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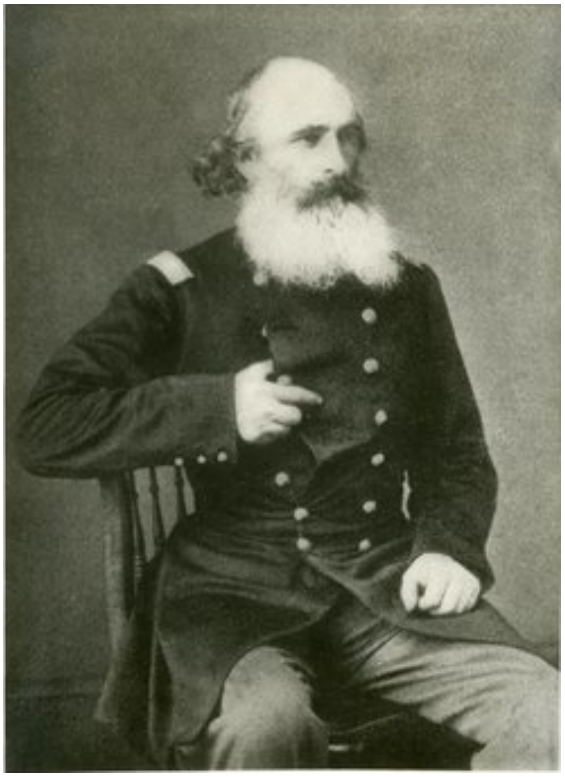
Joseph Weydemeyer
A German American for socialism and Black rights



Joseph Weydemeyer as Union Army's officer during the Civil War.
International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam)

"Just as in the eighteenth century the American War of Independence sounded the tocsin for the European middle class, so in the nineteenth century the American Civil War did the same for the European working class."

"In the United States of North America, every independent movement of the workers was paralysed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic. Labour cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the black skin it is branded. But out of the death of slavery a new vigorous life sprang. The first fruit of the Civil War was an agitation for the 8-hour day – a movement which ran with express speed from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from New England to California."

Karl Marx, *Capital*, 1867

Civil War, Reconstruction, and the German-born socialists

"Why not transfer all the lands that have been abandoned, confiscated, or forfeited through tax default to free Negroes to cultivate independently?" In order to put an end to a costly military occupation, its is necessary to "give the new representatives of free labor the political power to protect their newly acquired rights." "The more allies he [the modern worker] gains for the great fight between labor and monopolizing capital […] the more certain and speedy his victory. But where else in the South will he find these allies, if not among the workers themselves, regardless of what ancestry they have to thank for their skin color?"[1]

Those were the word written in 1865 by Joseph Weydemeyer in a series of articles favouring Black suffrage in the *Westliche Post,* the most widely read German newspaper of St. Louis, Missouri. Weydemeyer was a veteran of the 1848/9 Revolution in Germany and a friend of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Fleeing repression, he landed in 1851 in the United States. In the years preceding the Civil War, he collaborated to various labour papers and organisations. When the war broke out, he enlisted in the Union army. As an artillery officer, he participated along thousands of German-born soldiers in the fight against the Confederacy, a "slaveholders rebellion" to borrow Marx's expression. In September 1865, the war was finished and the content of the reconstruction of the South was heatedly debated, among them the rights of the freed people.

Weydemeyer's words would have been inconceivable only four years before. In 1865, they were seen as practical issues. Indeed, the end of the Civil War opened up new opportunities for social change in the United States. Veteran German revolutionaries as well as freed people, trade unionists, women were all willing, at various level and rarely in harmony, to push for such a change.[2] To understand that and, especially the role of a man such as Joseph Weydemeyer, a quick overview of the context is necessary.

I.

Between 1861 and 1865, a fierce Civil War took place on United States' soil. More American citizens died during this conflict than the combined deaths of all wars in which the United States was involved. Estimations range from a consensual 620,000 to 850,000 (over a population of 31 millions). Only recently, scholars began to take into account the war's health effects. Hundred of thousands soldiers, refugees, prisoners, and freed people moved across the country. Especially the latter, taking to the road for jobs and reaching members of their families dispersed by the domestic slave trade. The turmoil brought by the war favoured illness such as small pox.[3]

Apart of deaths and destructions, the American Civil War was the theatre of a major and deep social change: the liberation of 4 millions slaves. Some does not hesitate to call it a (second) Revolution. Others, more exactly, speaks of an unfinished revolution. Indeed, on the first January, 1863, president Lincoln signed an Emancipation Proclamation which freed slaves owned by "rebels". Far from a general emancipation, since the owners who remained loyal to the Union were not concerned, this decision marked a turning point. Until then, the preservation of the Union was largely seen as the main goal. Now, emancipation transformed the war character into a revolutionary war.

The Civil War was the culminating point of the sectional tensions between the slave South and a rapidly industrializing North. The balance of power at the federal level and the status of the new territories were at hand, would be the expansion of slavery and the planters class power left unchecked? At the time, the cotton grew by slaves was the main US exported and the "value" of the

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[1] Weydemeyer, Joseph. "On the Negro Vote", *Westliche Post*, third article, September, 14, 1866. Translation into English by Zimmerman, Andrew in Marx, Karl, and Engels, Friedrich, *The Civil War in the United States* edited and introduced by Zimmerman, Andrew. New York: International Publishers, 2016. The whole series of articles is reproduced in the Appendices. On the sources, see the notice in the bibliography.

[2] Roediger, David. *Seizing Freedom. Slave Emancipation and Liberty for All.* London: Verso, 2014. Particularly, the third chapter entitled "After the Impossible: Eight Hours, Black Labor, Women's Suffrage, and Freedom for All", p. 101-141.

[3] Schuessler, Jennifer. "Liberation as Death Sentence", *New York Times*, June, 10, 2012.

slaves themselves represented the economical main asset, exceeding the value of the railroads, canals, industries and estates of the whole country.[4] Seen as the survival of an old economical system, the American "second slavery system" had strong modern characteristics. The world market prices drove the work rhythm of the slaves on the plantations and modern insurances companies based in the North guaranteed the value of slaves sold across the South (around 1 million of slaves were transferred by force from the Upper to the Deep South with the internal slave trade), to name only two examples. Moreover, slave-grown cotton was industrial revolution's raw material *par excellence*.

The fragile dynamism of American slavery was a formidable power. Nevertheless, since the eighteen century groups of people saw slavery, the ownership of people by other people, as a sin. The War of Independence gave a larger audience to abolitionist ideas. In the Northern states, slavery was gradually abolished (New York state last slaves, for instance, very freed in 1829). The progressive disappearance of slavery in the South, where the slave economy had a deeper role, was seen as only a question of time. The profitable cultivation of cotton from the end of the eighteen century and the expansion of the plantations (on lands from where Amerindians were deported), particularly after the young United States doubled their seize thanks to the 1803's Louisiana Purchase, destroyed that conviction. From a necessary evil, but temporary, the planters and their ideologues increasingly justified openly slavery and were among the first proponents of modern racism. The incipient industrialization and urbanization of the North produced a growing imbalance between the sections of the country. A clear-cut division between two homogenous "social formations" profoundly divided probably never existed as such, as illustrated by the close links that existed between some northern financial and merchant interests with the planters' class. Yet, the maps showing the building of dense networks of canals, first, and then railroads are a striking illustration of the difference between North and South. Literacy rates and the fact that nine over ten migrants settled in the North and the Midwest are other factors of the growing imbalance between sections.

When, after the conclusion of the Mexican War, in 1848, the United States doubled again its size, it was no longer possible to differ the explosive issue of slavery. Indeed, the status of the new territories was the topic of heated debates in the Congress. Americans and immigrants alike were willing to settle in territories free of slavery (and, incidentally, of Amerindians) whereas planters feared to loose their hegemony over the federal government and wanted a guarantee that they could install slavery in the new territories, even at the cost of former sectional compromises. The failure of the successive attempts to make new compromises between North and South blasted a political system based upon the shared conviction that slavery should not be allowed in federal debates. In that context, abolitionists and antislavery politicians gained a growing audience.[5] For many

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[4] The value of slaves "would be valued in 2009 dollars at about $80 billion based on the Consumer Price Index and about $9 *trillion* based on the relative share of the GDP", Zimmerman, Andrew. "From the Rhine to the Mississippi: Property, Democracy, and Socialism in the American Civil War", *The Journal of the Civil War Era*, 5, no. 1 (March 2015), p. 14.

[5] It is common to distinguish abolitionists from antislavery politicians. The former, such as the American Anti-Slavery Society led by William Llyod Garrison favoured an immediate abolition of slavery privileging moral suasion and no violent means, refusing to participate in institutional politics since they view it as tainted by slavery, whereas the latter where generally more mainstream politicians proposing to stop the expansion of slavery in order to extinguish progressively the peculiar institution. Of course, this separation is somewhat artificial since collaboration existed between the different groups, especially when it came to the defence of fugitive slaves. Moreover, part of abolitionists, such as Frederick Douglass and Gerrit Smith, frustrated by the failure of the abolitionists to reach their purposed goal, get progressively involved in politics, through the creation of the Liberty party and, later, the participation in the Free Soil party, which would be one of the component of the new Republican party. Douglass and Smith considered the Republican party too moderate and at odds with their principles, maintaining the Liberty party and a Radical abolitionist party. Finally, a black abolitionist current existed. In its strong opposition to colonization, that is the so-called "sending back" of emancipated slaves to Africa which accompanied the gradualist approach in the 1820's, this current influenced a new wave of abolitionism. More generally, where white abolitionists often saw a clear division between "freedom" and "servitude", the Black abolitionists considered these as the two poles of a continuum. Due to their material and social conditions, they were particularly sensitive to any action ending discriminations (in the transportation, education, etc.) and favouring their equal rights. Thus, they often collided with their fellow white abolitionists who were often paternalists and not exempt of racist attitudes. Here again, it would be an error to see the black abolitionist current as homogenous, since it was also divided, notably

Northerners, the slaveholders were not only the sinful exploiters of people, something which numerous people could lived since it was far away, but a direct threat to their liberties. Unthinkable earlier, the new Republican party, formed in 1854, installed itself in the political panorama on a platform in clear opposition to the expansion of slavery. Even if it would follow a more moderate track and often succumbed to nativism, the Republican party was increasingly seen as a direct threat to the planters' interests.

On September 1859, when John Brown took with a small interracial armed group the federal Armory at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, the planters' fantasies of a slave insurrection where wakened. Indeed, Brown's intent was to distribute arms to slaves and initiate an uprising with a sanctuary in the Virginian mountains. If his plan failed, the large sympathies which were expressed during his trial and the execution that followed, raised sectional tensions. Whatever the Republican party's condemnations of Brown's action, the Southerners were infuriated by its ambiguities. The election of the Republican Lincoln as president in November 1860 triggered the secessionist mechanism.

The secession of the majority of the slaves states was quickly followed by a civil war. At first, Lincoln refused to take audacious measures regarding the abolition of slavery, an economical system which was deeply rooted for decades in American institutions. The president was certainly opposed to slavery, but considered that its disappearance would be gradual and takes maney decades. Moreover, he was willing to maintain in the Union at all cost the few slaves states that had not joined the Confederacy. It would take several months of a deadly war for Lincoln to shift policy, culminating in the publication of the Emancipation Proclamation on the first of January, 1863.

As of other tremendous social changes, such as the French and Russian Revolutions, scholars do not agree in their appreciation of the factors that led to the uncompensated abolition of slavery in the United States. Many stress the role played by Lincoln himself and the necessities of war. Others insist on the part played by some army "political" officers refusing to give back slaves to their owners, taking them in as "war contrabands". Among them, John C. Frémont, in Missouri who, in August, 1861 proposed emancipatory measures in Missouri. They were rescinded by Lincoln. Still others, echoing W.E.B. Dubois' famous 1935's book *Black Reconstruction*, insist on the black agency. Dubois presented the emancipatory process as the product of a huge "general strike" where 500,000 slaves withdrew from the plantations during the Civil War. Finally, the initiatives took by abolitionists and radicals insisting, inter alia, on creating military units composed by Black soldiers (from 1863, around 200,000 Black soldiers fought in the war, two third of them freed people), are also seen by some scholars as important actors in the radicalisation that led the North to abolish slavery and adopt, after the war, a full equality with the freed people—at least in the Constitution. No one would totally deny the presence of various factors, it is rather the mix and the main component that are fiercely debated. Underlying the various emancipation interpretations are, on the one hand, narratives attempting to decipher the agency of the oppressed as against, on the other hand, "gradualist narrative[s] of [a] national liberal progress".[6]

II.

In the study of the factors leading to emancipation, the role played by European-born radicals, chiefly Germans, is often neglected if not ignored. Yet, Andrew Zimmerman argues that they "bring to the Union army political and strategic lessons, particularly about private property, that they developed in their struggle against not only the Prussian reactionary enemy but also their moderate liberal allies."

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between the proponents of a proto-black nationalism, advocating a return in Africa, and those willing an equal integration in America as citizens of the United States. Martin Delany is considered as the main representative of the first tendency whereas Frederick Douglass as the illustration of the second. Yet, circumstances influenced both in their political appreciations: Delany was the Black who reached the higher rank as officer during the Civil War whereas, at the end of the 1850's, when the abolitionist's perspectives seemed reaching a dead-end, Douglass was not totally hostile to "proto-nationalism". The respective role of the abolitionists and antislavery currents in the coming of the Civil War and its path are far from reaching a consensus among scholars, beyond that issue, the complexity of the various movements offers inspiring reflections when it comes to strategies for a social change, the question of violence to bring it about, the role of women and minorities in it.

[6] Zimmerman, Andrew. "From the Rhine to the Mississippi…", *art. cit.*, p. 13.

Their approach collided with "the liberal respect for private property [that] produced a slow and circumspect legal process of emancipation […] Liberalism did not provide sufficient ideological justification for such far-reaching expropriation", thus the Germans socialists were instrumental in providing ideas and actions that transformed "the war into a revolution in class structure and in relations to production." [7] In another article, Zimmerman goes farther. For him, the second slavery system made of the "enslaved workers […] an early American proletariat, with nothing to lose but their chains". Accordingly, the German socialists' identified the slaves as "a revolutionary proletariat" and considers that Marx and Engels "did recognize in the Civil War a proletarian revolution", even though "they did not recognize the enslaved themselves as the principal agents of this revolution".[8]

Seeing the slaves as workers, following here Dubois, has the indisputable merit to offer them a dignity and agency which the historical accounts often deprived them. That appreciation also destroys a clear-cut division between "wage labour" and "slave labour". Moreover, it underlines the integration of American slavery in the global economical networks of the first half of the nineteenth century and is a recall that many German radicals were above all craftsmen. The risk, however, is to loose the specificities of slavery, that is "the tight invigilation of the slaves, the narrow space allowed them, the daily violence of the slave system, and the constant disruption of the slave community as the plantation economy advanced".[9] Zimmerman does certainly not underplay these dimensions, but in his intention to restore the slaves' agency and creativity as well as insisting in the capitalistic features of the second slavery system, the real differences in condition between wage-earners and slaves could be wiped out. To put the various form of labour exploitation in a continuum would probably be more fruitful, especially in a contemporary context where forced labour still exists at the same time as the majority of the world population depend of salaries to live. Moreover, it is not sure that Marx and Engels would have shared the qualifiers of the Civil War he attributes them.

III.

"At the beginning of the Civil War, more than 1,300,000 residents of the United States hailed from Europe's German-speaking lands" over a general population of 31 millions in 1860 (that is, 4 percent).[10] Between 1852 and 1854 more than half a million Germans moved to the United States.[11] If the surge of this German migration preceded the 1848's Revolution, reaching already nearly 60,000 in 1846, the figures were much higher in the years following the revolution's defeat. It would be an error to see the migration of Germans to the United States as mainly political, political motivations were often interwoven with the social difficulties and lack of prospects in the German states (these were themselves the source of political discontent). Nevertheless, the numerous politicized migrants would played a major role in shaping the cultural and political life—notably through the creation of a large range of newspapers, cultural, educational, and sport associations—of the German-speaking community. If the German migrants represented "only" four percent of the general United States population, "they concentrated both geographically and occupationally in some of the principal centres of the expanding commercial and manufacturing economy".[12]

It is in this milieu that Joseph Weydemeyer landed in 1851. At times disappointed by the capacity of his new country to integrate his compatriots and to move them away from class struggle, he would participate in the labour movement in every city were he settled during the decade that

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[7] *Ibid.*, p. 13-14.

[8] Zimmerman, Andrew. "From the Second American Revolution to the First International and Back Again. Marxism, the Popular Front, and the American Civil War" in Downs, Gregory and Masur, Kate (ed.), *The World the Civil War Made*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015, p. 315-317.

[9] Blackburn, Robin. *An Unfinished Revolution. Karl Marx and Abraham Lincoln*. London: Verso, 2011, p. 59.

[10] Efford, Alison C. *German Immigrants, Race, and Citizenship in the Civil War Era*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013, p. 9.

[11] See the figures in Levine, Bruce. *The Spirit of 1848. German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992, p. 16. This book remains a reference in the study of the German-born communities in the United States, especially for the 1850's decade. Levine offers a remarkable work of social and political history.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

preceded the Civil War. When the war broke out, he quickly enlisted in the Union army. He was far from the only German-born to do so. "All told, some 200,000 (or roughly one-tenth) of those who served in the Union army during the war were German-born, and 36,000 of these soldiers served in all-German units under German commanders. The *Turnvereine* were particularly active in recruiting and organizing these forces."[13]

This Seminararbeit begins with a short biography of Joseph Weydemeyer. Then, it would put into context my main source, the series of three articles "On the Negro Vote" published in September 1865 by him in the *Westliche Post*. That part is divided in three sections: a presentation of the newspaper in which the articles were published, followed by a short summary of the content of the articles. Finally, I will give a few indications about the abolition of slavery in Missouri. The essay is closed by a conclusion about some issues regarding the reflux of radical politics during the Reconstruction era.

My first intention was to add a part on the series of articles Weydemeyer devolved, in August 1866, just before his death, to the Eight-Hour movement. This would have helped to stress a point about the circumstances opened up by the Civil War and the Reconstruction Era offered new opportunities to labour and oppressed movements in the United States. The question raised by Weydemeyer, in his articles devoted to the Black suffrage, of an alliance between the "modern worker" and the freed people deserves a close study, and the connection between the struggle for the political rights of the freedpeople with the one for the shortening of the working day is particularly relevant on that respect. Issues such as land distribution, also evocated by Weydemeyer in his articles, or women rights are other dimensions that merit further examination. Due to a lack of time and space I decided to renounce and limit this essay on the sole Black suffrage issue. However, I left the reproduction of the series of articles in the Appendices.

I would here to warmly thanks Andrew Zimmerman who kindly sent me, from Washington, DC, a copy of the book of Marx's and Engels' texts on the Civil War he recently edited. His translation of Weydemeyer's "On the Negro Vote" articles, reproduced in that book, spared me hours of difficult attempt to understand the German original.
My recognition goes also to my comrades Daniel Bonnard and Robert Lochhead who helped me to grasp the meaning of some German texts and share with me a passion for history.
To all three, my commitment of a renewed effort to learn German and, above all, the wish to share and maintain the spirit of the now dead Zurich's *Eintrach Verein*, the radical socialist German association, centre of a sound internationalism. While I wrote this essay, the fall of Aleppo into the hands of a murderous regime and its allies was for me a reminder that if the past as a meaning, it is above all to understand the present in order to urgently change it.

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[13] *Ibid.*, p. 256.

I. Joseph Weydemeyer: a short biography

Joseph Weydemeyer was born in Münster, Westphalia, in 1818. Formed in the Berlin's military Academy, he became in 1838 lieutenant in an artillery unity.[14] Stationed in Minden, he became acquainted with the democratic *Vormärz* press such as the *Rheinische Zeitung*, paper headed since 1842 by Karl Marx. In the garrison city, Weydemeyer met other Prussian officers interested in democratic and progressive politics, among them Fritz Annecke (1818-1872) and August Willich (1810-1878). Together, they formed an informal group in order to regularly exchange on politics. Tired of the army, Weydemeyer left it in 1844. He dedicated himself to journalism, collaborating to the *Triersche Zeitung*, a publication influenced by Charles Fourier's ideas. The following year, he was involved in the *Westphälische Dampfboot*. In 1845, Weydemeyer was deeply influenced by Engel's book *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*. This reading, which led to the publication of a thirty pages review, drew Weydemeyer's attention to social and economic problems. Coupled with the authorities' censorship of all the publication in which he participated, this helped his conversion to a socialism putting a materialist understanding of history and society at its core. Already in contact with Marx and Engels, Weydemeyer contributed with one chapter to *Die Deutsche Ideologie*. Only fragments, as articles, of this book were published during the authors' lives. At the time, however, Marx pressed his friend to publish the text in Germany. All attempts failed, it took decades before the first formulation by Marx and Engels of a "materialist conception of history" exists in a published form. In 1847, Weydemeyer paid a visit to Marx and Engels in Brussels, where they lived in exile. He adhered there to the Communist League and went back to Germany, where he worked as engineer on the Cologne-Minden Railway Company.

As soon as the 1848's Revolution began, in March, Weydemeyer and his Communist League's comrades were involved in various political activities. For instance, he was one of the delegates to a "German democratic societies' conference" that took place in Frankfurt in June 1848, whose purpose was the establishment of a democratic republic. The Communist League and others radical democratic groups situated themselves on the left wing of the Revolution. Indeed, a majority of the National Assembly, the parliamentary body created by the Revolution and dominated by liberals, wanted a constitutional monarchy where socialists and radical democrats demanded a republic. The Assembly offered in 1849 the crown of the German Empire to the King of Prussia, Frederick William IV, the same sovereign against whom the people of Berlin fought. His rejection conducted a majority of liberals in the contre-revolutionary ranks.

Like Marx with his *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, Weydemeyer was also editing a paper during the Revolution, the *Neue Deutsche Zeitung*. The publication served as a link between the radical left of the National Assembly and the democratic societies. When, in May, 1849, the Prussian authorities closed down the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* and Marx was forced to flee, Weydemeyer's newspaper became even more important, especially after the dissolution of the National Assembly and the defeat of the democratic armies. Weydemeyer tried laboriously to reorganise a Communist League disrupted by the repression and paralysed by bitter internal debates regarding the possibilities that the revolution would quickly resumed or not. At the same time, he continued to edit the *Neue Deutsche Zeitung*. However, during the last days of 1850, the Frankfurt's authorities prohibited the paper. Weydemeyer went underground. Eventually, facing repression, he also took the route of exile, first in Switzerland then to the United States.

In November, 1851, he landed in New York. At the time, the city was "the third capital of the German-speaking world. Only Vienna and Berlin had larger German population than New York City

[14] For that chapter, I draw mainly on Obermann, Karl. *Joseph Weydemeyer. Pioneer of American Socialism*. New York: International Publishers, 1947. See the short note about that biography in the bibliography. A later article by the same author offers many abstract of Weydemeyer's correspondence: Obermann, Karl. "Weydemeyer in Amerika: Neues zur biographie von Joseph Weydemeyer (1854-1960)", *International Review of Social History*, 15, no. 2 (August 1980): 176-208.

between 1865 and 1890."[15] Hardly arrived and despite bad first impressions of America, Weydemeyer immediately put his energies in political activities.[16] Even though he was unable to realize all projects Marx trusted him, he quickly bought a small atheist paper, *Luzifer* and renamed it *Die Revolution*. Due to important difficulties, the publication had only two numbers, published in January 1852. Weydemeyer wished it to be an instrument to win over New York's Germans to socialist ideas. For that venture he was helped by Marx and others, among them the famous 1848's poet, Freiligrath, who promised articles from their European exile. One such contribution would become famous since it was Marx's *Der achtzehnte Brumaire des Louis Napoleon*, finally published as a pamphlet on May, 1852. Financial difficulties, for Weydemeyer, who came in America with his family, put an end to this experience. Weydemeyer, however, published meanwhile various articles in the Socialistischer Turnverein paper, *Turn-Zeitung*. He also actively dived in the political debates and trade unions activities. Weydemeyer established himself in the political panorama of the German exile. According to August Nimtz, "until his death in 1866, Weydemeyer functioned as the de facto head of the Marx party in the United States."[17]

In the aftermath of the defeated 1848's revolutions, one important debate was the possibility of revolution's resumption in Europe. This issue divided violently the exiles from various countries, in London as well as in the United States. Weydemeyer shared Marx's view that the conditions for a new revolutionary wave were not present. Others Communist League's members, such as August Willich (1810-1878), thought otherwise, which led to a split. Condemning this *revolutionist* view, Weydemeyer published a series of articles in the *Turn-Zeitung* in which he explained that a revolution could not be brought about by funds collects and propaganda, the more so from abroad. For him , a revolution is a product of social contradictions. Moreover, he indicated that "revolution" could not be seen as a kind of magic word, resolving all problems. The lessons of 1848 proved that taking decisive initiatives after a revolutionary overthrow were particularly important. Weydemeyer articles were not only a charge against *revolutionism* but also a reflection over the failure of an alliance with liberals during the early stages of the Revolution. On a political level, this last point echoed the strategic and military lessons drew at the same time by others exiles.[18] Weydemeyer and a handful of members of the Communist League living in America had also to struggle in 1852 against slanders on American soil coming in the wake of a trial manufactured by the Prussian state against the Communist League. Using fake pieces, that trial was part of the repression against revolutionaries. Weydemeyer and his comrades had not only to defend the political reputation of the League against other exiles but also to counter-attack in the German-speaking press since the prosecution used the supposed League's activities in America as proof of its harmful role. A solidarity campaign asking German workers to contribute to the defence of the activists prosecuted was also part of these activities.

Simultaneously to these debates related to the "lessons" of the recent revolution in Germany and the struggle against repression at the hand of the Prussian state, Weydemeyer became very active in the New York's labour movement. Once in America, one of his first preoccupations was to create a Communist League branch in the United States. With the collaboration of Adolf Cluss (1825-1905), another League's member and an architect who settled in Washington already in 1848, they tried to gather the League members living now in the United States. With the help of Marx, from London, they received documents exposing the views of the League. Among these documents was the English translation of the *Communist Manifesto* published in a Chartist paper, probably the first appearance of Marx's and Engel's text in the American continent. After a few months, their efforts allowed the constitution of a small group of less than ten members in New York. Weydemeyer and his comrades

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[15] Stanley, Nadel. *Little Germany. Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845-80*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990, p. IX.

[16] For Weydemeyer's New York activities, I also rely on *ibid*., p. 127-136 as well as on Obermann, Karl. "The Communist League: A Forerunner of the American Labor Movement", *Science & Society*, 30, no. 4 (Fall 1966): 433-446. Obermann's article uses sources from archives in Moscow, especially Weydemeyer's correspondence.

[17] Nimtz, August H., Jr. *Marx, Tocqueville, and Race in America. The "Absolute Democracy" or "Defiled Republic"*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003. Using an ebook, I cannot provide pagination.

[18] On that respect, see Zimmerman, Andrew. "From the Rhine to the Mississippi: Property, Democracy, and Socialism in the American Civil War", *The Journal of the Civil War Era*, 5, no. 1 (March 2015): 3-37.

founded a larger group, also in 1852, the *Proletarierbund*. The idea was to progressively win over to the League less "politicised" activists, especially members of the various German associations. Weydemeyer published articles in the larger German-speaking press, such as in the *Turn-Zeitung*, something that allowed him to reach out larger audience. He argued particularly on the necessity to form an independent workingmen's party, defending the common interests of the workers against the Democrats and the Whigs. This was a dividing issue since a large proportion of German migrants, especially among trade unionists, were loyal to the Democratic party. It is the large strikes of 1853 that would, however, gave to this little group much more possibilities to influence the workers. In March 21, 1853 an *Amerikanische Arbeiterbund* was founded. Organised on a ward-basis instead of a craft one, the *Arbeiterbund* worked also closely with English-speaking trade unions. According to Bruce Levine, author of one of the most important book on the *Forty-Eighters*,

> Joseph Weydemeyer […] played an active, leading role in this organization, and is views influenced the new *Arbeiterbund's* words and actions at many points. The preamble to a programmatic document […] bore his stamp. It asserted that "societal relations are no longer the same as they were when the Republic was founded. The introduction and development of large-scale industry has brought on a new revolution, dissolved the old classes, and above all, brought into being our class, the class of propertyless workers." At Weydemeyer's behest, the *Amerikanische Arbeiterbund* pledged early to asset its "independence… from existing political parties" and later to "strive for the organization of the working class into a cohesive and independent political party" of its own in order "to obtain and guarantee the rights of the workers. […] Through the *Arbeiterbund* […] Weydemeyer hoped to reach and collaborate with that growing number of workers who had not accepted the full Marxist worldview but did seem ready to proceed down the road of united and militant labor action.[19]

Weydemeyer's influence in the Bund was however limited by others political and union approaches. Among them, an old guild vision that stated that labour and capital could work in harmony if only competition were regulated. Another strong divergence involved the land issue, central through most of the century since numerous workers expected to become farmers in the West. Against the division of the public land in small properties, Weydemeyer suggested that it could remain public and be exploited collectively. Moreover,

> More tangibly, Weydemeyer's cherished goal of achieving political independence for the working class-like his opposition to the division and alienation of public lands- became a dead letter in the *Arbeiterbund*. The great mass of its members evidently still hoped to influence the Democratic party. Others (and these, too, far outnumbered the Marxists) aspired to build not a multi-ethnic party of workers but a specifically German "party of progress" oriented toward a broad, multiclass immigrant constituency. Beneath these doctrinal and programmatic differences lay a still more telling problem – the *Arbeiterbund*'s inability even to sustain membership levels beyond a give round of wage confrontations. The organization's decline became marked by summer, advanced by fall, and alarming by year's end. All of which convinced a discouraged Weydemeyer that he had overestimated most German-American worker's appreciation of their actual social position and interests.[20]

The reflux of worker's struggles and the economic downturns from 1854 onward weakened progressively the *Arbeiterbund*. Weydemeyer stayed however in its Central Committee and waged debates on many issues, especially when he tried to convince German workers to participate in the campaign against the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Another important issue was the fight against strong nativist tendencies that appeared in the middle of the decade. There were numerous obstacles to form an independent worker's platform and encourage trade union activities common to German and

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[19] Levine, Bruce. *The Spirit of 1848. German Immigrants, Labor Conflict, and the Coming of the Civil War*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992, p. 141.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

native workers. After the wave of strikes in 1853, and particularly after the beginning of the economic downturn, the trade union movement as a whole was in decline. The influence of the Democratic party over migrants and the working class was strong in New York. If the idea of independent political activities gained force during raising working activities, the Democrats reinforced their political grip in period of reflux. Finally, the possibility, real and dreamed, for workers to migrate and settle as farmers in the West was always a strong obstacle for socialist activities. All these impediments discouraged Weydemeyer.

The economic crisis obliged moreover Weydemeyer to move farther West. In 1856, he went with his family first to Milwaukee where he worked as a surveyor employed by the city of Bumlington and, four years later, Chicago. There, he participated in the German press, publishing articles in the *Turn-Zeitung* and the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung* (this one being one of the most diffused German newspaper in the United States). Weydemeyer devoted his time to a study of the economic situation in the country, especially regarding the strong economical differences between the "free" North and the slave South. He wrote a series of articles about this issue in 1859 for the *Staats-Zeitung* and, in the years preceding the Civil War, "lectured to Germans throughout the West on slavery, emphasizing that the attack on slavery was not simply a celebration of wage labour but also an attack on private property as a prerequisite to labour exploitation."[21]

Indeed, the second half of the decade saw the deepening of the sectional conflict that would lead to the Civil War, the expansion of slavery or its sheer existence being at its core. The Kansas Nebraska Act of 1854 and the bloody fights between pro-slavery and free soiler settlers in Kansas were the most notable illustrations of the widening gap between North and South. The US party system, designed to put slavery out of the political discussions at the national level, was one of the victim of this conflict. Over its ashes the Republican party was created, which brought together parts of the northern Democrats, some abolitionists and former Whigs. Even though the Republican party moved progressively away from some radical measures against slavery it advocated at its foundation in 1854, it remained a strong opponent to the expansion of slavery. This new situation put German socialists, such as Weydemeyer, in front of a dilemma: either to continue to insist on the organization of an independent worker's party, either to support the Republican party in its struggle against slavery, with the intention to influence it. The time period was also of a relative working-class demobilization, something that help understand why German radicals felt attracted by the Republican party.

Even if he never abandoned the perspective of an independent workers party or his working-class journalist activities (he was also very active in the diffusion in the United States of Marx 1859's book *A Contribution to the Critic of the Political Economy*), Weydemeyer became increasingly involved in Republican politics. During the 1860's electoral year, while he was in charge of a Chicago German workers' paper, the *Stimmes des Volkes*, he was one of the delegate to the German Republican at the Deutsches Haus conference in the same city. Convoked in May by the German Republican Central Committee of New York, this conference were to gather before the Republican National Convention that had to define the party platform and the presidential candidate for the November elections. The purpose of the German Republicans was to "counter the pressure of both nativist and conciliationist [that is, willing to reach an agreement with the "Slave power"] forces within the party."[22] The Deutsches Haus conference was the theatre of strong divergences between radicals and liberals, the former lamenting the moderation of the party. The pressure to reach a compromise, on unity sake, was however sufficient and the terms of the compromise were largely adopted later by the Republican National Convention. Moreover, "if the party's more radical potential candidates were passed over", so were the nativists and conciliationists.[23] A middle ground was found in the person of Lincoln, a moderate Republican who was neither nativist nor in favour of slavery.

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[21] Zimmerman, Andrew. "From the Second American Revolution to the First International and Back Again. Marxism, the Popular Front, and the American Civil War" in Downs, Gregory and Masur, Kate (ed.), *The World the Civil War Made*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015, p. 313.

[22] Levine, Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 248.

In August, 1860, financial difficulties led Weydemeyer to close the *Stimmes des Volkes*. He decided to settle again in New York, where he worked as a surveyor and engineer in the arrangement of Central Park. He also joined the *Kommunisten Klub*, founded in New York in 1857, among others, by former Communist League members. The Club had around thirty members and "was the only socialist (and labor) organization before the Civil War which invited blacks to join as equal members."[24] Weydemeyer also participated in the Lincoln campaign in the city. New York, whose merchant elites were strongly linked to the South and where the powerful Democratic party seat on town hall, was a difficult battle ground for the Republican. German radicals, among them Weydemeyer, played thus in important role to channel workers vote, especially their fellow countrymen, toward the Republican party.[25] The 1860 elections were probably the most tense in North American history. Part of the slaveholders already threatened secession while the Democratic party split along sectional lines. There was even a fourth candidate who ran with the unique purpose to defend the Constitution. If Lincoln won the popular vote and the electoral College, he received nearly no vote in the South. The New York State was a reduction, in a northern State, of these divisions: if Lincoln won largely the state, he lost the capital by 30,000 votes. Interestingly, the same day as the presidential elections, November, 6, a referendum over black suffrage took place in the State of New York. While the white men were completely enfranchised in the 1820's, property and fiscal qualifications were required for the Black men.[26] The State electors elected with a 50,000 votes for Lincoln, but rejected by more than 63 percent against black suffrage (representing, however, a progression of 10 percent of the yes vote in comparison with a similar referendum held in 1846). As the black abolitionist Frederick Douglass, who lived in the State of New York, noted the presidential election took precedence over the black suffrage issue.[27]

The Lincoln election triggered the process that led to the secession of Southern states and the Civil War. In the few months before the canons fired Fort Sumter, many initiatives were made to maintain the Union through a new compromise with the South. Lincoln himself seemed to support partially such initiatives. Radicals and liberals German American, together with abolitionists,

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[24] Its first article stated: "The members of the Communist Club reject all religious faiths, in whatever shape or form they may be presented, as well as any point of view which is not based on immediate perception of the senses. Equalityof all human beings irrespective of color or sex–is their belief, hence they strive above all to do away with so-called bourgeois property whether inherited or acquired in order to substitute for it a reasonable share in the national and spiritual riches of the earth, accessible to everyone. The undersigned pledge themselves in the present state ofsociety to uphold these views to the best of their ability and to lend moral and material aid to one another." Foner, Philip S. "Statuten Des Kommunisten Klubs in New York", *Science & Society*, 41, no. 3 (Fall 1977): 334-337.

[25] The German-born voting attitude and its evolution over the years are complex to analyse. The Democratic party had a long and particularly strong appeal for migrants, especially from the working-class, because it opposed temperance, Sabbatean laws and others measures which shocked with socialisation pattern from Europe. Another factor was the anticatholicism largely present among Whigs and Republicans. Moreover, in some cities, such as New York, the Democratic apparatus was instrumental in buying loyalties through material assistance. Finally, the attitude of local Republican organizations was also central in capturing or not the vote of the antislavery sentiments present among large layers of German-born workers: "Antislavery sentiments among Germans translated into Republican votes most readily where Republicans resolutely and effectively cleansed themselves of antiforeign and sabbatarian taint". "Republican organizations fared best among urban Germans when they could demonstrate credentials by rejecting, or at least subordinating, the politics of conservative nativism and sabbatarianism", Levine, Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 250 and 253. A comparison between German-born and Irish-born on that respect would be very interesting.

[26] "The more «democratic» constitution of 1821 made white male voter qualifications minimal (taxpaying, eligibility for militia or highway service); blacks, however, were required to be citizens of the state for three years (compared to one year for whites) and possess a freehold estate worth $250 above all debts. Thus, all blacks were not disfranchised, but they were severely discriminated against inexercising the right to vote. The difference in suffrage qualifications became even greater in 1826 when the remaining limitations on white voters were removed." Field, Phyllis F., "Republicans and Black Suffrage in New York State: The Grass Roots Response", *Civil War History*, 21, no. 2 (June 1975): 136-147.

[27] Qtd in *ibid.* I found no evidence of Weydemeyer's campaigning or taking position on that issue while he was encouraging his fellow countrymen to vote for Lincoln. That issue is absent in Obermann beyond the struggle against slavery. Nimtz, who would be more sensitive, does not see it, either for the 1860 or the 1866 period.
As Weydemeyer was a major proponent for Black men voting rights in the immediate post-war and as the New York's results announced some contradictions of the Reconstruction period, no doubt there are some reasons to do such investigation.

spearheaded the opposition to the "Slave power". A Weydemeyer's associate in the Lincoln campaign in New York, Adolph Douai (1819-1888), a Forthy-Eighter who set up an abolitionist paper in Texas before being forced to move in the North, captured the spirit of radicals German-born when he wrote three days after the election: "slave has in every condition the right and in certain conditions even the duty to free himself by every means possible from slavery".[28] When, finally, the war broke out, large numbers of radicals German enlisted into the Army. Among them, the members of the New York's *Kommunistischen Klub* which suspended its activities during the conflict. When, during the summer of 1861, John C. Frémont was nominated commander of the military Department of the West, he stopped in New York recruiting officers who already enjoyed a military formation. Among them were 1848/9's revolutionaries such as the Hungarian Alexander Asboth (Asbóth Sándor, 1811-1868), who was made his chief of staff, and… Joseph Weydemeyer.[29] The group moved quickly to Missouri, a border state where strong pro-slavery elements and the Governor made everything possible to join the Confederacy. Thanks to the mobilisation of the large German community of St. Louis, proslavery projects were defeated.[30] Once in Missouri, Weydemeyer became an artillery officer. During the autumn of 1861, Frémont's officers and soldiers were mustered out due to the radical abolitionist stance of their commander. Indeed, Frémont published in August a martial law allowing slaves manumission, a politic that collided with the conservative presidential approach, willing to maintain at all cost into the Union the border states that had not seceded. Frémont's measures predated the politic adopted finally by Lincoln in 1863. Frémont was shifted to another front, a decision that provoked the outcry of the German community and abolitionists over the countr.[31] Weydemeyer, who certainly also condemned Frémont's transfer, was nevertheless rehired in an artillery unit in November, 1861. He was even nominated Lieutenant Colonel. In the following months, he led his unit in many Missourian war theatres. The military despatches he left are very disappointing for those who wish to discover his attitude toward the slaves he probably encountered during the campaign. [32]

In September, 1863, Weydemeyer ended his military service. He collaborated in St. Louis to a radical publication, *Die Neue Zeit* and wrote articles in the *Westliche Post*. In the following months, political debates in the antislavery camp turned over those willing to seek an alternative candidate to Lincoln for the 1864's presidential election, because they were frustrated by Lincoln's procrastinations in his politics regarding the South, especially the rights of the future former slaves, on the one hand, and, on the other, those seeing that candidacy, dividing the Republican vote, threatened the whole emancipatory program. Indeed, the Democrats presented McClellan as their presidential candidate. George B. McClellan was the former General-in-chief of the Union armies, known for his cautious military approach and opposition to the abolition of slavery. Even if he shared not its conclusion, the Democratic platform called for an immediate peace with the South, which would have meant a new sectional compromise, overthrowing the Emancipation Proclamation. The radicals German-born were among the first to took a strong initiative against Lincoln and in favour of an alternative candidacy. In October 1863, and again in March, 1864, they gathered to define a strategy and a program. No wonder they choose Frémont, their Missourian champion of

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[28] Nimtz, *op. cit.*, ebook, chap. "Toward the "General Conflagration".

[29] See Zimmerman, Andrew. "From the Rhine to the Mississippi: Property, Democracy, and Socialism in the American Civil War", *The Journal of the Civil War Era*, 5, no. 1 (March 2015): 3-37.

[30] See bellow for more detailed developments about Missouri.

[31] See bellow and the introduction.

[32] See Flanders, Robert and Bradbury, John F., Jr. "Outpost: The 1862 Summer of Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Weydemeyer", *OzarksWatch*, 4, no. 4 (spring 1991). In the introduction of several items by the officer Weydemeyer, they wrote: "No evidence of his socialist ideology is apparent in his dispatches. They do reveal passionate patriotism and a sense of humanity and social justice—altogether, middle-class values that a host of German immigrant intellectuals, tradesmen, artisans, and other burghers brought to the United States." The only mention of slaves is, in passing, when in describe the confiscation of a cattle guarded by two slaves women adding "the male slaves very likely having been carried off to the South" with the fleeing owner. What was the fate of this two women is impossible to know, the only practical question Weydemeyer asked his superior is the possibility, if requested, to send the cattle to the headquarter of his unity. As Zimmerman noted, spontaneous slave's emancipation were rarely reported. Et pourtant…

emancipation politics, as their candidate. Moreover, "they drafted a comprehensive political platform":

> They demanded protection of popular liberties specifying that "the rights of free speech, press, and the habeas corpus, be held inviolable save in districts where martial law has been proclaimed." They also demanded a Radical Republican war policy premised on the Confederacy's unconditional surrender, the nationwide abolition of slavery, congressional supervision of Reconstruction, and legislation ensuring "all men absolute equality before the law" and "confiscation of the lands of the rebels and their distribution among the soldiers and actual settlers".[33]

Weydemeyer stood apart of his fellow radicals. Instead of supporting Frémont's candidacy, he advocated unity and a vote for Lincoln, whatever his shortcomings. A reversal of the military situation in favour of the Union with the fall of Atlanta at the beginning of the September, the threat of McClellan candidacy as well as heated debates among radicals who finally favoured unity lead Frémont to withdrawn his candidacy on September, 22, two months before the election. Karl Obermann, Weydemeyer's biograph, and political scientist August Nimtz consider Weydemeyer's role central in Frémont's decision.[34] In any event, that same month Weydemeyer enlisted again in the army and, with the rank of colonel, he was one of the officer in charge of St. Louis' defence.

In October, 1864, the correspondence between Marx, Engels and Weydemeyer resumed, probably motivated by the creation in London, at the end of September, of the International Workingmen's Association (IWA). Bringing together an eclectic range of activists from various countries and political sensibilities, the International was the first lasting attempt to associate several groups and tendencies in order to advocate working-class organization at an international level. It is not surprising that Marx and Engels thought of Weydemeyer for spreading the IWA's Inaugural Address in the United States, a document whose author is none other than Karl Marx. Weydemeyer would manage to publish excerpts of the Address in January 1865 in the *St. Louis Daily Press*, a paper created by striking workers.[35] End of November, Marx, on behalf of the IWA, wrote a congratulation letter to Lincoln for his re-election in which one can read: "the working classes of Europe understood at once […] that the slave-holders' rebellion was to sound the tocsin for a general holy crusade of property against labour".[36] The American Civil War, seen as a revolutionary war against slavery, boosted in Europe the morale of the revolutionists without a revolution as well as it helped a revival in class struggle in U.S. soil.

The creation of a newspaper by strikers on St. Louis was only one indication of that increase in working-class activity. The penuries and difficulties provoked by the war as well as a new vocabulary borrowed to antislavery struggles and abolition helped forge a new and more combative working-class movement. The rallying banner of this movement was the struggle for an eight-hour working day. A step forward in the working class organisation was the creation, in Baltimore, on August, 20, 1866, of the National Labor Union (NLU). There is not doubt that Weydemeyer

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[33] Levine, Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

[34] Obermann, Karl, *op. cit.*, p. 128; Nimtz, August, *op. cit.*, ebook chap. "A Last Card Up Its Sleeve". Actually, Nimtz generalizes Obermann appreciations. Apart the incontestable fact that German radicals changed course regarding Frémont's candidacy, they both mention the paper in which Weydemeyer collaborated, *Die Neue Zeit*, as evidence of their assertion regarding the central role played by Weydemeyer in Frémont's withdrawal. Unfortunately, it seems that the *Neue Zeit* copies are difficult to locate, if it exists copies at all. Kristen Anderson (*Abolitionizing Missouri*), who made a careful analyse of the St. Louis German press before, during and just after the Civil War mentions only *Die Neue Zeit* through republications in other newspaper and other indirect mentions. Whatever Weydemeyer's role in that campaign, Obermann and Nimtz based their assertion on a shaky base… I was unable to look at further documentation, such as Nagler, Jörg. *Frémont contra Lincoln. Die deutsch-amerikanische Opposition in der Republikanischen Partei während des amerikanischen Bürgerkrieges*, Bern: Peter Lang, 1984.

[35] Roediger, David. "Racism, Reconstruction, and the Labor Press: The Rise and Fall of the *St. Louis Daily Press*, 1864-1866", *Science & Society*, 42, no. 2 (Summer 1978), p. 161.

[36] Zimmerman, Andrew (ed.), *The Civil War in the United States. Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels*, New York: International Publishers, 2016, p. 154.

participated in these efforts as his series of articles, published in the *Westliche Post* and in the *St. Louis Daily Press* in August, 1866, on the shortening of the working day testifies.

In April 1865, the Civil War reached its end. A few months later, in July 1865, Weydemeyer, after having mustered out his regiment, left the service. He was later elected as County Auditor, on a Radical Republican ticket, taking charge the first day of 1866. In September 1865, he published in the *Westliche Post* a series of articles advocating Black suffrage.[37] Apart of his official charge, there is no doubt that Weydemeyer participated actively in the working-class movement in the last months of his life. He was among the radicals highly disappointed by Andrew Johnson, successor of Lincoln after his assassination, who proved very sympathetic to the interests of the former planters and wanted to implement a "reconciliation policy" at the cost of the freedmen. End of July, 1866, he signed as member of the Board of Managers of a Soldiers' League an appeal for an Union Soldiers' Convention on August, 10, 1866.[38] The Convention was intended as a show of protest against president Johnson "treason". It is not known if Weydemeyer spoke at that convention. He died of cholera shortly after, aged 48, on August 20, a few days after the publication of its own translation into English of a series of his articles on the Eight-Hours Movement for the *St. Louis Daily Press* originally published in the *Westliche Post*. The same day the NLU convened in Baltimore and adopted as its main goal the Eight-Hours demand. There is no sense to speculate what would have been Weydemeyer's political activities had he survived. One could only imagine that, due to his close contact with Marx and Engels and contrary to many of his former Communist League's fellow comrades, he would have certainly resisted the nationalist siren call of German unification in 1870/71. In any event, Weydemeyer's life offers a fascinating window over a transatlantic communist network in the period time between the European 1848/9 Revolution and the American Civil War. He is also a source of reflections for some problems that were news at his time and still present. Once placed in his historical context, the way circumstances and participation in politics and social activities in a difficult period shaped the life and thought of people willing to fight for social justice inevitably resonated today.

[37] The articles are in the Appendices. See the developments bellow.

[38] "Union Soldiers' Convention. Address to the Union Soldiers of Missouri", appeal published in the *Missouri Weekly Patriot* (Springfield), 26th of July 1866. See the reproduction of the text in the Appendices. According to Primm, James N. "The G.A.R. in Missouri, 1866-1870", *The Journal of Southern History*, 20, no. 3 (August 1954): p. 8, who quoted two issues of the *Daily Missouri Republican* (August, 8 and 10) August Willich was one of the speaker.

II. Weydemeyer "On the Vote of Negroes" in context

Weydemeyer's series of articles on Blacks' voting rights were published in German in the *Westliche Post.*[39] This part is divided in three sections. The first one provides a few indications on this newspaper whereas the second is shortly devoted to the content of the articles and, finally, the third gives some elements contextualizing the abolition issue in Missouri.

The *Westliche Post*

The St. Louis' German-speaking press in the 1860's has already a long history. Apart of religious-outlet such as *Der Lutheraner*, two papers would dominate the German readership: the *Anzeiger des Westens* and the *Westliche Post*. The *Anzeiger des Westens*, founded in 1835, was associated to the Democratic party, especially its "free-soil" tendency which would later be the core of the Republican party in Missouri. During the whole 1850's decade, Heinrich Börnstein (1805-1892) was editor of the paper.[40] A former German exile in Paris, he published there in the 1840's a weekly, *Vorwärts!*, in which Heinrich Heine and Marx, among others, collaborated. Börnstein gave an anticlerical tone to the paper, conjugated with a will to develop the cultural level of his fellow countrymen. Following Börnstein departure to Europe, as an Union diplomat, and financial mismanagements, the *Anzeiger des Westens* sold its press. Carl Dänzer (1820-1906), former Börnstein editor-in-chief, bought the title and made it a Democratic party's outlet, mouthpiece of the St. Louis' conservative Germans.

It is Dänzer, however, who was, in 1857, one of the *Westliche Post*'s founder, the *Anzeiger*'s rival. Dänzer was a veteran of the 1848's Revolution, member of the Frankfurt's National Assembly, who settled in St. Louis in 1852. In 1860, ill, he sold his shares in the paper and left the United States for Germany. It is when he returned that Dänzer revived the *Anzeiger*, now a decidedly conservative newspaper. Finally, in 1864, Emil Preetorius (1827-1905) became editor-in-chief of the *Post* and will remain so for more than forty years.[41] Also a Forty-Eighter, Preetorius entered in 1862 the state legislature as an emancipationist. Between 1862 and 1864, he was also editor of the more radical weekly *Neue Zeit* (newspaper with which Weydemeyer collaborated). Under his direction, the *Westliche Post*, became the most important German newspaper in St. Louis with (in 1867) 7,500 issues daily, and a readership that Preetorius estimated at 20,000. In January 1865, he celebrated the emancipation of the Missourian slaves and pushed for Blacks rights. Nevertheless, he was part of the "radical ebb" which led many Germans toward more conservative views. In that direction, he followed his co-editor (and paper's co-owner) between 1867 and 1877, Carl Schurz (1829-1906).[42] The latter is certainly one of the most famous German Americans of the nineteenth century. Diplomat and officer during the Civil War, he was elected Senator for Missouri in 1869, only one year after his arrival in St. Louis. Schurz's career culminated in 1877 when, thanks to the compromise that put an end to the Reconstruction, he became, until 1861, secretary of the interior. His biographer, Hans Trefousse, writes that Schurz's relatively short stay in Missouri "marked the high point of his career and contributed to the end of radicalism in the state."[43] The *Westliche Post*, which will absorb the *Anzeiger* in 1898, was published until 1938, even though it declined from the beginning of the twenty-century.

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[39] On the *Westliche Post*, I used mainly Saalberg, Harvey. "The Westliche Post of St. Louis: German-Language Daily, 1857-1928", Journalism Quarterly, 45, no. 3 (Fall 1968): 452-472 and Anderson, Kristen L. *Abolitionizing Missouri. German Immigrants and Racial Ideology in Nineteenth-Century America.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016. See also Rowan, Steven and Primm, James, N. *Germans for a Free Missouri: Translations from the St. Louis Radical Press, 1857-1862*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1983.

[40] On Börnstein's colorful character, see Steven Rowan, p 36-45.

[41] Indications on Preetorius are drawn from Steven Rowan's entry in the Dictionary of Missouri Biography.

[42] Indications on Schurz are drawn from Hans L. Trefousse's entry in *ibid.*

[43] *Ibid*, p. 678.

Joseph Weydemeyer on the Voting Rights of Blacks

On September 8, 13 and 14, 1865 the St. Louis *Westliche Post* published a series of articles written by Joseph Weydemeyer.[44] They tackle the issue of Black suffrage. Appearing in the context of president Johnson's sympathetic policies toward the Southerner ruling-class, these articles are a reaction against that trend. Whereas Weydemeyer devoted several articles and conferences on the issue of slavery and the sectional unbalance, especially in terms of the tariff question, before the Civil War, he mentioned here clearly the necessity of an alliance with the freedpeople "in the great fight between labor and monopolizing capital". The base for such an alliance is, for him, to grand political rights to the freedpeople.

The first article begins with a quotation of a Boston Address remarking that the abolition of slavery carries with it the suppression of the three-fifth rule. That rule touchstone of the Constitution, counted three-fifth of the slave population in order to design the size of the Southern representation at the House of Representative. According to the Address, the abolition automatically represents an important gain in seats for the Southern states. Moreover, the Address uses an abolitionist vocabulary since it adds that the strengthening of the Southern representation occurs while "the freedmen are kept in political unfreedom" Weydemeyer goes on to stress out the paradox that while the slaveholders lost the war, a new allocations of the seats would "expand the political influence of the former slave barons" at the expanse of the North. For Weydemeyer, the problem resides not only in that increased Southern share but also in "the character of [the] representatives." The "southern barons" are not only harmful because they "reached from the ballot box to the sword" but also because of their "aversion to mechanization". Slavery prevented the exploitation of the South "untapped sources of wealth" and the slaveholders were the constant opponents of "northern industry and commerce". Far from engaging in industrialization, "they sought out new ways to keep former slaves bound to the soil". As long as "the political machinery of the southern states" supports its rule "the aristocracy" if defeated is not "subdued". Weydemeyer concludes the article in this way: it "appears as if the victory in the field will not be accompanied by a political victory".

That first article calls for two remarks. The repetition of the terms "aristocracy" and "barons" taps into both traditions. The first comes from the American Independence War and its democratic currents which seen the English as malicious aristocrats, the second echoes naturally the 1849/9 democratic Revolutions in Europe. Making the association between the slaveholders and the "barons" and "aristocrats" is a way to fits the Civil War in a struggle for democracy, the continuation of two famous precedents, one of them, the European Revolutions, being a failure. As for the second point, Weydemeyer shares a common topic at the time, that of the superiority of industrialisation and free labour over slavery. On a strict economic point of view, he was wrong since the second slavery system allowed higher productivity, when it comes to cotton, than other "free" systems. It is only once mechanized harvesting was possible that industrialization proved "superior" to the "gang chains". He is right, however, when he points out to the "untapped sources of wealth". The slaves states specialised in the production of exports goods such as cotton, rice, tobacco, and sugar. This led to the concentration of the best lands in the hands of the planters and forms of monoculture. Moreover, the development's stages were lower when compared to the industrial North.

The second article describes the submission of the "white trash", a pejorative word used in English, to the "lords of the land". The poor whites' physical distance from the "wider world" and the service they rendered to the "southern oligarchy" in "hunting down their slaves and fighting their battles for them, even though their only reward was poverty and contempt" made

[44] See the Appendices for the whole articles. The German originals are available online, see the bibliography.

of them completely unreliable people for the building of a new South. Weydemeyer, after a long newspaper's quote stressing out, on the one hand, the "absenteeism" character of the planters and their reluctance to encourage industrialisation—a theme already treated in the first article—and, on the other, the "ignorance of the white population", concludes by asking why the "Negroes, who helped break the slaveholders' yoke" are not enjoying the vote. Contrary to the planters who rebelled and continue to refuse industrialization as well as their poor whites henchmen, the Negroes "stood with the Union" during the war and "gave vigorous support to our cause […] their interests coincided with our own they were also the interests of progress and civilization".

The third article, after such transition, tackle finally directly the issue of Black suffrage. It is probably the most interesting of the three, also the longer. After a beginning in which Weydemeyer explains that it would be vain to expect "that the enemies of industrial development" give up "their opposition" after the loss of their "privileges and power". Everything "indicates that violence or the threat of violence remains necessary to convince former slaveholders that the North is serious about ending slavery". Only the martial law "exercised by the Freedmen's Bureau and an army of occupation" prevent a "return to the old conditions". The problem is not only that the army "keep thousands of our best workers out of production" but also represents a new fiscal burden for the working-class. Refusing the "system of serfdorm" that begins to replace slavery, for Weydemeyer the only sound example of the introduction of "free labor into southern life" was made in the Sea Islands of South Carolina. The "missed" opportunities to develop free labor represent a waste in the recovery of the Southern states. A recovery would be possible only at the price of a "peace" reducing "our still tremendous expenses to a reasonable amount" and "the return [of] our workers from their costly inactivity to national production." Only then, would it be possible to "fairly distribute the burdens we have already accrued to the entire country and win new markets for the products of our industry and new sources of inexpensive raw materials for our factories." Who would be the agents of such a recovery, according to Weydemeyer? Not in the current generation of the "poor whites" since they were "raised in indolence and in disdain for worker". "There only remains the much despised Negroes, who, along with the white craftsmen of the cities represent practically the only workers in the South." A good measure, imitating what was done in the Sea Island, would be to "transfer all the lands that have been abandoned, confiscated or forfeited through tax default to free Negroes". Such "experiment can be carried out without continuing the military occupation of the South only if we also give the new representatives of free labor [the freedpeople] the political power to protect their newly acquired rights". If Weydemeyer recognizes that "a certain fatigue has settled over us northerners" after the war efforts and that "the worker looks with great indifference upon further developments in the South, noew that the principal question [slavery's abolition] has been decided". The workers are also victims of the "wealthy speculators and contractors" and support the "burden of taxes". Whereas the centrality given to the "eternal Negro" could be source of "envy", the workers now fight for their "own particular interests", "sometimes against those with whom [they] recently former a common front against a common enemy [the slaveholders], he misunderstands the great meaning that the further development of the South has for him". Industry oppresses and exploits the workers, yet it is only through a greater industrial development than the workers "can gain the power to destroy these forms of exploitation". Industrial development encourages then the development of the working-class interests: "the more allies [the worker] gains for the great fight between labor and monopolizing capital […] the more certain and speedy his victory". Who else allies than the workers themselves, "regardless of what ancestry they have to thank for their skin color?" While "the demobilization of the Negro regiments is already announced", the only way to prevent the restoration of the older planter power is a "rapid reconstruction of Reconstruction

with the political equality of the Negro as its basis", Negroes who are "now trained in the use of weapons."

If Weydemeyer's support to the Black suffrage is clear and that he sees Blacks as allies in the struggle against capital, it is interesting to note that he express directly this demand only after having discarded the "poor whites", stressed the planters inability to engage in the way of industrial development that he considers the "Negroes". Moreover, he concedes that "a certain degree of political education is necessary to exercise the right to vote independently" even though he immediately adds: "but it is not necessary to acquire this education from books—life is the best school for this". Weydemeyer wrote for an audience at the time largely favouring Black men votes (often with the same mention of the necessity of education). Nevertheless, his argumentation does not begin with the franchise seen as an inalienable right or directly mentioning the freedmen as his fellow citizens. He probably shaped his argumentation for the audience of the *Westliche Post*. In any event, whatever its shortcomings, Weydemeyer articles are probably the most progressive one can find in St. Louis at the time.

Missouri and the *Neger-Stimmsrecht-Frage*

On the eve of the Civil War, Missouri had a slave population, concentrated mainly along the Missouri river, of around 10 percent of the state's inhabitants.[45] In the 1820's, Missouri was the theatre of the first conflict around the expansion of slavery on the national level. Indeed, part of the Louisiana Purchase, Missouri was admitted as a slave state in 1821. The status of the state provoked heated discussions between those who wanted to limit the expansion of slavery (abolition was not part of the debate) and those who feared an unbalance of power between a "free" North and a slave South. An agreement was finally reached, known as the Missouri Compromise. The admission of Maine as a "free" state along Missouri as a slave one maintained the status quo. Furthermore, the expansion of slavery was forbidden north of the 36° 30' parallel, a line that corresponds to Missouri's southern border. For the next two decades, the two political parties accepted to leave the slavery question out of parliamentarian discussions. In the 1850's, however, a renewed conflict broke out. After the Mexican War, the United States doubled its seize. The status of the conquered lands brought about the same fears as in the 1820's. However, the social and economical conditions were not the same: huge waves of migrants settled in the United States, nine of ten in the northern and Midwest non-slave states, parts of the country were experiencing rapid urbanisation and industrialisation whereas the slave South produced the, by far, main exported good, cotton, to record highs. These underlying changes formed the basis of political tensions. A lame compromise, in 1850, settled the issue for only a few months. The Fugitive Slave Act, part of this new compromise, raised strong oppositions. Unlike the previous decades, abolitionists became heard in the North. At the political level, the conflict coalesced over the status of the western territories of Kansas and Nebraska. In contradiction to the Missouri Compromise, Congress resolved to let the population of the new territories to decide themselves if they wanted a free soil or a slave state. This led hundreds of "free-soilers" settlers (among them, John Brown) and "Missourian ruffians" into Kansas, each one wanting to carry the day.

When the Civil War broke out, in 1861, Missouri would be right on the fracture line between North and South. A slave state, although slavery played a minor role in the economy, Missouri harboured a city in expansion, with a large migrant population, St. Louis. Founded in the eighteen century by the French near the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, from the 1840's onward the city undergone a rapid development. Doubling its population twice between 1840 and 1850, St. Louis reached that last year a population of 77,860. One decade later, the city counted 161,000 inhabitants, the eighth larger of the United States.[46] In 1850, German and Irish migrants accounted for 40 percent of the population. By 1860, "if their American-born children are included, these ethnic groups comprised three fifths" of the population.[47]

The German population, concentrated in peculiar neighbourhoods, equipped themselves with a German-speaking daily press. But the Germans were also organised in many associations, and had their own spaces of socialisation such as gymnastic societies (*Turn-Verein*), cultural ones, schools, and beer halls. Like the Irish, Germans asserted their origins (although multiple, according to the dialect, the region and the language) through "institutions" they forged for themselves. Often, they were at odds with their "Yankee" neighbours. Alcohol consumption, public meetings on Sundays, religion (for the Catholics) or freethinking as well as citizens rights were issues which often led to conflicts, especially when nativism became more widespread among American-born citizens. Although Germans loved to see themselves in the 1850's as

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[45] According to the 1860's Census, there were 114,931 slaves over a total population of 1,182,012. *1860 Census*, p. 287. https://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.html

[46] Indications on the history of the city and numbers came from the introduction of James Primm in Rowan, Steven and Primm, James, N. *Germans for a Free Missouri: Translations from the St. Louis Radical Press, 1857-1862*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1983.

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

"freedom-loving" and against slavery, the reality was more complex, as shown by Karen Anderson's careful study of the St. Louis' German press.[48] To be sure, migrants from the failed 1848's revolution and many papers editors brought with themselves news ideas and attitudes than former Germans migrants. At the beginning of the 1850's, "few Missouri Germans advocated immediate or uncompensated emancipation at this time, seeking instead an emancipation strategy that would not violate property rights or Missouri law […] some also supported the colonization of freed African Americans outside the United States."[49] Influenced by and participating in, for instance, the campaigns against the *Kansas Nebraska Act*, their attitudes evolved. If they "could not yet be considered abolitionists in the conventional sense of the word", many Germans were antislavery.[50] Indeed, the 1850's saw a redefinition of antislavery politics and abolitionist struggles. Antislavery politics combined often with the idea of free soil. Racism was not absent in these political currents, since the free soil states they envisioned was often synonymous of states without a Black population. However, attitudes progressively changed. The various attempts to reach agreements between the North and the South were not the only element playing in that change. Slaves flying to the North were also determinants. Their flight contributed to the union of various groups against their capture. The 1850's Fugitive Slave Act was key to the sectional agreement, making the opposition to the return of the slaves to their owners a highly destabilising factor. Anderson has documented how the fugitives helped to change the German opinion. For the first time, the German press gave the names and the stories of the fugitives, humanizing the slave question[51].

The future of slavery became a major electoral issue when John C. Frémont became in 1856 the presidential candidate for the new Republican party. This party was founded after the collapse of the party system along sectional lines. Although far from being an abolitionist party, its candidates clearly favoured an end to the expansion of slavery and an abrogation of the Fugitive Slave Act. Frémont lost the election; he received nearly no vote in the South but 1,3 million votes in the North (33 percent of the popular vote). Significant numbers of Germans joined the new party. Germans in Missouri, especially in St. Louis were the majority of them lived, became more active in antislavery politics. They nevertheless favoured a gradual and compensated emancipation. They had to reckon with a state Constitution, product of the 1820's compromise, which stated that emancipation "could only take place if every slaveholder in the state agreed to it".[52] Even if the importance of slavery in Missouri was low, few were willing to embark in such emancipatory schemes. It would take the Civil War to change this. It is Lincoln election, in November 1860, which sparked the secessionist process. On that regard, Germans in Missouri stand out: they voted approximately at 80% for Lincoln whereas he received only 10% of the state vote (40% in St. Louis).[53]

The Germans' role in Missouri during the secessionist crisis was particularly important. It is Germans troops which, on May 10, 1861, prevented the state governor, Claiborne Jackson, to take control of the city and its arsenal for the Confederacy.[54] This event, which would be celebrated by the Germans in the following years, is surrounded by myths. It is not the place to discuss in detail what would be called the "Camp Jackson Affair", what is certain is that the mobilisation of Germans militias gave a decisive advantage to the unionist forces in the city. Even if Missouri would be a war theatre and thousands of men joined the Confederacy, many of them participating in guerrillas operations, the state stayed in the Union. German enlistment into the Army would also be impressive: "approximately thirty-one thousand Germans served in

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[48] Anderson, Karen, *op. cit.*
[49] *Ibid.*, p. 62 and 66.
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 66.
[51] Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 52-65.
[52] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[53] *Ibid.*, p. 83.
[54] *Ibid.*, p. 94-97.

Union regiments in Missouri", that is 36% of the whole Union troops in Missouri (85,400).[55] It is also in Missouri that was taken one of the first emancipatory measures by the Union authorities. Against Lincoln's conciliatory stance-who wanted to maintain at all costs the "border states" into the Union—the new head of the military Western Department, Major General John C. Frémont, former Republican presidential candidate, issued, on August 30, 1861 an order freeing slaves owned by rebel.[56] A few days later, Lincoln rescinded the order, saying the "general should never have dragged the Negro into the War. It is a war for a great national object and the Negro has nothing to do with it."[57] Lincoln's decision stirred outrage among abolitionists and determined antislavery people, particularly among St. Louis Germans. Beyond Frémont's order, this shown that it would take months before Lincoln saw emancipation as a war aim, transforming the character of the war. Individual initiatives by officers, motivated as much by abolitionist sympathies than by pragmatism, abolitionists pressures and the action of the slaves themselves would be fundamental in that evolution. On that respect the role played by German radicals, as Andrew Zimmerman argues, is often undervalued.[58] The strong representation among the officers of former participants of the 1849 Baden Revolution's, drives him to sustain that officers such as Franz Sigel, who was War minister in the short Baden's revolutionary government, or August August Willich, a former member of Marx's Communist League, acted upon a "socialist emancipation strategy".[59] For Zimmerman, their ideology favouring a disrespect of private property were instrumental in the adoption of radical abolitionist measures on the ground that helped to finally adopt an emancipatory policy. Far from the cautious liberal approach, slow to adopt radical measures, the German socialists helped Grant "to channel the social-revolutionary energies of soldiers and freedpeople into a form of warfare that revolutionized Confederate society rather than simply defeated the Confederate army".[60] Thus, on the battlefield these German officers were the counterparts of the political struggle of their fellow-countrymen.

In Missouri, abolitionists and antislavery proponents, frustrated by Lincoln's slowness regarding emancipation, organised conventions, already in 1862, to push through abolition in the state. The first day of 1863, with the Emancipation Proclamation's enactment, Lincoln made finally the abolition of slavery an explicitly war goal. The Proclamation did not concern, however, the Borders States such as Missouri. Yet, the state legislature adopted a gradual emancipation that same year. Rather conservative, this plan envisaged compensation, no emancipation before 1870 and a period of apprenticeship.[61] German radicals were not at all satisfied. The course of the war would however make this plan rapidly obsolete. Issues such as former slaves refugees ("contrabands") and the formation of Black regiments contributed to radicalize the Germans. Finally, the newly elected legislature passed an immediate Emancipation Ordinance on January 11, 1865.

The Emancipation opened a new phase: what rights would enjoy the Missourian freedpeople? Civil equality, a common use of public transportation and facilities, and the suffrage were among the rights in debate. Anderson shows that if Germans radicals figured among those favouring strongly, with ambiguities however, the Black suffrage, they were not sensitive to issues such as an equal utilisation of public transportation and facilities.[62] The issue of black suffrage came directly in front of the Missourians electors in 1868 in the form of a constitutional amendment. It was massively rejected, even by a majority of Germans. Finally, the adoption in

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[55] *Ibid.*, p. 88.
[56] Vernon, Volpe L. "The Frémonts and Emancipation in Missouri", *The Historian*, 56, no. 2 (Winter 1994): 339-354.
[57] *Ibid.*, p. 342.
[58] Zimmerman, "From the Rhine to the Mississippi…", *art. cit.*
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[60] *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[61] Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 115.
[62] Whatever the merits of Anderson's book, it is unfortunate that her focus on the St. Louis German press does not offer, if only allusively, indications of direct collaboration and debate between Germans and Blacks in the city.

1870 of the Fifteen Amendment allowed Blacks to vote. That year was however a turning point for the Germans:

> "Although the Republicans' platform of opposition to slavery and support for the Union had won the support of the vast majority of St. Louis Germans during the Civil War, the party ultimately proved unable to deal with the economic, religious, and racial conflicts after the war, losing some of their staunchest German supporters to their political rivals […] The German Radical Republicans who had pushed for so long for black suffrage abandoned the cause in the moment of victory, when it became apparent that their interests were not necessarily the same as African Americans' and that their constituents did not support their actions. The German voters demonstrated their desire to keep politics a realm for white men by voting against black enfranchisement in 1868. Not wanting to risk a resurgent nativism that might result in American political citizenship becoming divided by national origin rather than race, they provided support for maintaining the current racial status quo, in which a German immigrant could automatically outrank an African American. In the end, the German population's opinions on black suffrage were not that different from those held by other white Missourians."[63]

Anderson's harsh conclusion should probably be nuanced. As she explains, the Republican failure to rise to the post-Civil War challenges is at least one important element in that change of attitude. This failure is due to the nature of the Republican party, as a "capitalist" party. That nature was particularly expressed on two regards: the tepidness of its "radical wing" to sustain a reduction of the working time, the lack of a radical land reform attributing plots to the former slaves, on the one hand, and the will of a growing section of the republican establishment to reach an agreement with the defeated South and the Democratic party as a guarantee to the ruling class' domination. Another factor were the difficulties to form an independent working-class' party around workers, women and Blacks rights and demands once it was clear that the Republican party would not introduce measures in that direction.

[63] *Ibid.*, p. 192-193.

Reconstruction of Reconstruction

"Congress must choose a rapid reconstruction of Reconstruction, with the political equality of the Negro as its basis, or new disturbances and race wars à la St. Domingo. The newly armed aristocrat freed from military government will quickly forget the measures forced upon him, but he will no longer find the subjugated slave, unconscious of his own power, in the demobilized Negro, now trained in the use of weapons. No matter how the battle begins, bloodshed and devastation will be its is inseparable companions. Under the presidential policies this can only be avoided with continued military occupation; political equality of the Negro is the only means of permanently eliminating this danger."

Joseph Weydemeyer, "On the Negro Vote", *Westliche Post*, September, 14, 1865

The defeat of the Confederacy and the abolition of slavery were a turning point in U.S. history. It "did initiate an "unprecedented upturn" in the development of industrial capitalism in the United States. Victory over the planter class removed a major barrier to the free extension and development of the free labor economy. Industrialization, urbanization, and immigration made rapid strides in the next decades."[64]

I.

This new situation also opened up new possibilities and boosted a large range of struggles, from women rights to labour. Large sectors in American society "had watched the government make revolutionary changes in response to heroism and sacrifice by the oppressed", an observation that encouraged them to fight for new rights. One can speaks of a "cross-fertilization" of the different struggles.[65] On the labour front, the fight for an Eight-hour working day was waged under the following slogans: "Eight Hours: A Legal Day's Work for Freemen" and "Nation's gift to workingmen in the army". Eight-Hour League were created across the country. In a series of articles published in the *Westliche Post* and the *St. Louis Daily Press*, Weydemeyer wrote: "with the eight-hour movement […] the labor question, i.e. the modern labor question—the question of hired labor, which is better known under the euphemistic name of "free labor"—steps before the social forum, strips off the secondary character which heretofore adhered to it on this continent, raises itself to a social question." By 1864, trade-unions claimed 200,000 members.[66] On another front, the feminists, many of them had gained their experience in the abolitionist movement, pushed for the women vote. The adoption of an Amendment to the Constitution secured the voting rights of Blacks *men* sparked a heated debate among the feminists and their allies who were deeply disappointed that the issue of their voting rights was not raised.

At the same time, a central issue regarding the the freepeople was not only their civil and political rights, but also their material existence. These dimensions were debated during the Reconstruction era, a period which would finish in 1877 with the withdrawal of the troops from the Southern states. Lincoln, assassinated a few days after the end of the war, died without leaving a comprehensive politics regarding the former seceding states. Andrew Johnson, his vice-president, took the presidential charge. His Reconstruction politics quickly disappointed abolitionists, radicals and all those who thought that a radical change was necessary to reconstruct the South. Johnson, himself of former Tennessee slaveholder, proved to be very sympathetic to the former planters interests. He even opposed unsuccessfully his veto to a Civil Rights Act, in 1866, providing legal protection to the freed people. This led to an upsurge of opposition in the Congress, culminating in a failed impeachment. Nevertheless, Congress took in charge the Reconstruction policy, passing two amendments, in 1868 and 1870 that secured the voting rights of Black men as well as some guarantees against discrimination.

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[64] Levine, Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 263.
[65] Roediger, David, *op. cit.*, p. 117.
[66] Roediger, David R., and Foner, Philip S. *Our Own Time. A History of American Labor and the Working Day*. London: Verso, 1989.

The Congressmen failed, however, to provide a solid assistance to the freed people. An assistance which never went beyond the weak attribution and means of the Freedmen's Bureau (shut down in 1872). There was no (radical) land reform that would have provided better material conditions for the freed people. Whatever its shortcoming, the Reconstruction era, American unfinished revolution as Eric Foner called it, was the ground of deep social conflicts and was the theatre of large Blacks participation into the social and political affairs, the most impressive example being the South Carolina 1868's Constitution and Radical Republican government which a strong participation of freedmen and poor whites which introduced a large range of social measures. The Radical Reconstruction encountered a quick reflux, however. Many factors explained that: a surge of conservatism among the Republican party, especially men of property and standing, as a reaction of labour fighting spirit (German liberals and even many radicals were part of that trend); the shortcoming of the Reconstruction laws and measures that deprived freedmen of a sound base to assert their rights and conquer new ones; the reconfiguration of the ruling-class domination in the South, a process supported by numerous acts of racial violence; finally the failure to forge unity among the various working-class fractions and progressives, especially between Blacks and white workers.[67]

The Civil War and Reconstruction Era was nevertheless really an unfinished revolution in the sense that an economical system based on slave labour was destroyed and the planter class was not compensated. Moreover, the opening of a long period of various struggles illustrate that the country was at a crossing-point. Far from a linear vision of history, such turning-point illustrates that during ephemeral moments the window for a radical social was open.

II.

"German democrats maintained a steady drumfire during the war in favour of a more aggressive, egalitarian, and straightforwardly antislavery program than the one enunciated by Lincoln, and they raised demands that often brought them into close collaboration with congressional Radical Republicans."[68] Yet, in the following years many of them were caught in a "conservative drift". Increasing numbers of Germans were integrated into the American society, many of their leaders benefiting of career opportunities. "The social and intellectual foundations of the old German-American radical democracy began to disintegrate […]" many "became increasingly convinced that the defence of civil liberty required the most zealous enforcement of property rights and social order."[69] 1870 was a turning-point. Adding to the disappointments of the Reconstruction Era, the German unification through "blood and iron" appealed to many German-Americans. Not only the liberals succumbed, "even socialist August Willich was carried away by the nationalistic tide. News that war with France was imminent reached the Civil War veteran on a trip through the German states. Without further ado, Willich went to Berlin and presented his saber to William I. The Prussian king turned down his offer to lead the troops into battle—the official reason was that he was too old—which left Willich bitterly disappointed."[70] Fritz Anneke, another former member of the Communist League, expressed his recognition of Bismarck's role.[71] Many German-born liberals and radicals would support Horace Greeley—whose trajectory illustrate also the move toward conservatism—candidacy as a Liberal Republican in 1872. Greeley ran against Grant with the support of the Democrats on a platform calling explicitly to end the Reconstruction politics. Even though he

[67] Time period such as this would be a fruitful study field for those interested in the "intersectionality", that is the attempt at understanding and encouraging the articulation of various struggles. It shows that some contemporary debates would benefit of a study of past events where the same issues, even though in a different vocabulary and in a completely different historical context, were present. More generally, all those convinced in the necessity to bring about a radical social change would also find in that period some found for thought.

[68] Levine, Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

[69] *Ibid.*, p. 264.

[70] Honeck, Mischa. "Abolitionists from the Other Shore: Radical German Immigrants and the Transnational Struggle to End American Slavery", *Amerikastudien/American Studies*, 56, no. 2 (2011): p. 191.

[71] Levine, Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 265.

lost, the Reconstruction politics, already weakened, would only survive a few years. In 1877, in compromise with the Democratic party, the remaining troops left the South opening the door to more racial violence and, eventually, the disfranchisement of Black men. This evolution is complex and deserves a close study. The ambiguities of the "radical" period certainly helped in the process. Moreover, as Mischa Honeck notes, "although blacks and radical German workingmen marched together to commemorate [in Cincinnati] John Brown, open fraternization with African Americans are largely absent from the German American record."[72]

III.

There is no need to speculate about what would have been Weydemeyer political evolution had he lived longer. What is certain is that far from a "sanitized view of the past"[73] several German-Americans remained true to their beliefs. Many of them would continue to struggle in the working-class movement in the last third of the nineteenth century. An history that was erased by "a certain stratum of German-American politicians, businessmen, editors, and hoters who functioned as ethnic intermediaries […] in these circles, radical democratic and socialistic traditions had little or not value or utility. They did not add up to a "usable past," for either ethnic brokers or upwardly mobile German-Americans more generally."[74]

Weydemeyer's collaboration with a paper that later, under the editorial direction of Carl Schurz, would spearheaded the move of many former German radicals toward conservatism is an illustration of the collaboration of liberals, radicals and socialists in the years before the Civil War. That alliance, around the new Republican party, aimed to protect democratic liberties and to fight against the Slave power. At that time, the socialists estimated that the conditions were not ripe for the creation of an independent workers' party. Once the war over, that alliance progressively broke, and some radicals and socialists joined the conservative ranks. Others were at odds with the "common front" they formed to fight "a common enemy". Weydemeyer alluded probably to the end of that alliance with these words borrowed from his third article "On the Negro Vote". During the war, he assisted in Missouri to the conservatives fighting against an immediate end of slavery in the state as well as military officers breaking workers' strikes. Whatever the solidity of that alliance, it allowed to reach some gains. In any event, the class struggle never stopped, open or latent. This alliance and the tensions within it were also the reconfiguration of old divisions already existing on German ground during the 1848/9 Revolution. Political orientations changed under the circumstances and had to adapt, nevertheless it would be interesting to see them in that light.

The transatlantic life of Joseph Weydemeyer is an invitation to investigate the links across the ocean among the "Marx's milieu". In 1848, during the Revolution, a correspondent in Germany for a New York newspaper, Charles Dana, met the editor of *Die Rheinische Zeitung*, Karl Marx. A few years later, after the defeat, Dana would propose Marx to collaborate to his newspaper, *The New York Tribune*. That collaboration would last around 10 years and resulted in the publication of 500 articles. This is a well-known example of a transatlantic cooperation. At another level, Marx's and Engels' correspondence with their comrades, Weydemeyer chiefly among them, as well as the exchange of ideas, books and pamphlets are a fascinating moment to study. At the time of the creation of the International Workingmen Association, this international collaboration are a privileged standpoint to see activists and thinkers facing changing circumstances and adjusting their analysis to it. *Une pensée en mouvement* that could help us to understand the present.

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[72] Honeck, Mischa, *art. cit.*, p. 192.
[73] Levine, Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 266.
[74] *Ibidem.*

Appendices[75]. Joseph Weydemeyer's articles on the Negro Vote and the Eight-hour movement

On the Negro Vote (3 Parts), *Westliche Post*

[Translated by Andrew Zimmerman]

Part 1, September 8

"We should not overlook the fact that with the abolition of slavery the three-fifths rule of the Constitution also comes to an end. The representative population of the slave states thus gains close to two million for the purposes of allocating seats in congress and votes in presidential elections. And this increase of the political power of the rebel states happens at the expense of the free states. If, as it has until now been the case, the freedmen are kept in political unfreedom, then this increased power will be wielded by a class of voters even more restricted than before. It is a further goad for them to retain their monopoly of political power. We will have to encounter the same spirit as before, not only unchastened by political experience but also significantly strengthened in their political power."

—Boston Address

The U.S. Constitution allocates seats in the House of Representatives based on the number of free inhabitants [in each state], and it allows the slave states to count every five slaves as three free people, and as such to add them to their total. The only change that the abolition of slavery has brought to this situation is that the former slaves are now counted as full persons in this total, thereby increasing the number of representatives from the South. The readmission of representatives of the seceded states to Congress without any preconditions, without changing how they deter- mine voting rights, as the Reconstruction policy of the president proposes, will thus expand the political influence of the former slave barons. This is a remarkable way to punish treason and to discourage those who would repeat it!

A reallocation of representatives on the basis of the 1860 census would reward the treachery of each of the former rebel states—Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, South Carolina and Virginia, as well as Kentucky, which only remained in the Union because it was forced to—with an additional representative. It would reduce by the same number the representatives from Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Pennsylvania and reduce those from New York by two. Thanks to the provision of the Constitution that a reallocation of representatives occurs only every ten years, after each census, the brazenness of Presidential Reconstruction will not appear to the people in all its harshness before 1871. But the danger to the Union and to the interests of the people lies not only in the increased number of representatives from the South but also in the character of those representatives. We will not enjoy the full fruits of our hard-won victory if we allow the same people who reached from the ballot box to the sword once again to exercise their full influence on the nation.

If the well-being of a nation is determined by the manner in which it makes its living, and if it is necessary to develop natural resources, industry, and agriculture, we can only see in the southern barons the avowed enemies of the well-being of the people. They have opposed such development with all their power and influence. Although they depended on the North for almost all their needs, northern industry and northern commerce was up to them, Congress would have voted down every law that promoted northern industry and commerce.

The South is rich with untapped sources of wealth, but the slaveholders thought it would be better to guard them, like the dragon in the fairy tale, lest more skillful hands forge from them a weapon against the slaveholders and their holy institution.

"The wealthy planter, surrounded by his hundreds of Negroes und in the full enjoyment of every

[75] See the note on sources in the bibliography for details.

conceivable luxury," writes a correspondent of the southern-sympathizing N.Y. *World* from Virginia, "cares little that labor might draw even more wealth from the bowels of the earth, and he does not wish to allow anyone to undertake this work. His entire ambition consists in riding across his vast fields and knowing that he possesses more slaves than his neighbor. Far from undertaking any improvements, he repels every attempt to do so, and like the dragon guarding his horde he prevents others from making use of what he him- self cannot enjoy. I know of a mine that, at the time of the [American] Revolution, sent gold ore across the Atlantic, but has ever since been closed to the world and has not produced a single dollar of wealth. Scientific researchers from the North were prevented even from putting a spade in the ground to explore these hidden treasures."

Nothing hindered the development of the English and French colonies more than the adherence of their planters to the old labor system even after their governments had abolished slavery. Instead of embracing free labor without reservation, they sought out new ways to keep former slaves bound to the soil; instead of adopting the improved productive methods of the old world, they complained about the lack of 'hands,' since their aversion to mechanization did not disappear with slavery. Despite the assurances to the contrary by Democratic Party newspapers, there are many signs that the final struggle with slavery in this country will be even more difficult. We have defeated, but not entirely subdued, the aristocracy, while the political machinery of the southern states continues to support their rule.

"With the legislative power of the state in its hands"—says the N.O. [New Orleans] *Tribune*—"the southern oligarchy will once again exercise the influence for which they have fought. They already control the southern states again. It is true that their power is limited by their lack of military power, but the state militias are gradually being reorganized. 'We will soon resume our earlier positions in society,' one hears on our own streets from their sympathizers. Indeed, the northern victory may last only a very short time."

It already appears as if the victory in the field will not be accompanied by a political victory.

Part 2, September 13

Standing by the side of the old slaveholders are the 'poor whites' of the South, known throughout the civilized world by this name or by the even harsher one 'white trash.' Their horrifying lack of education prevents them from understanding their true interests and thus directly opposing the lords of the land. The inhabitants of remote mountainous regions that were unsuitable for cultivating the staple commodities of the South were the least acquiescent during the last war. But, cut off from the wider world on their poor farms, they share the prejudices of the slaveholders and cannot completely free themselves from their political leadership. On the lowest rung of civilization are those living on marginal lands near the large plantations, eking out a meager existence by hunting and fishing, carrying out prohibited trade with the Negroes, and serving as henchmen for the plantation lords. They have always been the most willing tools in the hands of the southern oligarchy, hunting down their slaves and fighting their battles for them, even though their only reward was poverty and contempt.

"The people of Carolina consist of two classes, the rich and the poor"— so said General [Francis] Marion during the Revolutionary War. "The poor are generally very poor because the rich, having slaves to do their work, do not need to employ them. Thus left without the support of the rich, they remain poor and downtrodden. They rarely have any money, and what little they get they spend on brandy, to raise their spirits a bit— not for books and newspapers, from which they might be educated."

Today it is still as it was in the time of the Revolution, and as it was in the Carolinas, so it is in the other slave states too. A born southerner who lived for years in South Carolina and also traveled through Spanish America ranked the poor whites of that state below even the mixed-race Spanish- Indians, known as Pintos. He insisted that the Spanish-Indians, living in the most adverse situation, were not so degraded, so lacking in energy and industry, and so devoid of any purpose in life as the poor whites.

It is the same in the newest slave states as in the oldest. Ever-expanding agricultural estates in the lowlands or plantation districts were one of the chief characteristics of the "old system," according to the Houston (Texas) *Telegraph*: "One of the evils of large landholding," continued the paper, "is how it

gradually swallows up small plantations and farms until in some places just a few large landowners own almost entire parishes and counties. This dissolves society into a system of absenteeism. Planters and their families spend most of their time in other parts of the country, in towns or cities, or sometimes even in New York or Paris. The whole region is left to a few overseers and thousands of slaves. In such a situation the possibilities for general improvement disappear, regardless of how rich the land is. No other branch of industry other than plantation agriculture, no art, is encouraged. No society can exist, no culture can develop, no social pleasures can take root. Under such a system industry cannot develop evenly in an area. It is a reversal of the purposes of nature and providence. The landowners restrict their entire interest to the expansion of their holdings of land and negroes, to the harvest of cotton, sugar, or rice, and to the profits they can realize from them. The sense of community dies out and the only improvements that are possible are those that the planter carries out in the interest of his Negroes."

"The ignorance of the white population here is astonishing," writes another Democratic correspondent from Virginia, referring to the 'poor whites.' "Of the thousands who take the loyalty oath [to the Union] each day, only about five percent are able to read and write. One might almost conclude that only this [poor] class of the population took the loyalty oath. Other inquiries convinced me that nowhere in the North can such a mass of ignorance be found. In their speech, manners, and everything else, with the exception of their eagerness to learn and their industry, they were the equal of the Negroes whom they so despised."

And that is the class of people for whose benefit the current President [Johnson], as their special representative, wishes to withhold the vote from the Negroes. These are the people for whom the president is willing to risk the peace and prosperity of the whole country!

And the Negroes? During the war they stood with the Union, gave vigorous support to our cause, and contributed their best energies to the victory of our arms. And where their interests coincided with our own they were also the interests of progress and civilization. Has the situation today so changed that President Johnson now believes he has to protect the poor whites against these same Negroes, who helped break the slaveholders' yoke, which pressed with equal weight on both of them? Let us forget the views of the president and see what the good of the country requires.

Part 3, September 14

It is not to be expected that the enemies of industrial development would suddenly give up their opposition now that they have lost some of their privileges and power. All reports from the South indicate that violence or the threat of violence remains necessary to convince former slaveholders that the North is serious about ending slavery and that it will not under any circumstances tolerate a return to the old conditions. To uphold the new order in this way requires the martial law exercised by the Freedmen's Bureau and an army of occupation to enforce it. Because we do not dare to give a fair portion of political power to those who have an immediate interest in defending and upholding the new order, we have to keep thousands and thousands of our best workers out of production and in an 'armed peace.' To support these troops we have to impose ever new sacrifices on our country and increase the government's power of taxation, which exercises an extremely crippling influence on the growth of our prosperity. Instead of seeing new activity springing to life in the South, we use all our efforts to keep everything there in limbo.

"The southern Negroes are misrepresented in one respect," writes the above-cited reporter from Virginia. "Again and again we were told that they were unable to take care of themselves. Their activities and achievements give proof that they can take care not only of themselves but also of their masters, and these better than they would have been able to take care of themselves."

Despite years of occupation of southern territories, almost everywhere we have missed the opportunity to introduce free labor into southern life. The system of serfdom introduced by [Union General Nathaniel] Banks [in Louisiana] offered but a pitiful substitute for the high expectations [for free labor] and was not suited to arouse a desire to work in those who had earlier been forced to. As far as we know, a serious attempt [to introduce free labor] was made in only one region, the Sea Islands of South Carolina, and there the experiment met with happy success. The following description of conditions there comes from a

reporter from the New York *World*, who traveled through the entire South on assignment for the paper:

"The condition of the islands along the coast," writes the correspondent, "is of great interest for the world in general and for the people of the South in particular. Through careful study I have learned that more than 200,000 acres are cultivated there with free labor. The business owners are mostly from the North, although some southerners also employ Negroes under the new system. It is currently the third year of the experiment, and each year its success is greater than the last. The profit earned by a number of workers totaled $500, in other cases even $5000 per year. The Negroes of these islands have deposited $140,000 in the bank. A community bond subscription to the [U.S. government's]

7-30 Loan delivered $30,000. Despite the fact that the [Union] troops who first landed on these islands robbed the Negroes of their money, their mules, and their supplies, the Negroes took up their work again right away."

The North has the greatest interest in quickly reestablishing truly peaceful conditions in the South—for an 'armed peace' is in fact no more than a war held back by force. Nobody would dispute that a rapid recovery of states laid waste by both foe and friend is of the utmost importance. We need peace to reduce our still tremendous [wartime] expenses to a reasonable amount and to return our workers from their costly inactivity to national production. We need the recovery of the South to fairly distribute the burdens we have already accrued to the entire country and to win new markets for the products of our industry and new sources of inexpensive raw materials for our factories.

But where can we find the element that can participate actively in this recovery? In the southern landed aristocracy? Most of them cooperate only against their will and prefer to waste their time and energies on vain plans to restore the old order. Among the 'poor whites'? We cannot count at all on their current generation, raised in indolence and in disdain for work. There only remains the much despised Negroes, who, along with the white craftsmen of the cities, represent practically the only workers in the South.

Why not repeat the very successful Sea Island experiment in other regions? Why not transfer all the lands that have been abandoned, confiscated, or forfeited through tax default to free Negroes to cultivate independently? Northern energy would also come to their assistance. Former slaveholders will quickly learn to pay fair wages when they see how easy it is for workers to escape their 'good will.' But this experiment can be carried out without continuing the military occupation of the South only if we also give the new representatives of free labor the political power to protect their newly acquired rights. We do not wish to deny that a certain degree of political education is necessary to exercise the right to vote independently. But it is not necessary to acquire this education from books—life is the best school for this, and the violent conflict through which the Negroes won their freedom has made them understand their own interests more quickly than would have been possible in any other way. All reports moreover ensure us nearly unanimously of the Negro's strong drive for education. His strenuous efforts to attain the education that was earlier denied him by the force of law show him to advantage in comparison to the 'poor whites' of the South, in whom the desire to escape their own ignorance has not yet been awakened.

We should not ignore the fact that, after the extraordinary efforts of the last years, a certain fatigue has settled over us northerners. The worker looks with great indifference upon further developments in the South, now that the principal question for him has been decided with the deathblow against slavery. When the war broke out he revealed the greatest capability for sacrifice, but he now finds the only thanks he gets is being slighted for the benefit of wealthy speculators and contractors. He sees the burden of taxes placed most heavily on his own shoulders, while large capital flees the flood for higher ground. He again looks with envy on the 'eternal Negro' who remains at the center of public interest. Forced to fight for his own particular interests, sometimes against those with whom he only recently formed a common front against a common enemy, he misunderstands the great meaning that the further development of the South has for him too.

The modern worker is the direct creation of industry, and his entire existence is inextricably bound up with its development. Although industry oppresses and exploits him, it is only by further developing industry that he can gain the power to destroy these forms of exploitation, as he helped destroy other

forms [i.e. slavery] that no longer corresponded to the civilization of our century. What fosters the development of industry thus also fosters his own interests. The more allies he gains for the great fight between labor and monopolizing capital, which we see organized and pre- pared before our very eyes, the more certain and speedy his victory. But where else in the South will he find these allies, if not among the workers themselves, regardless of what ancestry they have to thank for their skin color? This battle cannot be won within the government alone. It must quickly spread to the entire nation, where the voice of the South will be heard as clearly as the voice of the North. The tune it sounds will depend on the throats from which it emanates, whether only from the aristocrat and his henchmen, or also from the worker who has a vote in the election of representatives.

But we need not worry that this apathy will last long. The Reconstruction policy of the president seems to have moved from experiment to reality and its bitter fruits will soon ripen. Allowing a southern militia to form in Mississippi, which will, no doubt, pave the way for similar militias in other states, is just the preparation for the demobilization of the Negro regiments already announced in the *Army and Navy Gazette*. Congress must then choose a rapid reconstruction of Reconstruction, with the political equality of the Negro as its basis, or new disturbances and race wars à la St. Domingo [i.e. Haiti]. The newly armed [southern] aristocrat freed from military government [under the Union occupation] will quickly forget the measures forced upon him, but he will no longer find the subjugated slave, unconscious of his own power, in the demobilized Negro, now trained in the use of weapons. No matter how the battle begins, bloodshed and devastation will be its inseparable companions. Under the [current] presidential [Reconstruction] policies this can only be avoided with continued military occupation; political equality of the Negro is the only means of permanently eliminating this danger. And this solution offers the prospect of the rapid return of Southern prosperity, while continuing military occupation will bring nothing but further burdens. The decision lies in the hands of the next congress, the political future of its members in the hands of the people.

The Eight-Hour-Movement. *St. Louis Daily Press* (August, 1866)

Translated from *Westliche Post* by J. Weydemeyer

Meagre as the reports are which we find in the daily press on the progress of the eight hour movement, they give, nevertheless, sufficient evidence that the agitation of this question assumes daily more powerful dimensions; that it penetrates the masses of the people deeper, as it already embraces the workingmen's associations in most of the States of the Union. Although it offers no opportunity for sensation reports, it is of no minor importance, for the reason that to the present moment it creates only light clouds on the political horizon.

Of all prior labor movements on this continent the eight jour movement differs principally in this, that it gives one common aim to all workingmen, and thereby carries them necessarily beyond the narrow limits of the trades within which all their prior exertions to better their condition and social position were bounded. The different incessantly repeated attempts to raise the wages, either by really undertaken or threatened strikes, were necessarily limited to the different trades, as the conditions of labor were diverse in them, and in various ways influenced by the industrial development and the formation of commercial relations. The trade unions were the natural product of those movements; the aim to be obtained was a common one only to the workingmen of the same trade, and although the different trades sometimes assisted each other, the alliance between them was only a temporary one which dissolved again as soon as the aim was attained, or adverse conjunctions or want of resources compelled the strikers to yield.

Not so with the eight jour movement. Although it has been tried by a few trades to enforce by strikes a reduction of the working hours, the general aim of the movement is set to the regulation of them by law.

The question, therefore, involves an influence to be exerted on the legislation of the country-a political act to be executed; and this fact alone is strong enough to overthrow the whole theory of the trade-unions speakers, who thought the interference of workingmen's associations with polities irreconcilable with the interest of the workingman, and who recognized political abstinence as one of the essential conditions of success. By giving up this isolated position, the workingmen at once abolish the isolation among themselves, for they cannot meet legislators and representatives like they do the "bosses"- as locksmiths, carpenters, weavers, spinners, &c.- but only as electors and voters, who represent the interest of a large class of society of the workingmen, instead of the interest of small subdivisions of the same class, separated only by the variety of their occupation. With the eight-hour movement, therefore, the labor question, i.e., the modern labor question-the question of hired labor, which is better known under the euphemistic name of "free labor," steps before the social forum, strips off the secondary character which heretofore adhered to it on this continent, raises itself to a social question in the full meaning of the word. And that is just the great, the main significance of this movement, that it slings a common band round all workingmen, awakens in them a common interest, pulls down the barriers too often raised between the different trades, declares war against all party prejudices of birth and color, and thereby clears the ground for the formation of a real workingmen's party, in whose hands soon will be held the future of the country.

Before, however, we enter further upon the political consequences of this movement, it will be necessary to subject to a closer examination the effect which the introduction of an eight jour law must have in the conditions of labor generally, as well as the means and ways for its improvement.

The Eight Hour Movement – II.

[Translated from the Westliche Post by J. Weydemeyer]

It is evident that every kind of labor cannot be influenced in the same manner by law fixing the number of hours for a day's work. With the piece-work it can, of course, have nothing to do, but only with the work which is measured by days; and even here a difference is yet to be observed, according as the labor is an independent or a combined one, the operation of the one laborer depending on the operation of the one laborer depending on the operation of his colaborers, and of the machines, which control the whole of it.

A woodchopper, for instance, may, at his own pleasure, extend or curtail his working hours without compelling thereby his colleague working at his side to do the same. In a factory, however, which, for its operation, requires all hands, the laborers have either to stop working altogether, or have to proceed with their work together. The British ten hours law in no way forbids the longer working of adult

laborers in British factories, but fixes only a maximum time for occupation of children, women and not full grown young people; but, as in most of the factories a considerable number of the said categories is occupied, this act is quite sufficient to fix the working hours of all workingmen employed in those factories.

Mr. George A. Brandreth, who, in the Legislature of the State of New York, advocated the eight jour system, mentioned as remarkable that workingmen or mechanics, in performing piece-work, had for themselves adopted the average term of eight hours for a day's work.

He had them undoubtedly before his mind the iron-workers of Troy and Albany, whose strike at that time excited the general attention, as it had called into existence a hostile combination of mill owners. It may be true with them, as with some other trades, which require either a great bodily exertion or a great sill; but it is a fact not less incontestable, that such a rule does not apply to trades, which are not so well paid, and especially not to those which have ben left to the weaker sex. It needs only to mention the seamstresses of New York and other large cities, who were so often the object of sentimental newspaper reports, and who by the most strenuous exertions continued into the depth of the night, are scarcely able to earn the indispensable necessities of life. The connection between these unfortunate creatures and those ironworkers is formed by a chain of the most differing branches of labor, which altogether cannot be directly affected by an eight jour law, although an indirect influence is not to be denied.

But it must never be lost sight of, that piece work is only the precursor of automatic work, that the progressing division of labor only prepares the way to the machine, that automatic labor in our present society is the most prominent form of production, which is daily enlarging its empire, daily subjugating new labor branches. As soon as steam can advantageously be used with any work, and thereby necessitates the introduction of machines, the collection of the working men in one factory follows; and the "hands", as the modern laborers are called in the technical language of the middle classes, will fall into the servitude of the physical powers leased by the industrial master.

It is only natural that the workingman protests against such servitude he is forced into this protest by his situation; and that he revolts against the fact, that the advantages of this industrial development have been monopolized by a minority of the society, who may be surprised by it? "The aim and tendency in every improvement of machinery," says prominent British economist, "is to dispense with human labor, or to reduce its price by substituting the labor of women and children to the labor of the adult workman, and the labor of the trade artisan to the labor of the skilled mechanic."

Is not with this sentence the unavoidable position of the workingman defined in the most positive manner? He cannot push back the development of industry; he is already in too intimate an alliance with it, and so is the whole society. The opposition against the introduction of machinery belongs to the first and rudest period of industrial development, which opened the dissolution of the feudal patriarchal state of society. No other way is therefore open to him than to demand his share of the fruits of this development, and to fight for it. The action which workingman took, heretofore, were only acts of selfdefence, and bore no aggressive character whatsoever.

It is true, with us, the ten hours law, for which the British laborers had to fight so hard, exists in part; but in Great Britain, as well as here, experience has sufficiently shown that a regular ten hours labor, as required in mills and workshops, requires an over-exertion, which, for the workingman, leads to the most pernicious consequences, not to mention that he will be degraded to a mere work-machine and find no leisure either for his education or for mental enjoyments. It is evident that this disastrous influence is most heavily felt by the not full-grown youth, which, in this country, is not less early set to work than in Europe; and low indispensable the assistance of children is considered for the operation of the machinery, we learn-and learn among others-from the statements taken before the committee of the Legislature of the State of Massachusetts, to which the Eight Hours' bill was refereed. So states a Mr. Kitt, from Fall River, that at the time a great portion of the machinery had to be stopped for want of children's help, and that the overseers visited the school to press children for the mills, as soldiers were formerly pressed for the army. Another witness, who himself had two children, of seven and eight years, working in the mill, as his own wages were not sufficient to procure their sustenance, says that they had not only to work the whole day with the other laborers, but had to be in the mill even ten minutes before them to wind up the spindles, and that they were retained during dinner time to clean the machinery. If they then return home, weariness drives them to bed, and there is left no time to visit any school. The weekly earnings of those poor factory slaves amount to $[?]2 30, for which price of course no adult laborers can be procured. But that whole generations will be mentally and bodily rippled does not greatly affect a society whose highest aim is the profit.

In the "American Cyclopedia" we find charted that "the best continued practical working effect of animate motors, generally, if the efforts are in any degree severe, is obtained when the working hours do not exceed one-third of the twenty-hour." This should lead to the conclusion that a reduction of the working hours from ten to eight was just as well required by the interest of the manufacturers as of the laborer; but the interest of the manufacturer cares little about the "CONTINUED working effect" of the laborer, it considers only the momentary result, may the instrument perish so much sooner. The worn out laborer will be replaced by a new one, whose unbroken power then will be exhausted in the same way as that of his predecessor, whose fate will also be his own. "The average duration of lives of our mechanics and workingmen" – addresses Mr. Bracedreth to the legislature of the State of New York-"does not exceed thirty years, whereas our professional men, our Judges and lawyers, our statesmen and scholars, our divines and collegians, generally last much longer, sometimes continuing in active duty even till the age of four score. The statistics of our Provost Marshals who executed the enrollment law during the civil war, show that only about one quarter of all the men drafted were sound in wind and limb, the others had been broken down by overwork and curtailment of their proper hours of rest. Under the present ten hours system, which actually means twelve hours, it is hard to find anywhere in the State of New York a laborer, mechanic or factory hand who has attained old age."

"Machinery"-then argues the speaker-has indeed wrought *ill*. It has multiplied the power of *ill*.ing, so that our 30,000,000 population annually do the work of three hundred millions. It has extended the scope of our faculties so as virtually to increase the range of our physical sense. It has lengthened four *ill*night so that we can map the surface of the moon, our ears hear words on the instant that are uttered at 3,000 miles of distance. It has added wings to our feet, so that with our locomotives we outstrip the birds of Heaven in their flight. The trip-hammer smites with the strength of a thousand men, breaking the brittle iron into plastic malleability; and the cotton mill spins with thousands of metallic fingers that never tire. McCormick's reaper gathers in the harvest of a prairie in a single day; and the moving machine does up in a month the haying for a hundred farmers. These are some of the herculean achievements which workingmen have performed. The profit-capital has reaped it all. The mechanic and workingman are required to labor as severely and as unremittingly as though none of those magnificent inventions had ever been devised. It can work no injustice to grant their demand for some of the benefit to extend to them, by an amelioration of their condition, an abridgement of their terms of day labor-some of the advantages thus secured by labor-saving machinery. The question is fairly presented to us as men and statesmen, whether it is wiser for one workingman to produce for ten hours a day and continue to do so for only ten or fifteen years after the age of twenty-one, or to put in operation the eight-hour system, under which they will be able to continue in active life from thirty to fifty years after having attained to the estate of manhood."

The speaker declares this legislation to be required as a needful restraint upon the encroaching tendency of capital, as usury laws are enacted for a similar reason, saying nothing about enactments to restrict exhorbitant fare upon railroads and unjust discrimination in transportation of way of freights.

A more positive idea yet of the saving of human labor as affected by the development of industry, the reader will receive from the following dry figures: In 1770, the total population of Great Britain amounted to fifteen millions, of whom the laboring part was one-fifth, or three millions. The working power represented in machinery was at the same time estimated at equal to that of the twelve million men: so that the proportion between the total producing power of Great Britain and her population was 1:1, the proportion between the total producing power of the machinery to the producing power of the handicraft, 4:1. Yet, in 1840 the productive power of the machinery represented already six hundred and fifty millions, and its proportion to the number of inhabitants was 21:1, and to the producing power of the handicraft, 108:1. The workday, therefore, had gained, in sixty-two years, two thousand seven hundred per cent of productive power-that is, in the year 1840 Great Britain produced in one work day exactly twenty-seven times as much as she produced sixty-two years previous, while her population had only been tripled.

Must not, in comparison with such a development, the demand of the laborer for a diminution on his work time by one-fifth appear as a very devout one.

Translated from the *Westliche Post,*
The Eight Hours Movement.
No. III

By J. Weydemeyer

Like the price of merchandize, the price of labor is fixed by the proportion of demand to supply. Daily experience raises this elementary thesis of political economy beyond all objections; does not prevent it, however, to be constantly disregarded in the superficial reasoning of a so-called "well meaning" press. Assertions like the following one: that a reduction of the work hours must be necessarily accompanied by a reduction of wages, as it could not with equity be expected of the "boss" that he should pay as much for eight hours services as he did previous for ten-such assertions would otherwise be an impossibility. The good will of the boss is here suddenly introduced as a new contributing element, to regulate the conditions of production; but it has demonstrated its impotency already too often on other occasions, to be entitled to any further consideration. If we, however, apply those laws in the same manner to the eight hours' labor as to labor and its price in general, then the answer to the question: how will the price of labor, the wages, be influenced by a general reduction of the work hours? Will be simply reduced to the solution of the problem: What is the proportion between the working effect of a certain number of laborers, who work daily ten hours, to the working effect of the same number of laborers, who work only eight hours?

Could we suppose, as it is done by some parties, that a sparing of the working power by a reduction of the work-time from ten to eight hours would be of a such a favorable influence, that the product of the eight hours' labor would be equal to that of ten hours' labor, then of course the difference in time measure would not affect at all the proportion between demand and supply on the labor market.

May this, however, be really the case with a few trade branches, generally such a supposition must be considered as having no base in reality. So is, for instance, the labor in factories mostly wearisome, in not a few cases obnoxious to health, and rapidly consuming the vital power. But in the least cases, it requires such an exertion of power, that from the sparing of it any gain should flow to the factory owner. For the factory owner, therefore, the result of the combined work of his laborers and his machinery will, to a certain limit, which of course must not be extended to the complete exhaustion of the working power, keep in exact proportion to the number of hours, while both are active; and the consequence of a reduction of the work day from ten to eight hours will be a diminution of the production by one-fifth. To keep up the production to its former extent will then compel the manufacturer to employ additional laborers to make up the two lost hours. And as a similar, although not exactly the same proportion, will be introduced in most of the other branches of trade, a correspondingly increased demand of hands will be the unavoidable result. It is evident that thereby no reduction of wages but just the reverse will be affected.

But, say others, who concede the rising of the wages as a necessary consequence of the reduction of the working hours, the laborer will not enjoy the advantage of it, for as the wages constitute an essential part of the costs of production of all commodities, the price of those commodities must rise with the wages, so that the laborer cannot buy more with his higher wages than previously with his lower ones. They are confirmed in this by the present enormous prices of all commodities, forgetting that high war taxes and the depreciation of our currency had, at least, as much to do with this rise of prices as high wages, the rise of which even during the war could scarcely keep step with the advance of the price of commodities. But even if what they assert was true, the advantage would always yet be with the laborer, who gains leisure for his recreation and education without losing anything of his wages. It is astonishing, however, that notwithstanding an experience of many years, the laborers themselves could not be convinced of the uselessness of higher wages.

Others again go still further in their assertions, and insist upon that by the introduction of an eight hours law the laborer is directly losing, argumenting as follows: Where 1,000 laborers were sufficient formerly, 1,250 will now be required; and, if then, till the number of 1,250 is reached by an increase of working power and the proportion between supply and demand thereby again balanced on the labor market, each one of them has to be paid higher wages than previously each one of the thousand, the expenses for wages, and under this influence the prices of commodities will rise yet in a greater proportion than the number of required laborers, and consequently leave the laborer in a position wherein he is not able to buy even as much for his higher wages than previously for the lower ones.

But some very important points have been disregarded in this argumentation. In the first instance, it is only the inland production which will be affected by this rise of wages, while the commodities imported from abroad, or at least from those foreign countries where such a law is not introduced simultaneously, will scarcely be touched by it at all. Not every article, therefore, which goes into the consumption of the laborer, will rise in price with the wages. Furthermore, it is not only the cost of

production what is paid in the market price. To the same must be added the profits of the factory owner and of the tradesmen, just as to the wages the interest of the invested and the business capital, to constitute the cost of production. Only if the two last named factors should be left entirely untouched by the rise of wages, if only the purchaser of the commodities should have to bear the difference, the threatened reaction on the laborers would be possible, at least so far as inland manufactures are concerned. But it is a general experience that a rise of prices, if not itself the result of an increased demand, will paralyze just this demand and keep customers off from the market instead of attracting them. Lacking demand for commodities cannot fail to react on the demand for capital, to increase the competition among capitalists, and depress thereby the price of capital, the rate of interest; to increase in the same way the competition among manufacturers and sells, and to compel both to satisfy themselves with a smaller profit, in order to find a market for their manufactures. It is, therefore, evident that the two said factors by no means can remain unaffected; and that the assertion that a rise of wages resulting from a reduction of the work-hours, should only react on the laborer and bring loss to him instead of gain, is thoroughly arbitrarious, or at least based on wrong suppositions.

Far less dependent of the rate of wages, than the products of industry, are those of agriculture, and we have yet to consider separately the influences bearing upon their prices.

The British economist, Riccardo, was the first one to assert that the cost of production of the crop of the poorest soil regulates the average price of produce-the market price continually fluctuating around this average price, alternately rising above or falling below it-for each permanent decline of the market price below the cost of production must necessarily induce the farmer to abandon the culture of such soil and confine him to the culture of the next better soil, on which the cost of production will find an equivalent in the market price. Although the correctness of this assertion was then only proved for a limited district, a small country, it is not less applicable to extended districts and large countries; we must only not too timidly stick to the wording, so as to consider only the richness of the soil, when we judge about the quality of the ground; but before all other things we have to look to its location toward the market. Last winter it was reported as well from Iowa as from Illinois, that farmers of different counties were using their corn as fuel for the reason that, notwithstanding the high market prices in Chicago, St. Louis, etc., their proceeds were so small that the other use was more advantageous to them. In consequence of want of means of transportation the rates of freight had reached such a high that the profit on his sale did not even pay the farmer for his trip to the next collecting point of produce. So are fertile districts of our own State yet nearly excluded from the competition on our market by the want of such roads as are required by modern necessities; the completion of the long ago projected railroads would exercise a greater influence on the proportion between supply and demand on this market, than any rise of wages caused by a reduction of the working hours ever could do. It must furthermore not be overlooked that reaping, mowing, and threshing machines more and more replace human labor just in that period when the demand for it was the greatest, and that family labor enable most of the small farmers to dispense with hired labor. The price of provisions, which, undoubtedly for the workmen, constitute a very essential part of his necessities of life, will therefore be the least influenced by a rise of wages. The above indicated obnoxious consequences will therefore not take place, but an improvement of the condition of the workingmen in every respect may be expected as the immediate result of a reduction of the work hours; if not the introduction of such a law should just fall into a period of dullness and stagnation of business, when factory owners welcome each opportunity to limit their operations, to reduce work to "short time," if they not prefer even to close their factories entirely. But such times of stagnation and crisis, when the laborer has often to submit to the severest conditions to protect himself and his family against starvation and misery, are phenomena inseparable from our present condition of production; they return periodically, and will neither be created nor suppressed by an eight-hour-system.

The Eight Hour Movement. No. IV.

By J. Weydemeyer

Although the movement aims chiefly at an introduction of the eight-hour system by legislature, the laborers did not leave untried their old means of warfare, the strikes. On the grandest scale such an experiment was organized by the ship caulkers of New York; but although supported therein by the workingmen of the other seaports, they were, nevertheless, conquered in this unequal contest, and compelled to resume work under the old conditions. The capitalists can with more ease lose for some time the profits of the work than the workingman can his wages. And even if the laborers had gained a

victory, it never would have secured them lasting fruits, for the capitalists would not have missed the next favorable opportunity to contest the same, just as he never has failed, to shake off other concessions made under the pressure of circumstances.

The strike of the stonecutters of Chicago had no better success. More moderate than the New York caulkers, who demanded a reduction of the workday to eight hours, the stonecutters contented themselves with a reduction from ten to nine hours, and even conceded to pay such a reduction of time by a corresponding reduction of wages; but the bosses not only refused stubbornly to enter into any compromise; they even attempted to disperse the workingman's association, so as to compel the laborer to a more willing submission under the will of the capitalist. It is true, from this latter attempt they had to desist, but so much more successful was their resistance against the demands of the workingmen.

After a part of the stonecutters had left the city to resume work elsewhere under the same conditions which they had rejected in Chicago, and a part of those remaining got weary of the contest, the small umber of persevering men saw themselves also compelled to capitulate.

In the course of the last year the eight-hours bill was introduced into the Legislatures of different States. Its fate was everywhere the same; it was voted down. The question, however, if it is at all in the power of State Legislatures to secure this great measure, was discussed nowhere. An examination of this question will convince the reader that the answer should have been a negative one under all circumstances.

The products of the different States meet each other on the same market, no tariff law discriminating between them. The State producing the cheapest is, therefore, able to make the most favorable offer to purchasers, and to gain for its products the advantage over its neighbor States. But as the introduction of the eight-hours law must immediately enhance the cost of production-if it does not just happen in a period of stagnation-only two cases are possible: the dearer producing State offers its products as low as its cheaper producing competitor, notwithstanding the higher cost of production, and contents itself with a so much smaller profit, a reduction of wages being out of its power, and the necessary consequence will be that capital withdraws and looks out for investment where it may find conditions more favorable to its interest-or the more favorable conditions offered to workingmen will attract laborers from other States, till the thereby created competition among the laborers has depressed the wages even under the old measure, and placed the laborers really in a worst financial condition than they lived in before the introduction of the law. In both cases, consequently, the laborers would soon lose the scarcely gained advantages. Their interests are identical throughout the whole country, and cannot be vindicated separately in a separate part of it.

But thereby is at once determined the political position which laborers necessarily have to take for the benefit of their interests, into which they will unavoidably be pressed by their agitation. If they can expect nothing essential for them, from the legislatures of the different States, they can expect nothing from that party which advocates the breaking up of the country into small State sovereignties. It must, therefore, directly appear as a political blunder, if, at the nomination for influential political offices at the election of representatives, exclusive stress is laid on the declaration of the candidate in favor of the eight-hours law. What could, for instance, be gained by a Conservative vote for the eight hours' law, if such vote, at the same time, would be cast for the maintainance of State forms which never will allow the eight hours law to become a reality, the interest of the laborers to be asserted, which will form only the laborers to be asserted, which will form only as many barriers to the progress of civilization and the development of industry, whereupon exclusively rests the future of the working class? What profit would it bring to the workingmen to send a man into the Legislature, into the Congress, for having the eight hours law, while his entire political aim is in direct opposition to their interests? And yet it is not seldom that we meet such short sighted advices-meet them coming from working men, who thereby, perhaps unknowingly degrade themselves to tools in the hands of their opponents.

Having myself confined in the previous parts of this essay, to consider the immediate effect, which the introduction of an eight-hour-law must have on the conditions of labor, it remains yet, in order to complete this investigation, to add a few remarks on the permanent influences of such a law. It is out of question, that many of those, who show the greatest zeal in this agitation, dwell in illusions, which will soon be destroyed by rough reality and converted into as many betrayed hopes.

It is a law recognized by all political economists, that as the demand for commodities regulates their production, so the demand for laborers regulates the production of laborers, their accumulation on the respective points, in the respective districts and countries, where such demand originates; an increased demand favoring marriages, high wages facilitating the raising of children, the better conditions enticing

laborers from other districts and countries If we make the application thereof to the better labor-conditions created by the introduction of the eight-hours-law, we must necessarily come to the conclusion, that in place of the one thousand laborers previously required for the ten-hours work soon the corresponding twelve hundred and fifty will make their appearance, that the incomparison with other countries then yet favorable labor countries soon will lead to a transgression of this number, and that in this way by the usual and regular run of things the greatest part of the gained advantages must again be lost to the laborer.

It is evident that an eight-hours-law is not able to put a stop to the permanent fluctuations of trade and commerce; that it cannot prevent a commencing crisis to reduce the work to a far shorter time yet with corresponding reduction of wages or even to close to the laborers the doors of the factories, wherein they found their scanty subsistence; and it needs no further explanation, that an eight-hours-law cannot remove the necessity of the existence of the laborer, that it leaves untouched the essence of modern labor the system of hired labor.

But why agitate a law, which offers only a prospect to such small lasting gain? But is not the reduction of the work time a lasting gain, if even all the other advantages will be lost again- a gain, which for the facilities it offers to the mental development of the laborer, and for the continued agitation of his interests, cannot be valued too highly? And then it must never be lost sight of, that for the political education of the masses the school of life is almost the only school, and that if those masses aim at a certain object with exaggerated expectations, this object will be at once a conquered one, as soon as it is reached.

At this moment already the road, on which we did just follow the labor movement, is not the only one on which it is advancing to victory, although it is yet the only one on which the laborers did aim to united action Co-operative movements, the establishment of co-operative shops and factories, have occupied as yet only a narrow circle of laborers, and could, therefore, not influence their general status, at least not in the desired way.

When we, for instance, read a communication from New Orleans, that the foundrymen there had organized a co-operative association, and advertised to do all kind of work in their line twenty per cent cheaper than any other establishment in that city, must it not strike us at once that this new competition can only have a depressing influence on the condition of journeymen not comprised in this organization, but retained in private foundries, as the owners of those foundries have to submit to the same reduction of prices, and will necessarily try to indemnify themselves by a reduction of wages? It is only a single instance we are speaking about, it is true; but is it possible that co-operative associations in other places, for their own sake, can act otherwise? They have to enter into competition with private establishment of the same kind, and will react on their co-laborers outside of their organization like competitors of the middle classes. Yes, not a few of these cooperative associations we find, by-the-bye, transformed into regular joint stock companies, employing laborers in the same way as private factory owners, and giving up all pretension to act for the general interest of the working class. But, nevertheless, is the cooperative movement a very important one, and has a wider range than is apparent on the first sight. I cannot illustrate this assertion better than by referring to a most important document, "The Address of the Workingmen's International Association, of 1864." This association organized itself in London, in September of said year, delegates having been sent from different European countries, and published, with the provisional rules of the Association, an address to the "Proletarians of all countries," in which they speak of the co-operative movement as follows. Having first mentioned the Ten Hour's victory, they proceed:

"But there is in store a still greater victory of the political economy of labor over the political economy of property. We speak of the co-operative movement, especially the co-operative factories raised by the unassisted efforts of a few bold hands. The value of these great social experiments cannot be overrated. By deed, instead of by argument, they have shown that production of a large scale, and in accord with the behests of modern science, may be carried on without the existence of a class of masters employing a class of hands; that to bear the fruit the means of dominion over, and of extortion against, the laboring man himself; and that like slave labor, like serf labor, hired labor is but a transitory and inferior form, destined to disappear before associated labor plying its toil with a willing hand, a ready mind and a joyous heart. In England the seeds of the cooperative system were sown by Robert Owen. The workingmen's experiments tried on the continent were, in fact, the practical upshot of the theories, not invented but loudly proclaimed in 1848.

"At the same time, the experience of the period from 1848 to 1864 has proved beyond a doubt that, however excellent in principle, and however useful in practice, co-operative labor, if kept within the narrow circle of the casual efforts of private workmen, will never be able to arrest the growth in geometrical progression of monopoly, to free the masses, nor even to perceptibly lighten the burden of their miseries. It is, perhaps, for this very reason that plausible noblemen, philanthropic middle-class spouters, and even keen political economist, have all at once turned nauseously complimentary to the very co-operative labor system they had vainly tried to nip in the bud by deriding it as the Utopia of the dreamer, or stigmatizing it as the sacrilege of the socialist.

"To save the industrious masses, co-operative labor ought to be developed to National dimension, and, consequently, to be fostered by National means. Yet the lords of law and the lords of capital will always use their political privileges for the defense and perpetuation of their economical monopolies. So far from promoting, they will continue to lay every possible impediment in the way of the emancipation of labor.

"To conquer political power has therefore become the great duty of the working classes. They seem to have comprehended this, for in England, Germany, Italy and France, there have taken place simultaneous revivals, and simultaneous efforts are being made at the political reorganization of the working men's party."

In the United States the task to conquer the political power, would be a very easy one for the working men if they only would make use of that power, which is ready made offered to them; they only need to understand their real interest to assert it even beyond the possibility of a successful opposition, but political abstinence will never lead them to victory.

Union Soldiers' Convention. Address to the Union Soldiers of Missouri
Missouri Weekly Patriot (Springfield), 26th of July 1866.
http://digital.shsmo.org/

UNION SOLDIERS' CONVENTION.

Address to the Union Soldiers of Missouri.

Fellow Soldiers of the Union, in Missouri:

The undersigned, having been elected a Board of Managers for the Soldiers' League of St. Louis, at a mass meeting of soldiers of the late army of the Union, held at Turners' Hall, July 14th, 1866, have the honor to address you, setting forth the aims and purposes of the organization, and inviting you, and all others who favor a loyal supremacy in State and Nation, to co-operate with us in securing permanently the triumph of the just principles for which we fought in the late conflict of arms.

It is a fact most patent to every defender of the Union in our late war, that the full measure of success and of peace has not yet been attained for the Republic, in whose behalf our best exertions were put forth, and to which our first and highest allegiance is ever due; that those who but yesterday struck at the nations' life and heart upon rebellions' battlefields and beneath the flag of treason, though conquered and beaten there, are still defiantly seeking at the ballot-box, in the exercise of rights which belong only to the loyal citizens, the destruction of that Union which withstood the assault of all their armies in the field.

A loyal Congress to-day "stands watch and ward" over a nation saved from military disruption by your valor and your blood and your influence, potent at the ballot-box as on the field, is still necessary to assure the permanence and liberty of a still imperilled Union.

Treason, the highest crime known to civilization, has not, despite the declarations of our President, been made odious; it still flaunts its insolence in our faces, profanes the sacred memory of our martyred Lincoln, and decorates with worse than vandal insults the graves of our heroic dead.

It has gathered strength, prestige and power from accessions made to its ranks from *Conservative*, (half-way,) patriots and the cringing chattles of official barter and sale.

Let but this gory handed treason recuperate its wasted energies and seize upon the political power of the Nation or the State, and the dearest and most sacred rights for which you have fought in the long years of the Rebellion will vanish from your possession and enjoyment like the mist of the tropics.

No mercy will be shown you in such an hour by the men who massacred your brothers at Centralia—who followed your families with torch and dagger to their hiding places in the forest and swamp, and whose most christian warfare distanced in atrocious barbarity the bloody annals of feudel history or the wild dance of the Indian scalp hunter.

Burning under the shame of their inglorious defeats they wait for revenge.

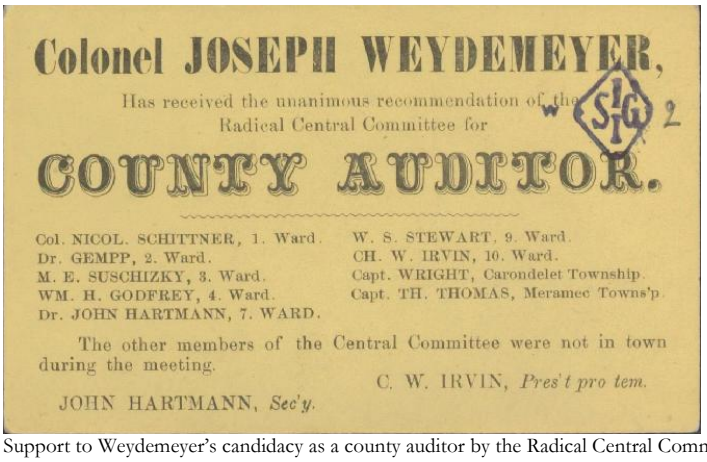
If you admit them to representation in your national Congress, without proper guarantees they will lay upon the shoulders of the loyal North, and upon your children for a century to come, the debt of countless millions, contracted in waging war against your Government, your lives and your property, or they will repudiate a just debt, incurred in maintaining the laws, and bankrupt the financial credit of the nation.

Soldiers, having buried the hatchet forget not *where* it is buried. Speak, vote and work in the interest and for the advancement of the essential principles of liberty and Union which no new relations of peace can make less imposing in the binding force of their obligation and necessity than they have been in all the past. Your sacrifices must not be in vain.

The proud memories of camp and field, of march and bivouac, and five hundred glorious battles which have made the American name and valor deathless—battles through which unfalteringly you have followed to victory and imperishable glory the dear banner of your adopted or your birth-land, can never fade from your memory, or grow less green and cherished in your hearts. Your martial spirit is still unbroken; your patriotism is equal to your valor, and your potent voice will be heard in this hour of National peril.

Let every company, battalion and regiment of our Free Missouri be represented in the convention and mass meeting.

Loyal papers throughout the State please copy. Captain J. P. COLCORD,
General D. C. COLEMAN,
Captain TAL. MUELLER,
Colonel JOHN REED,
Lieut. LEOPOLD DINGERT,
Col. PHIL. MURHY.
Col. JOSEPH WEYDEMEYER,
Col. W. S. STEWART,
Col. FRED. E. LEDERGERBER,
Capt. OTTO LADEMANN,
Capt. JOHN SANDERS,
Col. JOHN S. CAVENDER,
Col. R. J. ROMBAUER,
Private CHARLES ELRICH,
Gen. WILLIAM PILE,
Gen. JOSEPH CONRAD.



Colonel JOSEPH WEYDEMEYER,

Has received the unanimous recommendation of the Radical Central Committee for

COUNTY AUDITOR.

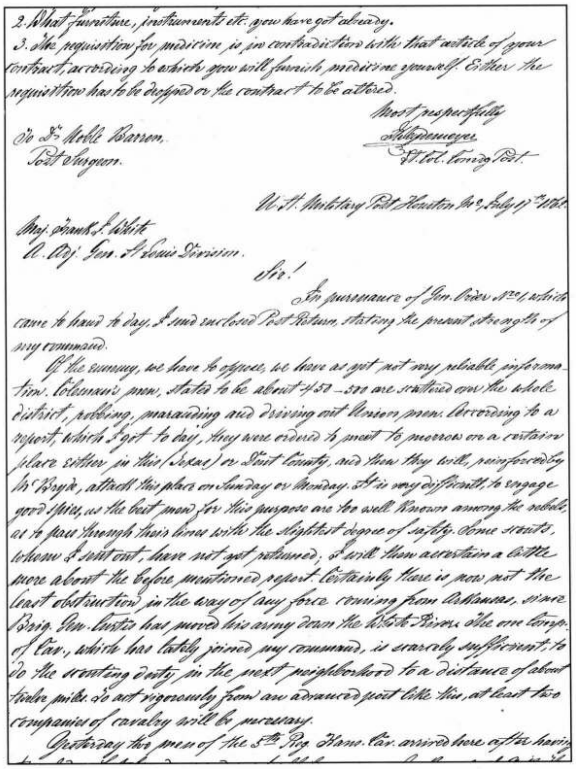
Col. NICOL. SCHITTNER, 1. Ward.
Dr. GEMPP, 2. Ward.
M. E. SUSCHIZKY, 3. Ward.
WM. H. GODFREY, 4. Ward.
Dr. JOHN HARTMANN, 7. WARD.
W. S. STEWART, 9. Ward.
CH. W. IRVIN, 10. Ward.
Capt. WRIGHT, Carondelet Township.
Capt. TH. THOMAS, Meramec Towns'p.

The other members of the Central Committee were not in town during the meeting.

C. W. IRVIN, *Pres't pro tem.*

JOHN HARTMANN, *Sec'y.*

Support to Weydemeyer's candidacy as a county auditor by the Radical Central Committee (1865).
International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam).



2. What furniture, instruments etc. you have got already.
3. The requisition for medicine is in contradiction with that article of your contract according to which you will furnish medicine yourself. Either the requisition has to be dropped or the contract to be altered.

Most respectfully
Weydemeyer
1st Lt. Comdg Post.

To Dr. Noble Barron,
Post Surgeon.

U. S. Military Post Houston Mo. July 9th 1862

Maj. Frank P. Blair
Comd. Gen. St. Louis District.

Sir!

In pursuance of Gen. Order No. 24 which came to hand to day, I send enclosed Post Return, stating the present strength of my command.

Of the enemy, we have to report, we have as yet not very reliable information. Coleman's men, stated to be about 450 – 500 are scattered over the whole district, robbing, marauding and driving out Unionists. According to a report, which I got to day, they were ordered to meet to morrow on a certain place either in this County or Pulaski County, and then they will, reinforced by Mr Boyd, attack this place on Sunday or Monday. It is very difficult to engage good spies, as the best men for this purpose are too well known among the rebels, as to pass through their lines with the slightest degree of safety. Some scouts, whom I sent out, have not yet returned; I will then ascertain a little more about the before mentioned report. Certainly there is now not the least obstruction in the way of any force coming from Rolla and, since Brig. Gen. Curtis has moved his army down the White River, the one Comp. of Cav., which has lately joined my command, is scarcely sufficient, to do the escorting duty, in the next neighborhood to a distance of about twelve miles. To act vigorously from an advanced post like this, at least two companies of cavalry will be necessary.

Yesterday the men of the 5th Reg. Home Cav. arrived here, after having

Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis.
Reproduced in Flanders, Robert and Bradbury, John F, *art. cit.*

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101 items are available online: http://hdl.handle.net/10622/ARCH01626

I reproduced here, in the Appendices, two series of articles, published in the *Westliche Post*. The first one "Zur Neger-Stimmrechts-Frage" was published on September 8, 13, and 14, 1865; the second "Die Acht Stunden Bewegung" in August, 1865. Weydemeyer translated himself, a few days before his death, the articles on "The Eight-hour movement". They were published in the *St. Louis Daily Press* on August, 8, 9, 16, and 19, 1865. All these articles are included in the Joseph Weydemeyer's Papers quoted above. I am responsible for the copy of the Eight-hour movement's articles reproduced here.

Due to my poor knowledge of German, I work on English translations of these articles. The series on the Negro Vote were translated and edited by Andrew Zimmerman in Marx, Karl and Engels, Friedrich, *The Civil War in the United States* edited and introduced by Zimmerman, Andrew. New York: International Publishers, 2016.

I am very grateful to Andrew Zimmerman who has kindly sent me parts of the above-mentioned book, especially his translations of Weydemeyer's articles.

For an extended study, I would have tried to grasp the meaning of Weydemeyer correspondence with Marx and Engels. The new Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe, knew as the MEGA2, has the great advantage to reproduce not only letters from Marx and Engels but also the ones they received. From the autumn of 1864, Weydemeyer resumed his correspondence, interrupted in 1860 for unknown reasons, with Marx and Engels. Zimmerman, in his edited book *The Civil War*…, reproduced part of it in an English translation. Unfortunately, the extracts are mainly devoted to the military situation whereas the exchange was also devoted to political as well as personal issues. It is frustrating to be unable to understand more than superficially Weydemeyer's appreciations of Frémont, the *Westliche Post* and "Kleinbürgertum Radikalismus" as well as indications of his relations with former Forty-Eighters. Moreover, only 13 volumes of Marx and Engels' correspondence were publications on the 35 planned.[76] The edition stopped in December, 1865 it is thus still impossible to know what was the content of their exchange during the last Weydemeyer's months.

Finally, several Missourian newspapers are now digitalised by the State Historical Society of Missouri.[77] A quick search allows me to find the call for a protest gathering of former soldiers and officers, a Union soldiers' convention, opposed to president Johnson's Reconstruction policy, signed among others by Weydemeyer as one of the members of the Board of Managers of the Soldiers' League. This Convention was set to be held the 10 August, 1866, that is the anniversary date of the defeat of Missourians troops against proslavery groups in 1861, the battle saw the death of Lyons, a "hero" of the Camp Jackson Affair. I also reproduce a copy of that call in the Appendices.

"Union Soldiers' Convention. Address to the Union Soldiers of Missouri", appeal published in the *Missouri Weekly Patriot* (Springfield), 26th of July 1866.

Note on Weydemeyer's biographies by Obermann

To my knowledge, there are only two biographies of Joseph Weydemeyer. Both are by the same author, Karl Obermann (1905-1987). The first one was published in New York in English (1947); the second, in 1968, in East

[76] http://mega.bbaw.de/struktur/abteilung_iii
[77] http://digital.shsmo.org/

Berlin. A leftist, Obermann left Germany for France in 1933 when Hitler became Chancellor. There, in 1936, he became member of the German Communist Party (KPD). At the beginning of the war, the French authorities arrested and interned him. However, he managed to migrate to the USA in 1941 where he stayed five years. Then, Obermann settled in East Germany where he became member of the SED, the German Democratic Republic's "governing party". In 1956, he was nominated director of the Deutsche Geschichte der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin[78]. As an historian, apart of the two Weydemeyer's biographies, Obermann wrote books on the workers participation in the Revolution of 1848-9 in Germany, the Communist League (Marx's organization during and after the Revolution), the elections to the 1848's National Assembly and, at the end of his life, on the antifascist German exiles in Paris before World War II.

Unfortunately, even though it contains useful material, Obermann's biography is flawed by what I would name a "Stalinist" conception of history, where Weydemeyer "correct line" and "Marxist" viewpoint are asserted instead of a complex, and perhaps richer, insertion of the militant and individual Weydemeyer in his historical and political contexts. Weydemeyer deserves certainly a better treatment, putting him in dialogue with his contemporaries and the changing circumstances in which he evolved. Moreover, Weydemeyer's last months, that is when he published the two series of articles I use as sources, are not well documented in Obermann's biography.

In order to illustrate Obermann's "Stalinist" conception of history, suffice to quote two sentences in a 1966 article on the Communist League founded in New York by Weydemeyer.[79] Speaking of the "original" Communist League, for which Marx and Engels wrote the *Communist Manifesto*, Obermann wrote: "In the revolutionary struggles in Germany the Communist League had proved itself to be the organization that represented the interests of the working class in the most consistent and decisive way. Since its founding in 1847 the League, as a proletarian revolutionary party, had adopted the stand point of scientific socialism and saw its task as that of showing the working class the right road, to initiate and lead its fight." That said, Obermann offers in his two biographies and articles many extracts of Weydemeyer's correspondence and chronological elements indispensable for those who want to study Weydemeyer's life and activities.

[78] See: *Wer war wer in der DDR?*

[79] Obermann, Karl. "The Communist League: A Forerunner of the American Labor Movement", *Science & Society*, 30, no. 4 (Fall 1966): 433-446.

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