

A decorative horizontal flourish with symmetrical scrollwork.

Political Economy

THE POPULAR FRONT

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A decorative horizontal flourish with symmetrical scrollwork.

Introduction

Definition:

The Popular Front is a left-wing political coalition, formed for the legislative elections of 1936 around the Radical Party, the French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO) and the Communist Party.





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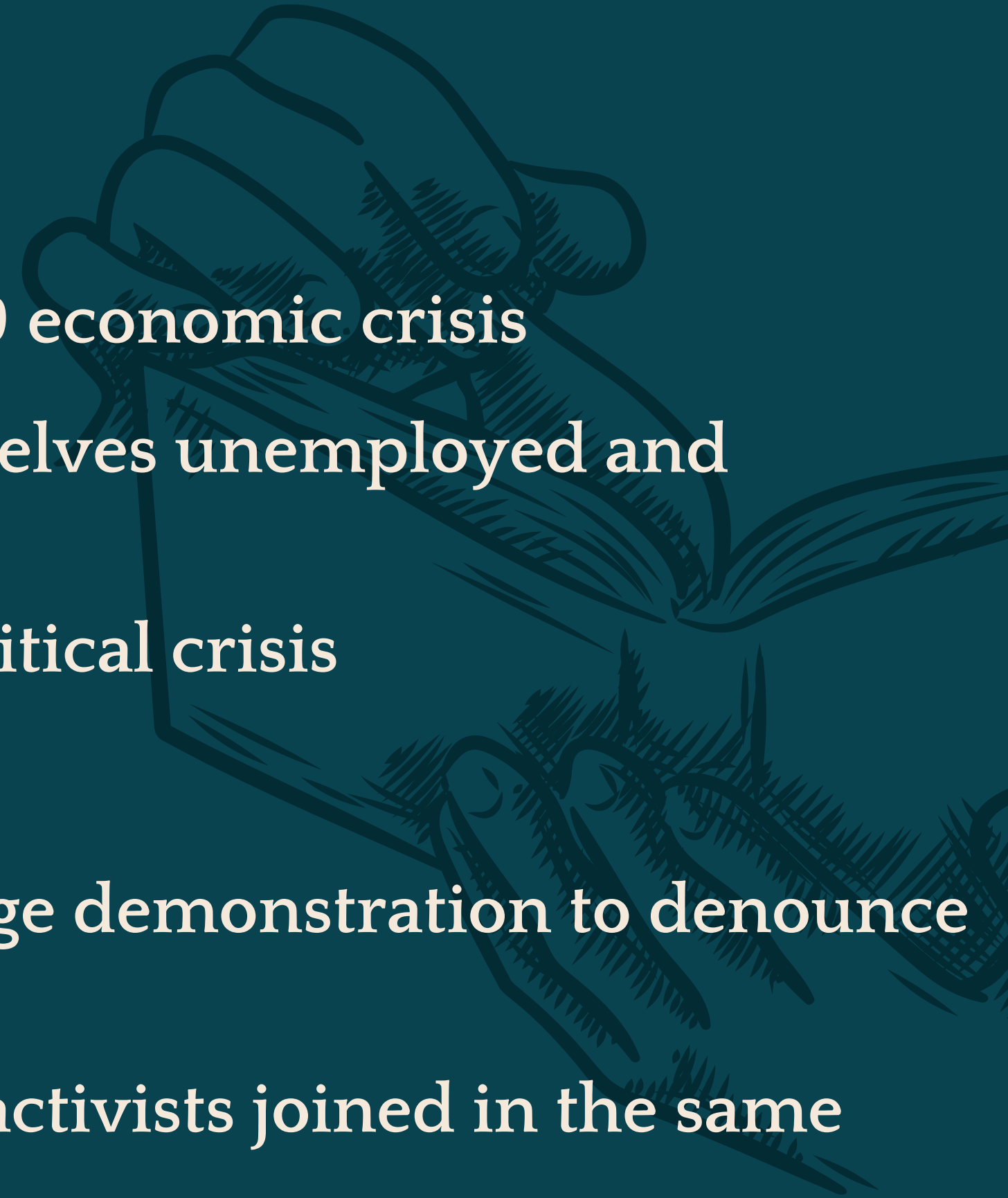
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Bibliography



The Context

- In 1931 France was hit by the United States, 1929 economic crisis
- Around a hundred thousand people find themselves unemployed and without compensation
- This economic and then social crisis led to a political crisis
- The Stavisky affair of January 9, 1934
- On February 6, the far-right LIG organized a large demonstration to denounce the decadence of the 3rd republic.
- On February 12, 1934, socialist and communist activists joined in the same procession





The socialist, Léon Blum



The communist, Maurice Thorez




The radical, Edouard Daladier

Formed an electoral alliance with a view to the legislative elections of May 1936.

They wanted to transform society and their slogan was
“bread, peace, freedom”

The Appearance of the Popular Front



On May 3, 1936 the popular front won the elections and an immense hope for change won over the popular classes.

Léon Blum, became President of the Council in June 1936.

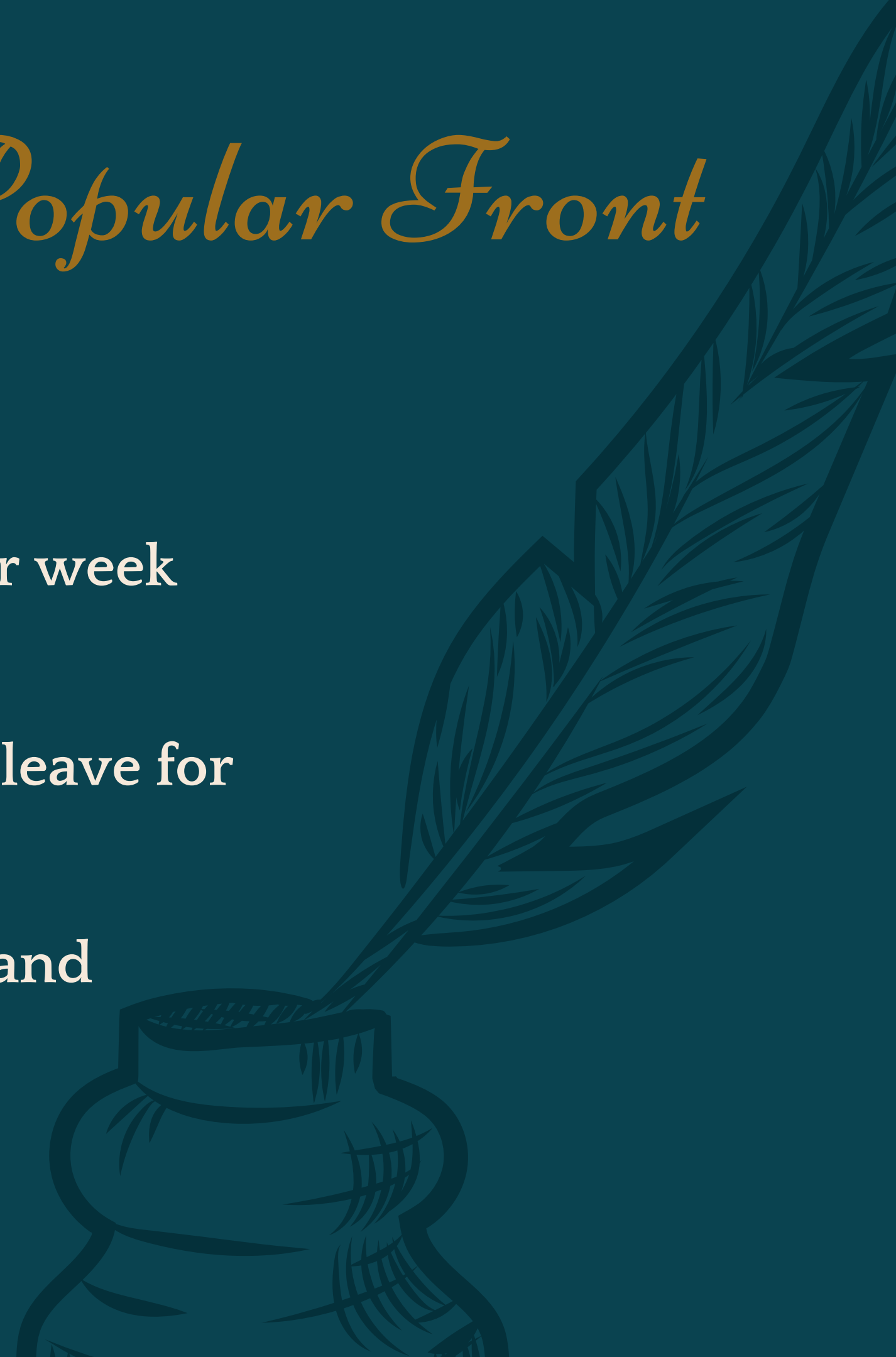
It was the first time in French history that a socialist led the government.



The Achievement of the Popular Front

June 7, 1936, the Matignon agreement

- The reduction of working hours to 40 hours per week (compared to 48 hours previously).
- Paid leave: establishment of two weeks of paid leave for all workers, which is a major social advance.
- The increase in wages in a context of deflation and unemployment.



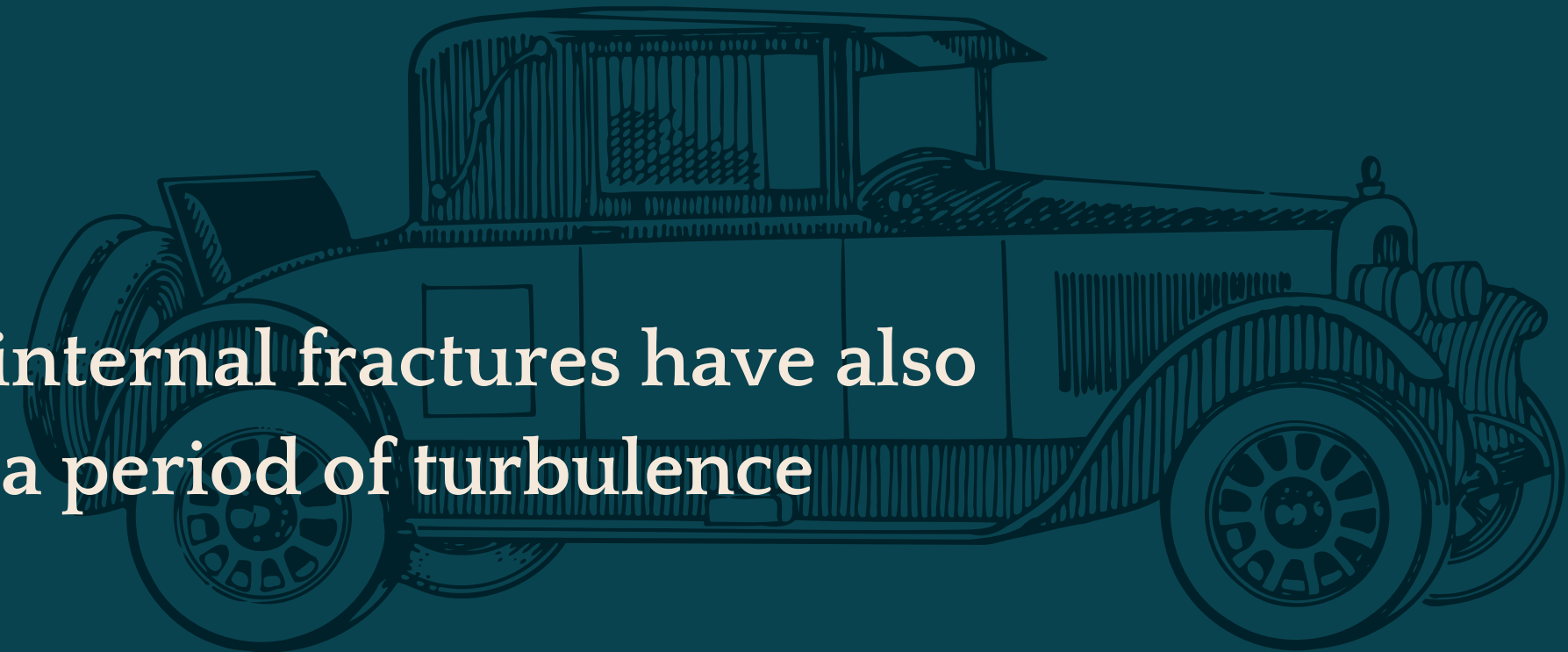
The reasons for the failure and the end of the Popular Front

- The economic policy of the Popular Front will not succeed in relaunching production or consumption, unemployment on the other hand will be reduced.
- On February 24, 1937, Léon Blum decided to pause the reforms.
- June 21, 1937 Leon Blum resigned. This is the end of the Popular Front experience



Conclusion

- It remains a valuable experience in the history of the French left
- It represents a period when ambitious social reforms were implemented
- Its social advances, such as paid leave and reduced working hours, are still symbols of the social struggles of the time.
- Its failure to resolve the economic crisis
- Its complex political management and its internal fractures have also shown the limits of a unitary left project in a period of turbulence





Thank you for listening



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