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Werkman, P.E.

2007

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citation for published version (APA)

Werkman, P. E. (2007). *Laat uw doel hervorming zijn! Facetten van de geschiedenis van het Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond in Nederland (1909-1959)*.

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SUMMARY

‘Let reform be your aim!’

Facets of the history of the Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond in Nederland (1909-1959)

1. General resumé

In the seventies and eighties of the twentieth century, neo-Marxist historians in the Netherlands declared that the Protestant-Christian trade union movement had distinguished itself in the negative sense from the ‘modern’ or socialist trade union movement, because with complete conviction it had only worked to confirm the existing social order, and as a result had not contributed to the liberation of the working class. According to them it did not even deserve the predicate ‘labour movement’.

This book contests this view. The leading question was to what extent the Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond in Nederland (cnv) (National Federation of Christian Trade Unions in the Netherlands) contributed to the social debate about and to the realization of structural changes in the relations of authority in business in the first half of the twentieth century. On the basis of research of sources, this work shows that the cnv, with its own aims for employee participation within the framework of a *publiekrechtelijke bedrijfsorganisatie* (statutory trade organization), most certainly laboured for the ‘deproletarianization’ of the working class and also wanted to struggle for it within its own Protestant population group. Furthermore, that through cross-fertilization and mutual adjustments, the opinions and demands of the Protestant, Catholic and Socialist movements about the reform of the socio-economic order and employee participation converged to such a degree that they were able to collaborate in the end. In other policy areas the differences between the three movements were sooner temporal and gradual than structural.

However, in its aim to change the relations of authority in business, the cnv for some considerable time manifested a doubtful and reserved attitude and always operated carefully. This stemmed from a relatively weakly developed anti-capitalist sentiment within the cnv, which was a movement of orthodox Protestants who often had jobs or backgrounds in the small-scale handicraft and agrarian trades. The understanding of God’s providence dampened the development of a radical social criticism as well as the development and subsequent pursuit of alternative constructions. The notions ‘antirevolutionary’ and ‘christian-historical’ were taken seriously. That was not a basis for radicalism, but at the most for gradual change.

The criticism and the resistance of conservative forces within the pillarized environment of the cnv also had a restraining influence. Steps that the trade union federation thought it could take in the light of advancing social developments were contested by Christian employers and conservative reformed Protestants and Antirevolutionaries. This happened with a plea to biblical power relations and relations of authority and to specific interpretations of the neo-Calvinist principle of

sphere sovereignty – the principle that the CNV also worked with. Although every now and then this led to considerable tensions, in particular within and around the Anti-revolutionaire Partij (ARP) (Anti Revolutionary Party), the CNV could not and did not want to distance itself from its pillarized framework.

The development of the CNV with regard to the question of employee participation in the years until 1950 can be divided into roughly three periods. The first period covers the first ten years after its foundation in 1909. The interest for structural social reforms was minimal at that time. The young federation was too preoccupied by practical questions: the small administrative machinery, the build-up of the federation and its unions, the conflict about interconfessionalism, the social legislation and the effects of the First World War. No less important was that the CNV tried to distinguish itself from the – what was called – ‘politicized’ socialist and syndicalist trade unions by not offering social criticism. According to its chairman H. Diemer, the CNV ought to focus on the improvement of the material position of the working class within the framework of the existing order, and not meddle with the power and property sphere of the employer in his own company.

The latter was a sensitive matter. In 1903 the reformed minister, the Reverend J.C. Sikkel, had made a frontal attack on the (Christian) trade union movement in a speech delivered to Protestant employers. Sikkel referred to the principle that had been introduced by Dr. A. Kuyper, the leader of the ARP, of the sovereignty of all social spheres. He argued that a company was sovereign in its own sphere, that the industrialist held a God-given position of authority, and that there was no room for exogenic powers such as the state and the unions. His charge was parried by his Dutch Reformed colleague, the Reverend A.S. Talma, whose more functional vision of the relationship between employer and employee and of the necessity of trade unions was backed by the protestant trade union movement. However, according to Diemer’s statements, Sikkel’s views had not been banished from the rank and file of the Protestant unions altogether. Among Protestant employers they became widely accepted.

The theological-ideological criticism strengthened the hesitancy of the young Protestant trade union movement with regard to the micro level of the private company. For practical and tactical reasons it was already wary of the so called *kernen* (committees for consultation) and other forms of participation and organization within the walls of the private company. They were often introduced by the employers to frustrate the trade unions. The CNV fully concentrated on the meso level, whereby in this period, the ambitions did not reach any further than the collective labour agreement. For the bipartite Kamers van Arbeid (Chambers of Labour), which had been introduced by Kuyper in 1889 and recommended as the prelude to the far-reaching statutory trade organization, it no longer had any interest. The Protestant Nederlandsch Werkliedenverbond Patrimonium (Dutch Workers Union Patrimonium) had at one time embraced the Kamers van Arbeid as a means to reconcile the classes and to provide workers with some participation. But owing to limited powers, regional setup, voluntariness and their creation outside of the organizations, the Kamers van Arbeid remained lifeless.

The second period covers the interbellum, in which the social debate about structural reforms by way of a complex of political and socio-economic factors expanded enormously. It is characteristic of the CNV, where revolution was a taboo anyhow, that it did not want to make ‘evolutionary leaps’ either. It did not believe in successes that were based on changeable economic circumstances or on the fear of revolution. It was one of the reasons that it distanced itself from the Roomsche-Katholieke Bedrijfsradenstelsel (System of Roman-Catholic Trade Councils) (1919-1922). In the disintegra-

tion of this Catholic edifice – due to the ebbing away of the fear of revolution, a change in the economic tide and a weakening of the trade union movement – one was proved to be right.

But in 1921 the new CNV ideologist, the union secretary H. Amelink, did put into words more clearly than before that the understanding of God's leading hand in history did not mean that what already existed ought not to be tested against biblical norms or that it was inadmissible to actively aim for the reform of society. His starting points were the dignity and equality of the worker as a creature of God. According to Amelink this implied a shared responsibility, and that in turn presumed participation. His thoughts went out to the collective employee participation of trade union officials on the level of the industrial branch and not to that of individual workers in individual companies. Amelink placed himself in the tradition of Kuypers and his architectonic social criticism. His ideal of the future was a statutory trade organization with the right to take part in the decision-making process in the social and economic field by way of the unions. Tying in with Kuypers's ideas, he based himself on the idea that a branch of industry was a sovereign sphere. Practical and principle motives kept him from making a blueprint for a new society.

Amelink's views were incorporated into the CNV programme of 1921, which remained directional throughout this second period and emphasized a regulation in law for declaring collective labour agreements generally binding. In addition to the protection of industrial branches against free riders, this had to gradually ripen the minds for the next steps in the direction of the statutory trade organization. Unions got orders not to make employee participation in private companies an item for action.

Nevertheless, Amelink and a number of supporters, among whom Patrimonium's figurehead C. Smeenk and the antirevolutionary jurist P.S. Gerbrandy, saw themselves compelled to enter into combat with Dr. H. Dooyeweerd, the director of the antirevolutionary Kuypersstichting. The latter condemned the legal inspection of books by union officials and other forms of participation in private companies. That would mean an unacceptable infringement of the sphere sovereignty of the industrialist and the company, and an infringement of the power and property rights grounded in the ordinances of creation that applied in that sphere. Amelink and his friends raised the objection that employee participation legitimized the industrialist's position and that labour was also a legal ground for participation. They were not overly fond of the idea, but they did not see obstacles on principle against a provision in law for works councils. The controversy confirmed that the difference Sikkels-Talma still existed.

Signals from within the CNV also made it clear that many executives and colleagues shrank back from Amelink's idealistic reflections and vehemence. Not everyone proved insensitive to Dooyeweerd's criticism, who in addition received support from the ARP leader H. Colijn and Christian employers. This meant that Amelink was forced to back down, and that during the rest of the interbellum the CNV did not see any real development of ideas. Policies were mainly geared towards taking advantage, as constructively as possible, of the legislation concerning collective labour agreements (1927), the *Bedrijfsraden* (Trade Councils) (1934), the declaration of collective agreements between producers as generally binding (1935) and the declaration of the collective labour agreements as generally binding (1937). In the thirties, the CNV did not play an active role in the debate about a planned economy.

The forties formed the third period. Turning point was the acceptance in 1943 by the underground leadership of the CNV of the 'Richtlijnen voor de bedrijfsorganisatie' ('Directives for the industrial organization'). This was the first time that the CNV of-

ferred a fully worked-out model for a statutory trade organization to be realized quickly after the war. It included the right to social and economic participation for union leaders on the level of the industrial branch and on the national level. It did not include arrangements for employee participation in the private company. Advancements in legislation, experiences of the economic crisis and rapprochement between the social partners had paved the way for this step in the thirties. The occupation, the 'usurpation' of the Protestant and Catholic trade unions in the summer of 1941 and the underground consultation between the social partners about the reorganization of post-war society that had started in the second half of 1941, had acted as catalysts.

For the CNV the 'Richtlijnen' were the benchmark in these underground negotiations. They were the stakes in the talks, which in 1944 resulted in the unique 'Nota inzake sociaal-economische ordening' ('Memorandum on socio-economic order') of the CNV, the Roomsche-Katholiek Werkliedenverbond (RKWV) (Roman-Catholic Federation of Workers) and the socialist Nederlandsch Verbond van Vakverenigingen (NVV) (Dutch Federation of Trade Unions). It was a presentation of their joint wishes with regard to the social and economic industrial organization and employee participation on the level of the industrial branch and nationally. The CNV had left a substantial mark on it. In their joint memorandum the three federations emphasized that the Stichting van de Arbeid (Foundation of Labour), about which an agreement had already been reached with employers, ought only to be a transitional body. The Stichting van de Arbeid was governed by private law and only designed to operate in the social field.

After the war, in preparing for the Wet op de bedrijfsorganisatie (Industrial Trade Act) and the Wet op de ondernemingsraden (Works Councils Act) – both were accepted in Parliament in 1950 – the three trade unions also stayed as close to each other as possible during negotiations with employers and the government. As it turned out, the CNV was prepared – within certain boundaries – to cooperate constructively towards finding solutions and compromises with the Catholics, Socialists and Liberals in order to make legislation possible. The CNV and the Katholieke Arbeidersbeweging (KAB) (Catholic Labour Movement) were closest to each other. Both emphasized horizontal trade organizations, wanted to keep the government at a distance as much as possible and preferred an Industrial Trade Act that contained, as a final piece, a basic regulation for works councils. The CNV wanted to prevent the works councils from developing away from and against the unions and the administrative bodies of the statutory trade organizations at all costs.

Since 1943, the CNV's 'Richtlijnen' and the policies that were based on them came under fire from Dooyeweerd, who in the meantime had been appointed as professor at the Calvinist Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. The Verbond van Protestantsch-Christelijke Werkgevers (VPCW) (Federation of Protestant-Christian Employers), a partner in the Convent van Christelijk-Sociale Organisaties (Assembly of Christian-Social Organizations), also distanced itself from them after the liberation. The VPCW became a bastion against the statutory trade organization. The character of the industrial branches, the nature and the admissibility of statutory powers, the composition and competencies of a national Social-Economic Council were matters of dispute. Dooyeweerd and the VPCW preferred the pre-war system of declaring the freely negotiated collective social and economic agreements as generally binding. However, the CNV and the other federations of trade unions had already passed that as a point of no return.

On closer inspection it all revolved around an old, unresolved issue. The CNV strived – in the tradition of Kuyper, Talma and Amelink – for collective joint respon-

sibility and collective participation for the labour factor, and based that on the idea that an industry sector was sovereign in its own sphere. Dooyeweerd and the vpcw – in the spirit of Sikkel – defended the sphere sovereignty of the company and the industrialist, and in doing so emphasized the preservation of free enterprise. Fear of totalitarianism, permanent state interference and a planned economy were important motives for Dooyeweerd and the vpcw during these years. But they warned against driving out the devil with Beelzebub. The conflicts between the vpcw and the cnv, which also wanted to keep the state at bay with the help of a statutory trade organization, were essentially a matter of interests. Despite shared religions and philosophies of life and all the organic-solidary ideals and beautiful phrases, the Christian-social movement of workers and employers again failed to bridge the gap between the differences in position and interest and it did so on a point it regarded as such a distinguishing feature.

As in the twenties, major tensions in the Convent van Christelijk-Sociale Organisaties and the arp resulted. The difference was that the cnv leadership now made a firm stand for its emancipatory ideals and even in its own sociopolitical group did not shrink back from an *Alleingang*. The driving force behind this was the ambitious M. Ruppert, who since 1940 had been the coming man in the cnv and was the trade union's chairman from 1947 until 1959. Ruppert was the exponent of a new generation of self-confident leaders. He was the spiritual father of the 'Richtlijnen' and took it upon himself to defend them against Dooyeweerd. That came to him more easily than to his predecessors and many contemporaries. Through upbringing, work and studies he was well versed in the reformed-antirevolutionary way of thinking and living, but as a confirmed Lutheran he was freer with regard to the arp and Dooyeweerd's Calvinist philosophy.

Ruppert postulated that the cnv should transform from an organization of Christians who isolated themselves into a true Christian movement with a universal message and vocation. This arose from a mix of political strategy and missionary zeal, with as a binding element the opposition to the *Doorbraak*, the ideology that aimed at a breakthrough of a pillarized Dutch society. It resulted in resistance to the obvious identification with the reformed-antirevolutionary world, in particular the arp with its conservative image and post-war political isolation. The agitation against Dooyeweerd and his supporters and against the arp's policy in that sense also fulfilled a role. All too much distance from the arp was not an option however, let alone an open rift and the creation of a new party. For that there was not enough support among cnv members, and the historical and personal bonds with the arp were too strong and the party was politically too important. The cnv could not survive without neo-Calvinist activism. Ironically enough this appeared most clearly in the New World, where at the end of the fifties the missionary ambitions with the Christian Labour Association of Canada failed owing to conflicts with neo-Calvinists of the old school.

The export of the Protestant-Christian trade union model to North America and other parts of the world was certainly not the only grand scheme of Ruppert that the cnv saw fail. Also the statutory trade organization for which he had argued so fervently failed to take off after 1950 through a series of political, economic and social factors. However, at least the cnv had seriously tried to do something about the two main aims that it had set itself from its own convictions about life: the freedom of the working class and social relations that answered to the Christian principles of justice and love of one's neighbour. After the rigidity of the pre-war period, Ruppert brought a new élan. For the cnv under his leadership the same applied as what Amelink had written in 1921 in his book *De vakverenigingsactie en de medezeggenschap der ar-*

beiders in de bedrijven (*Trade union action and employee participation in the branches of industry*). According to Amelink, the CNV had to examine how life in society best answered God's ordinances. It had to try to straighten out what had become distorted by sin. 'We have to lead the life, as it grows and as it grows crooked, towards the path of Christian principles. And although we know that we will not find *the* solution to the social question, yet we have to seriously strive for it ...'.

2. The chapters

The book covers roughly the first fifty years of the CNV, founded in 1909, and consists of two parts. Chapters 1 through 6 discuss the question to what extent the Protestant-Christian trade union movement in the Netherlands contributed to the discussion about, and to the accomplishment of, structural changes to relations of authority in business. Chapters 7 through 9 throw light on three other aspects of the CNV as a 'broad' trade union movement: party-political influences, work done in banking and investment and the aim to export the Protestant trade union model.

Chapter 1 deals with the question of how, between 1876 and 1940, the Dutch Christian-social movement of workers and employers tried to form its mutually acknowledged ideals for the community. The answer is less rosy than the movement would have others believe. The initiators of the *Nederlandsch Werkliedenverbond Patrimonium* (1876) opted for a positive Christian interclass organization. It was their authentic reaction to modernization, in which their frames of reference were: an idealized, pre-modernist society throughout which church and Christianity pervaded, and a small-scale class society based on traditional trades and agriculture with patriarchal labour relations. The *Christelijk-Sociaal Congres* (Christian-Social Congress) of 1891 gave up the outdated *Patrimonium* model after which, by trial and error, separate interest groups emerged – last of all among industrial employers, who until well into the thirties, preferred neutral-liberal associations for the protection of their interests, in addition to contemplative organizations. But, based on organic-solidary arguments, in 1891 the (statutory) trade organization was embraced as an alternative. Afterwards however, in efforts to put it into practice, essential differences arose. For employees an industrial organization became interesting because of the perspective it offered of employee participation on a meso level. The employers regarded it more as an opportunity for voluntary self-regulation and as a means of keeping government interference at bay as far as possible. They had no need for changes to the existing relations of authority.

Chapter 2 describes how much the pre-war Christian labour movement appreciated the collective labour agreement as an instrument that provided organized workers with legal security and collective employee participation for their own conditions of employment, and as a means of paving the way for a better legal order in business. Religious, ideological and practical factors made many in the CNV hesitant about scenarios for social reform that were too detailed. They preferred a general indication of a route that was thought plausible and a 'grab as it grows' policy: first extend the collective labour agreement according to form, content and range in order to promote community spirit, and then, through declaring collective labour agreements as generally binding, have the employers and workers of the branches of industry become accustomed to some measure of statutory pressure, to subsequently introduce social

and possibly also forms of economic industrial organization, and finally a complete social and economic statutory trade organization. On the eve of the Second World War, by developments in legislation and experiences of the economic crisis, minds had been ripened for a transition to the final stage.

Chapter 3 shows that the CNV was not prepared to take steps towards reaching the final stage under all circumstances. In that respect it differed from the Roomsch-Katholiek Werkliedenverbond, which cherished similar corporative ideals of a statutory trade organization. This chapter contains an analysis of how the CNV and the RKWV operated in the first year of German occupation, on the basis of the 'resistance-accommodation-collaboration' model. The findings were that the CNV accommodated in a passive or evasive way, while the RKWV initially tended towards active accommodation. The leadership of the RKWV believed that the capitulation heralded the 'pre-corporative' phase and therefore presented its own plans for a corporative organization and other union relations on the assumption that this would also interest the Germans. The CNV rejected this attitude, in particular because it believed that in order to achieve far-reaching social reforms, the restoration of democracy and sovereignty was essential. Moreover, benefitting from chance political or economic circumstances ran contrary to the gradual development and broad social acceptance that the CNV argued for. That was why it had distanced itself during the interbellum period from the tendency within the RKWV to make 'evolutionary leaps' and from its interest in right-wing authoritarian and fascist corporative experiments. This chapter also offers explanations for the relatively large number of CNV members who, after the German attack on the Protestant and Catholic trade unions on 25 July 1941, put up with an administrative transfer to the NVV, which had already been under Nazi control since July 1940.

Chapter 4 makes clear that after 25 July 1941 the leadership of the CNV persisted in its rejection of changes to the system during the German occupation, but cooperated constructively and with great influence, proportionally speaking, towards preparing for a statutory trade organization after the liberation. In 1943 the CNV drew up its own blueprint, the 'Richtlijnen voor de bedrijfsorganisatie', and defended it against the anti-revolutionary philosopher Prof. dr. H. Dooyeweerd. The CNV opposed his thesis that a statutory trade organization was incompatible with the Calvinist doctrine of sphere sovereignty and that the CNV had inadvertently ended up in totalitarian waters. The 'Richtlijnen' became a guideline in the illegal negotiations with the NVV and the RKWV about post-war cooperation within the union movement – for the CNV a united trade union movement was taboo – and about the 'Nota inzake sociaal-economische ordening' (1944). In this joint memorandum the collective demands with regard to a statutory trade organization and social as well as economic participation on the level of the industrial branch and the national level were laid down. In its consultations with employers, which in May 1945 resulted in the establishment of the Stichting van de Arbeid, the CNV chairman A. Stapelkamp showed himself to be a tenacious advocate of the idea behind the statutory trade organization. It was he who forced the liberal industrialists to promise that this foundation, which was based in private law and was confined to social affairs, would not be a stumbling block for a statutory trade organization with a broad social and economic sphere of action.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the preparations that were made for the Wet op de bedrijfsorganisatie (1950). A description is given of how, despite pressure from the CNV, the

unanimous rejection of the draft of the law that had been drawn up by the social-democrat minister H. Vos, who was a defender of a planned economy, did not lead to constructive counterproposals from Protestant quarters. The Convent van Christelijk-Sociale Organisaties was stuck in a situation of apparent unity. Dooyeweerd's objections based on his Calvinist philosophy against the statutory trade organization, and against what he regarded as the Catholic and totalitarian features of CNV's 'Richtlijnen' influenced opinions within the ARP. They also struck a sympathetic chord with the Verbond van Protestants-Christelijke Werkgevers, which also defended the principle that only forms of trade organization that pertained to private law and were not directly participated in by the government at all were acceptable. The more practical objections as expressed by Dooyeweerd did not play a major role in the debate. The gaps widened because in the mixed state commission chaired by Prof. dr. F.J.H.M. van der Ven, the CNV did want to work towards reaching compromises with Catholics, Socialists and Liberals and the VPCW did not. The climax was reached when the CNV, driven by its desire for a statutory trade organization, turned out to be the only Protestant organization that was prepared, in the final phase of parliamentary discussions, to pass over the constitutional objections that had been raised by friend and foe against the institution of *bedrijfschappen* (industrial boards) through an Order in Council. In the epilogue, reasons are given why after 1950 the statutory trade organization did not take off, and why, also within the CNV, interest for it rapidly ebbed away.

Chapter 6 discusses the CNV's contribution to the establishment of the Wet op de ondernemingsraden (1950) against the background of more than fifty years of Protestant thought about employee participation. This chapter shows that the CNV had not warmed to the idea of employee participation for individual workers in private companies; it had done so for collective employee participation through unions on the meso level. Moreover, the structure of industrial sectors of the trade union movement that had evolved historically and the dominance of small-scale business also played a role. What was important was the consideration that works councils posed a threat to the trade union movement and thereby also to the emancipation of the entire working class. Moreover, despite its fight during the twenties against the opinions of Dooyeweerd in particular, within its own ranks the CNV had to take into account sensitive issues regarding God-given relations of power and property in private companies. After the Second World War the CNV, in cooperation with the catholic federation KAB and the employers, delayed a quick statutory regulation of the works councils. The CNV and the KAB did so because they gave priority to an Industrial Trade Act that included basic regulations for works councils in order to prevent employee participation in companies from developing away from, and in particular against, the unions and/or the administrative bodies of the statutory trade organizations.

Chapter 7 deals with the institutional relations between the CNV and the Protestant-Christian parties with an emphasis on the interbellum period. What is outlined is that the CNV was compelled to officially adopt party-political neutrality because of the pluriformity of the Protestant part of the nation and its own membership file, but that there was no question of active neutrality whereby larger and smaller progressive Christian parties were treated equally and, where necessary, played off against each other. The historical, ideological and personal ties with the ARP were too close for that. Moreover, as far as the programmes and policies were concerned, the differences remained within bounds. Recognition of the trade union movement and its leaders was

the primary motive behind the protests that took place within the ARP in the twenties. Relations with the Christelijk-Historische Unie (CHU) (Christian-Historical Union) remained formal in nature; the rest was neglected or even opposed. Owing to the failure of the desired fusion of the ARP and the CHU, the new self-confident generation of leaders who took control after 1947 had, when it came to the crunch, to continue to exercise restraint in the party political sense.

Chapter 8 describes the pre-war initiatives that were taken following the example of the Catholic labour movement, to find out whether it was possible to establish a bank for Protestant workers. Changing economic fortunes and reticence of the part of the unions deprived these efforts of a sound basis. Nor did most of the unions warm to the Centraal Beleggingsfonds (Central Investment Fund) which was established by the CNV in 1932. The unions cherished their financial independence. In 1960, forty years after the RKWV, but at the same time as the NVV, the CNV launched its own savings bank, the Spaarbank voor Protestants Nederland (SPN). In the same year it was the first Dutch federation of trade unions to found its own investment fund, the Beleggingsfonds voor Protestants Nederland (BPN). Both SPN and BPN were ill-fated. The climate for investment soon deteriorated and the Dutch employers started to automate their salary payments. The well-established farm credit banks and commercial banks saw their chances and threw themselves onto the new salary and savings market. As far as its image, strength and package of services were concerned, the SPN could not begin to compete. Moreover, the support within the movement itself left a lot to be desired. After a merger with the banks of the Catholic and Socialist trade unions proved to be unfeasible, the CNV leaders agreed to a take-over by the Nederlandsche Middenstands Bank (NMB) in 1973. Five years later the decisions were taken that would signal the end of the BPN in the long term. In the nineties the CNV was no longer interested in ideas to resuscitate the fund with new and idealistic aims.

Chapter 9 describes the CNV's missionary zeal in the period 1947-1959, the years in which M. Ruppert wielded the scepter. His message was that a true Christian trade union movement was superior and had a universal task. This provided dynamism, but did not always serve a realistic assessment of desires and opportunities. Experiences in Germany, Indonesia and Canada confirmed this. The Protestant-Christian trade unions and multi-unionism were solutions of their age and linked to a particular part of the world and could not be exported just like that. This chapter concentrates on the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC), the leadership of which was granted to F.P. Fuykschot, the secretary of the CNV, shortly after its foundation in 1952. Fuykschot aimed for an inter-Protestant trade union of North Americans and regarded the colony of Dutch Calvinists only as a bridgehead. His efforts – in part as an answer to problems about government recognition – to force a breakthrough to reach English-speaking Protestants with the help of a number of Baptists, met with resistance from orthodox members of the Canadian Christian Reformed Church. This forced him to break away in 1958 and establish the Christian Trade Unions of Canada (CTUC), which never reached maturity. The disappointments in Canada and Ruppert's departure from the CNV in 1959 brought the international ambitions of the CNV to an end.

Translation drs. K.D. Houniet