussion, the forum wherein Catholic labour, employers, farmers, and middle-class organizations met to discuss their differences, fell into disuse. In earlier years the Council served at least to establish a climate of mutual respect. And the willingness to meet was in turn based on the fact that they were all Catholic. However, since 1973 only two meetings were organized, one of which never took place (Interview No. 41).
5. **Summary**

An undercurrent of discontent on the part of Catholic intellectuals, theologians and clerics within the Catholic subculture suddenly became the dominant current in the early 1960s. Members of this undercurrent were unhappy with the unusually strong emphasis by the Church on unity and the use of negative sanctions to maintain this unity. The Dutch ecclesiastical hierarchy changed course in the early 1960s by legitimizing critical debate within the Church and the subculture generally and by instituting a number of major changes. The Church became less hierarchical and more collegial. Sanctions were withdrawn and Catholics were given a large element of personal responsibility as to the scope and form of their participation in religious activities.

One result was the decision by many Catholics to devote much less time and energy to the spiritual aspects of their life. This has been reflected in the decline in mass attendance. The effect of this deconsecralization has been much less pronounced on Catholic socio-economic organizations and institutions. Despite a sense of uneasiness among many executive officers most Catholic organizations remain viable and still tend to carry the label "Catholic." Some, in order to maintain their viability in the face of changing economic conditions decided to federate or merge with their neutral or Protestant counterparts. They could no longer make appeals on the basis of their Catholic identity in order to maintain an adequate level of support. Such organizations, it should be pointed out, like the Catholic Middle-Class Organization, usually had a particular and somewhat narrow base, small retailers in the case of the Catholic Middle-Class Organization.
Catholic institutions such as the educational system, health and welfare organizations and the media, which served a much wider clientele, had much greater success in meeting changed conditions. There was, however, one mass appeal Catholic organization which did not survive. This was the Catholic People's Party (KVP). The reasons why deconsecralization and the changed orientation of the Catholic Church had such an impact on the viability of the KVP will be examined in the next chapter.
FOOTNOTES


4 Ibid., p. 219.

5 Ibid., p. 251.

6 W. Goddijn, De beheerste kerk; Uitgestelde Revolutie in Rooms-Katholiek Nederland (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1972), p. 82.

7 Coleman, p. 45.


9 Coleman, p. 208.


12 Ibid., p. 206.


16 Bisschop Bekkers, pp. 148-165.

17 Coleman, p. 66.

18 Kleine, pp. 58-60.

19 Van Hees, p. 85.
M. van der Plas, "What is going on in the Dutch Church?" in Van der Plas and Suèr, p. 17.

Suèr, "The Dutch Pastoral Council," in Van der Plas and Suèr, p. 129.

Coleman, p. 302.


Van der Plas, "Vatican II and the Dutch Catholics," in Van der Plas and Suèr, p. 56; For a general theoretical discussion of the possible reactions of individuals to the decline of organizations and their efforts in changing these organizations, see A. O. Hirschman, Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).


Van der Plas, p. 57.

Ibid., p. 58.

Van Hees, p. 78.

Coleman, p. 277.

Ibid., p. 389.

Instituut voor Toegepaste Sociologie (ITS), Ambtscelibaat in een veranderende kerk: Resultaten van een onderzoek onder alle priesters, diakens en subdiakens in Nederland (Amersfoort: Pastoraal Instituut van de Nederlandse Kerkprovincie, 1969).

Ibid., p. 32.

Ibid., p. 43.

Ibid., p. 40.

Coleman, p. 383.
KASKI did not start collecting systematic data on Mass attendance until 1966 when the Church sensed that attendance had begun dropping off.

Dutch priests generally do not watch television, thus they tend to be rather unaware of the impact of this type of media. In recent years the KRO has begun holding seminars for priests to inform them of the effects and uses of television.

The migration index is calculated by adding the percentage of the population leaving their abode to the percentage of those newly arrived. Thus if in a given province 20 percent of the population left their abode and these 20 percent resettled within the province then the index would be 40. H. ter Heide and Ch. L. Eichperger, "De Interne migratie," in H. J. Heeren and Ph. van Praag (Eds.), *Van nu tot nul: Bevolkingsgroei en bevolkingspolitiek in Nederland* (Utrecht: Spectrum, 1974), p. 226.
Broadcasting organizations receive government subsidies and broadcasting time according to their classification which is based on membership figures. Those having more than 400,000 members receive "A" status which entitles these organizations to the maximum subsidy and broadcast time. Those having less than 400,000 but more than 250,000 members are entitled to "B" status with proportionally less in the way of financial support and broadcast time. "C" status organizations are those having more than 100,000 but fewer than 250,000. Members have to pay an annual membership fee of at least five guilders. In most cases people become members by subscribing to the TV and Radio program guide (which tend to list the programs of all the organizations) of their particular organization in which case they have to pay at least 12.5 guilders annually. The liberal VPRO doubled its membership in 1968 (see table 4.6) by acquiring a popular entertainment magazine and using it as its official program guide. Omroep ABC (Hilversum: College van Perschefs van AVRO, KRO, NCRV, NOS, TROS, VARA en VPRO, 1971), pp. 60, 74, 127-150.


Thurlings, p. 133.


Querido, p. 251.

As per interview with an executive officer of the Catholic Middle-Class Organization (Interview No. 41).

As per an interview with an executive officer of the Christian Employers Federation (Interview no. 3). See also, Dit is het NCW (The Hague: NCW, 1975).


Cited in Dittrich, p. 8.

Cited in Dittrich, p. 9.

Dittrich, p. 10.


Ibid., p. 22.

NRC-Handelsblad, 6 November 1975.

In 1974 the KNBTB set up a special committee to study the need for the organization to maintain its Catholic identity. It came to the firm conclusion that the Catholic identity of the KNBTB should indeed be maintained. KNBTB, "Rapport van de kommissie structuur en werkwijze van de KNBTB" (The Hague, 1975), p. 7ff.

Marsman, p. 32.

Ibid., p. 33.


Ibid., p. 123.


KNBTB, p. 7-12.

Chapter V

THE CATHOLIC PARTY: DECLINE AND FALL, 1963-72

In 1963 the Dutch Catholic Party (KVP) still received over 84 percent of the Catholic vote. In 1967 it dropped to 63 percent. By 1972 it was down to 38 percent. In 1976 KVP as a party label ceased to exist when the KVP federated with the two major Protestant parties to form the Christian Democratic Appel (CDA). Why the decline in KVP support, particularly when compared with the relative stability of support for Catholic institutions such as the educational system and the Broadcasting Organization (KRO)?

In part the answers must be sought in the way the bishops deliberately altered their support for the KVP; in part they must be sought in the way the leaders of the KVP reacted to deconfessionalization; and in part they are to be found in the manner in which deconfessionalization affected the political attitudes and behaviour of rank-and-file Catholics.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL DECLINE

In order for a party to have members elected to a legislature it must have a modicum of cohesion and organization. As well, it should at least go through the motions of running for office. As Butler and Stokes point out, the importance of electioneering must be seen in terms of what would happen if one or all parties did no campaigning whatsoever before an election.

The KVP managed to remain largely intact throughout its history
until the mid 1960s. Although heavily dependent upon the authority of the Church, Catholic party leaders did put a reasonable amount of energy into waging election campaigns. Considerable effort was also devoted to ensuring that slates of candidates presented at election time were representative of the major socio-economic groupings in the Dutch Catholic bloc. In the 1960s, however, the following occurred: In 1966 the KVP was responsible for causing the sudden collapse of a cabinet led by a KVP prime minister. The formation of this cabinet only a year previously had been in large part the work of KVP leaders. In 1967, 1971 and 1972 the KVP waged what were generally conceded to be ineffective campaigns. In 1967 the KVP initiated discussions with the leaders of the two major Protestant parties, the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP) and Christian Historical Union (CHU), concerning a possible merger. In 1968 a number of the KVP's more prominent parliamentarians left the KVP to sit as a separate bloc in the Second Chamber and later formed their own party.

Commitment and Adaptation. Ironically, some of the factors which helped speed the process of disintegration of the KVP were also ones which earlier had been important in keeping the party together. In chapter III it was argued that one of the reasons for cohesion was the low degree of commitment to the party. Most individuals and factions saw the party in pragmatic terms. They were persuaded that a Catholic party was necessary to defend basic interests such as the Catholic school system but also realized that the party as it existed was a rather fragile coalition of disparate interests. No one tried to impose a particular Catholic or socio-economic ideology upon the others, knowing they might well decide to leave the party.
Dutch Catholics have always been ambivalent about politics generally and the Catholic party in particular. Father Schaepman in the late nineteenth century never wished to see a Catholic party but rather preferred a single Christian party encompassing both Catholics and Protestants. Thus the seeds for a Christian Democratic Union were sown some time ago. Lying dormant for several years the idea of a CDU was re-activated not very long after the 1963 election. A number of the more intellectually inclined people in the KVP were conscious of the developments taking place within the Church. As well they were aware of the forthcoming revisions in the guidelines originally laid down in the Mandement of 1954. Certain members within the party argued that the nature of the party's Catholic identity should be re-examined in view of Vatican II and changes in Dutch Catholicism.

Thus in 1964 the KVP instituted a committee to look into the question of "Foundation and Character of the KVP." Two years later the committee delivered its report. It concluded that for the foreseeable future the Catholic character of the KVP should be maintained. At the same time the report noted the close working relationship with the two other Christian parties which had always existed and, therefore, it did not rule out a possible union of the three major confessional parties at some indeterminate date in the future. The KVP was the largest party in the Second Chamber and had done quite well in the 1963 election. There was no logical reason for KVP leaders to start actively pursuing a merger with other parties.

Nevertheless, the fact that the topic was broached at all does indicate that the KVP was not seen as a highly valued institution. This is further evidenced by the debate which broke loose within the party upon
deliverance of the report. A number of the KVP parliamentary party argued against the long term conclusions of the report and urged that the KVP turn itself into a secular party. Several members, including most of the executive, spoke in favour of a Christian Democratic party. It also became obvious that only a very small minority within the party favoured maintaining the KVP as a distinct Catholic party in the long run.

Lipschits has identified five separate factions or "streams" within the KVP in the period of the mid 1960s, factions which came into full bloom after the report was tabled:1 The smallest pro-KVP faction; the Democratic Centre faction (secularization of the KVP); the KVP-Radicals faction (left-wing Christians who wanted close co-operation with the PvdA); the "Brabant" faction, a group pressing the interests of the Brabant region and favouring ties with the PvdA; and, finally, the pro-Christian Democratic faction.5

The acid test for these five different factions came in 1967. The election results gave party leaders a concrete indication that the KVP could no longer count on the near unanimous support of Dutch Catholics. Two days after the election the chairman of the "Foundation and Character" committee, who was also chairman of the KVP, visited the leaders of the ARP and the CHU to urge them to enter into discussions concerning a merger of the three confessional parties. On the basis of the initiative taken by the KVP an inter-party committee was struck comprised of six members from each party which then proceeded to look into the question of a merger.6

By 1968, however, the KVP radicals had become increasingly disenchanted with the course of events within the party. They realized any coalition resulting from the merger discussions would probably be right of centre. They were unsuccessful in transforming the KVP into a radical
Christian party. Thus they left the KVP to sit as a separate bloc, forming a new party entitled the Party of Political Radicals (PPR). It included a number of prominent Catholics including the chairman of the KRO and the former director of the KVP research bureau.

The drop in support suffered by the KVP in the 1967 election was substantial by Dutch standards. Yet the party still had 63 percent of the Catholic vote and was still one of the largest parties in the Second Chamber. Nevertheless, the possibility of rebuilding the party and regaining or stabilizing the vote was never seen as a serious option. The unwillingness to try to rescue the situation was in part a function of the low degree of commitment most KVP leaders had towards the party.

Not only was there a lack of willingness but also a lack of understanding of the situation, an understanding which might have allowed the leadership to undertake some kind of rescue operation. Many were unable to adapt. There was an air of fatalism coupled with a high degree of incomprehension. Most KVP leaders attributed the party's losses to the deconfessionalization of the electorate and, to a lesser extent, to the collapse of the cabinet in 1966. However, a number of KVP leaders were perplexed both as to the cause of deconfessionalization and its implications. The chairman of a major Catholic socio-economic organization, a long time member of the Second Chamber and later the First Chamber, found the changes which had occurred in his hometown in the south inexplicable. "In the last ten years things have changed completely. Before, the parish Church was always filled with people at Sunday mass. Now whenever I go back the Church is virtually empty. . . . I just don't know what has happened" (Interview No. 24). For some it was almost as if their world had been turned upside down. As a result they depicted the changes in the
Catholic pillar in the darkest possible way. One former member of the KVP executive steering committee stated: "Don't talk to me about changes in the Catholic pillar. It hasn't changed; it has simply disintegrated. As far as I am concerned it no longer exists. Do I make myself clear" (Interview No. 40).

The incomprehension of many KVP politicians was due in part to the structure of the Catholic subculture. As the Catholic subculture developed and became more differentiated, contact between the different sectors became less frequent. The KVP had, essentially, been by-passed by the changes in Dutch Catholicism. As Van Den Berg and Molleman point out, most of the people in the KVP were far too busy with the operation of the party apparatus as well as being involved in the affairs of whatever socio-economic organizations they represented. While they were experts in their particular policy area and internal party politics, they always left theological affairs to the Church.

An indication of this division of labour is the Dutch Pastoral Council of 1966 to 1970 where the changes of Vatican II and their implementation were discussed. There were only a few figures from the KVP who were actively involved in the Council, namely Dr. Marga Klompé and Professor Steenkamp. Klompé, a former minister for Culture and Recreation, had considerable influence within the Pastoral Council. However, within the KVP she was unsuccessful in trying to re-orient the party towards discarding its confessional image. Most KVP leaders were too preoccupied with politics to become involved with theological questions. Or alternatively they took a rather cynical view of the goings on at the Pastoral Council. An important figure on the executive of a kieskring in the south noted that the pastoral council was mainly for those who had been "complainers"
of long standing or "overly sensitive intellectuals" (Interview No. 6). For him the pastoral council was of little relevance. The Pastoral Council was definitely marked by an apolitical character. However, it was precisely this apolitical character of the Church renewal movement which was to have profound consequences, namely the withdrawal of Church authority from the realm of politics.

The Rise of Intra-Party Conflict. Ever since the diminution of the tensions of the early 1950s within the party involving the Catholic National Party organized by Welter and conflicts between left and right-wing factions, matters had been relatively quiescent. A member of the KVP caucus during the period 1954-1965 described it as a "very happy club" (Interview No. 4). By 1966 the situation had changed. The "Foundation and Character" report was tabled in 1966 and soon after the five different streams emerged. The debate as to whether or not the title Catholic should be retained was actually of minimal importance. Much of the debate revolved around socio-economic issues. Major changes in the nature of the KVP were bound to occur and the different factions had definite interests as to the course along which these changes should be channeled. The KVP radicals, the Brabant group and to a lesser extent the Democratic Centre faction, favoured a more progressive course, which in concrete terms meant closer co-operation with the PvdA rather than the Liberals. The Christian Democratic faction, encompassing a plurality if not a majority of the party's parliamentary caucus, tended to be more conservative.

These divisions were exacerbated by a number of events. In 1965 the cabinet, a coalition cabinet which included the KVP and the Liberals but not the PvdA, collapsed over the broadcasting issue. A Liberal cabinet
member was seen as being responsible for the fall of the cabinet by trying
to push through a policy which would have done away with the pillarized
structure of broadcasting. A new cabinet was formed with the KVP and
the PvdA as the major partners. The KVP parliamentary leader, Norbert
Schmelzer, was apprehensive about the new cabinet. Nevertheless, he saw
no alternative and consented to the formation of the new cabinet. In
the fall of 1966, however, the PvdA-KVP cabinet, under the leadership of
the KVP prime minister J. M. Cals, suddenly collapsed. The cause was
withdrawal of support by the KVP parliamentary party led by Schmelzer
during a vote on one of the spending estimates put forward by the Cals
cabinet. This event became known as the "Night of Schmelzer."

Those supporting the Cals cabinet within the KVP were furious.
And when the election arrived in 1967 the KVP had great difficulty in
finding candidates from Catholic-labour to appear on the election list.
Furthermore, the chairman of the Catholic Trade Union Federation (NKV)
refused to endorse the KVP. These events helped set the stage for the
deptature of a number of the KVP radicals in 1968.

As noted there was little attachment to the KVP as such which made
it easier for individuals to leave when the opportunity presented itself.
Beyond this, however, additional factors came into play which enhanced
the potential for conflict and decreased the chances for its containment.
The style of leadership and the unwritten rules governing conflict had
changed. In the period before 1963 the Catholic party was characterized
by the following: the parliamentary leader was usually a strong authori-
tarian figure while cabinet members tended to be weak and vacillating.
Party programs tended to be very flexible and the Catholic party rarely
took a strong stand on issues except when it directly affected the Catholic
subculture such as the position of Catholic schools. The non-parliamentary party, particularly in the regions, tended to be deferential towards the parliamentary party and the central executive, making little in the way of demands.

Traditionally the Catholic party would not deliver to cabinet unusually powerful figures. However, Cals, the man who was prime minister of the ill-fated cabinet in 1966, was a strong-willed political leader who was determined to lead the 1965 cabinet in a distinctively left-wing direction. He was quite different from previous Catholic party prime ministers who tended to be conciliatory, affable men capable of holding a diverse cabinet together and at the same time not alienate bases of support within the Second Chamber. The ascension of Cals to the position of prime minister broke a tradition which had long been important in maintaining harmony within the Catholic party.

There was a further change in the style of leadership. The Catholic party always had a strong, authoritarian figure as leader of its parliamentary party. Leaders like Nolens and Romme, would, at crucial points in caucus debate, assert their authority and resolve contentious issues in very short order. Schmelzer, who became leader of the parliamentary party in 1961, not long after Romme retired in 1959, was the very opposite. Schmelzer depicted himself as being friendly, flexible and democratic. He did not assert himself publicly. He attempted to maintain order within his caucus by using his charm on individual members. He was an expert in behind the scenes management.

When Romme retired in 1961 there was no logical successor in terms of his style of authoritarian leadership. Yet even if there had been a potential leader of his type it is doubtful whether he would have been
acceptable to the KVP caucus. Schmelzer's rise to the top position in the party was probably indicative of the degree to which the climate had changed.¹⁵

Schmelzer may have been an expert in arranging complicated political bargains and in finding a middle-ground between conflicting interests. At the same time he refused to compromise when it came to what he saw as important socio-economic issues. Historically the Catholic party had always avoided taking responsibility for specific political actions. In 1966 the so-called Night of Schmelzer broke that tradition. Never before had the Catholic party been seen as being responsible for the collapse of a cabinet. A close supporter of Schmelzer during this period noted that the party knew Schmelzer's move would be an unpopular one. Yet they were prepared to pay the costs, namely the tarnishing of the reputation of the KVP by rejecting what was generally conceded to be a reasonably good cabinet. However, members in the KVP caucus representing the interests of employers, small businessmen and farmers were highly perturbed by the scale of deficit financing proposed by the Cals cabinet. "Politically we had to pay the price but we knew that in economic terms we were correct. We could not let the Cals cabinet continue on the course it was on" (Interview No. 27).

During the 1960s the deferential relationship between the party in the regions and the central party executive began to change. The 'Brabant' group is a good example of this. The group included members of the KVP parliamentary party and people on the executives of kieskring organizations in Brabant and Limburg. The group represented distinct regional interests, namely those of the south.¹⁶ Regional interests, as opposed to class interests, had never before been clearly articulated.
The mines in Limburg had been shut down in 1965 and government policies
designed to retrain workers and to attract and develop new industries in
the area were seen as not being very effective.\textsuperscript{17} The Cals cabinet had
developed a detailed policy for economic redevelopment. However, the
government which followed after the Night of Schmelzer decided to devote
less in the way of resources to this scheme and watered down several of
the promises contained in the original plan.\textsuperscript{18} A member of the Brabant
group said the Night of Schmelzer indicated to him that the KVP had become
much too conservative. He argued that their concern with balancing the
budget and minimizing expenditures was a typical example of the Catholic
inferiority complex from times past. "They were afraid of tackling the
problems of the south for fear of appearing openly to be favouring
Catholics" (Interview No. 6).

Factions within the KVP were much more concerned with policy and
in pushing their particular interests more aggressively than was true in
earlier times. In doing so they appeared to have little concern for the
party itself. Ironically these developments can be seen in part as the
fruition of the emancipation process. The dropping away of feelings of
cautions, isolation and inferiority permitted many within the KVP to pursue
their own interests.

For the election in 1967 a haphazard unity was maintained. The
chairman of the NKV refused to endorse the KVP; a number of KVP candidates
stated publicly that they disagreed with the views of many of their
colleagues in particular with Schmelzer the party leader.\textsuperscript{19} Nevertheless,
there were no defections before 1967. The KVP was the largest party and
the different factions in the party still thought they could bring
sufficient leverage to bear to swing the party behind their particular
orientations. They may have been aware that the political, social and cultural climate in the Netherlands had changed but were uncertain as to the possible consequences and were probably only dimly aware of the way in which changes in the nature of Dutch Catholicism were affecting their own behaviour.

The reality of these changes became apparent with the election results of 1967. Those favouring a merger with the other confessional parties immediately initiated negotiations with the ARP and the CHU. The KVP radicals in order not to be left behind also contacted a number of like-minded "Christian Radicals" in the ARP and the CHU and formed an inter-party "Christian-Radical Steering Committee." Members of the Brabant group, some of whom were also members of the KVP radicals group, loosely affiliated themselves with the latter group. The KVP Youth movement, though not supporting the KVP radicals directly, criticized the party executive for making unkind remarks about the KVP radicals. The various groups all spoke in favour of political renewal but it was quite clear that for some groups (KVP radicals and the Brabant group) renewal implied close co-operation with the PvdA and Democrats 66 while for others (mainly the party executive) this was not the case.

In November of 1967 the leader of the KVP radicals declared that if the party executive did not speak out in favour of a radical, progressive party the radical wing of the KVP would have to find a home outside of the party. In December of 1967 at a meeting of the party council a series of resolutions was passed which satisfied most factions at least temporarily. However, in January of 1968 the radical group nominated Bogaers, their spokesman, for the position of assistant chairman of the party. The party executive declared this to be unacceptable. This was
taken by the radicals to be against the spirit of the resolutions passed by the party in December. In February a section of the KVP radicals group decided to leave the party. In April of 1968 they founded the PPR.\textsuperscript{23}

*Political Cohesion and the Church.* In the past when a fracturing of the Catholic party seemed imminent, or had in fact occurred, cohesion was maintained by pointing to the views of the bishops on the need for Catholics to maintain their unity in the political sphere. In the 1960s this was no longer possible. The slogan "maintain our sacred unity" would have sounded strangely old fashioned and inconsistent given the calls for a renewal of the party system and in the context of Vatican II and the Pastoral Council. Furthermore, virtually the entire party was committed to doing away with its specifically Catholic character. In 1961 the bishops refused to name a replacement for Father Stokman who was retiring from the Second Chamber.\textsuperscript{24} The provisions of the 1954 Mandement were officially withdrawn by the bishops in 1965. KVP leaders, even if they were so inclined, could no longer point to the wishes of the bishops as a basis for maintaining political unity.

There was no alternative rationale for maintaining the unity of the party other than purely pragmatic ones. The KVP radicals emphasized that they were Christian radicals. It was difficult to accuse them of being un-Christian. They had impressive academic credentials, were loyal Catholics and had a well articulated Christian vision of life and politics. After the departure of part of the KVP radical group Schmelzer noted that the split had been inevitable and unavoidable. He resigned himself to seeing the split as a permanent one.\textsuperscript{25}

The Catholic party had always been the forum wherein the major
socio-economic interests in the Catholic bloc could interact and make attempts at resolving their differences. After 1967 this was no longer the case. There was never an open break between the KVP and the NKV but relations became distinctly cooler as time went on. The NKV was moving in the direction of a merger or federation with the socialist NVV which had strong links with the PvdA. The KVP on the other hand was aiming for a merger with the ARP and CHU, parties usually seen as being slightly right of centre. The PvdA from 1967 on managed to attract candidates for their electoral lists from NKV affiliated unions. The KVP had increasing difficulty in finding representatives from the NKV.

By 1976 communication between Catholic labour and the KVP had become extremely poor. A KVP member of the Second Chamber, a former member of the executive of the NKV, complained of the changed climate in which it was no longer possible to talk rationally with many of the NKV trade union leaders (Interview No. 32). In 1976 the official magazine of the Catholic Transportation Workers Union published a photograph of this KVP member with the single word "traitor" as a caption underneath.

In 1973, after an unusually long and protracted period of negotiations leading up to the formation of a cabinet (10 months), the KVP agreed to a coalition which included the PvdA. This upset a number of interests in the KVP, in particular the Catholic Middle-Class Organization. An officer of the organization claimed that there was considerable pressure from member associations to drop all ties with the KVP (Interview No. 24).

The middle ground which the Catholic party had successfully occupied for so many years had shrunk considerably. Being Catholic was no longer a sufficient motivating force for different interests to arrive at a compromise solution. "Before when we came to a difficult problem we
said, 'well we have to find some kind of solution because after all we are all Catholic.' Now this doesn't operate anymore" (Interview No. 5).

Mobilization of the Vote. The fatalistic attitude of the KVP was amply reflected in the way it conducted election campaigns. In 1967 the party produced a program which differed little from those used in previous elections. The opening preamble of the program emphasized that the KVP favoured "safeguarding marriage and the family." KVP candidates on the election list openly disagreed or contradicted one another. "I could pretty well say what I wanted about the Night of Schmelzer. No one reprimanded me. They [the party] were probably glad to have me since I was from the labour movement" (Interview No. 5).

In 1963 the KVP still depended heavily on volunteer labour to decorate neighbourhoods with placards and deliver pamphlets. By 1967 the KVP began to place more emphasis on the media focussing in particular on television. However, campaign organizers found it difficult to package the KVP as a marketable product. One organizer noted: "Our people [candidates] didn't come across very well. We had very little experience with television. . . . We had meetings with public relations types to help think up slogans but it was very difficult. Compromise is not an easy thing to sell. It is much easier to develop liberal or socialist slogans like 'promote free enterprise' or 'abolish private property' . . . . We were way behind, especially in comparison with flashy new parties like the Democrats '66" (Interview No. 28).

After 1967, rather than rebuilding the party, the KVP leadership spent most of its time and energy trying to promote a merger between the three confessional parties. Most were fully expecting the merger to be completed before the next election.28 This was not the case, however.
At election time in February of 1971 there was still no Christian Democratic Union. The party did manage to find a relatively young and attractive candidate to head the election list. The list leader, Dr. Veringa, was untainted by the events surrounding the Night of Schmelzer. At the same time he had had political experience by virtue of having managed a major portfolio in the 1967-71 cabinet. Campaign organizers touted him as the Dutch version of John F. Kennedy.\(^2\)

However, party fortunes declined even further in the 1971 election providing an additional shock for the party. "No one thought that decon-fessionalization would go this far" (Interview No. 5). Furthermore, Veringa took seriously ill shortly after the election and had to resign. There was another election in 1972, a little more than a year after the 1971 election. There was still no Christian Democratic Union and the party was ill prepared, not having selected their list leader until shortly before the election. The vote in 1972 sagged even further to only 38 percent of the Catholic vote.

The efforts of the KVP to conduct election campaigns were further hampered by the lack of adequate funds. One of the more important sources of election funding had been membership fees. However, membership had dropped from 430,000 members in 1955 to 73,204 in 1972.\(^3\) The days of membership drives and bicycle rallies were in the past. Furthermore, the Catholic Middle-Class Organization which had long been important in soliciting funds from their members, reported that by the early 1970s this was becoming increasingly difficult.\(^4\) One KVP official noted that in 1963 they had one million guilders available ($380,000). In 1972 he estimated that the party needed four million guilders to run a proper election campaign but only had two million available (Interview No. 34).
There was less enthusiasm among party officials and workers at the local level. Fewer people came to party meetings. Party headquarters began to take a more important role in making up the election lists. This was done partially in order to have the central control necessary to run a national campaign focussing on the media. Furthermore, after 1967 the KVP central executive, realizing fewer seats would be available, gave less safe or guaranteed seats to the regionally oriented candidates.\textsuperscript{28} This upset local party organizers in provinces like Limburg.\textsuperscript{32} As well, much less in the way of financial assistance was made available to the 'kieskring' organizations. "Before we had considerably more money. We could rent sky writing planes, loudspeakers and so on. Now we're lucky if we have enough for a few leaflets" (Interview No. 29).

Particularly in the south of the Netherlands, where unemployment was running higher than the national average because of the mines closure in 1965, party workers and even some 'kieskring' chairmen were less than enthusiastic.\textsuperscript{33} It was only in the more remote rural areas such as the eastern areas where party organization remained intact and in a relatively healthy state. Thus in 1976 the chairman of the local KVP organization in a village in the eastern part of the Netherlands was still conscientiously selling party memberships (Interview No. 34). In contrast, at party headquarters in The Hague a party spokesman stated that the KVP was no longer selling party memberships since the formation of the CDA was imminent (Interview No. 2). However, even in this village matters had changed. Starting in the beginning of the 1970s attendance at party meetings had declined considerably. And it was becoming increasingly difficult to sell party memberships. "People will tell me that they'll vote for the party but buying a membership? No, they won't do that anymore" (Interview No. 34).
In the mid 1950s virtually every family in the village had had a membership to the KVP.

The party newspaper De Opmars, which at one point appeared bi-weekly, was appearing only on a bi-monthly basis by 1965. In that year the title, De Opmars ("The Upward March"), which had been in effect since 1934, was simply changed to De KVP. Even before the title itself was changed there had been a shift in terms of content. From 1961 onwards there had been no mention of the notion of Catholic unity or articles stressing the importance of the KVP in safeguarding Catholic interests. Themes concerning the minority status of Catholics in the Netherlands or articles depicting the PvdA in highly uncomplimentary terms were no longer evident. De KVP was still very much aimed at a Catholic audience, however, as evidenced by the numerous advertisements for Catholic missionary work, Catholic book clubs and Catholic periodicals. As well, Father Stokman still managed to contribute the occasional article.

In March 1968 the party newspaper De KVP ceased publication. It was revived in 1971 when it became once more propagandistic in tone. This time, however, it was propaganda not for the KVP but for that elusive goal: the formation of a Christian Democratic party. The title was changed again in 1972 from De KVP to Politiek Nieuws (Political News). After 1972 virtually the entire content of the paper was devoted to one theme: the necessity for a Christian Democratic party. Articles discussed the role members of the KVP would play in such a new party; the successful development of CDA lists in a number of municipalities for town councils were highlighted. By 1976 Politiek Nieuws was carrying thick black almost desperate headlines stating "The CDA must come: there is no alternative." Such desparation may have been the result of public opinion polls one of
which in 1974 indicated that the KVP would receive only 10 percent of the popular vote if an election were to be held.\textsuperscript{35}

The NKV had distanced itself from the KVP before the election in 1967 when the chairman of the NKV refused to endorse the party. But at the same time no efforts were made by NKV leaders to persuade Catholic trade unionists to vote for a different party. Before 1960 the KRO had provided free air time to the KVP to the exclusion of other parties. After this date they took a much more neutral stance. KVP officials complained that while the KRO had largely disassociated itself from the party the same was not true of the PvdA in its relationship with the socialist broadcasting organization (VARA). They claimed the VARA was still very much oriented towards propagandizing for the PvdA.

The only organization which remained loyal to the KVP until the end was the Catholic Farmers Association. At meetings members were advised to support the KVP. In the monthly publication the chairman of the association, who was also a member of the First Chamber for the KVP, would discuss political affairs and urge Catholic farmers to vote KVP at election time. This occurred right up to the provincial elections of 1974.

\textit{The Public Withdrawal of Church Authority.} The Church had been distancing itself from the KVP since the late 1950s. In 1961 the hierarchy refused to appoint another cleric to the KVP parliamentary party as "expert" on religious affairs. The KVP for its part placed much less reliance on its links with the Church. There were fewer articles in \textit{De Opmars} on the relationship between Catholicism and the role of the Catholic party in the Netherlands. And there were fewer items playing on the emotions of Catholics concerning their place in Dutch society. At the same time
advertisements and notices in *De Opmars* indicated that the KVP was still closely linked with Catholicism and the Catholic subculture.

The repeal in 1965 of the 1954 Mandement did not come as a sudden blow. The bishops had given prior indications that this would occur. Given Vatican II and the changes in the Dutch Church such a move was not unexpected. Furthermore, the 1965 repeal concerned all organizational life in the Netherlands and was not specifically directed against the KVP. The KVP did become highly defensive, however, when members of the PvdA in the Second Chamber made a point of noting that Catholics could now vote or join the PvdA without fear of contravening the wishes of the bishops. The KVP accused the PvdA of taking unfair advantage of the situation.\(^{36}\)

More significant for the KVP was Mgr. Bluyssens’ statement shortly before the 1967 election. The bishop stated on a television broadcast, in response to a question, that in his opinion it was perfectly acceptable for a Catholic to vote for a party other than the KVP. The leadership of the KVP considered it an extremely ill-timed statement.\(^{37}\)

It was not only the action of Mgr. Bluyssens which indicated publicly that the Church was no longer willing to support the KVP. A number of clerics in embracing the tenets of the New Theology also embraced the tenets of some of the more left-wing parties like the small Pacifist Socialist Party.\(^{38}\) The number of clerics involved was relatively small but their actions were often calculated to yield maximum publicity. The statement by Bluyssens confirmed in the minds of many Catholics that the Church had indeed disassociated itself from the KVP.

In distancing itself from many aspects of Catholic organizational life, the Church was most explicit in disavowing its connection with the KVP. Why was the KVP treated differently from organizations such as the
Among Catholics who were critical of Church orthodoxy in the past, both clerics and lay Catholics, the expectation of supporting the Catholic party was seen as one of the more odious aspects of that orthodoxy. It infringed upon notions of basic democratic rights. For many Catholics, particularly educated Catholics, voting for the Catholic party was put on the same plane as the Church's expectations concerning birth control, the confession and compulsory attendance at mass; all of them were aspects of Church orthodoxy many people wished to see abolished.

In the early 1960s the Church changed the rules on birth control and attendance at mass and de facto did away with the confessional. A number of clerics and Catholic intellectuals also lobbied for an explicit statement on the relationship between Catholicism and politics. What was wanted, however, was not a re-alignment of the Church with a different political party but a more definite separation of the political world from the sphere of religion. The re-orientation of the Church can be seen as a response to these pressures.

Furthermore, the withdrawal of the Church from political affairs marked not an entirely new phase but a return to a centuries old tradition. In the period up to World War I the Catholic Church had always remained outside of politics. In the 1920s both Church leaders and certain lay Catholics were highly ambivalent about the formation of a Catholic political party. Those in favour of Church renewal in the 1960s were primarily apolitical in a manner not unlike many of their brethren in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This is reflected in the attitudes of ordinary parish priests towards involvement in politics. Of the 15 priests interviewed in 1976 none expressed a preference for either the PPR or the PSP. One reported voting for the PvdA and had recently become a
member of that party. Nevertheless, he claimed to make no efforts to press political beliefs on parishioners or even colleagues. "It is my own private affair" (Interview No. 36). Two other priests said that if asked they would indicate their own political choice. In the past they both supported the KVP but in 1976 they noted they had had enough of the party and wished to see the new CDA become a reality. Only one priest, retired and 82 years of age, expressed a wish for the continuation of the KVP as a separate political organization. For the most part priests indicated an unwillingness to become involved in the political affairs of their parishioners. If the question did arise in discussions (a rare occurrence) most priests noted they would refuse to give instructions but only point out that voting was a matter of personal choice.

As the Church withdrew its support the KVP made no effort to develop a rationale for the maintenance of a separate Catholic party. From the beginning of the post-war period the KVP tried to develop itself as a 'programmatic' party. But the overwhelming presence of the Church stifled those efforts and ensured that the KVP would never be perceived as a policy oriented party by the majority of Catholics. Interestingly, even in the period following Vatican II the KVP would still make occasional use of religious issues in order to help improve the party's chances at election time. Thus in 1970 Schmelzer, the leader of the KVP, explicitly made use of the abortion issue during the provincial elections of that year. Schmelzer, by his own admission, did this in a highly calculated fashion: "I knew the vote would decline because of deconfessionalization. If I hadn't used the abortion issue the vote would have gone down even further."1

Thus even in its dying phase the KVP was unable to disassociate
itself from the Church. "The irony of the Catholic party has always been its inability to develop a stance independent from that of the Church. But the Church in turn found it easy to untie itself from the party when it felt the time had come to do so" (Interview No. 43).

2. The Vote 1963-72

In Chapter III it was noted that for the most part Dutch Catholics did not see voting for the Catholic party as a form of behaviour distinct from other forms of behaviour such as subscribing to Catholic newspapers and attending mass. Voting for the Catholic party and religious loyalty were virtually indistinguishable. This behaviour in turn tended to be dependent upon social control by the Church which was more effective in non-urban areas and in areas where Catholics were in a majority. How did the re-orientation on the part of the Church affect this relationship? Did the vote decline because large numbers of Catholics ceased to be actively loyal to the Church (as indicated by regular mass attendance)? Or did the relationship itself change so that even those regularly attending mass stopped voting KVP? What role did factors such as class, the urban-rural cleavage and gender play in the process of change? What was the importance of political issues involving the KVP, such as the Night of Schmelzer, in changing the vote?

Confessional Attachment and Voting. In the 1960s the Church divested itself of virtually all linkages it had with the KVP. Catholics were told it was no longer necessary to vote for the KVP. In addition the Church deliberately removed the strictures on social and religious behaviour. Catholics were left to decide for themselves as to what the
appropriate forms of behaviour should be. And many Catholics decided to no longer attend mass on a regular basis. In doing so they may have simultaneously distanced themselves from the Church and the KVP.

Thus when the KVP vote declined there may have been two processes at work. To begin with Catholics who were still loyal to the Church as demonstrated by regular mass attendance may nevertheless have chosen to support a new political party. Catholics, therefore, may have begun to differentiate more between different forms of behaviour, perceiving politics as an area quite distinct from religion. Secondly, Catholics may still have lumped the KVP and the Church together and abandoned them both when they became less strongly attached to the Church. The situation was not necessarily such that only one process operated at the exclusion of the other. They could well have been operating simultaneously either among individuals or groups.⁴².

Table 5.1 shows the relationship between mass attendance and voting KVP for four different election years. The percentages in parentheses indicate the proportion of the sample who attended mass regularly and those who did not. The data show that a decline in voting KVP is due not only to a decline in the proportion of those regularly attending mass but also to a weakening in the link between mass attendance and voting KVP. In 1956 90 percent of those attending mass on a regular basis voted KVP. By 1972 only 53 percent of those in this category voted KVP. Irregular mass attenders in the post-Vatican II period have also been less inclined to vote KVP compared to those in 1956. Interestingly, the decline among irregular attenders reached its lowest point in 1971 and remained constant at 25 percent for 1972. It was among the regular attenders that the sharpest drop occurred (17 percent from 1971 to 1972).
Table 5.1
Deconfessionalization by Year

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<td>voting KVP (% of</td>
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<td>sample)</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>77%</td>
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<td>(75%)</td>
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<td>Irregular mass attenders</td>
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<td>voting KVP (% of</td>
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<td>sample)</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>37%</td>
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<td>(11%)</td>
<td>(25%)</td>
<td>(42%)</td>
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<td>All Catholics voting</td>
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<tr>
<td>KVP (% of sample)</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>38%</td>
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N = Not available (1122) (544) (602)


The Effect of Context. What variables account for this simultaneous deconfessionalization and rejection of the KVP? In Chapter III it was argued that certain conditions helped make social control by the Church more effective with beneficial effects for the KVP. In smaller communities the parish priest would likely know his parishioners better and have more contact with them. In addition, in those areas where there was a high concentration of Catholics the close proximity of fellow Catholics provided an additional means of social control.

What happened in the different contexts when change was introduced? In the 1960s most priests ceased making regular calls on parishioners unless they were ill or specifically requested a visit. The mass
was secularized. Lay parish councils were introduced in most parishes. The liturgy and the catechism were altered. The confessional was done away with. The abolition of a number of restrictions was widely publicized in the popular press and on television.

Figures 5.1 to 5.4 depict the level of KVP support among registered Catholic voters residing in the different contexts for the period 1946-1972. The graphs are a continuation of the graphs presented in Chapter III for the period 1946-1963 (see Appendix III for details on the data). The differences between the different contexts which prevailed before 1967 continued to prevail up to 1972 though to a lesser degree. As can be seen there has been a distinct tendency towards convergence among the Catholic subpopulations residing in the different contexts.

The most important point to make is that the KVP vote declined no matter what the context. There is virtually no group which was immune from the changes which occurred in the latter half of the 1960s and in the 1970s. Support for the KVP among Catholics living in urban areas decreased from a high of 74.9 percent in 1954 to 29.8 percent in 1972 (see figure 5.1). Among those Catholics residing in homogeneous Catholic areas outside of the solidly Catholic south, support for the KVP dropped from a high of 97.2 percent in 1948 to 48.0 percent in 1972 (see figure 5.4).

Context did have some effect on the magnitude of the change. In figure 5.3 compare those residing in rural areas in the south with those living in rural areas outside of the south. In 1948 the former gave 93.7 percent of their vote to the KVP compared with 89.0 percent for the latter group. By 1972, however, those in the south were giving only 39.1 percent of their vote to the KVP compared with 46.0 percent for the non-southern group. Since the south is virtually homogeneously Catholic changes
1. All Catholics residing in non-urban areas (non-urban = municipal districts with population of less than 30,000).

2. Catholic population as a whole.

3. All Catholics residing in urban areas (urban = municipal districts with population of more than 30,000).

Figure 5.1. Percentage of Catholics Voting KVP by Urbanization
(Source: Houska and Leiden data sets. See Appendix III for details.)
Key:

1. All Catholics residing in homogeneous Catholic south (area below the Rhine encompassing provinces of North Brabant, Limburg and part of Gelderland).

2. Catholic population as a whole.

3. All Catholics residing in the north (area above the Rhine).

Figure 5.2. Percentage of Catholics Voting KVP by Region (Source: Houska and Leiden data sets.)
Key:
1. Catholics in non-urban areas in the south.
2. Catholics in non-urban areas in the north.
3. Catholic population as a whole.
4. Catholics in urban areas in the south.
5. Catholics in urban areas in the north.

Figure 5.3. Percentage of Catholics Voting KVP by Urbanization and Region
(Source: Houska and Leiden data sets.)
1. Catholics in non-urban municipal districts in the north where Catholic population is 60% or more of total population.

2. Catholics in non-urban areas in the homogeneous Catholic south.

3. Catholics in non-urban districts in the north where Catholic population is 59% or less of total population.

4. Total Catholic population in the Netherlands.

Figure 5.4. Percentage of Catholic Vote for KVP by Catholic Concentration, Urbanization and Region
(Source: Houska and Leiden data sets.)
probably were communicated more quickly. In the past the continual pressure from one's neighbours provided an additional means of social control. When attitudes changed, however, the presence of a high concentration of Catholics likely helped to accelerate change. It is also in the south where mass attendance rates dropped somewhat more quickly.\textsuperscript{43}

The vote of those living in rural areas outside of the Catholic south, but where Catholics nevertheless form a majority (over 60 percent), has not dropped in quite the same fashion as that of rural Catholics in the south (see figure 5.4). Homogeneous Catholic villages and towns in the non-south are essentially islands in a non-Catholic sea. Changes would be more likely to have been introduced via the media or visitors. The ripple effect, where changes introduced in one parish would spread to contiguous parishes, would be less likely to have occurred in the non-south.\textsuperscript{44}

\textit{Class, Organizational Membership and Gender.} What other variables are associated with the change in the Catholic vote for the KVP? The fall of the Cals cabinet in 1966 as a result of withdrawal of support by the KVP caused considerable ill will among Catholic trade union leaders. As a result the chairman of the NKV refused to endorse the KVP for the election in 1967. One might expect, therefore, that working-class Catholics, particularly those belonging to trade unions, would be less inclined to vote KVP in the post 1966 period compared with middle-class Catholics. Thus, as the Catholic working-class became alienated from the KVP the middle-class, particularly the self-employed middle-class, would still provide strong support for the KVP. In other countries with Catholic or
Christian Democratic parties the middle-class is much more prone to
support such parties than the working-class. One might also posit that
women were less likely to drop their support for the KVP. In countries
like West Germany, France and Italy women are much more likely to vote
for Christian Democratic parties than men. Men, it is argued, are exposed
to more left-wing or secular influences at the work place while women are
more likely to be religiously inclined.

There is no survey evidence available for analysis from the period
prior to 1963. However, Arend Lijphart in The Politics of Accommodation,
has analyzed data from a survey carried out in 1964. He reports that the
class composition of the KVP electorate was virtually a mirror image of
the class composition of Dutch society as a whole. Middle-class
Catholics were just as likely to vote KVP as lower-class Catholics.
Thus if the interpretation concerning working-class alienation from the
KVP in the late 1960s has any validity one would expect a significant
difference between middle-class and working-class Catholics in terms of
their support for the KVP.

The data do not support this interpretation. Table 5.2 is a
cross-tabulation for party choice and social class among Dutch Catholics
in the year 1970. Social class is defined according to the respondent's
own definition of his or her class. One can see that there is no differ­
ence between those who call themselves either working, middle or upper-
middle class. A certain amount of variation becomes evident if we
distinguish between those earning wages and those involved in agriculture
(see table 5.3). Only Catholics working in agriculture are much more
likely to support the KVP than the rest of the Catholic population. The
more wealthy Catholics earning salaries are somewhat less likely to vote
KVP compared with other occupational groupings.
Table 5.2
Voting Choice by Self-Assigned Social Class, 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Class</th>
<th>Working-Class</th>
<th>Middle-Class</th>
<th>Upper-Middle-Class</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other parties</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not intend to vote</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %:</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N:</td>
<td>(268)</td>
<td>(247)</td>
<td>(52)</td>
<td>(567)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey

Table 5.4 cross-tabulates organizational membership with party choice. Rather than abandoning the KVP it appears that Catholic trade union members were somewhat more likely to vote KVP than the Catholic population as a whole. Given the disenchantment of the NKV as expressed by the leadership, one would have expected Catholic trade unionists in the year 1970 to have supported the KVP at a rate less than that of the total Catholic population. Particularly striking is the contrast between Catholic trade unionists and those belonging to the Catholic Middle-Class Organization. Representatives in the KVP from the Catholic Middle-Class Organization played an important role in the collapse of the Cals cabinet. Nevertheless, those belonging to the Catholic Middle-Class Organization were less likely to vote KVP than Catholic trade unionists (55.6 percent
Table 5.3
Voting Choice by Occupational Level, 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Employed</th>
<th>Higher-Class Wage Earner</th>
<th>Middle-Class Wage Earner</th>
<th>Lower-Class Wage Earner</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
<td>83.6%</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other parties</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not intend to vote</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %:</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N:</td>
<td>(70)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(94)</td>
<td>(272)</td>
<td>(55)</td>
<td>(511)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey
Table 5.4
Voting Choice by Organizational Membership, 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>NVV</th>
<th>NKV</th>
<th>Catholic Middle-Class Organ.</th>
<th>Catholic Farmers Assoc.</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other parties</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No vote</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %:</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N:</td>
<td>(349)</td>
<td>(46)</td>
<td>(128)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>(573)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey
versus 64.1 percent). On the other hand those belonging to the Catholic Farmers Association were most likely to vote KVP. What about the male-female difference? Again the evidence is inconclusive: 55.2 percent of male Catholics support the KVP versus 59.2 percent of female Catholics.

As noted, long term time series analysis is not possible. However, using the 1970 survey one can test to see whether relationships between KVP voting and variables like class and gender changed between 1967 and 1970 by seeing how respondents voted in 1967. In 1967 in the case of middle-class and working-class Catholics the rates of support were 75.1 percent and 73.6 percent respectively (58.3 percent versus 57.5 percent in 1970 as per table 5.2). Thus differences which existed in 1967 and 1970 were virtually of the same magnitude. The drop in KVP support occurred in both categories. In the case of gender, in 1967 72.0 percent of male Catholics voted KVP compared with 74.3 percent of female Catholics (55.2 percent versus 59.2 percent in 1970). Male Catholics were somewhat more likely to vote KVP in 1970. However, given this minor difference it cannot be said that Catholic men were more susceptible to change than Catholic women.

Thus on the basis of the available evidence one cannot accept the argument that Catholic voters in the Netherlands became more like Catholics in countries such as Germany and Italy. In the Netherlands in 1970 Catholic workers were just as likely to vote KVP, even more so if they belonged to a Catholic trade union, as members of the Catholic middle-class. And there was no disproportionate tendency among Catholic women, compared to Catholic men, to vote KVP. It appears that relationships between KVP voting, class and other variables, which prevailed in the early 1960s continued unaltered throughout the period of the decline in KVP support.
Mobility. What about structural change in society itself? As people become geographically mobile or are shifted from one occupational level to another they might be prone to break with past traditions, familial bonds and open to new influences. Combined with the dropping away of Church influence, both geographical and occupational mobility may have given Catholics an opportunity to develop new socio-economic ties and a different political orientation. There was no significant increase in geographical mobility in the post-war period. Nevertheless, a large proportion of the population did change its locale. Furthermore, given the expansion in industrial capacity in the post-war period and the higher level of education attained by Catholics one might expect a greater rate of inter-generational mobility to have occurred.

One can see in table 5.5 that geographically mobile Catholics, those moving from one environment where they were resident between the ages of 10 to 16 to another environment, do differ somewhat from those continuously resident in only one kind of environment. Yet the rate of KVP support among those geographically mobile cannot be taken as evidence that moving to a new environment leads to a loss of attachment to traditional forms of behaviour such as voting KVP. Those moving from a rural or semi-urban environment to an urban environment are slightly more likely to vote KVP than those continuously resident in an urban environment. Those moving from a rural to a semi-urban environment or vice versa tend to have a rate of KVP support in between the rates of those having grown up and still reside in rural or semi-urban areas. In no category of those geographically mobile does the rate of KVP support deviate drastically from the national mean. No category of geographically mobile Catholics falls below the rate of KVP support of those having always been resident.
## Table 5.5

Voting Choice by Geographical Mobility, 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Mobile</th>
<th>Mobile</th>
<th>Total Non-Mobile</th>
<th>Total Mobile</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semi-Rural</td>
<td>Rural to Semi-Rural &amp; Vice Versa</td>
<td>Rural and Semi-Rural to Urban</td>
<td>Urban to Semi-Rural and Rural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>76.5%</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
<td>57.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>44.2%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No vote</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N:</td>
<td>(98)</td>
<td>(94)</td>
<td>(52)</td>
<td>(65)</td>
<td>(338)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Rural includes all those residing in rural areas with at least 20 percent of the economically active male population in agriculture; Semi-Rural includes all those residing in urbanized rural municipalities with over 50 percent of the economically active male population in manufacturing, industry and small and medium sized towns up to 50,000 inhabitants; Urban includes all those residing in cities of more than 50,000 people.

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Study
in urban environments. Overall there is virtually no difference between all those who are mobile and the non-mobile.50

A significant proportion of the Catholic population is inter-generationally mobile, although much of this mobility is in a downward direction as opposed to upward (see table 5.6). Class is defined in objective terms (i.e. by the interviewer as opposed to self placement by the respondent). The low to high and high to low categories have been eliminated from the table since they contained too few cases. Of those who are mobile, the low to middle-class and the high to middle-class deviate most from the overall mean. What is unusual about the data, however, is the degree to which they reveal considerable variation within the standard occupational categories. Thus the KVP vote for the high, middle and lower classes is 40.7 percent, 60.4 percent and 55.1 percent respectively (not shown in table 5.6). If we take the high category it is apparent that the figure of 40.7 percent conceals the fact that while the non-mobile higher class support the KVP at a rate of only 18.2 percent those moving into the higher class from the middle-class support the KVP at a rate of 56.3 percent. As well, it should be noted that the non-mobile middle-class category contains most of those who are in agriculture (N = 51) who tend to be overwhelmingly KVP (88.9 percent). This also tends to obscure the fact that the non-agricultural middle-class votes KVP at a much lower rate (55.8 percent). A fair proportion of those in the middle to lower-class category (N = 24) are Catholics with agricultural backgrounds moving to non-agricultural occupations.

Overall, however, there is virtually no difference between the non-mobile and the mobile. Furthermore, when using the analysis of variance procedure to test for significance, neither occupation nor
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Mobile</th>
<th>Mobile</th>
<th>Total Non-Mobile</th>
<th>Total Mobile</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High to High</td>
<td>High to Middle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>43.8%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No vote</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %:</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N:</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(150)</td>
<td>(183)</td>
<td>(16)</td>
<td>(10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey
intergenerational mobility by themselves have much explanatory power. Neither of the two variables is significant (see table 5.7). However, the interaction effect between the two variables is significant beyond the .0001 level, confirming that these two variables combined conceal considerable variation.51

Table 5.7
Analysis of Variance—Occupation and Intergenerational Mobility with Vote for the KVP as Dependent Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Significance of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Effects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>0.934</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>1.310</td>
<td>0.270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>0.335</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.335</td>
<td>1.409</td>
<td>0.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-way Interactions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation Mobility</td>
<td>4.888</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.444</td>
<td>10.286</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained</td>
<td>5.816</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.163</td>
<td>4.895</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>126.404</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>132.219</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey

Generational Change. To what extent is the decline in the KVP vote related to age? Butler and Stokes argue that when political realignment occurs it usually involves the younger voters.52 Young voters are most susceptible to changed conditions since the political allegiances they inherit from their parents are still rather fragile. Older age cohorts have loyalties which are firmer and therefore more resistant to change. Large scale change, according to Butler and Stokes, is mainly
a function of generational discontinuity and the inevitable replacement of older voters by younger voters.

Ronald Inglehart, in a variation of the age cohort theme, has argued that younger generations in Western Europe, brought up under conditions of relative affluence, have developed political values and allegiances markedly different from those of their parents. Younger voters having developed so-called "post-bourgeois" values as opposed to the materialistic values of their elders are much more likely to support political parties and movements emphasizing change and progress. Inglehart claims that this generational difference is quite pronounced in the Netherlands.

As well as the changes referred to by Inglehart, there are also changes specifically related to the Catholic population in the Netherlands. Many Catholics came of voting age during the era of Bishop Bekkers and Vatican II. As a result they may have felt much less bound to older Catholic traditions. Furthermore, younger Catholics have been much better educated than previous generations and therefore perhaps critical of past traditions and beliefs. We would expect, therefore, that younger Catholics in the Netherlands would be much less likely to vote KVP than older Catholics.

Table 5.8 does indeed show a clear relationship between age and KVP support. The differences, however, are not extreme. The rate for the youngest age cohort is approximately 16 percent below the overall mean while the rate for the oldest age cohort is roughly the same amount above the mean. Furthermore, the age cohort effect appears to differ depending upon the context. In table 5.9 where age is controlled for urbanization one can see that in rural areas only the youngest age cohort is less likely
Table 5.8

Vote by Age Cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Cohort</th>
<th>60+</th>
<th>44-59</th>
<th>31-43</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No vote</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total %: 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0
N: (89) (178) (158) (154) (579)

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey

Table 5.9

% KVP Vote by Age Controlled for Urbanization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urbanization</th>
<th>60+</th>
<th>44-59</th>
<th>31-43</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural (N)</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Rural (N)</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>62.2%</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban (N)</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey
to support the KVP. Table 5.10 divides the age cohorts into south and non-south groups. In the homogeneous Catholic south the difference between the different age cohorts is much smaller. A difference of only 20 percent separates the youngest age cohort from the oldest age cohort compared with a separation of 42 percent within the non-south group. The high concentration of Catholics in the south may have helped to diffuse change more uniformly.

How stable is the age relationship over time? Are older voters likely to remain loyal to the KVP or have they changed as well? Overall the older age cohorts appear to be more resistant to change but nevertheless are still not immune. Table 5.11 documents levels of KVP support among the age cohorts at different stages during the 1960s and 1970s.

Table 5.10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% KVP Vote by Age Controlled for North-South</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North-South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey

The 1970 data set was used for 1967 and 1970. Respondents were asked what party they voted for in 1967 and what party they would vote for in 1970 if an election were to be held. The 1971 survey asked people how they would vote in the forthcoming election of that year. From 1967 to 1971
Table 5.11

% KVP by Age Cohort Controlling for Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age (as in 1970)</th>
<th>60+</th>
<th>44-59</th>
<th>31-43</th>
<th>24-30</th>
<th>New Voters (21-23)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
<td></td>
<td>77.4%</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
<td>58.0%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(93)</td>
<td>(183)</td>
<td>(168)</td>
<td>(100)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(544)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
<td></td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(89)</td>
<td>(178)</td>
<td>(158)</td>
<td>(96)</td>
<td>(58)</td>
<td>(579)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
<td></td>
<td>77.4%</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(115)</td>
<td>(201)</td>
<td>(176)</td>
<td>(94)</td>
<td>(92)</td>
<td>(678)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey; Dutch Parliamentary Election Study, 1971

The data clearly show a definite drop in KVP support in all age categories except the oldest. This change cannot be attributed to the movement of voters in and out of the electorate through young Catholics becoming of age and the death of older voters. The same age cohorts are followed through from 1967 to 1971. Thus the oldest age cohort category containing those born in 1909 or earlier has the same cutting point (1909) for 1970 and 1971. Furthermore, the 1967 and 1970 data are from the same survey. On the right hand side of the table is an additional column for the 1970 and 1971 categories for voters who were not yet old enough to vote in 1967. Thus generational change is important but decline in KVP support is restricted not just to the younger age cohorts.

Decline and the Lack of Variation. Prior to 1963 virtually the entire Catholic population voted for the Catholic party. The Catholic
party drew strong support from every sector of the Dutch Catholic population. According to the ecological data only, variables such as Catholic concentration and degree of urbanization accounted for a certain amount of variation in the Catholic vote. In statistical terms there was not all that much variance to be explained. The influence of the Church and the Catholic subculture was such that other factors were given only a limited role to play.

After 1963, during the period of decline, there is little evidence to indicate that variables such as class have become more important.\textsuperscript{56} Only age and degree of urbanization have some predictive power as to which Catholics continued to vote KVP and which were less likely to vote KVP in the early 1970s. However, even the explanatory power of these variables is limited. In table 5.12 a number of variables which were shown to be related to differences in the Catholic vote for the KVP—age, urbanization, geographical and occupational mobility, trade union membership and the north-south difference—are entered into a multiple regression equation. A dummy variable structure has been used since a number of the variables is non-interval in nature.

Urbanization (combined with geographical mobility) and age are obviously the more important variables in the equation. In fact these variables by themselves will account for 10.15 percent of the variance when run separately without the other variables. Other factors such as trade union membership are also significant. However, since they involve a rather small number of Catholics they do not contribute much in terms of helping to explain the overall variance. The most important point to be made is that the total variance explained by all the variables is only a little over 15 percent. Thus, up to the end the KVP still managed to
## Table 5.12
Multiple Regression for KVP Voting Choice, 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Coefficients</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( R^2 = .15313 ); ( N = 579 )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanization and Rural</td>
<td>0.12131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical Semi-Rural</td>
<td>0.05433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility (Residual Urban)</td>
<td>0.07581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= Urban to Semi Rural to Semi and Vice Versa</td>
<td>0.07757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Rural) Rural and Semi to Urban</td>
<td>-0.06384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class and Inter- Higher Class</td>
<td>-0.34000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>generational Middle Class</td>
<td>0.00393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility (Residual Lower Class</td>
<td>-0.09903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= Middle to Low Middle to High</td>
<td>-0.02049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High to Middle</td>
<td>-0.20497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low to Middle</td>
<td>-0.15628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age cohorts 60+ years</td>
<td>0.26712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Residual = 44-59 years</td>
<td>0.20097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 years) 31-43 years</td>
<td>0.12044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region (Residual South</td>
<td>0.04981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>= Non-south)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Agriculture</td>
<td>0.18370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector (Residual = Non-agriculture)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade union NVV (Neutral)</td>
<td>-0.15406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>membership NKV (Catholic)</td>
<td>0.09294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Residual = non- NKOV (Catholic Middle Class</td>
<td>0.01569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organized) and Farmers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.45359</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level
** Significant at the .10 level

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey
draw support from a wide cross-section of Catholics albeit at a much lower rate. No single group, whether trade unionists or urban dwellers, was completely alienated from the KVP.

The significance of the overall low explanatory power of the above variables must be seen in *ceteris paribus* form. If these variables are involved in the decline of the KVP vote only in a limited way, what is the explanation then? Again, one must turn to the role of the Church. In earlier times the Church was the crucial force in impelling Catholics to vote for the Catholic party. In the 1960s the Church withdrew from this role and, basically, cast Catholics adrift. Catholics were told to be personally responsible for a whole range of matters including political choice. Given the well developed communications network of the Catholic pillar, most Catholics would have been aware of the changed orientation of the Church.

*Political Interest, Attitudes and Change.* Guidance from the Church to the effect that it was no longer a duty on the part of Catholics to vote KVP need not necessarily by itself have led to the decline in KVP support. If Catholic voters were reasonably satisfied with the performance of the KVP they may not have perceived a need to change their vote.

However, in the period from 1965 onwards the KVP was under considerable pressure concerning its performance. Catholics, within and without the party, who favoured a close working relationship with the PvdA, were extremely upset by the actions which led to the fall of the Cals cabinet in 1966. In 1968 a number of important figures of the progressive wing of the party left to sit as a separate bloc. The issues at stake mostly involved expenditures for social welfare programs and aid to the third world.
Progressives in the KVP favoured increased expenditures and deficit financing. Those supporting the party leader Schmelzer tended to favour limiting expenditures and balancing the budget.

The 1970 survey asked a number of questions concerned with the scope of government activities. Respondents were asked whether social welfare problems required more social reforms and whether equality of income distribution should be a goal. Respondents could agree, disagree or indicate that they did not know. The results are shown in table 5.13. It can be seen that those who strongly disagree are somewhat less likely to vote KVP compared with those expressing mild disagreement or agreement of any kind. The largest difference, however, is between the 'don't knows' and the rest of the sample. The former are much more likely to vote KVP compared with the latter.

The major difference, then, is not really between those who agree or disagree but between those who have an opinion on issues and those who do not. What does this suggest? It can be argued that those who are generally uninterested in political affairs are more likely to see voting as a form of traditional behaviour requiring little personal motivation. And they are more likely to vote KVP.

This point can be examined further by looking at the relationship between level of interest in politics and support for the KVP. Table 5.14 shows a slight but nevertheless linear relationship between voting KVP and level of interest. Those less interested in politics are somewhat more likely to vote KVP. In addition, as level of interest goes down there is an increase among those who do not intend to vote. Thus if one puts the question in the form of 'which Catholics are most likely to vote for a party other than the KVP?' the difference between the highly interested and the non-interested becomes 33 percent.
### Table 5.13
Voting Choice by Attitudes on Social Welfare, 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. &quot;There should be more social reform.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>72.5%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No vote</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                  |     |       |          |                   |            |
| Total %:         | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N:               | (145) | (277) | (48)   | (15)  | (91)  |

|                  |                |       |          |                   |            |
| B. "There should be a decrease in social benefits and subsidies." | |       |          |                   |            |
| KVP              | 66.0%          | 58.5% | 51.0%    | 53.5%             | 71.3%      | 57.0% |
| Other            | 23.4           | 35.8  | 39.9     | 35.4              | 20.0       | 34.0  |
| No vote          | 10.6           | 5.7   | 9.1      | 11.0              | 8.8        | 9.0   |

|                  |     |       |          |                   |            |
| Total %:         | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| N:               | (87) | (106) | (208)  | (127) | (80)  |

Source: 1970 Election Survey
Table 5.14

Voting Choice by Political Interest, 1970

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Political Interest</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>73.3%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>33.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No vote</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %:</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N:</td>
<td>(52)</td>
<td>(191)</td>
<td>(245)</td>
<td>(578)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Election Survey

Those having a higher level of interest, aside perhaps from being more self-motivated, are also more likely to be exposed to news and events about the Catholic subculture and politics. And they would be more aware of the changed orientation of the Church. They might react unfavourably to the behaviour of KVP parliamentarians or stands taken by the KVP on particular issues. As dissension within the KVP itself demonstrates, during the 1960s and 1970s it became increasingly difficult to achieve compromise solutions. A middle of the road position was sure to offend people on both sides of the question. Table 5.13 illustrates that Catholic voters having negative or positive opinions were less likely to vote KVP than those having no opinion at all (questions A and B). Thus Catholics having an interest in politics may well have decided that an alternative party like the Liberals or the PvdA had an orientation which was more in keeping with their own views and changed their vote accordingly.
This interpretation can be partially confirmed by comparing switchers (i.e. those having voted KVP in 1967 and supporting another party in 1970) with constant KVP voters with regard to their level of political interest. Switchers were less likely to fall into the "low" interest category than constant KVP voters (30.2 percent versus 45.2 percent). 57

There was little attachment to the KVP itself. In a survey inquiring into the role of religion in the Netherlands carried out in 1966, respondents were asked whether or not they favoured deconfessionalization of the political parties. 58 The results are given below in table 5.15 where Catholics are compared with other socio-religious groupings in the Netherlands. Slightly more than half of all Catholics favoured the uncoupling of religion and politics. This was only marginally less than the entire sample and considerably more than the Calvinists. It should be emphasized that the survey was carried out in 1966. In that year over 80 percent of Catholics still supported the KVP in the provincial elections. 59 In the election for the Second Chamber in 1967, 63 percent of all Catholics still supported the KVP. Thus many Catholics who voted for the KVP in those two elections did not believe that a Catholic party was necessary.

A similar question was asked in the 1971 election survey. This time 83.8 percent of all Catholics indicated they were in favour of either one general Christian party or a secular party independent of religion. Only 9.5 percent of Catholic respondents wished to see the continuation of the KVP. In comparison, 20 percent of Calvinists wished to see the continuation of their party. Of the Catholics who voted for the KVP only 9.6 percent wished to see the KVP continue as a separate party.

The sociologist Van Kemenade asked a sample of Catholic parents
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Dutch Reformed</th>
<th>Calvinist</th>
<th>Humanist</th>
<th>No Religion</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics and religion should be separated.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depends</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total%:</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N's not available)

Source: G. Zeegers, God in Nederland, pp. 216-217
about the perceived necessity of a number of different Catholic institutions.\textsuperscript{60} The survey was carried out in 1967. The Catholic educational system ranked at the top with 57 percent while the KVP was much lower with only 36 percent. Only the Catholic trade union federation and Catholic sports organizations were perceived as being less necessary (34 percent and 12 percent respectively). Thus, the low level of attachment to the KVP displayed by the leadership of the party, was matched by that of the Catholic electorate. A political party, because of the nature of the services it provides, and because it is much more likely to attract attention, is more prone to have dissatisfied clients in comparison with other organizations. The KVP, unlike the KRO, could not attempt to maintain a neutral position. Although Catholics may not be strongly attached to Catholic sports organizations, they will continue to patronize them if the services rendered are of reasonable quality. Such organizations are unlikely to venture into controversial areas.

Where Did Catholics Go? By 1972 only 37 percent of Catholic voters who voted KVP in 1967 were still voting KVP during the 1972 election.\textsuperscript{61} What happened to the remainder? This question is worth raising for two reasons: those who no longer voted for the KVP, as well as younger age cohorts who in earlier times would probably have voted for the KVP, represent a substantial portion of the Dutch population. A bloc of voters constituting more than 20 percent of the total electorate leaving one party and dispersing to a number of other parties can have major consequences for a political system. Secondly, an examination of the patterns of dispersion of ex-KVP voters may well tell us something about the nature of the Catholic vote. In particular, it can inform us as to the way Catholics became untied from the KVP.
What would the expectations be concerning Catholics who leave the KVP? Political scientists like V. O. Key studying American electoral behaviour have developed the notion of the "critical election." In such an election a large number of voters leave one party for another party and new previously uncommitted voters are mobilized so that a major realignment of the electorate takes place. A realignment usually involves major issues; Roosevelt's proposed New Deal legislation is usually seen as the key issue which was crucial in bringing about a realignment of the American electorate in the elections of 1932 and 1936. Can we talk of a critical election or a series of critical elections in the Dutch case? According to Wolinetz, party alignments in the Netherlands became unfrozen in the 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, he argues, it is meaningless to talk of re-alignment. Most of the major parties lost and none made major gains. The chief beneficiaries were the smaller parties but none of them in turn managed to achieve any degree of stability over time.

There were a number of major issues which involved the KVP such as the collapse of the Cals cabinet in 1966. In the previous section it was noted that Catholics who had an opinion on issues were less likely to vote KVP. However, ex-KVP voters did not shift to another party en masse. Rather, they dispersed to a variety of alternative parties. Furthermore, after leaving the KVP, Catholics were likely to be highly unstable in their electoral behaviour.

Tables 5.16 and 5.17 give an indication as to the nature of the traffic between the KVP and other parties over succeeding elections. In 1967 the largest proportion of ex-KVP voters went to the Democrats '66 (table 5.16). The support of ex-KVP voters contributed heavily to the success of this brand new party. Much smaller proportions went to the
Table 5.16
Where Did the Ex-KVP Vote Go?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote in 1967</th>
<th>KVP</th>
<th>PvdA</th>
<th>VVD</th>
<th>ARP</th>
<th>BP</th>
<th>D'66</th>
<th>Don't Know/No Vote</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who voted KVP in 1966</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>100% (N=1122)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote in 1971</th>
<th>KVP</th>
<th>PvdA</th>
<th>VVD</th>
<th>ARP</th>
<th>BP</th>
<th>D'66</th>
<th>PPR</th>
<th>DS'70</th>
<th>No Vote</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who voted KVP in 1967</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.3%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>100% (N not available)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote in 1972</th>
<th>KVP</th>
<th>PvdA</th>
<th>VVD</th>
<th>ARP</th>
<th>BP</th>
<th>D'66</th>
<th>PPR</th>
<th>DS'70</th>
<th>RKNP</th>
<th>No Vote</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Those who voted KVP in 1971</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>100% (N=249)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.17
Where Did the KVP Vote Come From?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote in 1966</th>
<th>KVP</th>
<th>PvdA</th>
<th>VVD</th>
<th>ARP</th>
<th>BP</th>
<th>D'66</th>
<th>New/No Vote</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All those who voted KVP in 1967</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=1045)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote in 1967</th>
<th>KVP</th>
<th>PvdA</th>
<th>VVD</th>
<th>ARP</th>
<th>BP</th>
<th>D'66</th>
<th>New Vote</th>
<th>No Vote</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All those who voted KVP in 1971</td>
<td>86.4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>.2%</td>
<td>.5%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N not available)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote in 1971</th>
<th>KVP</th>
<th>PvdA</th>
<th>VVD</th>
<th>ARP</th>
<th>BP</th>
<th>D'66</th>
<th>DS'70</th>
<th>New Vote</th>
<th>No Vote</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All those who voted KVP in 1972</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=213)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PvdA and the VVD. In 1971 the PvdA received a much larger proportion of newly defecting Catholic KVP voters and a smaller proportion went to the D'66. However, 2.5 percent of 1967 KVP voters did go to the newly-formed PPR, the party containing a number of ex-KVP politicians, and 2.3 percent went to DS'70, a conservative break-away faction of the PvdA. Thus the plurality of the ex-KVP vote in 1971 went to the newer, smaller parties (d'66, PPR and DS'70). The largest single bloc of ex-KVP voters, however, is to be found in the category for those who elected not to vote at all in 1971. The increase in the proportion of those not voting in this election can, in part, be attributed to the elimination of the compulsory voting law in 1970.65

In 1972 the situation was quite different. The PvdA and the VVD combined received by far the largest share of the ex-KVP vote. D'66 received virtually none and the PPR and DS'70 a significantly smaller share. The newest party to arrive on the political scene, the Roman Catholic Party of the Netherlands (RKPN), received 4 percent of the vote of those who voted KVP in 1971. The no-vote category increased slightly to 8 percent.

In looking at where KVP votes came from (table 5.17) it is obvious that there was some traffic coming from the other parties back to the KVP. Particularly in 1971, it appears the KVP received back a fair proportion of those who left the KVP for the PvdA or VVD in 1967 or earlier. In 1972 the KVP also received the votes of many of those who voted DS'70 in 1971.

In 1972, however, the two-way traffic between the KVP and the PvdA/VVD became heavily biased in favour of the latter two parties. The KVP lost many more votes to the PvdA/VVD than it received back from them, both proportionally and in absolute terms. The traffic between the KVP and the PPR was strictly one-way. The KVP received virtually no votes in 1972
from 1971 PPR voters. On the other hand, although the KVP lost 8 percent of its 1971 electorate to the no-vote category in 1972 it also received 9 percent of its 1972 vote from those who sat out the election in 1971.

What do these flows of voters between the KVP and the other parties tell us? For years Catholics had been told that both the PvdA (and before the war the SDAP) and the VVD stood for all the things Catholics were opposed to: secularization of schools, hospitals and the broadcasting system. It is quite likely that Catholics had been imbued with what one might want to call negative party identification. Many Catholics felt free to leave the KVP but felt incapable of moving directly to one of the old line parties. In 1967 it was probably easier for many Catholics to support a new non-aligned, untainted party like D'66 which had not been involved in the earlier controversies concerning the role of the Church in society.

The same was true in 1971. Although the flow to the PvdA increased somewhat, the PPR, which presented itself as a radical Christian party, became a refuge for many ex-KVP voters. Over 40 percent of PPR voters in 1971 were ex-KVP voters. As well, a substantial number of Catholic voters decided not to vote at all. In 1972 a number of the more conservative orthodox Catholics moved to the RKPN. This party took a strong stand on the abortion issue and claimed that the KVP was no longer a true Catholic party. Catholic voters, therefore, were deserting the KVP from all sides: orthodox Catholics went to the RKPN; the more radical Christians went to the PPR.

In 1972 the PvdA and the VVD received a larger share of the ex-KVP vote than previously. However, taking into account the number of non-voters in 1972, these two parties still received slightly less than half the total ex-KVP vote. The Catholic vote for the PvdA and the VVD is also
unstable. Thus 26 percent of all those who voted PvdA in 1971 but did not do so in 1972 were Catholic. Only 35 percent of Catholics who voted PvdA in 1972 had done so in 1971. In contrast Dutch Reformed voters for the PvdA are much more stable. Of Dutch Reformed who voted PvdA in 1972 69 percent had done so in 1971.67

Nevertheless, the trend does appear to be that ex-KVP voters are moving towards the VVD and PvdA. Many Catholics who first voted for the smaller parties moved to the larger parties at a later date. For them the smaller parties acted as a way station. Karl Dittrich's examination of some panel data provides further evidence on this point. His findings are presented in table 5.18. The 62 voters in the table are Catholics who voted KVP in 1967 but left in 1970 at the time of the provincial election. The data show that the smaller parties were indeed a temporary way station for many Catholics. As well, there is a general trend towards the PvdA and the VVD. Thus, if we follow the 11 Catholics who voted D'66 in 1970 we find that not a single one of the 11 was still voting D'66 in 1972 (not shown in the table). Six of the 11 went to the VVD and three to the PvdA.68

The patterns of dispersement of Catholics who left the KVP offer an interesting commentary on the nature of political change in the Dutch Catholic community. It is consistent with the notion arguing that the re-orientation on the part of the Church left many Catholics without clear guidance in the realm of politics. The KVP itself was unhelpful because it was in an obvious state of decline. The much hoped for Christian Democratic party did not appear imminent. Many Catholics were confused as to where their interests lay as well as having remnants of the all too recent past still imprinted upon their conscience.

Many felt inclined to abandon the KVP but there were no clear cut
Table 5.18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>1970</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1972</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KVP</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PvdA</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VVD</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D'66</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPR</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BP</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DS'70</td>
<td>—*</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPN</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RKPN</td>
<td>—*</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not vote</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know/Can't remember</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total %: 100.0 100.0 100.0
N: (62) (62) (62)

* Party did not compete in election of that year

Names of Parties: KVP (Catholic Party); PvdA (Labour Party); VVD (Liberals); D'66 (Democrats 1966); PSP (Pacifist Socialist Party); PPR (Party of Political Radicals); BP (Farmer's Party); DS'70 (Democratic Socialists 1970); CPN (Communists); RKPN (Roman Catholic Party of the Netherlands)

alternatives. One newspaper commenting upon this phenomenon headlined an article, "The Catholics are jumping off the roof tops but there are no safety nets." There is a discernible trend towards some form of re-alignment. The data for 1972 show Catholic voters gradually moving towards the PvdA and the VVD. In the 1977 national election, however, the presence of the long awaited CDA, based on the three major confessional parties, may have altered this trend. Thus to talk of re-alignment having taken place, without examining a series of elections in which the CDA is a participant, would still be premature.

3. Summary

In the 1960s the Dutch Church, greatly influenced by the reforms of Vatican II and by internal pressures, changed its views considerably on what constituted an appropriate role for both Church and individual Catholics in modern society. The Church placed several areas outside of its jurisdiction. One of these areas was the realm of politics. Catholics were left free to vote according to their conscience: no one party was favoured by the Church. The Catholic party could no longer use the symbols of Church authority in order to cajole the electorate into supporting it at election time. Equally important, the authority of the Church and the slogan 'maintain our unity' could no longer be used to maintain the unity of the party itself.

Historically, most Catholics saw the Catholic party in rather instrumental terms and as a result had a very low level of commitment to the party. During the 1960s many KVP leaders undertook actions with very little thought for the well being of the party. When the KVP suffered
losses at the time of the 1967 election most of those in the KVP parliamentary party were willing to take at least one of the following courses of action: merge with other Christian parties, transform the party into a secular centre party, or to transform the KVP into a radical Christian party. Virtually no one wished to maintain the KVP as a Catholic party.

Dissension within the party, centering on the role of the KVP in the collapse of a progressive KVP-PvdA coalition cabinet, and the general low level of commitment to the idea of a Catholic party, was reflected in the KVP's inability to wage effective election campaigns. With the advent of television the weaknesses of the KVP were highlighted.

The KVP was in an unusually difficult position compared with other Catholic organizations. In the past the Catholic party served as a coupling organization, allowing representatives from the different Catholic interest groups to interact and reconcile differences. In the 1960s, however, Catholicism as a unifying force had become less important and the issues dividing the different groups more intractable. The kind of compromise solutions which had worked in the 1950s and early 1960s were no longer acceptable.

Other Catholic organizations had a specific clientele with a limited number of interests, such as the Catholic Farmers Association, or else a well-defined product or service which was essentially non-controversial (e.g. that of the White-Yellow Cross Association). This was not true of the KVP: any actions undertaken by the KVP were bound to alienate substantial sectors within the Catholic population and, during the late 1960s, very few of its stances could be justified in terms of advancing specifically Catholic interests.
In most sectors of the Catholic population there was a uniform decline in the proportion of people voting KVP from 1967 onwards. Occupation, gender and organizational membership made at best only a minor difference as to whether or not an individual would vote for the KVP. Those most likely to remain loyal to the KVP were those in agriculture, people residing in rural areas and older people. As well, people who had little or no interest in politics were more likely to remain constant KVP voters.

The patterns of dispersement of the ex-KVP vote in the first two elections after Vatican II suggest that many Catholics were willing to stop voting for the KVP but were hesitant and unsure as to alternatives. A significant proportion decided to vote for the new non-aligned parties and, particularly after the compulsory voting law was lifted in 1970, many choose not to vote at all. Only in 1972 can one begin to discern a gradual movement of ex-KVP voters to the major secular old line parties, the PvdA and the VVD.

The KVP leadership felt both unable and unwilling to attempt a rescue operation. Virtually the entire party was committed not to the survival but to the disappearance of the KVP as a Catholic party. A majority was in favour of a merger with the two old line Protestant parties. After 1967 most of the KVP's efforts were directed towards the achievement of this goal, a goal which was finally reached in the fall of 1976.

The perceptions of KVP leaders as to the eventual fate of the party were coloured by their own predilections, fears and interests. Nevertheless, their perceptions were probably accurate. The Catholic party throughout its history was dependent upon the Church for its electoral support and internal cohesion. It was never able to develop a character or identity
which was distinct from that of the Church. Ironically, the Church, when the time came, found it relatively easy to make itself independent of the KVP, leaving the latter to flounder. KVP leaders in turn saw no alternative ideology, technique, or program with which they could retain the loyalty of a highly diverse electorate. Before 1967 the fact that all the members in this diverse group were Catholic was sufficient to unite them behind one political party. Less than a decade later this was no longer the case.
FOOTNOTES

1 J. P. Kruijt in the late 1950s suggested that if depillarization were to occur (i.e. organizations losing their confessional identity) it would commence first of all in fields such as sports, recreation and economic life, areas most remote from religious life. In fact it appears that deconfessionalization has had the greatest impact on religious life itself (e.g. decline in mass attendance); secondly, on politics and thirdly, on economic life. Contrary to expectations, Catholic organizations dealing with sports and recreation have remained relatively intact. J. P. Kruijt, "The Netherlands: The Influence of Denominationalism on Social Life and Organizational Patterns," in K. D. McRae (Ed.), Consociational Democracy: Political Accommodation in Segmented Societies (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), p. 136.


5 Ibid., p. 5.

6 Ibid., p. 4.

7 Wolinetz has noted that of the 13 KVP politicians he interviewed in 1969 not one favoured the continuation of the KVP as a Catholic party. S. B. Wolinetz, "Party Re-alignment in the Netherlands" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1973), p. 121.

8 J. Th. van den Berg and H. A. Molleman, Crisis in de Nederlandse politiek (Alphen aan den Rijn: Samson, 1975); p. 86.

9 Ibid., p. 86.


12 Wolinetz, p. 117.

13 Ammerlaan, p. 197.

14 For a discussion of the changes in the style and quality of political leadership in the Netherlands during the 1960s, see A. Lijphart,


Lipschits, p. 5.


Ibid., p. 231.


Lipschits, p. 5.

Ibid., p. 5.


Ammerlaan, p. 272. The former Prime Minister Cals and the head of the NKV both of whom were highly critical of the KVP nevertheless remained within the party, though maintaining a low profile.

For example, the vice-chairman of the Catholic Transportation Workers Union and a senior research officer of the Catholic Construction Workers Union both became members of the PvdA parliamentary party in the early 1970s.


Van den Berg and Molleman, p. 89.

Ibid., p. 87.

As per interview No. 28.


Ibid., p. 9.

Politiek Nieuws, January 1976.

Dittrich, p. 12.

De KVP, July 1965.


M. van der Plas, "What is going on in the Dutch Church," in M. van der Plas and H. Suèr (Eds.), Those Dutch Catholics (London: Chapman, 1967), p. 16.


Van den Berg and Molleman, p. 79.

Ammerlaan, p. 336.

For a further discussion of deconfessionalization in the Netherlands, see W. E. Miller and Ph. C. Stouthard, "Confessional Attachment and Electoral Behaviour in the Netherlands," European Journal of Political Research, Vol. 3, No. 3 (September 1975), pp. 219-258. Unfortunately their analysis is not a time series one.


For example, in terms of the social bases of the KVP, 12 percent of the KVP electorate were businessmen, 23 percent white collar workers, 34 percent blue collar workers and 8 percent farmers, to give a partial listing, while in terms of the entire electorate 11 percent were businessmen, 24 percent white collar workers, 34 percent blue collar workers and 4 percent farmers (N of sample equals 1,595). Lijphart, pp. 28-29.

Ibid., p. 34.

The survey was carried out shortly before the provincial elections in the spring of 1970. A stratified random sample was used resulting in a final sample of 1838 cases. Principal investigators were Ph. Stout-hard, F. Heunks, W. Miller, and J. Rusk. The data set was made available through the Inter-university Consortium for Political Research (ICPR), Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The dependent variable used in this table, and in all subsequent tables for the year 1970, is the question: "If there was a national election tomorrow for which party would you vote?" Tables for the year 1967 are based on the following question: "Which party did you vote for in the 1967 national election?"


Unfortunately the literature on the effects of geographical mobility is much sparser. For an interesting analysis of the phenomenon in Italy, see R. Fried, "Urbanization and Italian Politics," *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 29, No. 3 (August 1967), pp. 505-534.

A comparison was done between the vote in 1967 and voting choice in 1970. The relationships between KVP support and geographical mobility are substantially the same for 1967 and 1970.

There was no significant change in the relationship over time (1967 to 1970). Analyses for both years yielded similar results.

Butler and Stokes, pp. 65-89.


Ibid., p. 996.
The survey was carried out shortly before the election in 1971. A stratified random sample was used with a final sample size of 2,495 cases. Principal investigators were H. Daalder, H. Daudt, A. Hoogerwerf, G. Kuypers, R. Mokken, and Ph. Stouthard. The data set was made available through the ICPR.

This does not mean that these variables are unimportant in other respects. As will be shown in chapter VI, variables such as class are important in explaining which parties Catholics went to after leaving the KVP.

The categories used are the same as in table 5.14. Total N of all switchers equals 116. Total N of constant KVP voters equals 301. Not a single switcher was found in the "Don't know" category. This finding is interesting in that it is at variance with findings elsewhere. Butler and Stokes imply that voters interested in and exposed to political information are less likely to switch their vote than those less interested in politics (see pp. 217-239, *Political Change in Britain*). This suggests that the nature of political change with regard to the KVP vote in the Netherlands is different from that in Britain and perhaps elsewhere.

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61 Dittrich, p. 8.


63 Wolinetz, pp. 1-14.

64 See table 1.1.

65 For a discussion of the impact of the removal of compulsory voting laws see G. Irwin, "Compulsory Voting Legislation: Impact on Voter Turnout in the Netherlands," *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (October 1974), pp. 292-315. It appears that Catholics were somewhat more likely to stop voting in 1970 compared with other groups. However, 1970 was a provincial election year which would not attract as much attention as a national election. Thus the turnout rates for Catholics in 1971 and 1972 may well have been different.

66 Dittrich, p. 15.

The CDA received 31.9 percent of the popular vote in the 1977 election which was slightly more than the 31.2 percent received by the ARP, CHU, and KVP combined in 1972. The PvdA increased its share of the total vote from 27.34 to 33.81 percent. The VVD increased its share from 14.45 to 17.95 percent. Unfortunately no evidence is available yet as to the patterns underlying these results.
Chapter VI

CONCLUSION

The study began by asking some questions about the unusual pattern of electoral behaviour among Catholics in the Netherlands. Why did 85 percent or more of Dutch Catholics regularly vote for the Catholic party and why did this level of support suddenly start to decline in the 1960s and 1970s? The case was made that this pattern of electoral stability and electoral decline was unique in Western Europe.

In seeking an explanation for this unusual pattern of electoral behaviour it was decided that the concept of party identification, which emphasizes individual level attachments to political parties, would be unsuitable in the European context. Most of the literature on West European electoral behaviour suggests that social characteristics such as class and religion are the major determinants of electoral behaviour. Researchers such as Phillips Shively argue that in Western Europe individuals identify with subcultural blocs rather than parties, take their cues from such blocs, and see political parties in instrumental terms.

Unfortunately those arguing the importance of subcultures have little to say about how subcultural blocs actually animate electoral behaviour or how subcultures remain viable and intact over time. How important are subcultural organizations or institutions such as trade unions, social clubs and newspapers? Do social, religious, or political leaders play an active role? What are the characteristics of their
clienteles? Is the influence of subcultures direct or indirect?

The important task in this study, therefore, was to delineate the manner in which the Dutch Catholic subculture was organized and to account for its unusual cohesiveness. A further task was to show that the vote for the Catholic party was, in fact, a by-product of subcultural cohesion and how the change in the vote in the 1960s was integrally related to changes in the Catholic subculture.

Findings. Evidence was presented to the effect that the Roman Catholic Church has a dominant role in ensuring the cohesiveness of the Catholic bloc. The Dutch Church was strongly influenced by an isolationist mentality and a feeling that Catholics in the Netherlands were a suppressed minority. Only through isolation, it was felt, could the Roman Catholic faith be adequately safeguarded. As well, the Dutch Church was characterized by distinct Calvinist and Jansenist tendencies, in many ways inherent in Dutch culture, which emphasized the rigorous application of rules and sanctions, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of isolationist policies.

As the Netherlands entered the twentieth century the Church became instrumental in the development of a wide range of Catholic socio-economic institutions. These institutions helped insulate Catholics from the rest of Dutch society during the age of industrialization and beyond.

At the head of the Church stood a compact and cohesive group, the bishops, who operated on a collegial basis usually speaking with a single voice to the entire Catholic population. This collegiality was particularly strong from 1910 onwards. It was the ecclesiastical hierarchy which
was most affected by the isolationist mentality and, through the means of hierarchical control, was successful in imposing its wishes on the clergy and the Catholic population as a whole. A number of the lower level clergy, though interested in the spiritual well being of all Catholics by means of institutional isolation, nevertheless also favoured the development of Catholic socio-economic institutions in order to ameliorate the harsh conditions under which many lower class Catholics existed.

Catholics of all classes remained within the boundaries of the highly institutionalized subculture, as it existed from 1910 onwards, in large part because of a highly effective system of social control operated by a willing and able clergy. Clerics, through face-to-face authority relations, ensured that the Catholic populace were well aware of Church expectations. As well, Catholics were provided with social, economic and, of course, spiritual support making it unnecessary or at least unattractive for them to move outside of the Catholic subculture in order to obtain what they needed or wanted. In many ways Catholics can be seen as clients who were reasonably satisfied with the services provided by Catholic institutions.

Ordinary Catholics showed a high degree of willingness to comply with the edicts and wishes of an authoritarian Church. This was particularly true during the inter-war period when a triumphalist spirit pervaded most of the Catholic subculture. This was evidenced by the enthusiastic participation of Catholics in processions and rallies and by the popular literature of the period. In part this compliance was due to the relatively low level of education achieved by Catholics compared with members of other blocs.
The Church played a crucial role in the maintenance of political cohesion. Among the expectations of the Church concerning the behaviour of Catholics, such as regular attendance at mass, the bearing of many children and the reading of only Catholic newspapers, was that Catholics should "remain one" politically. This expectation was voiced several times by the bishops themselves before World War II and on four separate occasions in the post-war period.

The authority and ethos of the Church was actively used by the leadership of the Catholic party in order to mobilize electoral support and to prevent the fracturing of the Catholic party itself. Although Catholic party leaders spent considerable time developing party programs and reconciling conflicting economic interests within the party, it was the authority of the Church which proved to be most effective in ensuring compliance.

Dissidents within the party were persuaded from leaving, or to return if they had left, by having the wishes of the bishops pointed out to them. Dissident groups which did leave to set up a separate Catholic party invariably did poorly at election time.

In party publications Catholics were informed that the Catholic party was the only party for them. One KVP leader even went as far as to suggest that Catholics who voted for a different party should leave the Church. Even as late as 1970, when support for the KVP was in decline, the party leader made use of a largely religious issue, namely abortion, to help arrest further decline in support.

The Catholic party also played upon the suppressed minority theme. In the 1950s the KVP newspaper, *De Opmars*, frequently contained articles charging discrimination against Catholics. An image was created of the
KVP as the defender of Catholic interests in a basically non-Catholic society. It was claimed that without the KVP there would be no Catholic broadcasting organization, no Catholic hospitals and no Catholic schools.

For most people, voting for the Catholic party was part and parcel of being Catholic—like attending Sunday mass. The idea of not voting Catholic occurred but rarely. In the inter-war period the parish priest would, at election time, remind his parishioners from the pulpit of their duty. In the post-war period the parish priest was much less active in instructing parishioners to vote KVP (except in 1946 and 1948). Nevertheless, he reinforced the general notion that unity should be maintained under all circumstances. The compulsory voting law, in effect until 1970, helped ensure that most Catholics would turn up at the polls.

The potency of Church influence can be shown by the events of the 1960s when bishops and clergy altered their authoritarian stance. The Church, facing pressures from clerics and Catholic intellectuals, embarked on a program of critical self appraisal. Sanctions imposed in earlier times concerning inter-faith marriage, weekly attendance at mass and related matters were lifted. Church doctrine was demythologized and a large element of democratization introduced. A considerable amount of authority devolved to the level of the individual Catholic. Catholics were told they were capable of deciding for themselves what constituted good Christian behaviour. And specifically they were told that voting was a matter of personal conscience.

The result was that many Catholics decided to no longer participate in the activities of the Church and to no longer support the KVP. As well, a proportion of those still remaining loyal to the Church ceased to vote KVP. The KVP dropped from 85 percent of the total vote in 1963 to 38
percent in 1972. A public opinion poll in 1974 indicated that only 25 percent of Dutch Catholics would still vote KVP if an election were to be held. The drop in KVP voting was consistent in all sectors of the Dutch Catholic population. Only among older voters, those living in rural areas and those in agricultural occupations, did the KVP vote remain relatively high.

Although a number of political issues arose in the 1960s which involved the Catholic party and which embittered relations among conflicting socio-economic interests within the party, this did not lead to any one particular segment of the Catholic population, the working-class for example, to desert the KVP. It was the younger, better educated Catholics possessing an interest in political affairs who were more likely to leave the Catholic party.

Without the authority of the Church as a prop upon which to lean, the KVP ceased to be a viable operation. Its leaders either defected to form new parties or, if they remained within the KVP, attempted to negotiate a merger with the two major Protestant parties to produce a middle of the road Christian Democratic party. Their effort to create the latter was eventually successful in 1976.

Theoretical Implications. What implications do these findings have for the literature on electoral behaviour? To begin with they highlight the need to explore further the problem of subcultural cohesion. Some writers take subcultures as a given or as unspecific forces which lurk in the background but which nevertheless animate political behaviour. Others who do examine the workings of subcultures more closely, emphasize the insulating role of subcultural institutions such as the media.
In the case of the Dutch Catholic subculture the religious cleavage was not some unspecific traditional force but was actively fostered by elites, in particular by the religious authorities, namely the bishops. Political elites too played an important role by judiciously taking guarded middle of the road stands on various issues so as not to offend differing interests within the Catholic bloc. As well, they were active in promoting the idea that the Catholic party was the one and only party for which Catholics could vote.

Dutch Catholic institutions did indeed play an insulating role. However, there is a danger in misinterpreting their function. They should also be seen in market terms. Catholic institutions helped cement the loyalty of Catholics to the subculture by providing services which were competitive with those of the other blocs in Dutch society. Particularly in the area of trade unions and broadcasting Catholics were generally aware what alternatives were available. Catholic organizations made considerable effort to ensure that their clientele had no cause for transferring their loyalty to non-Catholic institutions. At the turn of the century Catholic trade unions, for the most part led by priests, had considerable success in organizing workers, especially in the southern and eastern parts of the Netherlands. In the post-war period the services offered by the Catholic Trade Union Federation were virtually identical to those offered by the socialist and Protestant federations.

Furthermore the boundaries separating the Catholic subculture from the rest of Dutch society were not impermeable. Catholics preferred reading non-Catholic novels rather than Catholic ones. They would frequently listen to non-Catholic radio programs. In the world of work there were interactions between Catholics and non-Catholics at all levels
of society. Thus Gadourek describes how in the village of Sassenheim members of Catholic, Protestant and socialist trade unions at local factories would hold meetings together to discuss problems concerning working conditions in the plant. Their views and recommendations would be forwarded to their relevant trade union leaders who in turn forwarded them to their trade union centrals. In the social and religious spheres there was considerably less interaction between the different blocs. Nevertheless the view that interaction and co-operation between blocs was totally lacking at the mass level is a false one. Catholic institutions could not maintain a grip over their clientele solely by attempting to insulate them from outside influences. Catholics remained loyal to these institutions because in part they provided an adequate level of necessary or desirable services. And in the mid 1960s when Church sanctions were revoked many Catholics remained loyal to institutions such as the Catholic Broadcasting Organization (KRO) even though support for the KVP went into decline.

Thus for the Dutch Catholic subculture to have survived intact over a considerable period of time required a judicious blend of authoritarian social control, individual level sanctions and rewards, and socio-economic institutions which were viable in market terms. Furthermore, the whole system required the active participation of leaders at both the local level and national level. Witness the number of instances when the Dutch bishops intervened in the realm of politics.

The charge can be made that the case of the Dutch Catholic subculture is unusual and not relevant for the study of intra-bloc cohesion elsewhere. The high degree of social and political cohesion on the part of Dutch Catholics was certainly unique. They enjoyed a degree of cohesion
matched by no other subculture in Western Europe. However, the Dutch Catholic case, in being a near perfect example of subcultural cohesion, does serve a useful purpose in acting as a benchmark with which to compare other examples of subcultural cohesion.

Other subcultures, both within and without the Netherlands, may have different ideological bases and perhaps different organizational techniques. Nevertheless, in broad outlines the structures of many of the religious and ideological blocs in Western Europe are surprisingly similar. All tend to have trade unions (and other class based organizations if the bloc cuts across class lines), youth movements and other service organizations. Furthermore, the manner in which the institutions of different blocs operate is not too dissimilar from that of the Dutch Catholic bloc. For example, Roth's study of the Social Democrats in Imperial Germany indicates that there was a strong tendency on the part of Social Democratic institutions, such as libraries and social welfare organizations, to provide services related to the material and recreational needs of German workers. These institutions did very little in the way of attempting direct ideological indoctrination. In contrast to the Dutch Catholic bloc, however, the German SDP had fewer direct sanctions available, other than group pressure, to help increase their hold over the German working-class. This probably helps explain the failure of the SDP to significantly increase their support.

Thus comparison of less cohesive blocs with the Dutch Catholic bloc may help explain why they are in fact less cohesive. The notion that subcultures do vary in terms of their cohesiveness is very important and one frequently neglected. This point becomes particularly acute in explaining the conditions underlying political change. Shively, for example,
argues that in Weimar Germany, where high levels of party identification were lacking, it was possible for alternative political parties to successfully compete for the interests of specific blocs, thereby displacing political parties which had previously represented these interests. In the Netherlands, however, political change among Dutch Catholics occurred when the central institutions of the bloc changed. This resulted in considerable loosening of the grip of the Church over its clientele. No other political party could successfully claim the specifically Catholic interests of the Dutch Catholic subculture. Rather, other interests began to predominate over previous Catholic ones and a large proportion of the Catholic vote dispersed over a number of parties. Previous attempts to 'raid' the Catholic vote were unsuccessful because the subculture was sufficiently well organized to be able to control the voting behaviour of its members.

What does this suggest about the Weimar case Shively puts forward? It suggests that the subcultural blocs in Weimar Germany lacked cohesion. The subcultural blocs Shively refers to were blocs more in terms of aggregates of individuals with similar characteristics rather than well organized subcultures. One need only look at the Catholic vote for the Centre party, the party the German ecclesiastical hierarchy had designated as the approved Catholic party. No more than 40 percent of Catholics in Weimar Germany voted for this party, considerably less than the support given by Catholics to the Dutch Catholic party in the period prior to 1967. Shively's statement that the choice for a Catholic in Weimar Germany was quite clear thus appears to have been true for only a minority of the German Catholic population. The majority of Catholic votes in Weimar Germany went to Marxist and non-Marxist parties rather than the Centre party.
It is quite probable, therefore, that not only was party identification not an important factor in Weimar Germany but neither was subcultural cohesion. Few blocs were sufficiently well organized. The interests and social location of many Germans were unclear which probably explains the tenuous links they had with political parties. The National Socialists successfully competed for the interests of such voters, however ill defined, offering very general solutions to the economic and social malaise afflicting many Germans during that era.

The major implication of the Shively argument is that electoral stability based upon the identification of people with subcultures is potentially highly unstable. Voters may move in massive swings to new political parties or movements. The case of the Dutch Catholic bloc and the Dutch Catholic party, however, indicates that where subcultures are well organized and cohesive, electoral behaviour is both stable and reliable. Furthermore, this type of electoral stability is highly resistant to efforts by other parties, particularly extremist ones like the National Socialists, to dislodge substantial numbers of voters locked into such as subculture. When change does occur it is likely due to large scale changes within the subculture itself.

What implication does this have for the concept of party identification as used by people like Campbell et al.? In the case of Dutch Catholics it was shown that party identification was unnecessary in providing a stable base for the Catholic party. The vote was determined, one can almost say over-determined, by the influence of the Catholic subculture. Thus, contrary to what is claimed by Dennis and McCrone, one can have party system stability without having a sense of identification with the parties "widely rooted in mass public consciousness." It is
possible, however, that when the protective boundaries of the subculture are removed or altered, political change will be much more rapid.

The Future. The Dutch party system is currently in flux. Large numbers of voters are basically adrift. Nevertheless certain patterns are discernable. Among ex-KVP voters there is a gradual movement towards the two major non-religious parties, the Social Democrats (PvdA) and the Liberals (VVD). Furthermore this movement appears to be animated by socio-economic differences. If we look at ex-KVP voters only it can be seen that those of lower class standing tend to vote PvdA while middle and upper-middle-class individuals are more likely to vote VVD (see table 6.1). Class in this table is self assigned social class.

Table 6.1

Vote by Self Assigned Social Class for Non-KVP Voting Catholics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote</th>
<th>Lower-Class</th>
<th>Middle and Upper-Middle-Class</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PvdA</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VVD</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D'66</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not vote</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total %</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>N =</strong></td>
<td><strong>(114)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(125)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(239)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1970 Dutch Election Survey

* Including the ARP, CHU, BP, PFR, etc.
The gradual movement of ex-KVP voters and Catholic voters newly entering the electorate to the PvdA and VVD may have continued in the 1977 election. The Christian Democratic Appel (CDA) received slightly more than the KVP, ARP and CHU combined in 1972. The smaller parties, with one exception, have all declined. The PvdA and VVD both improved their share of the total.

What implications do these patterns have for the future? The development of widespread party allegiances is a possibility. Catholics no longer receive cues or instructions from an authoritarian Church. The world may appear to be considerably more ambiguous. Catholics might want to develop partisan loyalties in order to provide themselves with an element of order and stability. These loyalties would have to develop over a series of successive elections which requires that at each election the parties be perceived as a stable part of the political landscape and be distinguishable in a meaningful way. Furthermore, any given party such as the VVD should take stands on political controversies which consistently coincide with the inclination of the voter. This would help attract voters initially and, over time, re-affirm party loyalty.

There is a likelihood, however, that these conditions will not be met. The three major parties may not be perceived as distinct alternatives particularly with the CDA occupying the political centre. Catholic voters may find it easy to switch from the PvdA to the CDA and back again over successive elections and therefore not develop a commitment to one party. Issues above and beyond socio-economic ones could arise which repel Catholics from a party for which they voted in a previous election. The abortion issue in the Netherlands, for example, has still not been settled as of 1978. Both the PvdA and VVD are in favour of extremely liberal
abortion legislation. The CDA is more conservative in this regard.

Thus the alternative possibility is the development of loyalties by Catholic voters to a tendance as it is referred to in France: that is, commitment to a group of parties representing a restricted range of ideological space. The party system would be continuously in flux with several parties waxing and waning in rapid succession as they compete for the interests of particular tendances. Parties would not be able to depend on an over-arching authority to ensure a stable support base but rather face a situation similar to that of parties in Weimar Germany and the Third and Fourth French Republics. This is basically the situation which has prevailed among Catholic voters in the period 1967 to 1977 and which may well continue to prevail in the future.

Further scenarios involving the Catholic vote might see the resurgence of subcultural influences. Currently there are elements of the social democratic subculture which are still quite potent. The socialist broadcasting organization (VARA) is strongly linked with the PvdA, unlike the Catholic KRO which basically takes a neutral stance on political issues. Communications from the VARA combined with statements by trade union leaders (the NKV-NVV trade union federation is inclined towards the PvdA), for example, may be sufficiently clearcut so that working-class Catholics would not need to acquire party loyalties. Religious authorities might again wish to assert their influence and, along with Catholic social and political leaders, recreate separate and highly distinctive institutions with a view to influencing the behaviour of Catholics. The Catholic pillar of years past has shown that institutions such as these can help provide an extremely stable and robust support base for a political party.
Whatever the course of events, it should be remembered that they will still have been shaped to a considerable extent by the actions of elites. In the past, leaders of the Catholic party, in conjunction with Church authorities, successfully used the religious cleavage in the Netherlands. For the future, the configuration of the Dutch political landscape as a whole, and more particularly the success of the CDA, will depend in large measure on the entrepreneurship of Catholic leaders and their Protestant brethren in exploiting sources of political cleavage to their own advantage.
Footnotes


2 Ibid., pp. 1203-1225.


7 G. Roth, The Social Democrats in Imperial Germany (Totowa: Bedminster Press, 1963), esp. chapters IX and X.

8 The German Social Democrats after World War I had to compete with the Communist Party, among others, for the working-class vote. The SPD's support fluctuated considerably and near the end of the Weimer Republic lost considerable ground to the Communist and National Socialist parties. See W. D. Burnham, "Political Immunization and Political Confessionalism," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, Vol. 3, No. 1 (1972), pp. 1-30.

9 Shively, pp. 1220-1222.

10 Laponce, pp. 154-155.

11 Shively, p. 1222.


13 Dennis and McCrone, p. 247. This generalization concerning the lack of party identification among Catholics is not necessarily true for non-Catholics although some students of Dutch voting behaviour have argued that party identification is generally lacking. For example, Jacques Thomassen has argued that the concept of party identification is not
applicable to the Netherlands. He demonstrates, among other things, that party identification for all Dutch voters in the Netherlands is less stable than vote preference, that is, respondents were more likely to change their party preference than they were their actual vote. Nevertheless, one can ask whether party identification is really absent in the non-Catholic sectors of the Dutch population. Historically certain of the blocs in Dutch society have been organized on a more political plane. For example, the party supported by Calvinists, the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP), was the focal point around which other Calvinist organizations revolved. From 1870 onwards the ARP spearheaded the drive for the emancipation of Calvinists drawing its support from the so-called "small people" who were drawn not only from Calvinist congregations but also to some extent from the orthodox in Dutch Reformed circles. There was no central hierarchical structure, such as that offered by the Roman Catholic Church, to help bind Calvinists together. For Calvinists the ARP, under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper, acted as a binding force. Over the years the ARP continued to be in the forefront of Dutch politics dominating the Catholics during their years of coalition, constantly propounding its evangelical message. In contrast the Catholic party had a much weaker profile—it did not officially call itself a party until 1926—and was much more reticent about entering the public limelight. In short the differences between the ARP and the Catholic party are such that one might well expect followers of the ARP to have developed a much stronger linkage between themselves and their party.

The data used by Thomassen were collected in the period 1970 to 1972. This was the time when Catholics began leaving the KVP for other parties on a massive scale. A substantial proportion of both PvdA and VVD support during this period consisted of newly arrived Catholics who had travelled either directly from the KVP or via the smaller, newer parties. Given the lack of any meaningful sense of party identification among many Catholics both among those remaining with the KVP and among those leaving the KVP, the presence of Catholics in the sample may well have confounded the findings. As well, the timing of the arrival of new parties may mean that voters may well have indicated a switch in allegiance to a new party without ever having had the opportunity to vote for that party. This might explain Thomassen's unusual finding of voters switching their allegiance more quickly than their actual vote. Thus analyzing the different socio-religious groupings separately and taking into account the timing in the appearance of new parties might alter the results and make the notion of party identification plausible for at least certain groups in the Netherlands. J. Thomassen, "Party Identification as a Cross-National Concept: Its Meaning in the Netherlands," in I. Budge, I. Crewe and D. Farlie (Eds.), Party Identification and Beyond (London: Wiley and Sons, 1976), pp. 63-80. See also M. K. Jennings, "Partisan Commitment and Electoral Behavior in the Netherlands," Acta Politica, Vol. 7, No. 4 (October 1972), pp. 445-470.

The CDA received 31.9 percent of the total vote in 1977 (in 1972 ARP, CHU and KVP combined received 31.2 percent). The PvdA obtained 33.81 percent (27.34 percent in 1972). The VVD obtained 17.95 percent (14.45 percent in 1972). All the minor parties declined with the exception of D'66 (5.43 percent in 1977 compared with 4.15 percent in 1972).


Some analysts have detected a tendency on the part of certain institutions in areas like broadcasting and education to return to the days of old. See, for example, S. Piët, "Omroepen willen oude nestgeur weer ruiken," *NCR-Handelsblad*, 8 November 1975.
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APPENDIX I

MAP OF THE NETHERLANDS
A major source of data for the study is interviews with 46 individuals closely connected with the Dutch Catholic subculture. The sample consisted of members of the Catholic party executive and parliamentary caucus, members of certain of the other parties, priests and executive officers of the main Catholic socio-economic organizations. The actual breakdown of the sample is as follows: 15 were priests, two were journalists, and five were members of parties other than the KVP. The remainder were in the KVP and/or Catholic socio-economic organizations. There was considerable overlap between membership in the KVP and Catholic socio-economic organizations. Seventeen of the 19 people who were active in the KVP were at some point employed by or involved in Catholic socio-economic organizations. Connections with these organizations were for the most part actively maintained by KVP members while sitting in the Second Chamber, on the executive, or acting as party organizer. Five individuals occupying executive positions in Catholic socio-economic organizations had no formal connections with the KVP. However, even these individuals tended to have considerable contact with those actively involved in the KVP.

Of the five persons in the other parties, two were from the Labour party (PvdA), two from the Party of Political Radicals (PPR) and one from the Anti-Revolutionary Party (ARP). All five were Catholic with the exception of the individual from the ARP. Three of the four people in the PvdA and the PPR had been active in the KVP prior to changing their party affiliation. Thus in total 23 individuals in the sample were or had been
actively involved in the affairs of the KVP during the post-war period.

Given the limited number of individuals interviewed it cannot be
said that the sample is totally representative of the Catholic pillar as
a whole. Nevertheless, an effort was made to ensure some sort of balanced
distribution. The priests interviewed were resident in different parts of
the country; in the rural east, in the south and in the rural and urbanized
areas of the west. In the case of each of the major Catholic socio-economic
organizations or sectors, for example, the Catholic trade union federation
(NKV), the broadcasting organization (KRO), the self-employed middle-class
(KNOB), the employers (NCV) and the farmers (KNBTV), a minimum of two
individuals were interviewed and in most cases at least three or four.

The interviews had two main goals. The first was to find out what
got on inside the Catholic subculture; the structure and activities of
organizations, the role of the Church as well as information about specific
events. The second was to inquire into the values and beliefs of indivi-
duals; for example, why did priests believe in the importance of insulating
Catholics from non-Catholics. The interviews themselves were semi-structured.
Certain questions were asked of all individuals concerning the influence of
the Church, actual instances of Church control or intervention, their
reaction to events like the Mandement of 1954 and their reaction to the
changes in Catholicism during the 1960s.

As well, there were questions for particular groups and specific
individuals. Priests were asked what means were used to control the
behaviour of parishioners and in what ways the bishops exercised their
authority. Catholic party leaders were asked how they mobilized the vote,
what relations were like between the party and the different socio-economic
organizations and about the impact of the decline in the KVP vote on the
party during the 1960s.

The length of interviews varied from 40 minutes to well over six hours. Five of the sample were interviewed more than once and one individual four times. The interview numbers in the text refer to individuals. The same number has been used when referring to subsequent interviews with the same individual. Notes were taken by hand during the interview. Immediately afterwards additional time was taken to record as many impressions and details of the interview as possible. If there were gaps or points which were ambiguous, the interviewee would often be asked for clarification later by telephone or in a subsequent interview. The use of a tape recorder was rejected because it was felt that it might make subjects more guarded in their responses or lead to outright refusal on the part of certain subjects. Some individuals specifically asked for anonymity and all were told their names would not appear in the study. All information was double checked with other individuals and with published sources. The interviews were carried out over a nine-month period during the year 1976.
APPENDIX III

AGGREGATE DATA AND THE CATHOLIC VOTE

In examining the stability and decline of the Catholic vote for the Catholic party (KVP) during the period 1946-72, I have depended mainly on aggregate data. The election data were originally collected by Joseph Houska of Yale University. The data consist of election returns aggregated to the municipal district level, covering all Dutch national elections from 1946 to 1972. These data were combined with ecological data, again aggregated to the municipal district level. The ecological data were collected by researchers at the Department of Political Science, University of Leiden, under the supervision of H. Daalder and J. Verhoef. The ecological data, based on census data and data collected by municipal registry offices, concern variables such as degree of industrialization and urbanization, proportion of Catholics, birth rate and so on. Data for these variables are available at different time points, for some variables as far back as 1889, enabling the researcher to take into account changes over time in the socio-economic structure of municipalities.

There are over 900 municipal districts (the actual number varies from year to year as new municipalities are created and others disappear or become amalgamated into larger units). This results in a reasonably large sample with a high degree of differentiation between units and relative homogeneity within units. In analyzing the data the assumption is made that only Catholics vote for the KVP, an assumption borne out by survey data.\(^1\) This helps considerably to minimize some of the problems usually associated with analysis of aggregate data.\(^2\)
Graphs 3.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4 are based on the total registered vote in each municipal district multiplied by the percentage of Catholics in the district. Registered voters rather than actual vote turnout was used since for some election years the latter was not available. Thus, to ensure consistency the registered voters' variable was used for all election years. This has the effect of systematically underestimating the actual percentage of Catholics who voted KVP since not all registered voters turned up at the polling booth at election time (e.g., some non-voters were actually deceased but still on the registration list). According to W. J. Kusters, in 1959 85.9 percent and in 1963 84.8 percent of all Catholics voted KVP. In my analysis the use of the registered voters' variable results in figures of 82.8 percent and 81.6 percent for 1959 and 1963 respectively, a difference of approximately 3 percent compared with the figures computed by Kusters.

The registered Catholic vote figures used in my study were multiplied by a correction factor to take into account the difference in age structure between the Catholic population and the rest of the population. Fewer Catholics are of voting age compared with non-Catholics. For example, in 1947 Catholics constituted 38.5 percent of the entire population but only 35.5 percent of those of voting age. Thus for the elections of 1946, 1948 and 1952 a correction factor of .922 was used (based on the 1947 census). For the elections of 1956, 1959 and 1963 the factor used was .932 (1960 census) and for 1967, 1971 and 1972 the factor used was .982 (1971 census).
FOOTNOTES TO APPENDIX III


3 W. J. Kusters, "Stembusgedrag en Maatschappijstructuur," Sociologische Gids, Vol. 10, No. 5 (September 1963), p. 233. Kusters notes he uses election returns and census data in his calculations but does not indicate the criteria used in arriving at the actual number of voting age Catholics.