

AS
YOU
SOW

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FOR GALE

PREFACE

FROM INDUSTRIALIZED sowing of the soil is reaped an urbanized rural society. This is the lesson which the present study teaches us. Many changes in social relationships and in the functioning of social institutions—sometimes subtle, sometimes blatant—are the component parts of this urbanization, and an intelligent planning for the future of rural society must recognize the import and content of this transformation.

Both in popular thought and in sociological doctrine, rural life has been set apart from that of the city. Rural ties are said to be closer; face-to-face contacts are said to dominate social relationships. The individual is said to be evaluated in terms of his own true worth. Rural institutions are said to derive from common needs and not only serve them but serve also to integrate the society and unite its members. Sometimes less laudatory features are pointed out. Rural people are said to be backward, naturally cautious, and individualistic, less educated and less concerned with progress. A livelihood is said to satisfy their wants.

The present volume shows that these generalizations do not hold for California rural society. In the California community which is the subject of this study, social ties are not close, invidious social distinctions are maintained without reference to personal qualities. Most institutions serve to maintain these distinctions rather than to destroy them for the sake of common interest. On the other hand, the people are neither backward nor uneducated, but are interested in progress in the way that concept is usually understood in American society. They are a part of that society, and not a separate entity.

This is a community study, but whether it is the study of communities depends upon our definition of that concept. For our data show, as intimated above, that the town and its surrounding rural population form a community only in the politi-

cal sense. The ties which bind the individuals living in this area are subservient to the ties of social classes and cliques which are at all times dominant. It is this fact more than any other which compels us to consider the rural community as urbanized, and which makes us loath to consider it a community in that sense of the term which implies social unity and homogeneity. Remnants of community life remain, to be sure, but when they are brought under closer scrutiny it is clear that they serve but a segment of the population which dwells in the area.

A few general statements will serve to orient the reader. The community of Wasco is an unincorporated town of over 4,000 persons, while perhaps another 4,000 live in the immediate vicinity. It lies on the floor of the Great Central Valley of California, near its southern end. The land which is now so rich and fruitful was once desert, reclaimed to man's more urgent uses by the gasoline, electric, and Diesel pumps which lift the water from the underground table. Save for an unimpressive oil field near by, it is dependent entirely for its resources on the products of its soil. The people are mostly native whites who have come to California from the Middle West during the last thirty-five years. Many of these are of German descent. There are also a number of Canadians. Aside from the native whites, there are substantial colonies of Mexicans and Negroes. The Mexicans have been present since the very beginning of the community; the Negro colony developed shortly after the first World War. These groups have their own communities; yet they are also a part of the whole, and it is in this latter aspect that they appear in our study.

The detailed information on Wasco is given a broader meaning through the analysis of two similar neighboring towns, Dinuba and Arvin. The study of these latter communities was made after the analysis of Wasco was completed, and it was therefore possible to check the conclusions reached there.

At the outset we made the hypothesis that the nature of the economy is the causative factor which sets off Wasco from the rural community as more commonly conceived. Industrializa-

tion has changed farming enterprise from a livelihood to a means of achieving wealth. Diversification, the drudgery of the farm yard, self-sufficiency are gone and in their stead is the single cash crop grown at high cost in the ever-present expectation of large profits. This means on one hand the need for large groups of farm laborers and on the other the interest of large commercial enterprises in the farming community. These are the elements which make for the breakdown of the old community and for the development of urbanized social relationships.

The factors which make for these new relationships are widespread in California; indeed, they are characteristic of California's agriculture. Furthermore, it has been found that these factors are appearing in other parts of the United States; that industrialized farming is spreading rapidly. Obviously such areas within and outside of California have not and will not produce communities identical to Wasco. But it is clear that those essential characteristics of the three California towns analyzed, and which we have subsumed under the term *urbanization*, are generally associated with industrial agriculture. While Wasco displays these characteristics admirably, we can see the nature of the divergence by the variations presented in Arvin and Dinuba. The causative relationship between industrialized agriculture and urbanized society, we feel, is established in this study, and insofar as this is the case, the basic characteristics of the latter may be expected wherever the former develops.

The implications of this thesis do not, therefore, end at California's borders. Nor do they extend only as far as industrialization has already been found. Mechanization and industrialized production will inevitably come to dominate the rural scene in all America. Neither wishful thinking nor nostalgic legislation will prevent this course of events. To those who look backward, this trend presents a doleful picture. But such a view is not justified. Though the traditional has its endearing charms, it is not without its costs, while urban society has much to commend it. The importance lies, however, in the recognition both of the possible dangers and the inherent values of an urbanized rural

society. It is not impossible to salvage the good from tradition and still capture the best that technological efficiency has to offer. But if we are to accomplish this a realistic view must be taken; reality must replace stereotype. The traditional bases for farm policy must be reviewed in terms of the future social picture in rural America. Because the society of Wasco and her sister communities point up the character of that future rural scene, an attempt has been made in the closing chapters to indicate some of the broader implications that Wasco has, and to outline the necessary elements for American agricultural policy.

This study is a case history. It is the result of eight months' study as participant observers in Wasco and a month each in the two other towns. We—my wife and I—made every effort to participate in Wasco society on that level which might be considered normal for persons of our background. We joined in community meetings, school functions, and club affairs; we attended churches and fraternized with as many groups as we could. Furthermore, interviews were held with persons of all walks of life, with emphasis either upon the historical or developmental aspects of the town, or upon that person's relationships to the community. All available and pertinent statistical material was examined, membership lists were analyzed, and many chance observations and unsolicited remarks were recorded. Similar techniques were used in Arvin and Dinuba in addition to specific statistical information collected.

The visit in Wasco started in the fall of 1940 and lasted into the following summer; the visits to Arvin and Dinuba were made during the spring of 1944. Data collected in the field refer, therefore, to those periods unless otherwise specified.

In the course of our visits many close bonds were developed. Some persons knew rather precisely the nature of the investigation, others vaguely that it was an historical study or falsely one of many romantic notions, and most—such is the urbanity of these towns—nothing whatsoever of the study. To these friends and strangers we are permanently indebted, and from them we have quoted liberally in the hope that thus we may better interpret their, and our, society.

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THE CONTRIBUTIONS of innumerable citizens and colleagues have made the present volume possible, and to all of them I would like to express my deep appreciation.

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Second, there have been many whose advice has been a constant guide in the prosecution of the study and analysis of the California communities and in the preparation of this volume. Particularly do I wish to express my appreciation to Paul S. Taylor of the Department of Economics of the University of California, whose help began with the inception of the study as an idea and has continued through to its completion. Dorothy S. Thomas of the Giannini Foundation, and Robert H. Lowie of the Department of Anthropology, both of the University of California, have also served to stimulate me and to improve the quality of the work. Many members and former members of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, especially John Provinse, Lloyd Fisher, Davis McEntire, Varden Fuller, Marion Clawson, and Carl C. Taylor have guided me through the tortuous processes of carrying a research idea to its final fruition. Our visit to Wasco was made under a collaboratorship with the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. While I am indebted to that agency for its material aid and to its personnel for the contributions they have made, neither that agency nor any other branch of the government is to be held responsible either for the factual content or the sociological analyses developed in this volume.

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AS YOU SOW

CHAPTER I

THE PLACE OF CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE IN AMERICAN FARM LIFE

TENURE PATTERNS IN AMERICA

THREE FUNDAMENTAL and divergent traditions of farming may be isolated in America: the small landholding pattern introduced in New England and the North Atlantic by early colonization; the plantation system of the South; and the industrial farming and large-scale ranching of the Southwest. There are small farms in the South and West and large ones in the East and Middle West, but the farm economy and rural life in each area can only be understood in terms of these basic traditions, and a knowledge of the differences between them and the essential characteristics of each will help to clarify present-day farm problems and future farm policy.

The farm pattern of the North was the pattern of the self-sufficient small farm, owned and operated on a modest scale. On it were produced the basic crops in the American diet—grains, potatoes, and livestock products. The farmer was a husbandman, close to his soil, producing much of his own needs, and maintaining maximum independence from the city. The tradition of the small independent farmer has spread throughout most of the nation. The slow movement westward during the first half century of our national life was in very large part a spread of this pattern. Settlers moved into the frontier country and hewed for themselves a farm out of the wilderness. The development and spread of this major trend was given official recognition in the Pre-emption laws which assured the settlers title to their land. It was developed into the dominant pattern by passage of the Homestead Law which made it possible for individuals of initiative to make a livelihood at a minimal cost

by merely building a homestead and working the land. So firmly rooted in American tradition is this pattern that it is hardly necessary to elaborate upon it. Novelists have filled our shelves with tales of this sturdy element in our economy. Orators refer to it when they speak of the glories of farm life, administrators inevitably formulate national farm policy in terms of it, and many of us have tended to accept this tradition not only as real, but as universal throughout America.

The South developed a very different pattern. The early and successful—from the point of view of the landed gentry—introduction of slaves into the area created a different type of production and a different social system. Instead of small farms producing largely for home consumption, there were great estates producing single crops of goods—usually cotton—for the export market. The landowner remained distant from the soil, and even further from the actual work of tilling that soil. He did not produce his own needs, but bought them from the urban centers with money obtained from the sale of his cotton. This pattern also spread westward, but its course was checked by the Civil War. Though the Civil War abolished the legal institution of slavery, it did not wipe out the social order which slavery had engendered. Under the sharecropper system, which has come to replace slavery as the fundamental economic pattern, the dependence of the Negro and the poor white worker upon the land owner is virtually complete. Strong caste barriers combine with this economic dependence to preserve the social system of the antebellum South. Here lies a great exception to the traditional democracy of American rural life. The character of Southern economy and the structure of Southern society have been recorded in detail by the economists and sociologists, and have reached the people through the medium of literature. But this recognition has not altered the popular concept of rural America. The South has been recognized as a great economic problem, but only as an exceptional and localized aberration on the small-farm tradition. It has had little effect upon American agricultural policy.

Agriculture in the Southwest conforms to neither of these pat-

terns. And unlike farming in other sections of the country, it is relatively poorly understood, relatively little has been written about it, and its peculiar problems are frequently overlooked in the formation of national agricultural policy.¹ In part this is because it is not easily characterized, and in part because it is remote—or has been—from the major currents of American life.

The industrialized agricultural pattern has its origin in an amalgamation of several historic traditions. It received its early impetus from the Spanish *hacienda*, and it was further developed by the giant land grants and land grabs of the early period of California statehood. Its origin in part goes to an amalgamation of Northern and Southern traditions, for both groups came to California, and California farming contains elements of each. And while the small farm exists in California as well as the large holding, the tenure relationship, the organization of the farm enterprise, and the attitudes of the people are neither those of the North nor of the South.

The pattern of the North created a social system in which local democracy could flourish and the farmer had a large measure of autonomy. To be sure, the farmer was usually looked down upon by the townspeople, and he has been described as heavily subject to the pressures in the market place.² But in the long run, the yokel or rube from the countryside had a measure of economic and social independence rarely achieved among the tillers of the soil anywhere else in the world. In contrast, the social system of the South has been one of extremes—the very rich juxtaposed to the poor. The landowners, the aristocracy of the South, look up to no one, but the sharecropper and tenant farmer have no social standing.

The social status system, the relation of farmer to townsman and of the worker to the land, these are the subject of detailed analysis in the chapters which follow. It is an urban pattern, for

¹It is not without interest that the great novels based upon California rural life are proletarian rather than agrarian in tone.

²Thorstein Veblen has discussed this with bitter sarcasm in his essay "The Case of America," in the section entitled "The Independent Farmers." Reprinted in *What Veblen Taught* (Wesley C. Mitchell, editor), The Viking Press, New York, 1936.

just as agricultural production is handled like business and manufacturing, so, too, the social relationships follow the pattern of those in the city.

LAND TENURE IN CALIFORNIA

California's heritage from Spain, under whose flag she once stood, was a heritage of large landholdings. The *hacienda* was a small principality, in which the landlord lived supreme, and the labor was done by impressed Indians whose major compensations were admittance into the realm of Christendom. Spanish land grants, the spurious often along with the real, were recognized by the American government as valid claims, upon the acquisition of California. The importance of these grants may be seen from the fact that by 1934, 8.5 millions of the 55 million acres which had been transferred from the public domain to private title had entered such private ownership as Spanish grants. Their importance is, however, even greater than these figures indicate, first, because the lands under such grants included much of the State's finest, and second, because through the recognition of the Spanish tenure system the tradition of large landholdings was continued into the American period.³

Large-scale landholdings were further augmented by grants of land to railroads amounting to 11.5 million acres. Both these lands and the Spanish grants included much of the best acreage in the state. Such grants gave further impetus to the tradition of large-scale ownership and curtailed to that degree the opportunity for land settlement in the small farm tradition.

This tradition of large holdings and the attitudes of officials during the sixties and seventies, created a favorable climate for the acquisition of large holdings by land grabs. Much of the 8.5 million acres of land to which the state had title was sold to speculators, without limitation on acreage, at \$1.25 per acre. For

³ Leon Key, *The History of the Policies in Disposing of the Public Lands in California, 1769-1900*. Ms., University of California, Berkeley, 1937 (M. A. Thesis). Data obtained from A. E. Douhan, Acting Assistant Commissioner, General Land Office, by letter dated October 4, 1934.

a summary description of land acquisition we can rely upon the historian, Paul Wallace Gates.

Land monopolization in California dates back to the Spanish and Mexican periods when large grants were made to favored individuals. . . . Following 1848 there came a rapid influx of settlers which, together with the large profits realized from the grazing industry in the interior valleys, created a land boom and led to extensive purchases. With great areas of land in the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys open to cash purchase the opportunity for speculative profits was unparalleled elsewhere; nor was the opportunity neglected. From 1862 to 1880 land sales and warrant and scrip entries in California were on an enormous scale, surpassing all other states for the period and in some years comprising well over half of the sales for the entire country. In the single year, ending June 30, 1869, 1,726,794 acres were sold in this state by the Federal government and for the entire period from 1862 to 1880 well over 7,000,000 acres were entered with cash, warrants, or scrip. It should also be remembered that the State of California which received 8,426,380 acres from the Federal government was disposing of its most valuable holdings at this time.

Greatest of all the speculators operating in California was William S. Chapman, whose political influence stretched from Sacramento to St. Paul, Minnesota, and Washington, D. C. Of him it was said, with apparent justice, that land officers, judges, local legislators, officials in the Department of the Interior, and even higher dignitaries were ready and anxious to do him favors, frequently of no mean significance. Between 1868 and 1871 Chapman entered at the Federal land offices approximately 650,000 acres of land in California and Nevada with cash, scrip, and warrants. At the same time he entered additional land through dummy entrymen, purchased many thousands of acres of "swamp" lands from the State of California, and otherwise added to his possessions till they totaled over 1,000,000 acres. Fraud, bribery, false swearing, forgery, and other crimes were charged against him but he passed them off with little trouble. The most remarkable feature about his vast acquisitions is that when plotted on a land-use map today they appear to be among the choicest of the lands. Chapman was not able to retain this vast empire for long. He became deeply involved in a grand canal project and eventually lost his lands, many of them going to a more constructive but equally spectacular land plunger, Henry Miller.

Miller, unlike Chapman, bought lands for his cattle business which was his main interest. As the activities of his firm—Miller and Lux, of which he was the chief promoter—expanded, he pushed its land acquisitions until they mounted to over a million acres. One hundred and eighty-one thousand acres of this amount were acquired directly from

the Federal government, with cash, Agricultural College scrip, and military warrants; large amounts were purchased from Chapman and other big land speculators and from the State of California. Miller's lands were slowly irrigated, parts were disposed of to small farmers, and upon them today exists a veritable agricultural empire.

Other large purchasers of land in California were Isaac Friedlander, E. H. Miller, and John W. Mitchell, who acquired 214,000, 105,000, 78,000 acres respectively. The total amount purchased from the Federal government by Chapman, Miller and Lux, Friedlander, E. H. Miller, and Mitchell was one and a quarter million acres. Forty-three other large purchasers acquired 905,000 acres of land in the sixties in California. Buying in advance of settlement, these men were virtually thwarting the Homestead Law in California, where, because of the enormous monopolization above outlined, homesteaders later were able to find little good land.⁴

While lands sold under acts devised to create small holdings after the pattern of northern development included 15 million acres, such lands were frequently sold in large tracts by means of various fraudulent devices.

The massive holdings acquired during the last century are not, of course, still operated as single farms. But their former existence had certain direct and specific effects. The first of these was to create a pattern or tradition of large landholdings and tenure relationships which has dominated California's agricultural scene. The second was to create a demand for cheap labor which, once supplied, came to be capitalized into the value of the land itself. The third was to make the lands subject to speculation and speculative prices, and such prices have regularly constituted a burden upon the working farmer who attempted to wrest a livelihood from the soil.

Great acreages of California's fertile valley lands have been subdivided by speculators and colonized by hopeful "pioneers." Sometimes these settlements resulted only in blasted hopes and shattered bank accounts. Frequently, however, some present thriving community—and Wasco is one such community—has grown out of these very settlements. Such thriving communities are no guarantee that everything was always easy. The tradition is widespread in the West that it takes three failures to make a

⁴ Paul Wallace Gates, "The Homestead Law in an Incongruous Land System," *American Historical Review*, July, 1936, pp. 668-69.

successful farm; that is, that the investments of three efforts at improving the land must be written off before the land will pay returns to the working farmer. Such settlements were frequently the result of some speculator's endeavor to make money out of lands, and their traces can often be seen in the curbings and sidewalks of a never-to-be community, and again on the land ownership maps which show many small land parcels where in reality the land is a single sage-covered desert. Other colonies were developed by promoters who had an interest in the success of the plan, since their returns frequently came from the wealth created by a flourishing community. Such was the basis of the Wasco development, and both Arvin and Dinuba were given great impetus by the efforts of private land prospectors. Co-operative colonies also were responsible for the origin of some of California's communities, and the state contrived, in 1919, to initiate two colonies under circumstances which would eliminate the role of the speculator and profiteer. A long story could be written over the development of such colonies throughout California, for in the history of nearly every town there lies some promoter's plan.

Large-scale speculative land buying and group settlement of land have virtually ceased. Many of the giant landholdings, such as that of Miller and Lux, one of the biggest and most dramatic nineteenth century developments, involving mile upon mile of fertile lands, have largely been liquidated. Others, like the Kern County Land Company, still remain nearly intact. The breaking up of these lands has led many observers to believe that farms in California are getting smaller. But certain tendencies in the opposite direction make this doubtful. In the first place, increased intensification of land use means that smaller acreages now may constitute a large operation. Thus, when the Kern County Land Company leases a few of its many sections of land to an operator who plants his leasings to a crop like potatoes, this new unit is, from the agricultural production point of view, a bigger farm operation than the total Land Company holdings. It produces more goods, requires more working capital, and demands more labor than the less intensive agricultural operations

of the larger area of which it formerly was a part. In the second place, while certain types of large holdings are becoming smaller, there are many consolidations taking place which are often obscured by statistics on farm size. Three types of large-scale agricultural production have developed during the twentieth century. They can be called the "factory farm," the "mobile operations," and the "consolidated holdings."

The factory farm is a unified operation dependent upon land ownership. There are many such operations in California, among the most famous of which are the Tagus Ranch, the El Solyo Ranch, Balfour-Guthrie Investment Company, the several Di-Giorgio units (Earl Fruit Company), the California Packing Corporation, Adohr Milk Farms, and Spreckels Sugar Company. There are many smaller ones and, one smaller corporation, valued at around a million dollars, is found near Wasco. The general characteristics of such units are: they own the land; it is usually in one or a few large tracts; the land frequently has heavy expenditures for improvements, including permanent plantings, labor housing, packing sheds, and processing plants; there is generally an effort to integrate the industry by getting control of box-making plants, processing plants and distribution systems, and the units are usually incorporated. Most of these factory farms developed at about the time of World War I. As financial enterprises and business ventures, not all have been an unmitigated success. Among those which grow fruit—and most of them are fruit producers or dairies—there has been an effort at diversification. A greater variety of fruits, often supplemented with vegetable production, has been introduced in order that the enterprise can more fully utilize its equipment, its packing and shipping facilities, and in order that it can utilize its labor for a season of maximum length, thus attracting either better labor or cheaper.

The large-scale operators who lease lands for specialized production on short leases have been, for want of a better term, called "mobile farmers." This peculiar type of operation is largely confined to California and Arizona, and presents an entirely new picture of agricultural production. The mobile farmer

is a specialist in one or two heavily soil-depleting annual crops. He therefore does not want to own large acreages of land on which he would have to plant soil-replenishment crops, and which at best would take too much of his operating capital. Therefore he leases land for that period of time during which it can produce his special crop, and when it is exhausted he moves his operations to new lands. He frequently owns one piece of land, on which such permanent investments as packing sheds, labor camps, and the like are placed. In addition, he will lease a number of pieces for two- or three-year periods, after which the owner will plant alfalfa to rebuild the soil. This pattern developed first in the Salinas and Imperial Valleys during the early twenties, and is particularly associated with lettuce, melons, and carrots. In recent years it has invaded the San Joaquin Valley, and is found associated with potatoes in the neighborhood of Wasco. The mobile farmer is a speculator, investing heavily on a short-term basis. His money is a gamble on the crop, while there is little investment in land or capital equipment. Permanent investments are largely in farm machinery. In Imperial County, where the pattern is most prominent, the total investment in farm machinery exceeds the total investment in farm buildings. It is specialized farm equipment, usually expensive and of limited usefulness, that forms the key to this type of farming. The operator must have a large amount of it and wants to use it as fully as possible. The geographical scatter of his operations means that he must be able to move his equipment from place to place. For this purpose a tractor rig has been developed, on which tractors and other heavy equipment can be hoisted off the ground and pulled from one piece of land to the next. The "farmer" engaged in this kind of production is much more concerned with matters pertaining to the market than he is with matters pertaining to the soil. His judgments as to the amount of planting, the proper time of maturation, and the particular place to which to ship his products are the most important he must make. Prices fluctuate seasonally and spatially, and his entire operation is a gamble on price. The economics of this type of production do not motivate the operator to maintain soil fertility; to consider the welfare

of the local community in which his leased lands lie; nor to have any concern over the long-term welfare of his labor.

The third type of large farm unit that has grown up in California is that created by the consolidation of numerous farms. A continuous process of breaking and joining of tracts takes place in any dynamic farm community. In many communities of California, of which Wasco is one, the original farm size was too small for the character of farm operations, the dominant standards of the area, and the increasing efficiency of farm machinery. There is a natural tendency for such units to adjust in size. In Wasco the original settlement was mostly in 20-acre tracts, and many were smaller. Now the average farm is over 100 acres and hardly a single full-time unit is based on as few as 20 acres. This consolidation is a healthy adjustment to a form of disequilibrium. Some such consolidation, however, results in very large production units. Usually this is the case when an operator has invested in a processing plant. Thus, the ownership of a potato shed in Wasco or a raisin packing plant in Dinuba usually motivates the operator to increase his holdings. What happens is this: a successful operator decides he can function better if he has his own packing shed. He invests in a packing shed, but finds it difficult to maintain an orderly flow of produce into the shed, and he also wants to maintain the quality of his produce in order that his merchandise will be considered premium by the buyers and will move more rapidly and command a higher price. He may solve his problem by purchasing the fruit on the tree or vine, hiring his own crew and managing the later stages of farm production. Such purchasing is frequent in the citrus area of Southern California, and quite general in grape and deciduous fruit production. But the producer may find it difficult to assure an even flow of prime quality fruits, even if he contracts in advance. He may also feel that he stands to profit more if he owns the fruit from the outset. So he is motivated to own and operate enough land to utilize his packing plant. As his operations grow, they approach in size and organization the operation of the factory farms. Such a process of accretion lies in the history of the Wasco Creamery, and a similar pattern is

involved in the development of grape production by the Schenley Corporation, distillers.

Attempts have been made to determine the degree to which large-scale operations and industrialized farming dominate the agricultural scene in California. The census, for instance, reports that 4 per cent of all farms in California have 1,000 acres or more, and that these farms own 66 per cent of the total farm acreage and 35 per cent of the land under actual cultivation in the state. A study recently made of irrigable lands in three counties in the San Joaquin Valley shows that the 2.5 per cent of the owners holding 640 or more acres of irrigable land own 52 per cent of all land in the area. If we direct our attention to the farm as an operating unit, less than 4 per cent of the farmers operate over 640 acres, but they utilize 58 per cent of all land in the area.⁵ No statistics can give a full appreciation of the importance of industrialized operations because even the modest grower uses methods, organizes his operations, and maintains attitudes established by the large grower. The family farmer in Wasco, Dinuba, and elsewhere in California must compete with these large enterprises and frequently is dependent upon one of them for financing, processing, or marketing his goods. He finds himself a part of a system of social attitudes, ethics, and social values which he can rarely escape. In that way the whole agricultural production is industrialized.

FARM PRODUCTION IN CALIFORNIA

California produces commercially every major commodity grown anywhere in the United States, except tobacco, soy beans, and peanuts, and in addition produces numerous items which are found nowhere else. This marked diversity of production lends special interest to the farming in the state, and makes California farming a matter of particular interest to the nation. California produces all the domestic almonds, artichokes, raisins, olives, and dried apricots, peaches, pears, and figs in the

⁵ Edwin E. Wilson and Marion Clawson, *Agricultural Land Ownership and Operation in the Southern San Joaquin Valley* (Mimeographed), Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Berkeley, June, 1945, Tables 3 and 15.

United States. It produces 22 per cent of all commercial vegetables and 46 per cent of all fruits and nuts.⁶ Fruits, nuts, and vegetables make up 41 per cent of all production by volume shipped out of the state, compared with but 7 per cent of the volume in the nation as a whole.

At the same time that California farms are producing commodities for nation- and world-wide shipment, they fail to furnish the staple food products for local consumption. About 226 million dollars' worth of fruits, nuts, and vegetables were produced annually between 1930 and 1939 in California, of which 177 million (about 80 per cent) was shipped out. But the 189 million dollar livestock production had to be augmented by 81 million dollars' worth of net inshipment, and the 36 million dollars' worth of grains by 7 million dollars net inshipment.⁷ California farms produce a great variety of commodities and export a large portion of them, yet many staple needs in the local diet are not met by production. There are many interesting economic problems associated with this situation, but one aspect of it particularly attracts our attention. This is that those commodities which constitute a disproportionately large share of the agricultural enterprise in California are those which are subject to the greater fluctuations in market value, while the "deficit" crops in California are those characterized by relative stability in prices and production. It seems probable that the specialty crops which dominate California actually return more income per acre and therefore afford a "higher" use of the land resources. Whether or not this is the case, it is clearly true that these commodities offer greater speculative possibilities, afford the farmers an opportunity to get rich quick, and also carry a greater threat to the operators' economic security. This speculative character of farming in California is an important psychological as well as economic attribute, and some of its direct influences will become clear in the subsequent story of Wasco and her neighboring communities.

⁶ Wendell T. Calhoun, "State Balance of Trade in California's Farm Products," Western Farm Economics Association, California Meeting, Berkeley, Calif., March 14, 1946, Table 6. Data based upon 10 year average, 1930-1939.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Table 4.

FARM LABOR IN CALIFORNIA

Approximately 350,000 persons were employed in the production of agricultural goods in the State of California in September, 1939.⁸ One-third of these are farm operators and their families and two-thirds are laborers. The number of "unpaid family workers," as the Census calls those who help on the farm without compensation, is small. In addition to these there are many who engage in agricultural processing, while during years of low industrial employment there are great numbers of persons who seek employment in agriculture.

Three fundamental facts must be recognized with respect to farm labor in California. First, the origin of large-scale farming and the continuance of industrialized agriculture are dependent upon an abundant supply of cheap (relative to price) wage labor. Second, no group as such has remained as farm labor in California for more than a single generation. Third, it has been necessary for large-scale farm operators to maintain a flow of workers into California in order that they can continue their operations under normal price conditions.

Since the Indians were impressed into service on Spanish missions and ranches, a colorful and diverse array of workers have labored in California's fields. During the first two decades of American statehood, California's agriculture was largely devoted to stock and grain production. While these commodities were produced on giant land holdings, the amount of labor required was not great, and the industrialized pattern of production was not established. In 1869 the transcontinental railroad was completed, and by 1870 the Chinese were available as an abundant supply of agricultural labor. Their continued immigration for over a decade maintained this supply of exceedingly cheap workers. It was during this decade that the production of fruits on an intensive basis came to be an important part of California's agriculture, and the entire organization of the farm

⁸ According to the Sixteenth Census of Agriculture (Vol. III, *General Report*, Chapter VI, Table 10). The total employment in agriculture is greater, because of the seasonality of farm employment.

enterprise and land values were based upon the continued existence of such labor. Wages of \$1 per day or \$25 per month, and with extremely low costs for board, coupled with the employers' complete lack of responsibility toward the workers when not needed, made for a labor supply which was often considered cheaper than slave labor. The use of Chinese labor did not require capital investment, as did slaves, nor very much in the way of housing and equipment. The Chinese worker was generally recognized as performing his duties well and rapidly.

When further immigration of Chinese was excluded and the resident Chinese began to move away from farm work, the growers, whose expectation of profit was based upon such a labor supply, began to seek elsewhere for the necessary labor. For nearly twenty years the labor demand was met by the remaining Chinese, the first immigrant Japanese, and above all the industrial workers who could not find employment in the cities because of the depression of the nineties. By the turn of the century, when industrial employment drained the Caucasian workers back to the cities, the Japanese were sufficiently numerous to assure abundant field workers. They continued to come to California through the first decade of the century, and were supplemented by Hindus. Before World War I, industrial unemployment again assured growers a full supply of workers. Meanwhile immigration from Mexico was beginning. During the war there was an acute shortage of workers in agriculture, from the growers' point of view. A number of emergency measures were taken, including use of juveniles and urban workers (based on patriotic appeal), and the importation of Mexicans.

During the twenties the farm labor supply was constantly augmented by a great immigration of Mexican workers and the lesser immigration of Filipinos. These groups replaced the Chinese and Japanese in that they worked for low wages and demanded a minimum of responsibility from the employers.

It should be mentioned that from time to time, from 1850 to World War II, efforts were made to bring Negro workers into California's fields. While some Negro labor has served California farmers, they have always been few in number. Probably the greatest influx was during and just after the First World

War, when large acreages were planted to cotton. While Negroes now constitute one of the largest minority groups in the state, they are heavily urban, with 70 per cent of the 1940 total living in Los Angeles and Alameda Counties.

The accompanying tabulation shows the growth and decline of different minor racial and ethnic groups in California. The data on Mexicans are available for only three decades and two

TABLE I.—NUMBER OF PERSONS OF VARIOUS ETHNIC GROUPS IN CALIFORNIA, 1890-1940

Year	Mexican ¹	Negro	Japanese	Chinese	Filipino	Indian
1890	.....	11,322	1,147	72,472	0	16,624
1900	.....	11,045	10,151	45,743	0	15,377
1910	48,391	21,645	41,356	36,248	5	16,371
1920	121,176	38,763	71,952	28,812	2,674	17,360
1930	368,013	81,048	97,456	37,361	30,470	19,212
1940	.....	124,306	93,717	39,556	31,408	18,675

¹ Separate classification of Mexicans was made only in 1930. The 1910 and 1920 figures are estimated.

SOURCE: Charles N. Reynolds, *Basic Information on Race and Nativity*, Statistical Memorandum No. 3 (Race and Nativity Series), Population Committee for the Central Valley Project Studies, Dec. 3, 1943, p. 1.

of these are estimates, but their importance in California is clearly demonstrated. There has been a steady growth of the Negro population during the fifty years since 1890. During that half century the Japanese increased to a peak of nearly 100,000 while the Chinese declined. As a result of wartime relocation policy, the Japanese will probably be insignificant in number in California. The Filipino immigration is recent and the number is small. However, most of these are employed men, since families did not enter.

A careful analysis of the agricultural labor force made in 1930 enables us to see the situation as of that year.⁹ By 1930

⁹ George M. Peterson, *Composition and Characteristics of the Agricultural Population in California*, Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 630, June, 1939, Berkeley, California.

native whites made up over half the labor force (including operators) in the agriculture of the state, and together with foreign-born whites, nearly 62 per cent of the laborers. However, Mexicans, Filipinos, and Japanese, though each did not make up a great proportion of the labor force, were predominantly engaged in farm work. The Negro and Chinese were, on the other hand, more frequently engaged in urban pursuits. Table 2 shows that

TABLE 2.—GAINFULLY EMPLOYED WORKERS IN CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE BY ETHNIC GROUP, 1930

Ethnic group	Total in farm pursuits			Wage workers as per cent of total in farm pursuits	Proportion in ethnic group in farm pursuits
	Owners, tenants, managers and foremen	Wage workers	Total ¹		
	No.	No.	No.	Pct.	Pct.
Native white	85,980	84,069	170,049	49.5	12.3
Foreign born white	40,854	33,035	73,889	44.7	18.6
Mexican	1,417	41,191	42,608	96.7	37.0
Japanese	4,784	14,569	19,353	75.3	54.8
Filipino	231	16,100	16,331	98.6	60.2
Indian	797	2,306	3,103	74.3	55.4
Chinese	450	2,191	2,641	83.0	13.5
Negro	488	1,907	2,395	79.6	8.3
Other	211	1,444	1,655	87.2	70.8
Total	135,212	196,812	332,024	58.6	16.5

¹ Excludes 3,581 special workers unclassified by race, including bookkeepers, clerks, engineers, tractor and truck drivers.

SOURCE: George M. Peterson, *Composition and Character of the Agricultural Population in California*, University of California Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 630, June, 1939, Tables 5 and 6.

most of the whites (both native and foreign born) were operators, while most individuals in the other groups were employed as wage hands.

By 1930 the native white farm laborers comprised nearly half of the wage workers, while Mexicans, foreign born whites, Japanese and Filipinos made up most of the remainder, in the order mentioned. By that year Chinese and Indians were insignificant, while the Negroes and Hindus had never been important. The decade of the thirties, however, brought further changes in the composition of the agricultural population. For it was during that decade that the great migration of destitute citizens from the Southwest, particularly from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas, took place.

The migration of the thirties and the conditions of the migrants have been brought forcefully to the attention of the nation by Steinbeck's novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, by Carey McWilliams' *Factories in the Field*, by many public notices of the problem and finally, at the end of the decade by the detailed examinations of the Committee on Violation of Free Speech and Rights of Labor (the La Follette Committee) and of the Committee on Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens (Tolan Committee). This migration for the first time brought into California native white American families who settled in great numbers in the rural areas and furnished the army of cheap labor that is requisite for the continued functioning of the industrialized agriculture of California.

Though the migration into California during the thirties received a great deal of public attention, it was not of unusual magnitude in California's history. California's phenomenal population growth in the last century has been almost entirely from migration and hardly at all from natural increase. The migration of the twenties was nearly twice as great as that of the thirties; the decade before that it was just as great, and in the first five years since 1940 there had already been as much migration as there was during the thirties. Nor was the migration limited to the rural areas. One-third of the migrants settled in the larger cities (over 100,000 population) while only one-fourth of them moved to communities of less than 2,500 population. Nor were the immigrants during the thirties all of one class. A survey made in 1939 showed that they were distributed among the major occupation categories in almost identical proportions as

the total California population at the time of the 1930 census.¹⁰

What, then, set the migration of the thirties apart from previous decades? First, a large proportion of those seeking new homes in the West were destitute. Second, the depressed condition of agriculture and the low wages created an unfavorable environment in which these immigrants could seek their fortune. Finally, the large army of immigrants—especially those from the depressed agricultural states of the Southwest and the region of the “dust bowl”—formed the first native white American families who endeavored to make their livelihood as wage workers on the California farms. These Okies, as they have been called, moved westward in their broken-down cars, with bag and baggage, children and pets, to fill the role that the Coolie Chinese originally created. They have been the ultimate successors to that long and unbroken line of farm laborers—Chinese, Japanese, fruit tramp, Filipino, and Mexican.

Low-paid insecure labor devoid of any real participation in community life was rationalized by farm operators in California on the basis of race. The poor economic position and the social segregation were taken as evidence that those groups were inferior to the American farmer, and the farmer rationalized his demands for labor importation on the basis that the difficult work in his fields could be performed only by these “inferior races.” The presence of these foreign elements had not been suffered without considerable resistance on the part of many of California’s citizens, for it was generally recognized that traditional American institutions could not be built on the basis of a segregated and destitute citizenry. It was this realization, together with the organized efforts of labor, which feared the competition of these foreign elements, that secured successively the restrictions on immigration of Asiatic peoples. Meanwhile, however, California’s industrialized farming was predicated on the basis of such a labor supply, and the operator had to work to insure the continuance of these needed hands.

The destitute migrants from Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and

¹⁰ Seymour J. Janow and Davis McEntire, “Migration to California,” *Land Policy Review*, July-August, 1940, United States Government Printing Office, Washington.

other drought and depression-ridden states stepped into the picture as the Mexicans were beginning to move out; they stepped into the status of these Mexican and Asiatic workers, and inherited the attitudes and prejudices of the resident citizenry of California. The nature of the adjustment that has been made and the type of rural community which has evolved is presented in the detailed picture of Wasco, Dinuba, and Arvin.

CHAPTER II

INDUSTRIALIZED FARMING AND THE RURAL COMMUNITY

THE NATURE OF INDUSTRIALIZED FARMING

WASCO HAS, in the past thirty years, been transformed from a pioneer community into a center for industrialized farming enterprises. It was an urbanized farmer who said: "There is one thing I want you to put down in your book. Farming in this country is a business, it is not a way of life." This was no big landed gentryman, but the operator of a 200-acre farm, a man who himself can qualify as a pioneer and who built up his holdings by the sweat of family labor. From its very outset, Wasco lay in an area of highly industrialized agriculture; for this industrialized farming has its roots in early California land policy and has continued unbroken to the very present. The history of the industrialization of the California rural scene has been documented especially by Taylor and Vasey, McWilliams and Fuller.¹ Taylor and Vasey present the components of this form of agriculture:

Together with crop intensification and large-scale production organization have come commercialization of California agriculture, higher capitalization, increased production for a cash market, and a high cash

¹ The history of California's agricultural labor has been described, first by Paul S. Taylor and Tom Vasey in two articles, "Historical Background of California Farm Labor," and "Contemporary Background of California Farm Labor," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. I, Numbers 3 and 4, 1936; second by Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field*; and third by Varden Fuller, "The Supply of Agricultural Labor as a Factor in the Evolution of Farm Organization in California," Exhibit 8762A, Part 54, *Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor*, United States Senate, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, pursuant to S. Res. 266 (74th Congress), Washington, 1940 (hereafter referred to as *La Follette Hearings*).

expenditure for wage labor. Each of these developments contributes to the industrialization of labor relations. . . .

The family farm, which still expresses the national ideal, is subordinate in California to the influence of agriculture on an industrialized pattern.²

The farm operators have recognized this industrialization, as Taylor pointed out in a quotation from the *Western Grower and Shipper*, which says:

California is not unfriendly to husbandry and farming as a mode of life, but costly experience has shown that a large percentage of its acres, no matter how attractive to the inexperienced eye, are not suited to such purposes. The history of attempted development of many sections now successful under industrialized agriculture to small farming is a history of blasted hopes and broken hearts. And nature, not man, has been responsible.³

Though the nature of California's climate and terrain make industrialized farming profitable, we must beware of the simplistic explanation in this statement. The early establishment of great land holdings acquired through genuine and spurious Spanish grants presented the background for the present agricultural pattern.⁴ The introduction of cheap labor which heightened land values has been a heavy contributing factor, as Fuller has shown.⁵ And the development of urban values in the rural society has created strong pressures toward the perfection and continuation of the industrialized farming pattern which itself

² Taylor and Vasey, *op. cit.*, pp. 403-4, 419.

³ From "Census Truths," *Western Grower and Shipper*, October, 1939, p. 7, and quoted in the testimony of Paul S. Taylor, *La Follette Hearings*, Dec. 6, 1939, Pt. 47, p. 17224.

⁴ Carey McWilliams states that "Migratory labor . . . is a result of the character of California agriculture, but (this) . . . is, in turn, a consequence of the type of land ownership in California." *Op. cit.*, p. 25.

⁵ "Wherever intensive cultivation had already begun or was in prospect, land values were capitalized on the basis of actual or anticipated returns from the employment of the cheap and convenient Chinese labor supply. To the prospective small operator, this meant paying so high a price for land as to permit him a labor return approximately equal to the wages of Chinese. . . . Such a prospect did not encourage either European immigrants or people from the East to come to California. . . . Thus, in order to subdivide and sell the large holdings to prospective small operators, a considerable depreciation in valuation would have to be suffered. . . ." Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 19878.

is responsible for the existence of these urban values in the rural society.

While industrial farming has largely developed in areas where the scale of operations are great, large-scale operations are not synonymous with industrial farming. It is possible to have large units measured by acreage or by production, where many of the essential elements of industrialization are not present. It is not only possible, but in California irrigated farming areas frequently the case, that small units show every other feature of industrial enterprise—intensive production, large investment, impersonal hiring, and complete commercialization. Similarly, production efficiency does not rest upon scale of operations. A detailed analysis made by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics shows the relation of size of farm to efficiency in production and concludes as follows:

The large and medium-large farms [averaging 1,894 and 179 acres, respectively] have a slight advantage over the medium size farms [averaging 52 acres] in output per unit capital employed. But judging from past performance the medium-size summer-field-crop and dairy farms and the medium-large fruit farms have the advantage over other size groups studied in maximizing work opportunity, agricultural production, and the potential trade, or in maximizing income for the maximum number of people directly dependent upon agriculture for their livelihood.⁶

It is significant that only from a personal pecuniary calculus do large-scale operations appear advantageous over more modest farming enterprises. Smaller units are more productive of total commodities, total income, and people supported.

DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIALIZED FARMING IN WASCO

Wasco itself has grown rapidly out of the fertile desert soil. Save for a few early homesteads, the land was all held by the Kern County Land Company, that great landowning corporation developed by Haggin and Carr in the early days of California's

⁶ J. Karl Lee, *Economics of the Scale of Farm Operations in the Southern San Joaquin Valley, California*, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Berkeley, 1946 (Mimeographed).

statehood. Prior to 1907 the town was peopled by cowhands, section hands, and the few independent farmers. It was a negligible aggregate of a few buildings housing saloons, a hotel, and a store. Its lands were considered adequate only as pasturage for sheep. Its sudden growth in 1907 was the result of a colonization scheme which opened to farming nine sections of desert land. This land, like miles lying in either direction, had not previously been opened for sale, according to the man who promoted the settlement at Wasco, because the Land Company did not consider the income from such a transaction sufficient to compensate for the increased costs of fencing and protecting the vast herds of stock. The promoter, aided by business sentiment against this restriction on population growth, induced the Company to part with the small parcel, which he then subdivided and sold to members of his organization in tracts of from two and a half to twenty acres. These lands were opened in the late winter of 1907 and the colonists prepared to farm this arid land the coming season. The hardships these people suffered in coming to so hostile an environment are still poignant in memory and have won for the colonists the name of pioneer.

The settlers' organization which opened up this land was made up of persons who, for various reasons, wished to change their economic conditions. One was a middle-aged Eastern business man who had lost his job and was considered too old to be employed. Another, a lawyer, a third, a doctor, and a fourth, a professor, were motivated partly by reasons of health, believing that the desert atmosphere and the farm life would improve their condition. Some were clerks, who in classic resentment of the control of the boss desired to be on their own. Others were young men who had a small stake in a world of limited opportunities, some were given their start by farmer parents in neighboring regions. Before they met at the organization office in Los Angeles they were all completely unknown to one another, but they each bought, one might say, an interest in the new community. The organizer of this colony has himself given expression to this aspect of the enterprise, for the basis of the philosophy by which he sold his scheme was that in bringing together

an aggregate of people he created new values.⁷ Whether his advertisements actually reflected his own philosophy or influenced his customers, the fact remains that these individuals had a real financial, as well as social, interest in the new community that came into being at that time.

Like pioneers, during this early period, the colonists had a common enemy. The enemy was the desert, and it had two aspects: the drought on one hand, and the infestation of rabbits on the other. Both were the subject of concerted action of that group which had put its stake in Wasco. The colonists still like to tell of the rabbit fence that was built around the nine sections with community money, and the rabbit drives, in which all the young men participated, to kill out the rabbits which had converged upon the greenery of the newly created oasis. The water problem had been anticipated, and a water company had been formed by the organizer. A clause had been inserted into the contract requiring the land owners to take shares on a per acre basis. But the co-operative distribution of water pumped by gasoline engine and carried in open canals proved unsuccessful. It is little wonder, therefore, that the major business of the first civic organization in Wasco, the Improvement Club, was directed toward a solution of the water problem. It is characteristic of our American culture that this solution was derived not from a higher concentration on co-operative effort, but on an individual basis. It is the first of the technological developments that altered the economy of the region and therefore it is worthwhile to examine the nature of the solution.

The water corporation was a stock company. The plan was to pump water to the surface with gasoline engines and distribute it in open canals. The inefficiency of the early internal combustion engine and the high degree of loss due to seepage and evaporation made it virtually impossible to get water to the far corners of the colony. The importance to the farmers of having irrigation water at the exact time they needed it added to the problem. After the colonists had dislodged one or two of the

⁷ In a brochure, he proclaims: "You are worth \$1,500 just because you sit in that chair . . . your family has great value to you in a new community group for acre gardens. Alone, you lose it."

original men in charge, a movement started which led to the dissolution of the company, for at about that time the power lines of one of the major utilities companies were brought to the community, and it became possible for the individual farmers to install electric pumps. Thus, the water problem was defeated by individual effort of the farmers, with the technological aid of an outside corporation of major size, and this solution destroyed one of the focal points of community effort.

So the course of Wasco's star was set by the nature of her physical and social environment. Long before the community existed, the agricultural enterprises were established against which her farmers had to compete, and the pattern was set. The very plan of establishing a colony on irrigated lands inevitably called for the production of cash crops at a high cost with abundant cheap labor. Though the hardships were to be great and many farms were to be lost in the struggle to bring Wasco into the pattern, it was inevitable from the outset that she should be set up on an industrialized basis. That is, inevitable in an economic sense. For the cash outlay for expensive equipment necessary to pump water meant producing high-value cash crops. And in order to realize the necessary return to cover these costs the new farmers had to compete with established enterprises. Thus they were immediately caught in the established pattern of farming.

CHARACTERISTICS OF WASCO'S AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

What, then, are the characteristics of this industrialization? Its first characteristic is its intensity of production as indicated by crop specialization, thorough cash cropping, high per acre yield, the utilization of irrigation, and a high dependence upon farm machinery.

The farm operators in the Wasco area tend to specialize in two crops. The most usual combination is potatoes and cotton. Others grow sugar beets, melons, grapes (but rarely are new vineyards now put in). The dairy farms are completely specialized to that one product. Furthermore, farmers who specialize in two or three crops always consider one of these as their major interest.

A farmer will grow cotton and a few potatoes, or potatoes and a little cotton. The farmers who gave figures on the cost of production of cotton, potatoes, and beets felt competent only to present figures on one crop. The other crop is a result of compliance with the Federal AAA program, or the feeling of safety a second crop affords. The farmer is not only specialized, but also is proud of his specialization. He maintains firmly that you have to know how to raise potatoes or cotton in this country, that "the old dumb-bells just can't farm any more." Crop specialization is indicated statistically in the census by the appearance of only 100 "general" farms out of the 2,397 farms in the county, the others being specialized in one or, at most, two crops.⁸

This tendency to specialize in one or two cash crops has very clear effects upon the social and physical landscape. Basically, it expresses the competition between the old traditional rural values and the urban value system. One of the first evidences of this meets the eye immediately—the virtual disappearance of the barnyard. Practically no farmers milk cows; almost as few have chickens; a garden is considered a luxury, not because it is work to plant one, but because it is considered cheaper to buy the products at the market and turn the land into cash crops. Flower gardens around a home are also a luxury. One farm wife expressed herself clearly when she said, "My husband would plow up that rose garden if I'd let him. He'd plow right up to the bedroom window." The disappearance of the barnyard has also meant the "emancipation" of the farm wife. With barnyard chores eliminated and with electrical labor-saving devices and smaller families, the line, "but a woman's work is never done," is no longer applicable and she is freed for social activities, just as the housewife of the towns. These changes have tended to break down the traditional barrier between the country and town people.

There are other psychological effects. The farmer is planting with one eye on his furrows and the other cocked at the market.

⁸ *15th Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture, Vol. III, Pt. 3, p. 387.* "General" farms are those "where the value of the products from any one source did not represent as much as 40 per cent of the total value of all the products on the farm." (P. 3.)

When the total investment is in cash crop, it becomes a basic matter with the small farmer to hit the right market. Farmers consider that during the harvest season they should be at the marketing center rather than in the fields. The entrepreneur's insight into market conditions is more important than his managerial ability in supervising the harvest.

Certain events can indicate the effect of this aspect of farming as it appears to the local people. In 1936 the yield in potatoes was at its prime, and the price of potatoes skyrocketed. Potatoes that make a neat farming profit at \$1 a sack sold for as high as \$4.50. Costs were low in that year, especially labor, so that the net farming profits were astronomical; one farmer reputedly made a million and a quarter on his crop that season. The picture has been preserved in such exaggerated stories as the one claiming that "three people were killed in the scramble when a sack of potatoes fell from a truck." Many a completely mortgaged farm was paid for with a little patch of potatoes. "The year 1936 is what ruined this country," the merchants say. "Ever since then everybody has been figuring he'd make a killing in potatoes and he invests everything he has."⁹ But the 1936 crop did not change the basic trend of events in Wasco; it merely brought them to the fore and won over to urban monetary standards the remainder who were still thinking of farming "as a way of life."

Specialized farming means production of cash crops. We have already pointed out that specialization spelt the doom of the barnyard. It has meant likewise that all the products of the farm are sold for cash. Table 3 shows the major crops grown in the Wasco area—products with low on-farm utility and high cash value.

It is, of course, necessary for all farms to sell some of their goods for money under our economic system, yet traditionally the farm produces most of the food for the farm household. Though the trend away from production for home use is general, it has gone especially far in Wasco. This appears clearly

⁹ The Kern County and local potato shipments doubled the following year.

from the census data. The opposite pole from cash cropping is the self-sufficient farm. In Kern County only 35 of the 2,397 farms were of this type.¹⁰ It is doubtful if any of these are in the Wasco area. Even more significant is the fact that the farmer and his family consumed only \$371,000 worth of the \$14,900,000 he produced in that year.¹¹ This means that about 2.5 per cent of the farm products were used by the farmer and his

TABLE 3.—CROP ACREAGES IN NORTHERN KERN COUNTY
1931 AND 1936¹

Crop	1931 acreage	1936 acreage
Fruits and olives	2,405	1,946
Grapes (table, wine, and raisin)	10,932	9,808
Potatoes	5,000	9,000
Sweet potatoes and onions	910	1,500
Cantaloupes and watermelons	2,097	700
Alfalfa	6,254	2,398
Cotton	19,157	20,000

¹ Northern Kern County . . . "all land north of Seventh Standard Road that is irrigable" and comprises lands that are in vicinity of neighboring towns of equal size.

SOURCE: *Soil Survey*, by A. C. Anderson and J. L. Retzer, United States Department of Agriculture, and Bruce C. Owen, Leighton F. Koehler, and Ralph C. Cole, University of California, Ms. Project #1006, USDA, June, 1936, pp. 38-40.

family, the rest was sold for money with which to buy food, clothes, and other necessities and luxuries.

While no data are available specifically for Wasco, the difference between the California pattern and other portions of the United States is shown in the accompanying table (Table 4) developed by the Consumer Purchases Study and based upon three California agricultural counties (San Joaquin, Orange, and Riverside).

¹⁰ *15th Census of the United States: 1930, Agriculture, Vol. III, Pt. 3, p. 387.* Self-sufficient farms are those on which over half of the total products is consumed on the farm.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 398.

High farm yields further characterize this intensive land cultivation. In the Wasco area, the average yield per acre of early

TABLE 4.—CONSUMPTION OF HOME-PRODUCED FOODS IN CALIFORNIA COMPARED TO OTHER AREAS

Area	Number of families using home-produced food			Average value of food per person per meal	
	Milk	Pork	Garden	Home production	Purchased
	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Pct.</i>	<i>Cents</i>	<i>Cents</i>
California	53	0	29	2.6	6.6
North Dakota- Kansas	100	76	72	5.1	3.8
Pennsylvania-Ohio	84	72	100	5.7	3.5
Georgia-Mississippi	96	96	96	7.7	2.5

SOURCE: Hazel K. Stiebeling, *et al.*, *Family Food Consumption and Dietary Levels*, Farm Series, p. 51.

potatoes was from 240 sacks in 1937 to 198 sacks in 1940 (Table 5). Furthermore, acres of land with as much as 600 sacks

TABLE 5.—ACREAGE, YIELD, AND PRODUCTION OF POTATOES

Year	Acres	Production (sacks)	Yield	County yield
1937	16,277	3,916,500	240	205.6
1938	15,817	3,447,900	218	185.4
1939	16,906	3,366,600	199	187.1
1940	17,406	3,456,000	198	183.3

SOURCE: *Marketing Kern County Early Irish Potatoes*, by John B. Schneider, M. A. Lindsay, G. B. Alcorn, and H. W. Longfellow, Agricultural Extension Service, University of California, Bakersfield, 1940-41.

(30 tons) have been reported and good farmers expect 250 sacks to the acre. The average cotton production in the county was

631 pounds of lint per acre, though farmers in Wasco considered two bales (1,000 pounds) a normally good yield.

Practically all farms around Wasco are irrigated and irrigation is another feature of intensive farming. It is not mere contour irrigation with surface water, but the careful distribution of water raised about 100 feet from an underground table over land that has been perfectly leveled. Of the 566 farms in the Wasco area in 1935, 539 were irrigated, and virtually all the crops are produced on irrigated soil (Table 6).

TABLE 6.—FARM SIZE AND VALUE, WASCO TOWNSHIP

Item	Total	Average per farm	Irrigated	Average per farm
Number of farms	566	..	539	....
Number of acres	49,165	87	...	....
Crop land harvested, in acres	29,644	52	29,233	54.2
Total value of land	\$8,058,870	\$14,238 ¹	.....	....

¹Or a value of \$164 per acre.

SOURCE: United States Census of Agriculture, photostated sheet on 9th Township, Kern County, 1935.

Another aspect of the intensive character of farming is the use of modern machinery, especially power equipment. Though a few farmers maintain a team to help with cultivation, virtually none of them attempts to work without at least one tractor. The land is leveled, prepared, planted, and cultivated with tractors, and the potatoes are dug by a tractor-drawn machine. We have already indicated that the individual farm irrigation systems with costly wells and pumps were the harbinger of farm mechanization. These power pumps, operated by gasoline, electricity, gas, or butane, are an important item in the farm operations and in the farm costs.

The tractor is both a necessity and a luxury. Under the competitive system, no man can make much money following a team. The tractor is a source of pride, and many a farmer re-

ferred almost affectionately to the tractor, as a young man might to his car. The long straight furrow takes on new connotations after a farmer has said with pride: "With this tractor, you can cultivate right up to the roots; you can put that dirt right where you want it." A tractor salesman said that the farmers in the area over-buy on farm equipment and tend to follow styles in the nature of machinery they use. Table 7 shows the steady

TABLE 7.—AVERAGE SIZE OF FARMS AND AVERAGE VALUE OF FARMS AND FARM EQUIPMENT, KERN COUNTY, 1870-1940

Year	Total farms	Average size of farm		Average farm values	
		All land	Crop land	Land and buildings	Farm equipment
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Dollars</i>
1870	86	2,900	105	3,960	163
1880	282	1,880	284	6,830	220
1890	730	975	191	13,600	305
1900	1,098	1,431	295	17,900	316
1910	1,167	1,202	270	21,606	526
1920	2,020	741	197	32,257	1,035
1925	2,793	462	97	23,841	1,048
1930	2,397	712	79	31,076	1,294
1935	2,584	626	91	18,822	.....
1940	2,188	705	138	30,854	2,153

SOURCE: United States Decennial Census and Census of Agriculture for years specified.

growth of farm equipment in Kern County, from a value of \$526 per farm in 1910 to \$2,153 per farm in 1940.

The intensive use of land has been discussed as one characteristic of industrialization. A second is the high capital requirements. In a sense this latter is merely the obverse of the former, for each of the factors which are part of intensive land use are likewise items of cost which lead to difficult capital requirements.

A major factor in the cost of production is the high evaluation upon the land—values which create a heavy interest burden upon the crops to be produced, which limit the uses to which it is put, and which require the further intensification of efforts if a going enterprise is to be maintained.

The cost of improved land around Wasco was \$200-300 per acre during the low-price period of the late thirties. At the lower rate, a farm of the size recommended by the local Agricultural Planning Committee, namely, 80 acres, would cost \$16,000.¹² An 80-acre farm requires at least one tractor and one pump, plus other equipment which would add from three to five thousand dollars. The psychological effect of such investments is far-reaching, and there is no wonder that the farmer in California feels himself and comports himself like a business man.

Farm values can best be understood in terms of production costs, for as such they appear in the operations of owner, tenant, or manager. Leading growers of several commodities presented cost of production figures, two of which are presented below. These show the heavy expenditure required in the production of crops. While these figures are not averages, they nevertheless represent estimates based upon successful individual farm operations.

At the average yield of 198 sacks per acre achieved in 1940, the cost of bringing potatoes to maturity is \$94.75 and the costs of putting them in cars is \$70.49, or a total production cost of \$165.24 (Table 8).

The costs of bringing sugar beets to market is considerably less, yet it is not small. The production costs are almost \$50, while the sliding scale of harvest pay established by law and the trucking charges to shipping point bring the costs up another \$22 (Table 9).

Data were collected on cotton production costs from 7 farms in Kern County. These units ranged in size from 13 to 60 acres. Though they are not considered "typical," the range and aver-

¹² County and Community Committee of Farmers, *Brief of Land Use Survey of Kern County: Description, Problems, Recommendations*. Bakersfield, 1940, pp. 40-41.

TABLE 8.—ALLOCATION OF COSTS: POTATO PRODUCTION

<i>Production of crop on a per acre basis</i>		<i>Harvesting on a per sack basis</i>	
1. Rent	\$25.00	1. Hauling	\$ 0.05
2. Preparing soil, plowing and discing	2.75	2. Digger and picking crew	.11
3. Planting	3.25	3. Washing	.09
4. Seed (ca. 15 sacks at \$2.36)	35.00	4. Sacks	.10
5. Fertilizer (5-6 sacks per acre at \$2.50)	13.75	5. Inspection	.006
6. Power (for water)	6.50	Total	\$ 0.356
7. Irrigation labor	6.00	Average yield	× 198
8. Cultivation	2.50	Harvest cost per acre	\$ 70.49
Total production	\$94.75	Production cost per acre	94.75
		Total cost per acre	\$165.24

SOURCE: Local potato farmer (based upon 1940 costs and wages).

TABLE 9.—ALLOCATION OF COSTS: SUGAR BEETS

<i>Production (per acre)</i>		<i>Harvesting</i>		
		Yield	Per ton	Per acre
Rent	\$20.00	Trucking:		
Chopping	6.50 ¹	18	\$0.50	\$ 9.00
Hoeing (twice)	2.50 ¹	19	.50	9.50
Irrigation (water)	6.00	Labor: ¹		
Irrigation (labor)	3.00	15	.82	12.32
Plowing, discing and making beds	4.50	16	.78	12.48
Planting	1.00	17	.75	12.75
Seed	2.25	18	.72	12.96
Cultivation	2.00	19	.70	13.30
Labor overseer	1.00	20	.69	13.80
Total	\$48.75	21	.68	14.28
		22	.67	14.74
		Average harvest cost		21.96
		Production cost		48.75
		Total cost		\$70.71

¹ Costs set by established government wage rates. The sliding scale for labor of topping is based upon the variation in speed as the yield varies, since low yield is largely a function of size of tubers.

Italicized figures are local average yields as given by farmer reporting.

SOURCE: Operator of sugar beet enterprise (based upon 1940 costs and wages).

age costs are illustrative of the factors in cotton production (Table 10). The accounting was set up in such a way that the residual net profit after the farmer's labor and the interest on his investment were paid was allocated to the operator's managerial skill. Chart 1 displays graphically the major average

TABLE 10.—SUMMARY OF ALLOCATION OF COSTS AND INCOME: COTTON

Item	Range		Average costs	
	High	Low	Amount	Proportion of total
Costs				
Total costs	\$119.76	\$70.79	\$90.25	100.0%
Labor (wage)	61.16	35.38	48.80	54.1
Labor (farmer's)	9.53	.58	2.47	2.7
Capital investment	35.48 ¹	6.77	17.55 ¹	19.4
Materials, overhead, depreciation	27.44	16.52	21.43	23.8
Income				
Total net income	67.20	13.43	37.12	100.0
Managerial profit	49.57	1.86	28.92	78.0
Interest on investment	13.19 ¹	.17	5.73 ¹	15.4
Farmer's labor	9.53	.58	2.47	6.6

¹ Rental included in interest costs but not in interest income.

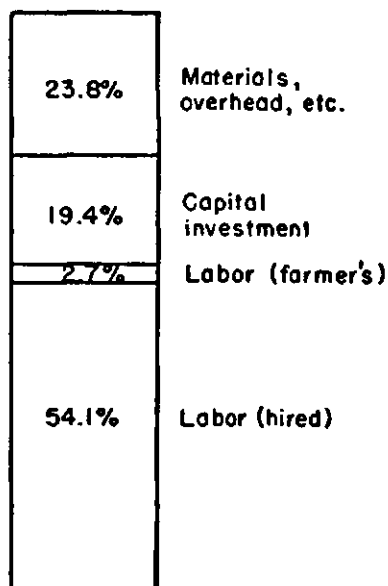
SOURCE: *Third Annual Report, Kern County Cotton Enterprise Efficiency Study for the 1940 Crop Year.*

allocations of costs and the several sources of income in the operation of the farming enterprise.

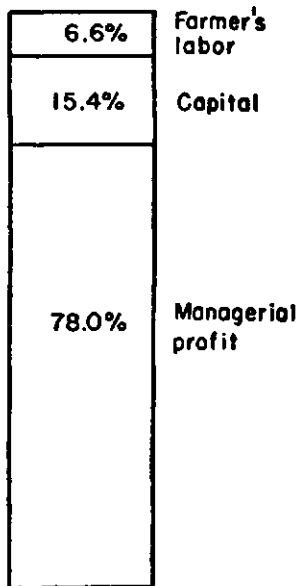
Translating these figures into the quantity of operating capital required to bring a crop to market—this is not the capital value of the farm but the capital value of the annual crop—we find that the sum varies from over \$2,000 to nearly \$5,000 for the minimum size of unit acceptable to the Agricultural Planning Committee (40 acres, but letting 10 acres lie fallow). Despite these costs, the sentiment prevails that size of units should increase, and that farms of less than 80 acres should not exist,

ALLOCATION OF COSTS AND PROFITS IN COTTON CULTIVATION KERN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, 1940

COSTS OF PRODUCTION



OPERATOR'S INCOME



SOURCE: Third Annual Report, Kern County Cotton Enterprise Efficiency Study for the 1940 Crop Year, (see Table 10).

CHART I

while units of 160 acres should be maintained. The farmer who is content with 40 acres is generally considered unprogressive. The 20-acre plats which were originally established are all either held or operated in connection with other land. This pressure toward expansion was expressed in many different ways. One farmer was discovered who had just bought a tractor. "You

TABLE II.—TOTAL LABOR REQUIREMENTS IN MAN-DAYS OF SELECTED CROPS, KERN COUNTY

Crop	Total	Permanent	Seasonal	Percentage of workers seasonally employed
Alfalfa	194,942	194,942	0	0
Cotton	480,611	182,726	297,885	62
Grapes	441,753	181,010	260,743	59
Onions	18,302	3,452	14,850	81
Potatoes	268,588	169,016	99,572	33
Sugar beets	19,788	3,135	16,653	86
Totals	1,423,984	734,281	689,703	48
All crops	1,643,783	834,091	808,692	49.2

SOURCE: *Agriculture Labor Requirements and Supply, Kern County*, by R. L. Adams, June, 1940, Mimeo. Rep. No. 70, Giannini Foundation of Agr. Econ., Table 4, p. 8.

watch him," his neighbor said, "next year he will be wanting to farm eighty." Another said that he had made enough money the previous year to buy 20 acres, but that he was going to try renting one more year. He hoped to get ahead sufficiently to have 40, for 20 acres was not enough for a living.

This need for capital is not necessarily met out of the operator's pocket. Estimates of the proportion of operators dependent upon crop financing varied between 75 and 90 per cent. It is generally considered good practice to borrow at least a portion of the production cost, since it does not tie up for the whole year capital that is needed only during the peak cost period.

But the effects upon the pattern of farming are essentially the same whether the operator has or borrows this capital. In either case he must emphasize cash returns and the reduction of costs; in either case he is entrepreneur for a highly capitalized business unit.

The third major aspect of industrialized agriculture is its heavy labor requirement. According to the Census, three-fourths

TABLE 12.—ESTIMATED MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR SEASONAL WORKERS, KERN COUNTY, 1939

Month	Resident	Number transient	Total
January	1,300	500	1,800
February	650	200	850
March	750	600	1,350
April	800	750	1,550
May	2,100	700	2,800
June	2,400	850	3,250
July	1,250	550	1,800
August	1,750	700	2,450
September	1,700	750	2,450
October	4,000	2,250	6,250
November	3,000	1,700	4,700
December	2,750	1,400	4,100

SOURCE: *Agricultural Labor Requirements and Supply, Kern County*, by R. L. Adams, June, 1940, Mimeo. Rep. No. 70, Giannini Foundation of Agr. Econ., Table 8, p. 15.

of all farms hired labor for cash wages during 1939 (as against a national average of about one-third). The crop requirements in Kern County have been worked out by R. L. Adams and show not only the heavy requirements for labor but the importance of seasonal workers (Table 11).

On the basis of the data in Table 11, an estimate of the minimum monthly labor requirements for Kern County has been made. These are presented in Table 12. Before the war drained off farm workers, the available supply of hands in Kern County to do this work was estimated at from three times this demand

in peak season to twenty times the demand in slack season. The working force in agriculture in Kern County is predominantly hired labor; the farm operator and his family contributing only a small part of the work. In September of 1939, according to the Sixteenth U. S. Census (Agriculture, 1940), there were approximately 13,000 persons employed in agriculture in Kern County. Over four out of every five of these were hired workers, and less than one either a farm operator or a member of his family. In the United States as a whole, the category of unpaid family labor comprised about one-third of all workers at that time. In Kern County about 5 per cent fell in this category. Of the 10,724 hired workers, only 1,084, or about 10 per cent were hired by the month, 2,731 or 20 per cent by the day or week, while the remainder were hired on a piece rate, hourly or contractual basis.

From the farm operator's point of view, labor needs can best be understood in terms of labor costs. The allocation of production costs for three of the leading crops in the area has been shown. In one, cotton, these costs represent over half of the total production costs (see Chart 1) and in the other two they represent well over a third. That these labor costs are paid out as cash wages is indicated by the fact that only 2.7 per cent were allocated to the farmer's own services, and this demonstrates the small proportion of the total farm work which he performs. The right hand column on this chart demonstrates that his own labor does not account for a significant proportion of his income, but that this income is allocated to his entrepreneurial efforts.

If these industrial features of farming around Wasco are to be considered the causative force in creating an urbanized type of society, then it must be expected that they have immediate psychological effects upon the farm operators. The social identity of the farmer has changed with the development of the United States, as Paul Johnstone has pointed out.¹³ The Wasco farmer is more and more identifying himself with the business entrepreneur, as the quotation at the beginning of this chapter

¹³ Paul Johnstone, "On the Identification of the Farmer," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 1, March, 1940.

suggests. His income derives largely from returns upon entrepreneurial efficiency and secondarily from interest on investments, while only in small measure from his own toil. Furthermore, his entrepreneurial efficiency depends upon wise buying and selling, and above all, on maximizing the returns from expenditures for hired labor. In this last lies the most insistent psychological factor which influences the farmer's thinking. Therefore, though the farmer and the laborers on his farm are virtually interdependent and together bring the product to market, there is nevertheless a source of conflict in their economic relationships. The impersonal character of most of the hiring does not serve to ameliorate this situation. The farmer's increased business contacts with equipment merchants, gasoline salesmen, power representatives and the like as well as with the marketing agents further develop the urban outlook. The large sums of money handled by the farmer also has an effect on his way of thinking regarding his own personal expenditures, which in turn influences his whole scheme of values.

EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIALIZED AGRICULTURE ON THE TOWN

The industrialization of agriculture has not only altered the psychological and social attitudes of the people on the land, it has also affected the people of the town who serve the farm population. Though Wasco falls within the Census definition of a city, being an aggregate of over 4,000 people, it is the smallest place the farmer can go for his needs. There are no smaller satellite neighborhoods or shopping centers which enable him to avoid coming to Wasco, except for one or two nearby road crossings with bars or filling stations. There is, at a greater distance, an oil town which is in many ways socially and economically dependent on Wasco. It is the only town now represented by a separate column of social notes in the local newspaper, although in 1921 there were three others, which have since either grown to independent status or dwindled to nothing.

While Wasco is the smallest town to which the local farmer can go, it is capable of serving all his needs. There he can buy his groceries, clothes, lumber, furniture, or car; his farm equip-

ment or seed; and there he can market his potatoes or beets, gin his cotton, or process his milk. Likewise it contains his church, schools, and many governmental agencies. When the local resident searches elsewhere for his goods or services it is almost invariably because of personal preference. In this sense, Wasco is a self-sufficient economic unit. Its complete dependence upon the outside world, not only as the source of goods, but also as the impetus of the economic and social forces, stands in marked contrast to this apparent independence, and in marked contrast to the pioneer type of community.

The first change in the rural community, as has already been suggested, is the influence of large outside corporations. Big business is involved in the farm enterprise to an extent much greater than is frequently realized, and the representatives of big business are the leaders in the local community. When electrical power was first brought to Wasco by one of the great utilities companies, it was a boon to the farmer who was fighting for his share of the insufficient water supply; it was also the introduction of large corporation interest in the town. Even gas is piped in by the major distributor of this utility in Southern California though capped natural gas wells lie a few miles away.

The bank is a branch of one of the largest banking institutions in America. Its representative is a community leader, yet his position is quite different from that of the small-town banker as traditionally conceived—the locally successful financier firmly rooted to his community. The patrons of the bank may argue at length over the relative merits of chain banking, with its unlimited resources, and the local bank, which does not have to get outside approval of loans. Whatever the farmer's choice, the fact remains that the local banker is a representative of an outside large corporation, with which his natural economic interests lie. The fact that he enters fully into community affairs does not alter the case, for the corporations are fully cognizant of the value of good will and the need for an effective representative not only of their economic interest but of their social point of view. Gasoline distributors have played an important role in local business and social life. Petroleum products are vital to mechanized agriculture and the sales in

Wasco are large. Four oil companies maintain distribution plants; their managers are community leaders and their salesmen are persons of social prominence in the town.¹⁴

Smaller business enterprises are also affected by the growing tendency toward chain operation. There are several small grocery stores, but also two large supermarkets which are members of chain enterprises centered outside Wasco. The smaller grocers tend to sell exclusively to one or another of the social or ethnic groups, but the chain stores serve all segments of the society. Of the three automobile dealers only one is limited in its operation to Wasco, another is a branch of the nearest city dealer, and the third is the central office for a small syndicate. One of the two drugstores and both the variety stores are syndicate members. Even two of the bars and pool halls are said to be chain operated. Hardware and farm implement sales are completely dominated by outside corporations, and only the much smaller of two lumber companies is locally owned. Some types of stores are completely free of outside domination; notable among them are the clothing, furniture, and restaurant businesses. Except for one hotel, bar, and restaurant combination, all purely local enterprises are on a very modest scale.

There is one local corporation of major size, and its paramount interests and activities lie outside the local community. In this corporation is embodied all the tradition of the local entrepreneur as a community and business leader, yet the very continuation of the enterprise was dependent upon the development of outside interests. Its major battles for growth and survival have been with outside large corporations, unions, gov-

¹⁴ The implications of the trend toward increased mechanization upon rural society has been pointed out by C. Horace Hamilton. He says, "The invention of the machine and . . . their exploitation by monopolistic corporations may be considered as one very effective means by which a nonagricultural economic group cuts out for itself a juicy slice of agricultural income. In this sense farm machinery manufacturers and the large oil companies are engaged in the process of agricultural production, without having to take nearly so many of the risks as does the farmer." "Social Effects of Mechanization of Agriculture," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 4, p. 15. He goes on to quote the Federal Trade Commission which points out that the International Harvester Company made its record-breaking profits in 1937, when farm income was 18 per cent below the 1929 level.

ernmental control, and the need for an established external market. This corporation grew out of a farmers' co-operative creamery established to improve marketing facilities for a number of local dairymen in 1915. Like most co-operative effort in Wasco, it proved unsuccessful, and was reorganized upon a corporate basis. During the twenties, its growth, in connection with a construction company, was phenomenal, and its president and chief stockholder became a local leader in community affairs. During that decade the major enterprise of the corporation was the subdivision of a tract of land, and the development and construction of an elite residential section. Though an outside market was developed for the creamery products, the major interests of the corporation were local, and, in turn, the local people looked up to the corporation as their leading business and a source of community well-being. With the onset of the thirties, the situation began to change. The construction phase of the enterprise was dropped, and in its stead a second creamery plant was established in a nearby city, and most of the operations were centered there. As a result, the local interests not only dwindled, but also the local payroll was lessened. With increased economic depression, the need for controlling sales outlets was recognized, so that a chain of "malt shops" was established in Los Angeles to insure a market. This meant that now there was only one of the two plants and only one of the eight malt shops in Wasco, and though the central offices remain there the outside interests are dominant. On the other hand, the creamery established dairies of its own, so that a large proportion of its milk supply was directly controlled. Several factors were responsible for this integration. The competition from larger milk distributing corporations forced the creamery to maintain a certain supply of products. The increased dairy regulations in the Los Angeles milkshed made it difficult for the small operator to supply milk. Finally, the value of land in the Wasco region increased with the development of potatoes, making it difficult to maintain a dairy with the resulting high fixed overhead except under highly efficient business practices. The necessity under AAA regulations of maintaining some land under cover crop insured a supply of hay to the dairymen that

remained. But now dairying, like the other Wasco farming enterprises discussed above, is a completely integrated industry—there are no small farmers supplying a few cans of milk.

The economic interest of major corporations and chain enterprises has thus wrought changes in the town itself. These corporations have sent in representatives who have, by and large, taken the dominant social role in the community. In this way the whole social structure has been affected, and the natural external loyalties of this group further the disintegration of the unified community. Though these changes are not in themselves entirely dependent upon industrialized agriculture, this form of economy has been favorable to corporate interests. The great demand for capital quickens the interest of lending agencies; the growing universality of power equipment has supported several implement houses; this equipment plus pumped water has brought in electric, gas, and gasoline enterprises, and the large labor population has made cut-rate stores profitable.

The increase of the influence of outside governmental agencies, county, state, and national, is another aspect of this externalizing of the local community. Its application to the local scene is, of course, merely a manifestation of the trend toward governmental centralization, yet its effects are potent.

It is a matter of local choice that the community is not incorporated. (It has, in fact, since become incorporated.) In the middle twenties, it actually became a civic entity, but this was short-lived as a number of farmers succeeded in forcing disincorporation through legal action. Instead of incorporating, a public utilities district was established to maintain the water and sewage systems. This is the only completely local public service operated in Wasco.

Considerable local autonomy prevails in the public schools. The local school board is elected by the people; it determines (within the framework of state law) wages and salaries, can hire and fire, and decides on the disbursement of funds unless a vote of the people is required. While the curriculum and nature of teaching are established by the school officials in conjunction with the county offices, the trustees can and do exert con-

siderable influence over the actual class work. In this way, the community exercises some control over the knowledge and development of its young.

Another elective local officer (who works through the county) is the constable. He is the chief law-enforcing agent in the community. The Justice of the Peace and a county deputy sheriff work in conjunction with him. Similarly, a local voluntary fire department co-operates with the county department. Other county organized administrative agencies include public welfare and health.

During the thirties the major state institution in the community was the State Relief Administration. This was administered entirely from without, employing virtually no local people, and under no local control. A great deal of criticism and abuse was directed against this agency and those others established for the purpose of assisting indigent and unemployed persons. Such reaction stems from several sources. The resentment of an outside power entering into community affairs is supported by the tradition of local autonomy, and is fostered by the dominant element of the community itself. The fact that the philosophy of unemployment relief runs counter to the complex of pioneer traditions, such as rugged individualism, personal sacrifice, and individual fitness in the struggle for existence, offers a climate of opinion that makes the program particularly vulnerable to criticism. Many farmers have recognized that, since the presence of cheap labor is necessary to their agricultural economy, some form of unemployment aid is necessary during times of economic depression. Even these, however, objected to the administration policies. They would have the relief administered entirely for their own needs with all aid terminated as soon as work is available and reinstated when work is over. Since off-season support of farm labor has never been considered the responsibility of the farmer, there is little recognition of the function the welfare agencies perform in maintaining sufficient workers on a low wage-scale basis.

Hostility has also been expressed towards the Agricultural Adjustment Agency, though it gives assistance to the growers

themselves.¹⁵ Here external control is the center of attack, and the committee members themselves have not only asked for more local committee autonomy, but have actually taken it upon themselves. Most of the Wasco committeemen operate moderately large farms; they are successful men fully imbued with the concept of farming as a business enterprise. Their attitude toward "parity payments" does not stem from resentment of the big payments received by the very large operators; they have fought valiantly for the rights of both large and small. Their objection is with the effect upon their operating costs and taxes, and also with the curtailment of their freedom of action. Since they are not in need of subsistence, they do not look upon the payments as a means of assisting distressed farmers. These attitudes substantiate their major claim that the AAA program is not suited to their mode of farming. It is interesting that the very farmers who object to unemployment assistance for labor insist that "parity payments" are different in kind from such aid. No one has ever made the claim that the relief check is a means of maintaining the purchasing parity of the workingman's dollar, while only those few local farmers who are on marginal or submarginal farms recognize the relief aspect of "parity payments." The fact that most of the farmers are business men with large capital investments and a considerable margin of profit makes it difficult for them to view these payments in the light of relief. But unless they can see greater profit through failure to comply with the AAA plan, they have no hesitancy in taking payments, and this without any loss of self-esteem or any hostility on the part of the citizenry. On the other hand, there is no feeling of shame in failure to comply with the rulings of this agency if such a failure proves to be profitable to themselves.

The trends toward industrial and governmental concentration that have just been described have slowly and inexorably invaded the local autonomy and independence of the small com-

¹⁵ The older name Agricultural Adjustment Agency has been used because it was used during the period to which this study applies, and because it is the better known term. Its functions are currently under the Production and Marketing Administration.

munity throughout America, but most particularly where farming itself is caught in the vortex of industrialization. The change of local social attitudes by the introduction of personal representatives of big business and government in the rural community is only part of the story. The urban newspapers with their syndicated columns tend more and more to replace the local newspaper as a source of information and opinion formation. The radio has brought into the homes of nearly every rural resident the values and attitude systems of the outside world. Both these media, through their advertising, have had the effect of creating standard urban wants among the rural people. The motion pictures have not only had an effect upon local attitudes, but tend to establish patterns of behavior by precept. The automobile has been of very great influence. The mobility it affords emancipates the individual from the fortuitous ties of propinquity and enables him to seek social outlets where they are most congenial. This inevitably tends to destroy the neighborhood as a unit of social action and dissipates local loyalties.

These technological developments for living, together and in combination with growing direct economic influences from urban centers, have deprived the local community of much of its function and even more of its social solidarity.

BACKGROUND OF THE FARM LABORERS

We have discussed the agricultural economy and its effects upon town and country alike. Throughout, the importance of the existence of a large farm labor population has been stressed. A brief résumé of the background of this laboring group is necessary to our understanding of the community.

Farm laborers may be divided into two groups: Those who are permanently employed by a single farmer, and those who work by the day or hour, or on a contract or piecework basis. The steady hand may be, but is not usually, of the "hired man" type of employee. Only very occasionally does he eat or live with the farm family; he much more frequently has a separate cabin. He is employed on a permanent basis only in the sense

that he is paid by the month; when the work stops, his employment likewise terminates. Frequently he continues to live on the farm, but it is only the rare farmer who feels it necessary to keep him employed the year round.

Prior to 1930 field labor was performed mostly by minority races, Chinese, Japanese, Hindu, Filipino, Mexican, and Negro. The white agricultural worker was the unmarried fruit tramp or "bundle stiff," whose contact with the rural community was nil. In the last decade there was an influx of a new type of laborer: whites from the Southern Plains region who came with their families in search of employment. Immigration into California has been a steady phenomenon for nearly a century, but the social consequences of the immigration in the decade of the thirties has had a special effect.¹⁶ Both the absolute and proportional in-migration of the twenties exceeded the in-migration of the past decade. During the earlier period two and a quarter million persons came into California, while the most reliable evidence indicates that the thirties brought in but one million, one hundred thousand. The immigrants were drawn from all occupations and "generally are a cross section of the occupational structure of the States from which they came,"¹⁷ and furthermore the "distribution of occupations pursued by migrant family heads in California in 1939 was strikingly similar to the occupational structure of the California population of 1930."¹⁸

The important difference between the migration of the thirties and that of earlier decades was in the economic circumstance

¹⁶ Persons born outside the state have constituted from 55 to 80 per cent of the population during various census years in California. In 1930 67 per cent were born outside the state. Native births have always constituted but a small portion of the growth of the state's population. See Charles N. Reynolds and Sara Miles, *Migration*, Statistical Memorandum No. 6 (Growth of Population Series), Population Committee for the Central Valley Project Studies, July 5, 1944, Table 1.

¹⁷ Seymour Janow and Davis McEntire, "The Migrants VI: Migration to California," *Land Policy Review*, Vol. III, No. 4, 1940, p. 32. In the studies of migrants into California, statistics were obtained through a census of school children throughout the state. "Migrants" were defined as all persons entering California since January 1, 1930. The coverage of California schools was virtually complete, but, of course, the sample was of those individuals having children in schools, therefore excluding single persons.

¹⁸ Janow and McEntire, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

which surrounded them. For the movement of people in those earlier years was in response to an attractive force of economic opportunity in the Far West, while in the thirties this pull was not so much responsible as a push from areas of distress. This means that the migrants left because their situation became untenable in view of economic circumstances in their native state, and they had to go elsewhere. It also means that there were no ready opportunities in California for economic betterment, so that the already impoverished migrants remained destitute and had to scramble over the countryside to seek a livelihood as best they could during an era of economic depression.

Kern County received the greatest proportionate increase of population of any county in the state, and the rural areas in many cases show increases in school enrollments of over 50 per cent.¹⁹ Wasco is a community with such a large influx. Approximately 2,500 persons came into Wasco from outside of California between 1930 and 1939, according to the school survey.²⁰ Over two-thirds of these came from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas. The growth of population which this increase implies may be inferred from the increase in water users over this period, and from the school survey (Table 13).

This population came largely from the area of depressed agricultural conditions as a result partly of the drought and partly of increased farm mechanization.²¹ In their own parlance these people had been "blown out" and "tractored out." The people who came into the rural areas were virtually destitute and were in search of any type of employment they could find.²² The major labor market which was open was provided by agri-

¹⁹ Davis McEntire and N. L. Whetten, "The Migrants I: Recent Migration to the Pacific Coast," *Land Policy Review*, Vol. II, No. 5, 1939. See especially the map, p. 11.

²⁰ Data collected through California public schools.

²¹ Paul S. Taylor says, "Heavy displacement of farmers and laborers, as a result of increasing mechanization, is already in progress in several important cotton areas." "Power Farming and Labor Displacement in the Cotton Belt, 1937." *Monthly Labor Review*, March and April, 1938, p. 1.

²² "The average financial inventory (of resettled migrant families in California) at the time of arrival consisted of the following items: Approximately \$100 in cash on hand, \$20 in household goods, automobile valued at about \$100, and other assets including clothing valued at about \$60. The average total value of assets was therefore less than \$300." Varden Fuller, "Resettlement of Migrants in Rural California Communities," Ms., p. 54.

culture, especially harvesting work, and this market they flooded. They more than replaced the repatriated Mexican workers and the workers immobilized by the residence laws governing eligibility for public relief. As destitute agricultural laborers

TABLE 13.—ESTIMATES OF POPULATION GROWTH, WASCO, 1930-41

Year	Estimate from water users			Immigration increment estimate	
	Number of water users	Persons per outlet ¹	Population estimate	Families enumerated ²	Population estimate
1930	572	2.7	1,548	..	1,548
1931	583	2.8	1,632	19	1,738
1932	612	2.9	1,775	14	1,878
1933	586	2.9	1,699	7	1,948
1934	608	3.0	1,824	12	2,068
1935	650	3.1	2,015	38	2,448
1936	700	3.2	2,240	40	2,848
1937	907	3.3	2,993	49	3,338
1938	962	3.3	3,175	41	3,746
1939	1,075	3.4	3,655	30	4,048
1940	1,131	3.5	4,000	12	4,168
1941	1,134	3.6	4,082	..	.....

¹ Established by the 1930 and 1940 Census data, with a sliding scale for intervening years; 1930 and 1940 figures are from the U. S. Decennial Census.

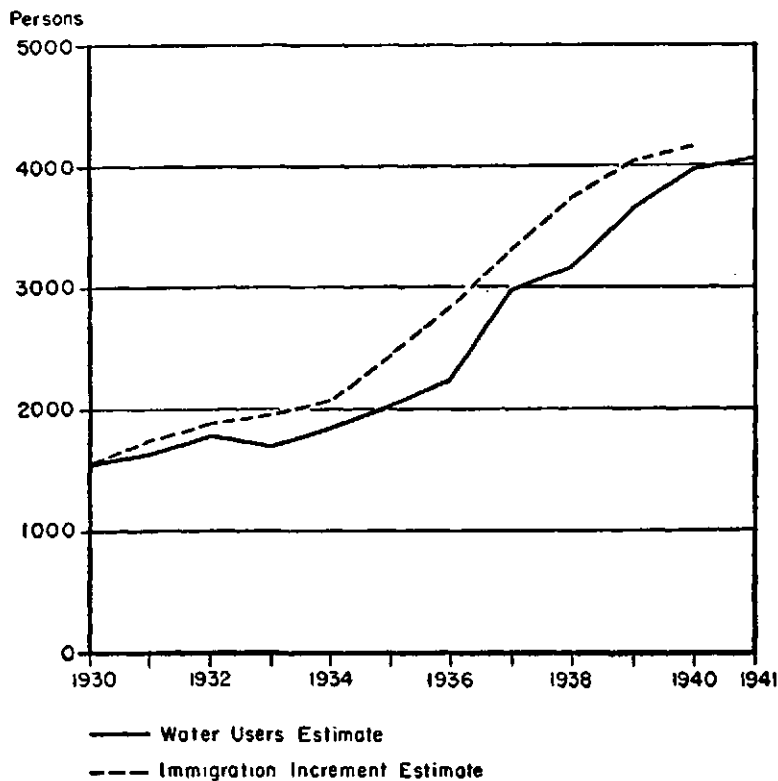
² Studies have indicated a net increment of 10 persons for each family enumerated in this school census.

SOURCE: Water Users, from records of the Wasco Public Utilities District. Immigration Increment, from California Location Census.

dependent upon intermittent employment and public welfare they became known to the rural and small town population; their poverty, their peculiarity of dress and speech, and the fact that they came from outside marked them as a class apart, and they came to be referred to by such derogatory epithets as "Okie" and "Arkie."²³

²³ The literature on these migrants is by now fairly voluminous. John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* is the outstanding fictional account; Dorothea

ESTIMATES OF POPULATION GROWTH, WASCO, 1930-1941



SOURCES:

Wasco Public Utilities District Records
 California Location Census
 See Table 13.

CHART 2

This new laboring element in California differed from its numerous predecessors in the combination of two characteristics: They were of the white race, and they came as families. Earlier white migrants had quickly gained a higher status and were absorbed in the population. These two items made it both possible and necessary for them to differ in another and more important way; they tended to settle down in the communities and become permanent laboring citizens. Despite local opinion, the "Okie" did not come to California out of wanderlust, and neither does he want to move about in California now. From a survey of resettled migrants made in 1939, it was learned that most of these laboring families came directly to California from their home, that half of them came directly to the community in which they had permanently established themselves,²⁴ that most of them intended to remain in the community in which they were at the time of the interview, that almost half of them have bought homes, and that over 70 per cent are registered voters. These facts clearly indicate what every Wasco resident knows, that the "Okie" is a permanent part of his community.

This large sessile labor population, like the growing influence of outside business and governmental interests and the technological developments as the radio, moving pictures, and automobile, has been a contributing factor in the shift away from community homogeneity toward a more urban rural environment. First, the fact of a large labor population increases the size of the local community so that personal face-to-face relationships are no longer universally possible. Second, the great diversity of economic conditions and social backgrounds make closer interpersonal relationships undesirable to the people

Lange and Paul S. Taylor's *American Exodus* describes the movement both in words and photographs. A case study made by the Farm Security Administration (*A Study of 6,655 Migrant Households in California, 1938*, processed report directed by Jonathan Garst, San Francisco, 1939) has been supplemented by other official bulletins. The La Follette and Tolan Hearings include data on the situation and the causes of migration.

²⁴ Varden Fuller, "Resettlement of Migrants in Rural Communities of California," Ms., pp. 51, 73.

themselves. These factors have tended more and more to render inoperative those normal modes of social sanctions based upon personal approbation and censure. In its stead there has developed a system of social values based upon pecuniary and occupational standards, paralleling that found in the city.

CHAPTER III

BASIC STRUCTURE

THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS

THE COMMUNITY of Wasco—the town and the surrounding countryside together—includes between seven and eight thousand individuals. The diversity of cultural background and the division of economic interests are more evident in this aggregate than is their unity, and in this respect it duplicates the city. Negroes and Mexicans, whites from the sharecropper South, German Mennonites, Catholics, representatives of big business, small shopkeepers, all make a diversified list with variations of great importance, yet the patterns of behavior are not so chaotic as this record would imply. They vary from individual to individual, but they also approach norms within certain basic classifications, norms which differ significantly according to social class. And the most significant variations in behavior correlate in general with the groups which have divergent economic interests. It is for this reason that the important social groupings in the community must be established, and this chapter will attempt to classify the population into such groups. Certain basic cultural desires on the part of all members of the society, however, affect the life of all classes and groups, and the significant variation in behavior is very largely an expression of the degree of attainment of these values. In order to classify the society it becomes necessary to define the nature of the social goals.

Social worth is determined in this rural community, as in most of our society, by an interdependent triad: occupation, money worth or income, and material possessions. The very interdependence of these things makes it difficult to select one as the most important, while the high degree of correlation be-

tween occupation, income, and possessions makes it unnecessary. The core of these three items is money: occupation represents its means of acquisition, income is the amount available, and possessions are the public assertion of that income. And, in general, income as such is determined by the public through knowledge of occupation and evidences of conspicuous consumption. It is impossible for an investigator not armed with the legal instrument of subpoena to obtain information on income and only with difficulty and uncertainty on expenditures, and for that reason occupation must be used as the instrument for establishing social position. Occupation is, after all, the major orientation of the newcomer into the society, for just as in the simpler societies the stranger is oriented by real or fictitious consanguinity, so the stranger in Wasco is oriented in terms of his occupation through the inclusive question, "What do you do?" It is generally accepted that the source of a person's income be public knowledge but the amount is a matter of speculation and gossip, established by the process of reckoning from occupation on one side and from expenditures on the other. And for this reason the purchase of consumers goods is *de facto* a social gesture as well as an economic act. Especially is this true of homes and house furnishings, of cars, and of luxury items. Modern devices which increase leisure and mobility and serve creature comforts are popular, while silver, linens, and other more conspicuously luxury goods are limited to the more affluent. The compulsion to spending can best be viewed when farm profits have been abnormally great, as in 1936, when potato prices were high. Then farmers bought houses, hired interior decorators, acquired two and three new cars, and the like.

The major criterion for establishing social differences will, therefore, be occupation which implies income and wealth as well, and involves not only the economic activities devoted to the acquisition of money, but also by implication and less perfectly the nature of expenditures for the gratification of physical and social wants. This fiscal-occupational classification is an adequate device for determining social position because it is used by the members of the society themselves.

A series of five occupational distinctions have been utilized

to indicate the variations in social status in the community, and while these only imperfectly reflect the social classes and status levels to be defined they can be used to indicate the existence of social distinctions. These occupational groupings have been adapted from the work of Alba M. Edwards.¹ They are as follows:

A. Professionals, Managers and Proprietors. Professionals, including physicians, nurses, teachers, ministers, and a few other highly trained occupations; managers and proprietors of commercial establishments, including trained managers of large farms.

B. Farm Operators. Either tenant or owners of farms.

C. Clerical Workers. All white collar workers not included in A above, such as clerks, salesmen, secretaries, and the like.

D. Skilled Labor. Skilled and semi-skilled workers including mechanics, truck and bus drivers, public services, construction and mechanical workers, school janitors, and the like, as well as carpenters, painters, plumbers.

E. Unskilled Labor. Unskilled laborers, whether farm labor or not.

F. Non-employed. Housewives, unemployed, unknown occupations.

We may fairly consider classes A, C, D, and E a descending scale of social worth, though with exceptions established on the basis of various factors as indicated in the text. Farmers show variation in social status from A to D, but for the most part fall between A and C.

In the absence of census data on these occupational classes, we must use two available indices for the distribution of occupations; namely, the results of a survey made of school children,² and the voting registration of the several precincts of the Wasco township for the November, 1940, elections. The following Table shows roughly the distribution of the occupation groups in

¹Alba M. Edwards, *A Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States: 1930*, U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington, 1938, and coded according to the *Alphabetical Index of Occupations by Industries and Economic Groups*.

²California Location Census, a survey of families who have entered California in the period 1930-39 taken through the public schools of the State.

Wasco and among the migrants (Table 14). Since voting registration is somewhat selective, we cannot interpret these figures too literally.

TABLE 14.—PROPORTIONATE DISTRIBUTION OF OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

Occupational class	Voting registration		School survey families	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	231	15.1	14	7.6
B. Farm operators	197	12.9	17	9.2
C. Clerical workers	130	8.5	3	1.6
D. Skilled laborers	491	32.1	64	34.6
E. Unskilled laborers	482	31.4	87	47.0
Total	1,531	100.0	185	100.0

SOURCE: California Location Census and Voting Registration for 1940 elections, Wasco Township.

THE TWO SOCIAL CLASSES

On this basis two all-pervasive social groups may be established.³ One of them is made up of business men, farm operators, professionals, and the regular employees of business houses, both white collar and skilled, and some semi-skilled labor. (Groups A to D in the above list.) The other is made up of the agricultural laborers, both regularly employed and seasonal, and the other forms of common labor in the community. (Group E in the above list.) It also includes persons of other occupations whose work is directed toward this group, such as storekeepers

³ The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to presenting the nature of the social cleavages in the society. The following sections will describe the nature of the social behavior in terms of the groupings established in this. Statistical documentation of the validity of the social differences has been relegated to the later chapters.

who sell only to members of this class. These two classes may be called upper and lower, and in a loose way those terms will be used below, but because these terms have a variety of meanings, it will be better to establish a set of terms that are more descriptive of the actual relationship. The former of the two will therefore be called the *nuclear* group, or the functioning members of the Wasco community, and the latter will be called *outsiders*, or non-members.

This terminology expresses both the historical and the immediate aspects of the social situation. The nuclear group is that body which grew up with Wasco and inherited the institutions of the community—that body to which Wasco belongs. The outsiders are those who have arrived somewhat later to serve as agricultural laborers. They remain outside the social walls of the community, against which they are constantly impinging. They are not accepted into community life, and they are not considered in community affairs. Though more recent, this outsider class is not new—it has existed as long as, and to the extent that, industrialized agriculture has prevailed. It is a necessary concomitant of agriculture which requires a large amount of unskilled labor. It has, as indicated in the preceding chapter, changed its ethnic composition. And with this change has come a new set of social problems.

The established psychological attitudes and the sanctioned social behavior easily separated the minority ethnic groups from the dominant or nuclear element in the society. Any social advancement of a Negro or Mexican was within his own group; he did not enter the social sphere of the white community. He had fewer social possibilities, and his externality remained complete. As a result of common physical characteristics, common social backgrounds, in the case of the Mexican a distinct language, and because the dominant group insisted upon their geographical segregation, the two minority groups developed an internal unity which resulted in their having communities of their own. The "Mexican colony" and the "nigger town" still exist as separate entities. The white laborers, unlike the colored groups, do not have the identity of physical and social characteristics to set them off from the nuclear population, nor do they have any

mechanisms by which they could organize into a community with internal status differentiations. Though economic pressure tends to force them into delimited subdivisions with poorer housing facilities, actually they are scattered throughout the town wherever poorer houses exist, or wherever property deeds do not contain building restriction clauses. As a result of all these factors, they consistently impinge upon the nuclear group and some attain membership in it. But because of the social barriers that have been created, and because of the limitations upon economic advancement, the group as a whole remains separate.

Members of both classes generally give overt expression to this class distinction. It may be the minister of the most elegant church in town saying, "The migrants don't come here because they don't feel comfortable," or it might be almost any of the outsiders saying, "To tell you the truth, I don't like the Baptist church here because they are a different class of people, and I'd rather stay around my own class."

While Wasco is in a region of industrialized agriculture with dominantly urban values, the poorest of the white agricultural workers have come from an area where different conditions prevail; where population is sparse, great wealth is rare, and differentiations in social position either are not dependent upon the possession of luxury goods, or the people are themselves in such poor and backward country that few could afford them. Many of them did not have modern plumbing, houses with several rooms, special clothes for Sunday, trade unions or other secular organizations, nor rural slum areas. Their religious observances were largely of the "old time religion" type; their occupational experience mostly as farm tenants, or farm or other unskilled labor. This is not, however, true of all of them. Data have been collected which show the variety of occupations of the new arrivals into California and of the resettled agricultural workers. Whatever the previous circumstances, most of them have, since coming to California or before, adopted the standards of value of the dominant group in the area. A few have maintained their old behavior patterns, yet it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain to what extent their living conditions

are determined by their values and to what extent they are forced upon them by economic circumstances.

In short, it is impossible to generalize that part of the behavior of these agricultural laborers which is not directly determined by the economic forces to which they are subject. Their backgrounds and histories are too complex and varied to make such generalizations valid. And, since they remain a disorganized aggregate, they have not developed any internal sanctions which would tend to unify their social behavior. The only generally accepted sanctions for attitudes and actions among this group are those imposed upon them by the nuclear group in their desire to achieve acceptance in that society. Nevertheless, members of the nuclear group do tend to make generalizations regarding the behavior and character of the laborers, and usually base their own actions upon these preconceived attitudes.

The popular picture of the "Okie" with straight blond hair, lean face and body, dressed in bib overall or apron and sun-bonnet is filled out with imputed character designations. That imputed character is a bad one, with a ready rationalization for the many exceptions that have come to the individual's attention. Members of the nuclear group usually describe the "Okie" as ignorant and uneducated, dirty of habit if not of mind, slothful, unambitious, and dependent. He may be viewed now as emotional, again as phlegmatic; sometimes as sullen and unfriendly; again as arrogant and over-bearing. Not rarely is he accused of being dishonest. These characteristics are sometimes considered innate (a local physician spoke of them as a separate breed); sometimes lack of education is held responsible. As a matter of fact, the farm workers display as great a variety of characteristics as are found in any group of equally divergent backgrounds. Cases are often cited from personal experience illustrating each characteristic, for as in any group individuals may be found to conform to them. It is true that the level of educational attainment and the apparent capacity to learn is generally lower among the workers than among the nuclear group. The opportunities and facilities for learning have not been so readily available to many of them, and migration from town to town and the necessity for the children to work are

instrumentalities enough to bring this about. Many dirty homes can be pointed out among them, as well as exceptionally clean ones. Yet the circumstances of their living are not readily conducive to the maintenance of middle-class standards of cleanliness. Many have spent days and weeks in idleness, yet a local leader remarked with astonishment that laborers generally preferred working for wages to getting relief. A long history of malnutrition and lack of dietary knowledge, coupled with poor living conditions generally, have not been conducive to vigorous bodies capable of sustained physical exertion, yet the work these laborers perform is long and hard. Emotional religious practices are generally cited as examples of emotionalism in their nature, yet the function of such religion for those who participate can be understood in terms of their social and economic situation. Court records do not uphold the imputation of dishonesty since local arrests and convictions did not rise proportionally with population. In summation, the bad and good is mixed among the "Okie" as it is among any population; and while the condemnation made by the nuclear group can be applied to individuals, they are not justified generalizations for the group as a whole. The valid generalizations regarding their behavior are those which derive from common economic and social circumstances, and will be discussed in greater detail below.

While the two social classes in Wasco are interdependent parts of a functioning economic system, and together bring farm products to the market, they are also in direct economic competition. For the wages that the one receives come directly out of the profits of members of the other—"managerial profits" derived from the use of hired labor. Resulting conflicts have been expressed in strikes which have involved violence, but for the most part it is latent, rarely rising to the surface. The farmer needs the worker and the worker needs the job, and an agreement is usually maintained. But the farmer is interested in having a large number of laborers unused to achieving the social values of the dominant group, and satisfied with few of the luxuries of modern society, so that his desires conflict with the social desires of the laborer. One of the leaders of the nuclear group expressed this all too clearly. "The trouble," he said, "is that we

have educated them too much. They are dissatisfied with their work and who will then scrub our floors. Don't think that I disapprove of education. . . ."

Wasco, then, is an aggregate of people divided into two groups, social classes with the same basic values but with different social experiences and differing interest in the economic system. The one has inherited the traditional life of the community in the pioneer sense; the other remains an outsider. These two classes are not only distinguished by differences in social status; they are also in competition. They are in turn divisible into less clearly differentiated subgroups, according to their prestige in the value system of the society. Three separate levels of social status may be segregated in the nuclear class: an elite, a middle group, and a marginal group. This is a conceptual device for dividing a continuum of variation into broad categories, but it is of real value in helping to understand the social relationships, and in describing the nature of social life in the community. Furthermore, since the citizen tends to accord like status to groups who associate together (that is, to classify their associates unconsciously on a status basis), this conceptualization has validity. The levels of status are not the same kind of social entity as the social classes just defined, however. The individual manifests at every hand his realization of the class to which he belongs, and it is possible to awaken in him loyalties to these groups, while the conceptual levels of prestige are not overtly recognized.

THE NUCLEAR GROUP

The highest level in Wasco society is made up of the representatives of the large corporations which have branch offices in the community, the persons who are in administrative positions in the single large local corporation, the members of the medical profession, and a few local business people of long residence (group A in the occupation list), and the most successful large growers (part of group B). Economically, they are all well off, not only in that they possess most of the goods which have prestige, but also in that they have more than reasonable certainty

that they will continue in this economic position for the remainder of their lifetime. They are not an aristocracy in the sense of the upper classes of the South, and they are not extreme wealthy. In neighboring communities where the land is subdivided in larger units, there are usually a number of families with great holdings, but in Wasco there are but one or two. This class is comfortably housed in dwellings usually having a spare bedroom or two. They are never highly elaborate or ostentatious. They do not indulge in such wealth displays as yachts, summer homes, chauffeurs, or even regular maids, probably because few or none can afford even the least of these. None of them is a capitalist in the sense that his living comes solely from invested moneys; therefore, even the elite in Wasco habitually work a normal set of hours each day. They are, however, capitalists in the sense that either they have administrative positions in large capital interests, or their work is directed toward the end of seeing that their capital investments pay proper dividends. As pointed out in the preceding chapter, this is true of even the farmer whose holdings are moderate.

Because Wasco is not a unit separate from the remainder of the county, state, and nation, these individuals are not a complacent elite, sure of their own standing. Those whose position is highest have entered a wider social arena in which their ambitions are directed upward. Thus, a farmer of the elite group entertains an exclusive county organization rather than participates in a community social event. Others achieve outside recognition through developing political interests or spreading their economic activities over a wider area. There is no tradition of an upper class with certain prerogatives; membership is attained through the economic struggle and it is maintained by continual social and economic effort. And there is always a higher social rung to egg on the individual. As the Negroes in the South would say, they are all "strainers," straining to achieve ever higher social standing.

The middle group in Wasco is made up of local entrepreneurs and the operators of eighty to two hundred-acre farms (groups A and B of the occupation list); school teachers; lesser representatives of the big corporations, such as gasoline and power sales-

men (group C); most skilled laborers; and some semi-skilled laborers who have had long residence in the community (group D). They are the substantial citizenry who, for the most part, are living well. They usually have all the "modern conveniences," such as new gas ranges, shining kitchen sinks, and frigidaire; like all other classes in Wasco, they usually have a car and it is frequently new. Installment buying makes it possible for these people of modest means to acquire this assortment before they have the requisite capital, and it is generally recognized that possession does not connote full ownership. This has reduced the prestige value of these material possessions. Their houses can be classified into two types. The older persons in this class who have lived there a long time are in the older section of town in rather large bungalows built in the early twenties. The younger group and those who have come into Wasco during its recent growth have for the most part built or rented new bungalows with one or two bedrooms. When built by the present inhabitant, they are generally financed through FHA loans, usually in the newer subdivisions in the better but not the best section of town. The social life of the middle group is more closely bound up with the town than any other group in Wasco's social structure. Those special occupational groups, like oil workers and school teachers, form a partial exception to this statement. The pattern of social behavior is virtually the same as with the elite, but on a less ambitious scale. It tends, also, to be more intimately connected with the church, usually either the Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, or Seventh-Day Adventist.

The marginal group consists largely of regularly employed workers, such as mechanics, clerks at small stores, assistants at filling stations, and the like (C and D). The smallest farmer, renting less than eighty acres of land can also be classed in this category. They are the least clearly defined unit in the nucleus. They live in the older houses of the town, many in the section called Little Oklahoma City, and many of them are former outsiders who have attained membership in the community by length of residence and permanent employment. They are likely to have some of the modern conveniences, but not all. Their floors are typically covered with linoleum rugs, their houses are

old and require repair. They are insecure economically as well as socially, and their wants remain great. They are part of the nuclear group because they are known to that group, as the poor in the pioneer type of community are known to it. Their church affiliation may be with the established churches, but is frequently in one of the two older revivalistic sects. If so, they form the pillars of those churches, in which they associate with the outsider group.

THE OUTSIDER GROUP

The outsiders consist of three separate categories distinguished by ethnic origins: the white, Negro, and Mexican laborers.⁴ They are economically insecure and most of them have at one time or another received some form of unemployment assistance. It is possible to consider the three as a single class, because they are accorded similar treatment by the nuclear group and have the same economic circumstances. But since they each remain to themselves and, in fact, have some manifestations of hostility, they cannot be considered a functioning unit. Allusion has already been made to some of the distinctions between the minority races and the "Okie." The primary distinction lies in the fact that the white can potentially attain the higher status, which the Negro can never, and the Mexican can only with difficulty. The second distinction is that the two minority races have an internal cohesion which the white group lacks. This is derived from their geographical and social segregation, and results in quite different social behavior.

The Negroes and Mexicans each concentrate in certain sections of the town, though some of each live in the neighborhood dominated by the other, and some whites are interspersed in the

⁴The distinction between Mexican, Negro and white among the outsider group are largely an expression of social avoidance between persons of separate ethnic origins. The fact that the Mexican and Negro have physical characteristics by which they may be identified is a social fact of considerable significance to the structure of Wasco society. In the following we shall occasionally refer to these ethnic groups as races, without any imputation of a biologic basis for differentials in behavior, except as biology is raised to an important consideration by the society itself.

Mexican neighborhood. Between Negro and Mexican there appears to be no friction or ill-feeling; their relations seem amicable. Despite these friendly relationships and their close physical proximity, there is no evidence of close social ties. The fact of being a Negro or Mexican is a potent fact in establishing social intercourse; and most social action takes place within each of these groups. No Negro-Mexican marriages were noted, but because this aspect of the Wasco social structure was not subjected to detailed examination, the absence of evidence is not conclusive.

The Mexican, being Catholic, has a point of contact with the whites that the Negro does not have, even though the church does not bring the Mexican and the white into very close social contact. Catholic leaders have expressed differential attitudes toward the two groups, considering the Mexicans like children. The church sponsors separate social affairs for each group. In light of this it is interesting that one completely assimilated person of Mexican descent who has become a member of the nuclear group has renounced the Catholic faith and joined a Protestant church.

The dominant attitude of the nuclear group toward the Negro is one of complete superiority. Its members have no social relationships with him, except under patronizing circumstances. The Negro will perform in a white church or the whites will be invited to come to money-raising functions at the Negro church; the whites will be condescending and the Negro not so much subservient as deferent. The Negroes have escaped so many violations of their privacies and legal rights by leaving the South that they feel well treated. They also manifest fewer of the obsequious qualities which are important to their well-being in the South. Nevertheless, they must maintain a respectful attitude and their occasional failure to do so is the subject of ill-feeling among the whites. The Negro child in school is frequently aggressive in over-compensation and is condemned for not "keeping his place." The complete segregation and the formally recognized and socially sanctioned forms of behavior in their relationship make social behavior between them more "natural"

than it is between the nuclear group and the other two outsider races.

Not only does the white outsider come from the region where the more virulent forms of race prejudice are found, but he is also in direct economic competition with the minority races. As a result, the segregation is fully as complete, and the relationship more antagonistic than is manifested between nuclear group and Negro, though there are no evidences of open hostility. On the other hand, the enforced closer association between the two groups has had some effect in breaking down the prejudiced attitudes of the whites. As one Negro storekeeper said, "It seems like the white folks don't feel so bitey as they do down South. Down there they won't come into your place because they are afraid that someone down the street won't like it. When they see that other people won't talk about them they don't mind coming in. They are a little standoffish here at first. I've seen them come in at first like they were afraid of us, but pretty soon they find out we are civilized. One woman wouldn't come in for a long time, but finally she sent her children in." Though there is a tendency for the workers to be hired by race, the three races often work in the same field together, and one of the most active labor contractors is a Negro preacher. One white outsider woman expressed the effect of this interrelationship by saying that when her husband first came out here he didn't like to work in the same field with a Negro, and that it "nearly killed him" to work for one, but now he has extreme respect for the honesty and reliability of this contractor. That the traditional prejudices have not broken down sufficiently for co-operative action was manifested by the wife of a former union officer who refused to join a union with Negroes in it because "you can't equalize me with no nigger."

The white outsiders form an aggregate which is a part of this economic class, but which manifests little evidence of social unity. We have already indicated that they represent a variety of economic backgrounds, and possess no effective institutional mechanisms for organization and unity. They form an economic class that has by and large accepted the values of the nuclear community.

Several factors lead us to the conclusion that the status drives of the outsider group are directed toward membership in the community of Wasco rather than toward status desires within their own group. The first of these is their own statements, especially the often repeated ones that they want "a steady job." Desire for permanent work is an economic one, but permanent employment is not the only possible adjustment. It is possible to make a highly successful adjustment on a permanently migratory basis, and the laborers themselves recognize that year-round farm employment means less income during the season of high labor demand, when hourly or piece rates net more per day. Secondly, they want a "place of their own." To the newcomer this usually means a small farm—"just two acres." This ambition tends to become moderated to merely a small house on a little plot of land in town. This desire gets frequent expression among those who have not acquired one, while half of a group of resettled migrants recently studied had purchased real property.⁵ A third factor indicating the direction of social desires is for education for their children, and a general appreciation of the facilities provided for this purpose by the community.

It is equally clear that the migratory workers have tended to settle down and remain in one place. The study mentioned above indicates that 84 per cent of the families intended to stay in the community in which they settled, while almost half of the families moved directly to their community of settlement from their state of origin.⁶ Furthermore, the laboring group has tended less and less to be entirely migratory, and has remained more and more in one place. This is indicated by the disappearance of squatters' shacks and tents in the last prewar years. It can be demonstrated statistically by the reduction in the fluctuation of the average attendance in the schools. Migrant workers take their children in and out of schools as they move from town to town. In the early part of the 1930's this created a great fluctuation in the monthly averages of average daily attendance in the elementary school, but this fluctuation declined steadily

⁵ Fuller, "Resettlement of Migrants in Rural Communities of California," Ms., p. 67.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 51, 67.

after 1935. Such a decline means that there is an increasing number of laborers who remain in one community during the school semester, or at least maintain a home there for their children.

We have, then, evidence that the families of agricultural workers are becoming a physical part of the total community, and that their ambitions lie in that direction. But in the community only the nuclear group can confer either status or membership, for, as we have already said, the outsiders have no mechanisms at the present time for establishing and maintaining their group entity. Though there is a large neighborhood made up of agricultural workers only, there are no evidences of neighborhood activities or neighborhood solidarity. That smaller cliques exist, independent of any formal organization, there can hardly be any doubt, but there is no evidence that such groups play a large part in the social life of the outsider, and the outsider consistently denies any regular social contacts of this sort. There are, of course, two institutions which can serve to bring together members of the outsider class: the union and the church. The union has at different times been an effective weapon in obtaining economic advantages for the laborer (see Chapter VI). In Wasco at the time the study was made it was subject to a leadership more interested in public relief than increased wages, and was shaken by the racial prejudices of these leaders. The situation in Wasco was less favorable than in neighboring towns, as the district organizer said in the following:

Wasco is different from other towns. There is a higher percentage of workers there who become home owners. It might be because the relief office is there or because rents are cheaper.

It is the hardest town to organize, and there is more hostility to organized labor there than anywhere else. At Arvin the Chamber of Commerce supported the [Government sponsored low-cost] housing plan, and so did the merchants, but not in Wasco.

The Mexican population is different too. At the union meetings the majority of the union members were drunk, and they are hard to organize. The Mexicans in a neighboring town were easiest to organize. The Wasco Mexicans don't get along with them at all.

The Wasco Negroes believe in nationalism, that is, they believe that the Negro must solve his own problem, and that their problems are

not the problems of the working class. Under the domination of the church and the police, these people were taught that the Negro must believe in the Negroes helping themselves. A former deputy sheriff, a preacher in a big frame building, and a grocery store owner who has a bunch of labor contractors are responsible for this set of ideas among the Wasco Negroes.

These people from Oklahoma aren't very class-conscious. It isn't in their background.

Union organization fails to unify the farm labor group, particularly in Wasco, because the workers are not willing to identify themselves as laborers. This is partly because such identification, and the whole philosophy of unionism is foreign to their background, and partly because such identification, constitutes a denial of community values. Instead, the individual worker strives for status as an individual.

The church has failed to serve the purpose of bringing the laborer into a unified social class for other reasons. First, many persons do not care for church membership, and so belong to none. Second, the churches are many in number and split the outsider group into small factions. Even for those who are brought together by the church, their religious ideology precludes the development of class-consciousness. For the outsider religions are non-class-conscious, if not actually anti-class-conscious. Though church membership reflects class distinctions of which both member and minister are aware, the philosophy their religions espouse negates the importance of mundane social considerations in view of the greater truths of eternity. This, as will be shown below, is particularly true of those denominations serving entirely the outsider group. For other of the outsider churches, there appears to be a kind of institutional social mobility, whereby the whole congregation moves toward social acceptance in the community. This condition again leads to a denial of labor-class identification, which would be a check against such social acceptance.

If the outsider's social ambitions are directed toward membership in the community, it must be equally clear that these desires are frustrated by the circumstances in which he is thrust. For the acquisition by the outsider of status, or even recogni-

tion of a minimal kind, is rare and the possibilities of satisfaction limited. Such frustrations find their sublimations in different ways. The church serves this end admirably, for in denying the reality of the social and economic system in which its members have an unenviable position, it sets up a putative society with transcendental values and criteria for membership. Liquor, of course, serves as escape from this social situation as well as from more personal difficulties. Finally, a form of sublimation, or partial fulfillment through symbolism, is obtained through the purchase of items in the inventory of middle-class well-being. It is not infrequent that a new and expensive electric refrigerator is found in a small shack, and one of the most expensive kind shone through the flap of a tent. Cabinet radios are similarly found, and the outsider is frequently criticized by nuclear persons for the money he spends on automobiles. These items have their practical functions; they serve some segment of creature comfort. But they are purchased at the sacrifice of other items which might serve more basic needs, or at the sacrifice of savings, which might serve the original purpose more satisfactorily but only after a long period of time and over many hazards.

Considering, then, that the white outsider himself conceives of social status with reference to the values of the nuclear group, it is permissible to use them for purposes of social segmentation, and therefore the outsider may be divided into groups according to the permanence of his employment. The laborers who are permanently employed gain permanent residence thereby, and those social advantages which result from permanent residence. Their relationship to the community is set in terms of their employment, so that they become known to at least a segment of the nuclear group as the worker on a particular ranch. The seasonal worker has no such ties with the community, and may be known to none of the nuclear residents, frequently not even those for whom he works under contract, even though he spends the greater part of the year in the community.

Members of the nuclear group are in the habit of making a distinction between agricultural laborers which, in a general

way, follows this dichotomy; namely between "dust-bowlers" and "Okies." The Okie is, as we have already indicated, characterized as a congenital ne'er-do-well without ambition or desire, while the "dust-bowler" is a person of ability and good character who is temporarily in bad circumstances. In the words of one farmer, "The dust-bowl people who came out here have settled down and become real citizens. There isn't one of them that hasn't gotten a steady job and settled down. But these Okies who come out here, who weren't anything before they left, don't amount to anything. They are filthy dirty—you give them a decent house and in a couple of weeks they are spitting through the cracks. Why, yes, I've seen it myself." Another says, "They are Okies back home, just as much as they are here, and never would amount to a damn."

This distinction between agricultural laborers who have and those who have not achieved the standards of the dominant group is certainly valid, though we cannot accept the imputed attributes. The agricultural laborers make the same sort of distinction. One of them spoke in shocked tones of the deplorable condition of the people in a certain region in Oklahoma; another laughingly said that the Oklahoman has just as much prejudice against the Arkansas people, as the Californians do against the Oklahomans. But these statements came from persons who would, from their economic circumstances and general living conditions, have been branded "Okies," not dust-bowlers.

The important thing is that, while the distinction exists, the nuclear member makes the assumption that the agricultural laborer is an Okie, with the social connotations already described, until he proves himself otherwise. As one outsider woman said, with keen insight into the tendency of persons to generalize regarding people unknown to them, "You know, one person can cause a lot of trouble for others. You can't blame these people for feeling that you can't trust those Okies. There are some that make them feel that way." The outsider can only establish the fact that he is not an Okie by advancing his economic position, and the first advancement possible is to permanent employment status. The most frequent opportunities are in dairies or as permanent hired hands on middle-size farms. A

few opportunities are found in the town as service station attendants or bus drivers, and these jobs most frequently lead to recognition by the community.

The permanently employed group of outsiders either live in a small house in Little Oklahoma City or on the land of the farmer for whom he works. The farmers frequently furnish their regular laborers a house comparable to that which they would have in town, namely a three-room bungalow with linoleum-covered or bare floors, and electricity. For this he usually does not have to pay any rental, for the house is considered a regular perquisite. Socially, he tends to remain separate, knowing only a few intimates, his nearest neighbors or his working companions. If he goes to church, it is almost always to one of the newer sects in the community, while most frequently he merely sends his children to Sunday School. For those who do attend church it becomes the center of all their social and recreational activities.

The temporarily employed may have the same living conditions, but more frequently they are less favorable. Many avail themselves of the cabins that have been built in congested courts like the one-room tourist cabins of an earlier period, usually furnished with electricity, running water in the yard, and a common toilet which may or may not be of the flush type. Others live "on the desert," where they have their tents and accumulate shacks by gradual accretion. This practice is frowned upon by the health authorities of the county, and has virtually disappeared, except that during the season when much labor is needed tents are found in uninhabited groves. Such migrants (or families who have their homes in some other community) may also come in homemade trailers and settle either in places where accommodations are available or on empty lots near a filling station or the home of a friend. Like all the preceding groups, they have cars which are essential to their occupation. Occasionally they are quite new, but cars six or eight years old are more usual. Some also have acquired such things as washing machines, refrigerators, and furniture.

The Negroes live in a 20-acre tract that was subdivided by

one of the older citizens and sold to them on a small payment plan. It lies outside the area served by the public utilities district, but water has been furnished them. There are, however, no sewers. The housing in this Negro community is the poorest in Wasco, few of the dwellings are painted, and none is of substantial size. Some of the Negroes and Mexicans in the district have stores and others have rent-houses for Negroes, but none is well off. Very few of the Negroes escape permanently the relief rolls. The Negro has his own churches, of which there are three, his own stores for immediate necessities, and even a civic organization. These represent some of the elements of internal unity lacking among the white outsider. There are also status differentials but the nature of these was not determined in view of the fact that the major problems here are concerned with the white group. A few leaders are well known to many white business men.

The Mexican lives in similar circumstances, with less clear social segregation and with more variation in living conditions. Many of them live in the Negro district, but there is an area in Wasco known as the Mexican colony. There are a number of stores operated by Mexican entrepreneurs, and one restaurant that is occasionally visited by whites. Though they do not have a church of their own, they remain fairly segregated under the Catholic roof. The unpainted barn-like building of a Mexican Pentecostal group still stands, but has not been in use for a year. The Mexicans, too, have enough civic unity to be able, for instance, to have a float representing them in the local parade, and there are status differentials among them.

LESSER SOCIAL GROUPINGS

In each of the social groups described there exist smaller units which are, however, of a different order. One is the family; the other is the clique. Of the family—the biological family consisting of a married couple and its dependents, usually children—little need be said. It is economically communal, sharing the profits of labor and the costs of living. With the highly devel-

oped tendency in the society to segregate social activities on both sex and age lines the family plays a relatively small part in the community social life, except for some families of German descent. The status of one member of a family affects that of the others: the school child may be an agricultural laborer's son and therefore is an Okie; the business man derives prestige from his wife's social activities; and the success of their children redound to the parents' credit.

The cliques are made up of persons of similar social background and tastes; they are, as one person put it, people who are "our kind." One clique may be clearly defined, another but vaguely, and always it is a highly fluid unit. An individual may have full membership or he may remain on the peripheries. Usually the members of a clique are in about the same economic circumstances and have about the same amount of prestige in the community. The primary function of the clique is to delimit the group in which the individual has social experience, where he derives the pleasure of belonging and associating with other beings. It supplements and often supplants the function of the family. Secondly, it is the group which determines the minor sanctions of social behavior, for the member will tend to behave according to the norm of his group on penalty of ostracism, while the person hoping to attain membership will conduct himself acceptably. The third function of the clique is to serve as a means of recognizing the social position and tastes of the individual members, because as their behavior tends to approach a norm, so the expectancy of that behavior can be predicted by the person less intimately acquainted. This is important in making proper adjustments upon social contact, and is necessary in a society where the norms of conduct vary as greatly as in Wasco.

Several factors operative in Wasco tend to segregate the individuals of each class into smaller units. One of the most important of these is his attitude toward drinking. One of the first things that the newcomer hears about Wasco is that it is divided between the drinkers and the non-drinkers. Such statements refer, of course, only to the nuclear group. Since the

clique is a unit for social participation, attitudes toward drinking are naturally important considerations in establishing membership, for drinking is a determinative of social behavior. Religion also tends to separate the population into smaller groups. There are many churches in Wasco, yet many attend no church. Since a congeries of taboos regarding social behavior are associated with religion, it is natural for the religious and the non-religious persons (or rather church-goers and persons who do not go to church) to find their social interests divergent. The religious group is re-divided by the different sects. This is in part because of the difference in status-level of the different denominations, and in part because the church organization itself presents the machinery for cohesion. Occupation is another factor in segregation. Farmers have in the past tended to remain separate from the townspeople, but this distinction is breaking down. The teachers and the oil workers tend to consort with their own occupational group. Clubs and orders in the community bring together individuals who have like social interests, and thus set up cliques. The tendency to age-grading is manifest in many aspects of the social pattern, and cliques are inclined to be unified by age categories. A set of young high school graduates can be distinguished from a group of pre-married and just married people; a group of mothers of young children can be separated from those whose children are well along in school. This age-grading is formalized not only in the schools, which separate classes by age, but also by many organizations which have special units for younger people. Where the family has remained strong, as with some of the Germans, it has the same functions as the clique, while family dissolution and age-grading are correlated social phenomena.

SUMMARY

Fundamental to the understanding of Wasco society is its division into two separate social classes: an upper one which has continued from pioneer days and has inherited the ties, institutions, and attitudes of the old community, and therefore forms

the social nucleus; and a lower one which is made up of persons who have come to the town later, who do not have access to most of the older social institutions, and who therefore remain outside the normal spheres of community activity. This distinction transcends all others in importance with respect to social and economic behavior of the people themselves, and therefore is basic to an understanding of the social structure of Wasco. Each of these classes is, in turn, subdivided into more or less well-defined status levels with varying amounts of prestige. The nuclear group includes an elite, a middle group, and a marginal group which are generally differentiated by occupation and economic circumstances, and whose daily social and economic activities tend each to vary from the other. The outsiders are segregated first on a racial basis, with little or no social contact between the Mexicans, Negroes, and whites. The Mexicans and Negroes each have their own community with special institutions serving the group as a whole and some evidence of social solidarity. The whites, however, do not have any homogeneity, except insofar as it derives from the common effort to attain acceptance in the nuclear community. On this basis two levels of status may be seen, one with relative permanence and stability and another with no established ties whatsoever.

The rural community everywhere in America, as in human society without exception, recognizes levels of prestige and creates and maintains social distinctions on the basis of some calculus of personal worth. In Wasco, however, there is a very real difference in the character of the social structure from that more generally found in the rural communities where farming is not industrialized. This difference lies in two things. First, that social evaluations are made at such a social distance that symbols are used in the determination of social worth, rather than a true evaluation of the individual on the basis of personally known qualities. Thus occupation and the pecuniary calculus generally establish the individual's social standing, with a general tendency to class people accordingly. Second, the society is divided into two fundamental groups who, though they are mutually dependent, are in direct economic competition.

Between such groups there are not merely differences in social standing, but a lack of social contact, quite different modes of behavior, and most particularly great differences in natural economic interests. In these matters, social relationships are like those to be found in the cities rather than those of the farm community as generally known.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIAL STATUS AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCE

THE VARIATION in the social activities of the Wasco citizenry makes clear the necessity for a classification such as the one established in the preceding chapter. It is only by discussing them with reference to the norms for social classes that description becomes feasible. Conversely, the existence of norms for social groups substantiates the established categories.

By social experience is meant the gamut of activities which fill the lives of the people, and which they engage in together with other persons; patterns of behavior, established by cultural tradition, that serve to determine the individual's place in the social aggregate.

MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD

Seasonal Rhythm. The most compelling of the individual's activities are those devoted to the business of getting a living; for not only do they occupy a major portion of the waking hours of each person, but they are also indicative of his social status and his level of living. As a background to the economic activities of all and sundry, there is an insistent rhythm established by the march of the seasons which determine crop maturity, employment, and business activity in turn. The two major crops, potatoes and cotton, create a double beat to the annual cycle—a rhythm which should be briefly described.

In the winter, as the last of the cotton is picked and the cotton "bollies" (the cotton that is picked from the dried bush with the pod adhering) are being pulled, the cold rains and the tulle fogs settle over the countryside. This is a relatively dormant period, when the farmer is preparing his soil and doing the

tasks that have accumulated during busier seasons. At this time there is plenty of work for the farmer and his regularly hired hand, but none for the seasonal workers; the merchants' business is slow; the town is dead even on Saturday night. Toward the end of February more and more tractors are crawling up and down the land, first preparing the long potato field and then sowing the potatoes into the ground and leaving the soil behind wrinkled in deep furrows. A few added laborers drive tractors or work in the sheds cutting the potatoes for seed, and business begins to pick up. During the "hundred days" in which the potatoes mature the cotton beds are prepared and the seed dropped in the trough of shallow furrows. The town remains quiescent; work is still scarce. Purchases are limited to the necessities, while talk of potato prices grows in pace with the vines. By the end of April the first shipments of potatoes are announced, trailer houses appear in empty places, and campers occasionally along the highway. The sheds along the railroad tracks begin to hum as the washers are put to work; the laborers in the field and the graders in the shed have money in their pockets. Saturday night becomes the active time it classically is in agricultural communities. Preachers exhort the public on the street; a roller-skating rink blares out canned music under a tent. The merchants remain open until late and look to this period as the key to their year's earnings. If potato prices are rising the car salesmen begin to seek out the farmers to discuss the merits of the latest model, while the farmer's face reflects a downward curve of the market. By the middle of July the potato digger has eaten its way under all the deep furrows and left the ground flat and firmly packed behind it. Labor demand drops off, the trailers disappear, and the farmers have a short vacation after the cotton is once more irrigated.

In September the vacation is over, the schools are busy, the two gins begin to hum as the trailers and trucks filled with cotton drive up to the scales. The town is again active, this time with less excitement over price, with not quite so many outside workers, and with a longer and slower pull to the end. The pickers go over the fields once, then again, and by the third time the year is over. Work drops off as the farmers contract

for a few laborers to pull the "bollies." Most of the workers are out of a job and drawing assistance from one of the relief agencies.

The rhythmic variation affects the tempo of life of the whole community (Table 15 and Chart 3). Employment rises and falls

TABLE 15.—MONTHLY VARIATION IN STATE RELIEF ADMINISTRATION CASE LOAD IN WASCO AREA AND THE LABOR DEMAND FOR KERN COUNTY

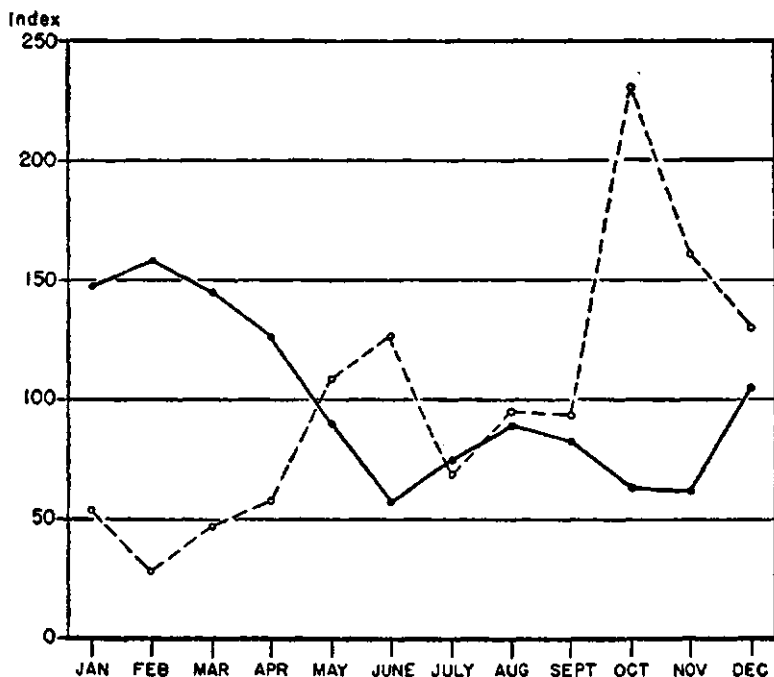
Month	Case load		Labor required		Money order receipts	
	No.	Index ¹	No.	Index ¹	Amt.	Index ¹
January	1,215.5	1.47	361	.54	13,471	.98
February	1,292.7	1.57	186	.28	11,666	.85
March	1,197.4	1.45	318	.47	11,826	.86
April	1,039.3	1.26	386	.57	12,452	.91
May	739.0	.90	734	1.09	13,186	.96
June	471.1	.57	851	1.26	16,823	1.23
July	614.7	.75	464	.69	14,304	1.04
August	736.3	.89	637	.95	12,222	.89
September	681.0	.83	631	.94	12,213	.89
October	531.8	.64	1,556	2.31	16,002	1.17
November	510.7	.62	1,082	1.61	15,343	1.12
December	866.5	1.05	876	1.30	14,864	1.09
Average annual	824.6	1.00	673.5	1.00	13,712	1.00

¹ Relation of monthly average to annual average.

SOURCES: Case load for Wasco district, taken from SRA weekly report on applications and case load statistics (form 213-K). Labor demand from R. L. Adams, Agricultural Labor Requirements and Supply, June, 1940, Mimeo. Report No. 70, Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics. Money order receipts from records of the Wasco Post Office.

with the advent of the harvest season and the population increases and decreases. Relief rolls rise and fall conversely with them. Business activity similarly rises and falls in the same rhythm. But this is a pattern of intensity, for the actual work varies with occupation, which in turn expresses sexual, age, and

RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP OF RELIEF CASES TO FARM LABOR REQUIREMENTS



- Average Monthly State Relief Administration Case Load Wasco Area, 1938 -1940.
- - -○- - Average Monthly Farm Labor Requirement, Kern County (Index figures give relationship of monthly average to annual average).

SOURCE :

Case Load: Form 213K, SRA Weekly Report on Application and Case Load Statistics.

Labor Demand: R.L. Adams, Agricultural Labor Requirements and Supply, Kern County.

See Table 15.

social differentiation. The economic activities of the men can best be described in three categories: the farm operator, the business people of the town, and the farm laborers.

Farm Operators. The work of the growers in the above cycle is the most insistent and continuous of any. Every farmer declares that farming in California not only requires more ability than dry farming, but it also requires infinitely more work. Since most of them have at one time or another engaged in dry farming, and some quite recently, there seems no reason to doubt their statement. The farm operator is, after all, expecting a great deal in return for his work, and he conscientiously piles work upon work in an effort to increase these returns. Adages which suggest the insistence of farm work understate the reality; tractors driving through the night make working from "sun to sun" seem easy. Though field work is relatively slow in the middle of winter and for a few weeks in August, it never ceases. The pressure is relieved, and the hired hands are released, but there is always field work to be done and the operator remains to do it. A whole mass of socioeconomic forces make him want to increase his holdings, and with this increase the responsibility grows, the work grows, the tensions grow. Some producers have acquired farms which they feel are large enough, but most are still hoping and trying to expand. Farms of 160-200 acres are often considered the optimum size for it is large enough to require the full managerial ability of the owner, and also large enough to make the most of a full complement of power equipment.

The farmer of a forty-acre tract can do most of his own work other than the actual harvesting, except that he may require one hand to help him plant and irrigate. Any larger farm requires one man during much of the year, and farms over 120 acres require at least one and usually two hands hired all the year round. This means that the operator's time tends to be devoted more and more to managerial work, and the operator of two or three hundred acres, with perhaps a potato shed to manage as well spends almost all his time watching over the labors of others. The tradition of the dirt farmer remains, however, and the farm

operator who is not in his field each day to direct activities is contemptuously referred to as "farming from the saloons." It is not without some satisfaction that operators are pointed out who delegate this managerial duty to others and are now losing their holdings. The large farms of a thousand or more acres are in a different category, because the managers are highly trained professionals, receiving good salaries. It is no hollow tradition, this insistence on the farmer remaining in contact with the soil, for the permanent labor hired at a hundred dollars a month on a straight salary basis can hardly be expected to be a first-class manager with requisite training and with his full interest in getting the most out of the soil. The tradition means, moreover, that when the managerial tasks do not consume the operator's time, he is actually on the tractor, looking to the pump, or doing other tasks which fill not only his day, but also his year.

The Townspeople. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find anything in the life of the business people of Wasco that is in any way unique. The mechanics and clerks go to work at eight and leave at five, a pattern measured by a raucous shop whistle. The salesmen wear pressed suits, the waitresses gingham dresses, the filling station attendants the company uniform. Many townspeople know their fellows by their first names and use them in ordinary business transactions—more than in the cities. But this in no way alters the nature of the business relationship; the car buyer and the salesman are as wary as they would be if entirely unknown to one another. And the first name acquaintance is not universal; the laborer remains outside this sphere of intimacy. There is probably a larger proportion of business proprietors in Wasco than in the city, but, as has already been pointed out, they are being crowded in many fields by chain operators and outside corporations.

The Farm Laborer. The economic activity of the agricultural worker is directly tied with the seasonal rhythm of the crops. The permanently hired hand receives from sixty to a hundred dollars per month, occasionally more, plus perquisites of an unfurnished house, space for a small garden, and sometimes

gasoline.¹ For this he works at least ten hours a day, though the dairy farmers and some others require more. His work includes driving the tractor for preparing seed beds, planting and harvesting, irrigating, maintaining equipment, and sometimes acting as foreman. Some farmers feel that the returns for hiring a competent man, who can be relied upon in crises, are great enough to justify premium wages which may run as high as \$135 (including perquisites), but most operators bargain more closely in the labor market, and \$90 is generally considered good pay for all the services one man can perform in a month.

The seasonal employee is usually paid on a piece-work or hourly basis. In this way not only is the laborer's inefficiency accounted for in his wages, but also many of the labor costs of operation inefficiencies are passed on to him. Special skills or aptitudes earn a premium to the worker, and the person lacking them is at a disadvantage. It is for this reason that field operations requiring stooping are often segregated on a racial basis. The Filipino and Mexican, who after long years of practice have developed the requisite skill and stamina, are almost exclusively hired to thin beets and onions and to harvest lettuce. Other workers frequently state that they have had to abandon such employment as they could not keep up the pace set by the Filipino. The operator would be willing to give such employment to them, as the pay is on a per-acre basis.

The potato crop is harvested on an assembly chain pattern, and the industrialized nature of this operation warrants a full description. The potatoes are planted in broad ridges separated by deep furrows which serve for irrigation. The mechanical digger is drawn by a tractor, and consists essentially of a blade which cuts under the ridge, a belt which carries the potatoes up and separates them from the dirt, and drops them back on the earth, and a roller which tramps down the bed so that the potatoes lie on top of the soil. The potato picker wears about his waist a broad belt to which are attached hooks. On these he impales the number of sacks which he will need in order to

¹ These wage figures, and all subsequent ones, are based upon 1940-1941 data. Obviously great changes in income have occurred due to wartime labor shortage.

complete his "space." Each picker is allotted a certain space of from thirty to sixty paces along the row which he must harvest before the digger returns on its circuit. His work consists in filling the sacks and setting them in a row. The normal field employs about 24 such hands when a single-row mechanical digger is used. About every fourth or fifth circuit of the digger a truck comes to pick up the sacked potatoes. A crew of four swampers and a driver load the truck as it moves down the row and hauls the potatoes to the shed. The potatoes are then dumped into a bin feeding a chain which carries them through the washer. They are automatically graded by size, but eight or ten women "grade out" the potatoes which have been burnt by the sun or affected by blight or rot. The chain carries the potatoes to the sacks in which they are to be shipped. These are filled and weighed by the "jiggers," then sewed and hauled to the cars. Table 16 shows the workers required, the mode of

TABLE 16.—WORKERS, WAGES, AND LABOR COST OF POTATO HARVEST OPERATIONS, 1940

No.	Type of work	Wage scale	Wages per man-day	Cost per day
48	Field operations ¹ Pickers	35¢ per hr.	\$3.50	\$168.00
4	Tractor and digger operators	40¢ per hr.	4.00	16.00
Shed operations				
10	Swampers	9¢ per ton	5.40	54.00
9	Graders	50¢ per car	4.00	36.00
2	Dumpers	65¢ per car	5.20	10.40
2	Jiggers	65¢ per car	5.20	10.40
2	Sewers	65¢ per car	5.20	10.40
2	Loaders	65¢ per car	5.20	10.40
2	Side men	65¢ per car	5.20	10.40
				\$326.00

¹ Two field crews operating for one shed crew.

SOURCE: Verbal statement of active potato producer.

payment and the labor costs of the operation given by a successful grower who has his own shed. Variations in yield, grade, and wages affect this setup.

This operation covers four acres on each of two separate fields with a normal yield of 300 sacks to the acre, working a ten-hour day. The labor cost of \$326 per day for harvesting the crop suggests the importance of hired labor to the farm operator. Timing is a very important factor in the harvesting of Wasco potatoes as they may be spoiled by a short exposure to the sun, while delays add to the labor cost. In this operation the grower's full day is devoted to non-farm activities, largely managerial or administrative. The operator who furnished these particular figures also hired a "row boss" to supervise field activities and act as timekeeper, and had a special agent to handle sales.

The assembly-line aspect of potato harvesting is not duplicated in the cotton field. These pickers follow along the rows filling long canvas bags. These are then weighed and the weight recorded either on a ticket which is given the worker, or in the timekeeper's book. The cotton is hauled to the gin in trailers where it awaits being processed, and where it passes out of the farmer's hands.

The tasks these workers perform are hard, and working under pressure in a temperature normally around 100° F. requires real stamina. There is no wonder that many of the less hardy workers prefer to remain on the public welfare rolls as long as possible, thus bringing on the virulent censure of the nuclear population. Some of the work, like the sugar beet thinning, requires a kind of suppleness that is foreign to the muscular habits of the white worker. Perhaps the surprise expressed by one of the members of the elite is justified. "The marvel has been that they will work at all, getting only a little more than they did on relief," he said. "It is something that I didn't expect with this changing of the social order." The workers in the field feel that the forty cents an hour rate is good wages, and with two members of the family working, the eight dollars that they make each day suffices for their physical, if not their social, needs. The difficulty is not insufficient pay, but under-employment. In Wasco there are only two periods when labor is needed

in large quantities, and even at these times there is an over-supply of workers. During part of the year the laborers move out of Wasco to work fields that mature at times when work is scarce in Wasco. But this moving is costly, often requiring double rent payments, large gasoline expenditures, and the added cost of living on the road. The worker frequently has a regular work connection in a distant town, but this does not prevent him from being without work much of the time, even during the season of general employment. Almost two months after the potato season had opened, a number of laborers with good work connections in Wasco had had only fifteen to twenty days of employment.

The worker employed on a monthly basis is better off in that he has a fixed income, but there are only a few such jobs, and since they pay less per day than seasonal work, and since it is often impossible for the wife to work, the difference is not very great. To this must be added the fact that most workers in Wasco employed on a so-called permanent basis do not have employment security, and the worker who has sacrificed the higher seasonal wage rate during the harvest period, still fears being laid off during the slack season (Table 11). This is not conducive to stability or the interest in workmanship that the farmer wants.

Women's Work. The work of the man, whatever his class, is theoretically that of providing the necessities and luxuries of the family; the woman's job is to care for provisions once they have been brought into the household. This fundamental sexual division of labor, though not sanctioned through any express tabus or elaborated beliefs, is maintained in the thinking of the people even to a greater degree than it is actually practiced. For although the woman has entered into the field of man's activities and the working wife is accepted without question in Wasco society, the man has been reluctant to take over any of the household duties. It is woman's work to prepare the food, keep the house clean, wash and repair clothes, and care for the children. Frequently she manages all the affairs of the household, making purchases and keeping accounts. We may divide the women into three groups: those who work only in the home

(found in every class), those who work as clerks, teachers, or in some other business enterprise (predominantly in the middle nuclear group), and those who work as agricultural laborers (outsiders only).

The majority of the nuclear group women who are married do not engage in any remunerative occupation but devote all their energies to attending to the household, and their spare time to recreational activities which also serve to establish and maintain the social position and relationships of the family. The business of keeping house requires over half of the woman's time, sometimes virtually all. But the definite trend away from large families, the absence of any gardening or other outdoor chores, and the possession of mechanical devices which simplify household tasks, all serve to give the woman more and more freedom from her primary economic function (household duties), to devote to her secondary one (acquisition of status through social participation). These observations apply as much to the wives of farmers as they do to the women of the town, but not to the farm laborers.

There is no loss of status through the woman's working if the job itself is not "degrading." It is the norm for unmarried women who are no longer in school to work for a salary as office or sales help, and some women have become entrepreneurs. Though there is a tendency for them to stop working after marriage, many of them continue at their occupation, at least until they have children. This means that the new family will have more money at the expense of operational efficiency and ability to engage in the normal leisure-status activities of the women. The important point is that there are no direct pressures brought by the society on the women, the choice is made on the basis of personal predilection and the evaluation of the social and economic results. Very frequently the wife of a small entrepreneur will assist her husband in his business, sometimes to keep books and more frequently to help during rush hours or to relieve him for lunch. The farm wife rarely helps her husband in farm work, and rarely has a garden to tend, so that much of the traditional drudgery of the farm wife no longer exists.

The outsider wife either works in the fields or potato sheds with her husband, or she is busy maintaining a household. Very

TABLE 17.—ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO STATUS AND SEX

Social status		Men	Women
Nuclear group	Elite	Farmer devoting almost all time to managerial activities Corporation executives and a few successful entrepreneurs Professionals	Managing household usually with maid or part-time paid assistance Much club work, entertaining, and cultivation of leisure-time activities
	Middle	Farmers hiring labor most of year Professionals, especially teachers Salesmen, clerks, technical and other white collar workers Skilled laborers and some semi-skilled workers such as school custodians, mechanics, and oil workers	Housekeeping, rarely with help Often working for wages or to help husband in business Church and club work important
	Marginal	A few "worker-farmers" Most semi-skilled laborers like bus drivers, mechanics, etc., and some skilled laborers	Keeping house is major task Church work may be prominent but little formal club work or entertainment
Outsiders	Permanently employed	Agricultural laborers, dairy-men, general hands, tractor drivers, irrigators, occasionally harvest-crew foremen	House work, with occasional gardening or chicken raising Sometimes work in fields during harvest
	Seasonally employed	Harvest hands and seasonal workers as required	All housework, rarely a garden Often works alongside of husband in field

rarely she works as a maid, for but few women in Wasco have assistance in their household, and when they do they usually prefer a Mexican or Negro woman. As an agricultural worker the woman has exactly the same duties as her husband, and is

working at the same time that he is. This means temporary curtailment of all possible household activities. It means that children of about ten years are expected to care for the house or trailer and their younger brothers and sisters, while the older children often help in the fields. If they are too young to be allowed to work according to law, they may assist their parents in small ways. Very frequently pre-school age children are seen in the field, alternately playing and helping their parents.

The economic activities of the several social groups have been summarized in Table 17.

ECONOMIC NEIGHBORHOODS

The neighborhood has a special place in American society. Rural sociologists have shown that in many farm areas the people living within a small area tend to have such a degree of close association that the neighborhood forms the major social environment for the individual.² In the cities, however, the neighborhoods tend to have an economic basis. Rather than representing an arena for social action, the unity of the neighborhood in an urban environment generally develops in response to economic pressures. Even where they are unified by common racial and national backgrounds, the economic pressures have generally been responsible for the appearance of unity. Such economic neighborhoods are familiar in every American community, which has its "wrong side of the tracks."

The neighborhood in Wasco conforms more to the urban than the rural pattern. Those who dwell in the open country rarely show any special degree of association with their immediate neighbors, but seek their social ties on the basis of common interests. There are no rural schools or open country churches which might serve to bring people from a particular section together. The absence of barriers to communication—of breaks

² Charles H. Cooley in his *Social Organization* cites the neighborhood as a primary group—that first group beyond the immediate family in which the individual is socialized. Based upon his conceptualization, sociologists have been able to delimit areas of close social interrelationships (cf. J. H. Kolb, *Rural Primary Groups, A Study of Agricultural Neighborhoods*, Research Bulletin No. 51, Agr. Exp. Station of the Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison, 1921).

in the continuity of farms by hill, wood, or stream—deprives the area of a natural basis for delimiting such groupings. Some neighborhood action was found in one area, where the flow of a stream affected the water table and created a particular economic situation which gave a common interest to the neighbors. Some of the neighborhood activities went beyond this common interest. By and large, however, little evidence existed of specially close interrelationships among farmers based upon nearness.

In town, neighborhoods are clearly economic. A drive through the streets immediately reveals the dilapidated Negro quarters, the impoverished Mexican section, the area built up by migrants from the dust-bowl, the residential area of the elite, and areas of intermediate or mixed status. Table 18 shows the occu-

TABLE 18.—OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WASCO VOTING PRECINCTS

Occupation class	Proportion of voting precinct						
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	28	28	27	24	10	8	3
B. Farm operators	7	2	2	2	1	4	1
C. Clerical workers	18	12	13	12	8	8	1
D. Skilled laborers	37	39	43	49	46	36	11
E. Unskilled laborers	10	19	15	13	35	44	84
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

SOURCE: Tabulated from voting registration sheets, 1939. Based upon 1,760 persons listed, of which 1,131 were classified by occupation. The remainder were chiefly housewives.

pation classification of voting registrants of the precincts. Such voting units do not conform to the boundaries of economic neighborhoods, but the table reflects their effect. Voting precinct I which includes the best residential district, shows fewest labor-

ers and most in farming and white collar pursuits. Precincts II, III, and IV are in mixed areas. Precinct V includes the area of settlement of migratory workers, and this is shown by the proportion of laborers tabulated. Precinct VI includes the Mexican colony and VII the Negro colony. This last precinct conforms most closely to economic boundaries, and therefore the high proportion of laboring people is most accurately reflected.

The pressures forcing segregation are made on an economic basis, but that does not belie their essential social motivation. The Negro and Mexican are forced to live in their own neighborhoods, and while such direct pressure cannot be brought against white unskilled laborers, the economic pressures can. Land titles often contain restriction clauses which effectively maintain the quality of the districts, and these clauses are enforced by the neighbors, as was witnessed when a permanently employed laborer tried to build a modest house in one of the areas restricted by contract clauses. Land values express this social differentiation of the neighborhoods.

Such neighborhoods have little social cohesion. Social contacts are not set within such neighborhoods, and there are no formalizations of the neighborhood as a social unit. Primary group relationships in Wasco—that is, the social group in which attitudes and behavior are established—are not based upon such geographical units, but rather on common interests which derive from similarity in age, marital status, morals, and recreation habits.

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

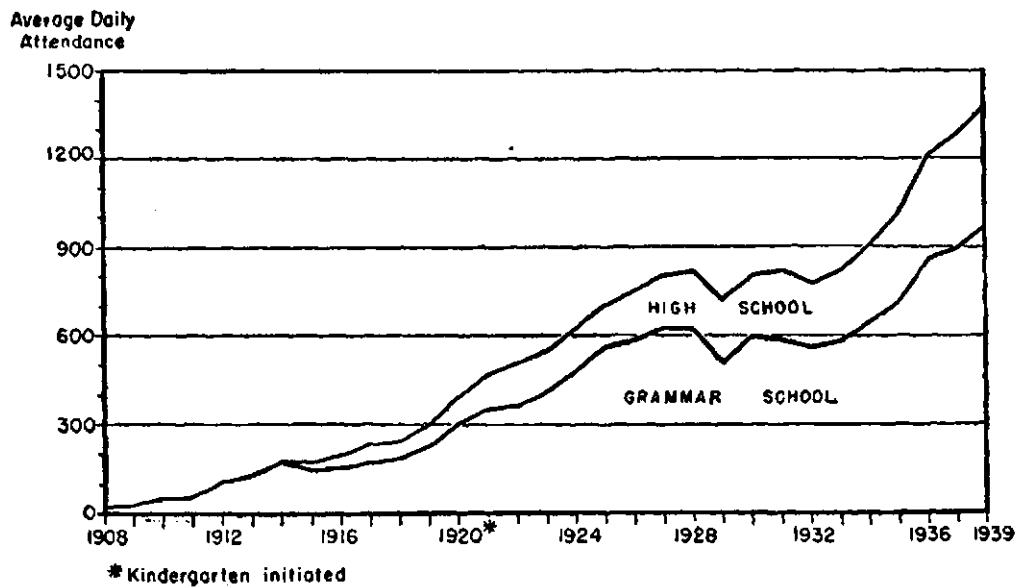
The schools are the major public institution of the community. They serve not only to educate the young and to inculcate in them the mores of our society, but they form the major integrative force in the community. By mandate they are all-inclusive, bringing the young of every race, creed, and economic status together. It is the single institution which brings together people in Wasco irrespective of race or status. And if the schools fail completely to integrate the social classes into a true community, they serve this end far more than any other institution.

At the time Wasco was settled and for 20 years prior there were two or three single-teacher schools in the area. Since 1908 the school enrollment has increased steadily until in 1940 the average daily attendance reached about 1,400. This growth is presented graphically in Chart 4. The plateau on the Chart shows that Wasco had achieved its agricultural growth in the middle twenties, after which no more large tracts were broken into small farming units. The sudden upswing in the curve coincides with the influx of laborers who came to California in search for employment and settled in the community as shown on Chart 2. The last five years brought an increment of 70 per cent in school attendance.

The increase in enrollment was accompanied by an increase in plant, and as early as 1929 the half-million mark was reached in school property evaluation. Soon after the establishment of the colony in 1907 a grammar school was built. A high school was started in 1915 and by 1917 the first unit was built. Building after building has been added, the most recent acquisition being a junior high school, administratively a part of the elementary school. The high school has an elaborate auditorium, a well-equipped gymnasium, and a football field with lights for night games.

The school system has suffered some change in status during its history. An early high school principal was a community leader with a firm conviction of the value of "cultural" as opposed to "practical" education. He was responsible for the construction of the auditorium which is unusually lavish. He stressed the arts and classical languages at the expense of commercial and agricultural courses. He likewise insisted that the teachers become integral parts of the community. They were encouraged to join the best clubs and attend the elite church. Since his departure these activities are not emphasized, and some teachers report actual discouragement of such participation. Newer teachers do not join and older ones drop out. Fewer teachers are now church members, and they tend to develop fewer ties within the community and to maintain social interests outside the community. Men teachers are becoming more numerous. They generally participate in community affairs in

GROWTH OF THE WASCO SCHOOLS AS INDICATED BY ANNUAL
AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE — 1908-1939



SOURCE: Records in the Office of the Superintendent of the Kern County Public Schools

CHART 4

close association with the business men. Along with this shift in the status of teachers has come a new emphasis on education for livelihood, though the two facts are not necessarily associated. In part both reflect the interests and attitudes of the later school principals, yet both changes conform to dominant social opinion.

The schools, it must be recognized, are subject to two dominant direct influences. On the one hand, they must conform to the county and state patterns for schools, for they receive county and state funds and are integrated into the state-wide system. They must maintain certain records, conform to certain standards, and include certain prescribed courses. The community also has influence over the operation of the schools. School boards are elected for the elementary and high school, and these exert influence over the school chiefly in two ways: determination of expenditures and hiring of teaching staff. The democratic processes make it possible for the citizen to have an appropriate measure of influence over the schools and the education of the young. That this measure of influence resides largely in the nuclear group is shown by the fact that no laborers have ever been elected to a school board, and by the real fear shown over the threat that such a representative should be elected. This is discussed in a later section. There appears to be a reluctance to grant permanent tenure to teachers. Very few in the high school are granted a permanent right to their job. State law provides for automatic tenure after a period of teaching in elementary schools, but the school board at one time tried to insert a waiver of tenure in teacher contracts.³ Such reluctance to grant permanent tenure appears to reflect a desire to maintain firmer control over the school.

Teachers in general bring their behavior into close conformity with the moral strictures established by the more conservative elements in the community. Public acknowledgment of smoking

³ The following appeared in the minutes of the school board: "Board discussed matter of teachers who will become permanent. Stated tenure will not influence Board in the matter of discharge. Those who will become permanent will be asked to sign agreement to resign at the end of any term at the pleasure of the Board."

is avoided by women teachers and drinking by both men and women. Among a growing number of women teachers, social life is largely carried on outside the community.

While there is evidence in testimony that the teacher has lost status in the community, the school remains the most important single institution in the eyes of the citizens, whatever their walk of life. The quality of buildings and grounds and of the facilities made available at the schools appeared to be a point of personal pride among numerous people in the town. The quality of the schools is the most cogent argument for the existence of a strong community spirit, just as the school serves as a major integrating force in the community. The emphasis such references generally receive indicates that the quality of the building and the availability of equipment are more important to the citizenry than either quality of teaching or breadth of education. Since Wasco had swung away from a period of "cultural" education, the emphasis upon practical courses at the expense of language, history, and arts is understandable.

The student entering high school makes a choice between one of five programs of study: College preparatory, agriculture, industrial arts, home making, and commercial. College preparatory courses conform to the standards of the state institutions of higher learning and include four years of English (two each of grammar and literature), two years of mathematics (algebra and plane geometry), two years of history ("world" and United States), at least two in one foreign language, and a variety of courses ranging from mechanical drawing to "social problems." The other programs of study are far more specialized, requiring four years of English and one each of mathematics, social studies, and United States history. Other subjects, outside the special field, are elective. Four courses are given in agriculture, all of which the agriculture students take. There are nine commercial courses, six home economics courses, and five industrial arts classes.

In an effort to determine what schooling meant to the students who were enrolled, certain school forms were examined. Since the Wasco school did not utilize this form, those from a neighboring high school were used. Among other things this form

inquired: What kind of work would you like to do after leaving school? What kind of work will you probably be doing? Name the three types of employment you are most interested in. The answers to these questions were not kept separate, since they are, in essence, the same question. The accompanying tabulation shows the answers, taking for each student each answer that fell in a separate category. The occupational background of this group of 94 students appears in the right-hand column which gives employment of that parent who had the socially highest classification of occupation. The answers were given in more specific terms and represent a wider array of answers than appear on Table 19. Most frequent among boys were "mechanic"

TABLE 19.—EXPRESSED OCCUPATIONAL AMBITIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS¹

	Boys	Girls	Total	Occupation of parents ²	
				Number	Per cent
A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	22	13	35	3	3
B. Farm operators	10	0	10	19	20
C. Clerical, etc.	6	18	24	3	3
D. Skilled laborers	29	11	40	20	21
E. Unskilled laborers	3	0	3	41	44
F. Unemployed, unknown	5	15	20	8	9
G. Aviator or air stewardess	14	3	17	..	...
Total	89	60	149	94	100

¹ Obtained from farms at a neighboring high school. Responses to questions: "What kind of work do you want to do after leaving school? What kind of work will you probably be doing? Name the three types of employment you are most interested in." Personnel inventory taken from entering Freshmen; 94 questionnaires (58 boys and 36 girls) were analyzed and multiple responses counted separately.

² Where both parents work, or where one parent carries two jobs, highest ranking position was selected.

SOURCE: Personnel Inventory, neighboring high school.

(18 instances), "aviator" (15 instances), and "farmer" (10). Among girls (who more frequently refused to make a choice) was stenographer or secretary (13). Five wanted to be hair dressers and 6 wanted to be home makers. Only one boy and one girl wanted to be a "business" person. Authors, actors, veterinaries, baseball players, missionaries were all represented.

Table 19 shows clearly the desire to achieve higher status, yet the limited nature of these ambitions is also quite apparent. Children most frequently wanted to have occupations other than their parents whether the parents were high or low on this scale. For instance, only 4 of the 19 farm boys wanted to be farmers. Though the answers tabulated here show the undesirability of farm labor as an occupation, they show that freshman students are not heavily aware of the lesser social distinctions which mark the levels of local society. A similar set of statements from seniors might be revealing but unfortunately were not available.

Social democracy is not perfect in Wasco schools, but it is far greater than in any other area of life activities in the community. We have already stated that the schools are the major integrating force, and it is this measure of democracy that makes them so. There have been efforts to segregate the Negroes or the migrant workers, on the basis that they are poorer students, but such efforts have never succeeded, and all groups mingle together. Negro-white clashes have been reported, but they are not frequent. The different groups tend to maintain their own social interests, but segregations of this kind are not rigorous. Teachers report that the tendency for nuclear children to keep the outsider away from social activities has diminished. The successful migrant football player is a strong democratizing influence, and at least one such boy came after early rebuffs to be accepted at parties of the nuclear students as a result of his athletic prowess. For the general group in high school, segregation roughly along class lines as already defined was found, but there are more opportunities and successes in breaching these class lines than is found in the community as a whole, and class strictures are diminishing.

SOCIAL LIFE

It is in the leisure-time activities that the most significant variations occur with respect to the social divisions, for it is in these pursuits that social status, social membership, and invidious social distinctions can best be expressed. For, while the Wasco citizen is steeped in the philosophy of personal freedom of choice, he recognizes the compulsive force of the job he has to do, the control of the "boss" and the necessity of "making a living." On the other hand, he is rarely aware of the social pressures which mold his use of time not spent in the pursuit of a living. Occasional references to the oppression of social duties and compulsions to engage in certain types of recreational activity indicate the existence of social forces which are only dimly recognized as such by the citizenry.

The leisure activities of Wasco may be brought under two headings, social recreation and commercial entertainment. These are very different in character and in social implications. The one implies group activity and social participation, the other means individual activity without social ties. The one is local, indigenous not in the sense of originating historically on the spot, but having its source with the people of the community. The other is imported from outside. The one may be considered rural or small town, however much it is patterned after city behavior, the other is entirely urban. Above all, the social recreations are almost exclusively for the nuclear group and tend to solidify that group, whereas commercial recreations know no class lines.

ORGANIZED SOCIAL RECREATION

We may say, then, that the social recreations involve group participation, create a sense of belonging, delimit social groups, and give prestige to the participant. They are limited by class lines and status barriers, and, in fact, there is a dearth of such forms of recreation among the outsider class.

Associations in Wasco. The clearest exemplification of the status activities is expressed in those sponsored by the various

formalized organizations such as the commercial clubs, the women's organizations, and the secret orders, to which we must first direct our attention. The associations or clubs of Wasco may be divided into three categories with respect to their major orientation. The first are those created to further common socio-economic interests: the service clubs, occupational organizations, such as the P.T.A., Farm Bureau, Associated Farmers, and the moribund Agricultural Workers' Union. The Grange, though a secret order, fits this category better than any other. Likewise, the American Legion is a sufficient social force as an action group to be included here. The second are the organizations which are purely socializing in character. The women's clubs, the secret orders, and the social organizations in connection with the churches exist primarily to promote and institutionalize certain forms of social intercourse. The third category is the club oriented around some hobby or game, and includes the golf, camera, rifle, and card clubs.

Status Differential Among Associations. The first thing to note about the clubs, whether it be the most exclusive organization or the theoretically all-inclusive Parent-Teachers Association, is the practically complete absence of agricultural or other unskilled workers, as well as of members of the minority races. Data are presented in Tables 20 and 21 and in Charts 5 and 6. In short, the clubs serve as an instrument for organized social action and activity within the nuclear group, whereas they do not serve to bring the nuclear group and the outsider together. This thoroughgoing class limitation on club life means that the outsider group does not participate in any of the socioeconomic activities which are the province of club organizations, thereby depriving them not only of a sense of belonging, but also of any voice in social controls and pressures exerted by the clubs.

Not only do the clubs express the distinction between the nuclear and outsider social classes, but also each expresses its own level of status within the community. This status level is determined by its membership composition, and is maintained, on the one hand, by limitations on that membership and, on the other, by certain forms of prestigious social activity. Thus, of the three service clubs (I, II, and III of the Service and Spe-

TABLE 20.—OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF TWELVE SELECTED ORGANIZATIONS IN WASCO

Occupation class	Men's orders		Service and special interest					Women's clubs				Recreation	Total
	I	II	I	II	III	IV	V	I	II	III	IV		
A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	46	25	94	54	78	31	39	79	48	23	40	47	45.6
B. Farm operators	16	8	3	15	11	7	13	14	21	39	6	5	15.3
C. Clerical workers	14	12	0	31	2	21	5	7	7	2	33	16	8.9
D. Skilled laborers	23	25	3	0	9	38	35	0	21	32	21	32	25.2
E. Unskilled laborers	1	30	0	0	0	3	8	0	3	4	0	0	4.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

SOURCE: Data obtained by interview and from membership rolls. The number of members of known occupation were, respectively: 70, 24, 37, 26, 66, 29, 283, 14, 118, 82, 52, and 19.

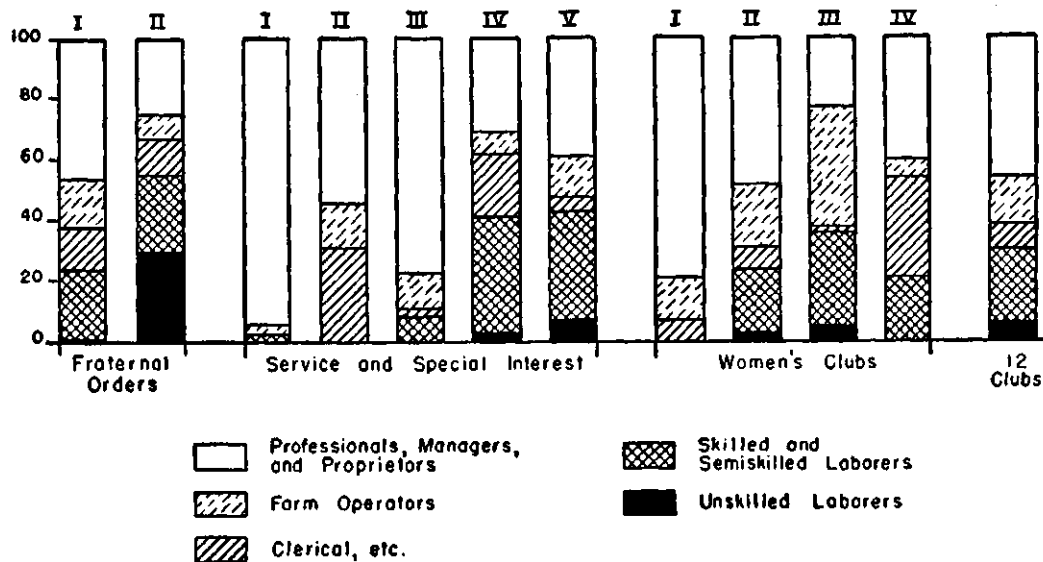
TABLE 21.—PROPORTIONS OF OCCUPATION CLASSES BELONGING TO ANY CLUB OR CHURCH¹

Occupation class	Voting registrants	Club membership		Church membership	
		No.	Per 100 registrants	No.	Per 100 registrants
A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	231	374	161.9	169	73.2
B. Farm operators	197	127	64.5	221	112.8
C. Clerical workers	130	73	56.2	84	64.6
D. Skilled laborers	491	207	42.2	285	58.0
E. Unskilled laborers	482	39	8.1	174	36.1
Total	1,531	820	53.6	933	60.9

¹ Each member of family is included in occupational class of its head, therefore it is possible to have more than one church membership per person among farm operators. These figures cannot be taken as literal representations of membership, but only for their distributional value.

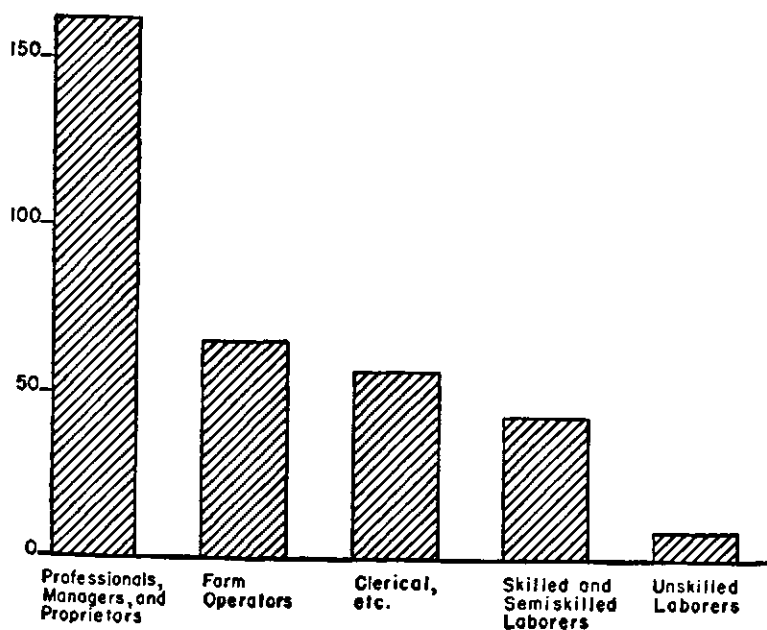
SOURCE: Data on occupation and membership obtained from membership rolls and by interviews.

OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CLUBS WITH DIFFERING STATUS



SOURCE : Table 20.

CHART 5

NUMBER OF CLUB MEMBERSHIPS PER 100 PERSONS
REGISTERED IN OCCUPATIONAL CLASS

SOURCE: Table 21.

CHART 6

cial Interest Clubs in Chart 5), the first is the oldest; it meets at lunch time which requires freedom from economic pressure in the midst of the day, and it is made up almost entirely of the managerial-entrepreneur-professional group, including most of the managers of the big corporations. This is the most exclusive of the clubs, carrying more status than the other two. Number II is almost as old, has much of the same membership but many others as well, and serves especially the needs of the smaller merchant class. It maintains none of the trappings of prestige, meeting in the evening in a public building, and having a membership open to all business people, including farmers. Consequently belonging to this organization carries none of the subtler status connotations but denotes rather membership in the nuclear element of the community. The third service club is new and very active in sponsoring civic projects. It is made up almost exclusively of small merchants and assistants in larger organizations. Its evening meetings suggest less freedom of movement. The membership composition is thus more strikingly different than Chart 5 indicates, being made up of small shopkeepers, such as barbers and butchers who were "overlooked" by the older organization, yet anxious to participate in service club activities.

Recent changes in the existing women's clubs are suggestive of some of the social changes that have taken place. Since the early twenties, there have been two women's clubs (II and III in the Chart), one made up mostly of the women of the town (II), the other of the women of the open country (III). As the membership of each grew, the town-country division became less sharp. It was recently decided that two organizations were unnecessary, so they merged. While remnants of the old cleavage remain in the internal politics of the club, their unification shows the similarity in leisure activities and social values between town and country women. Meanwhile, a separate club has been established for the women under thirty (IV), splitting the group on an age basis. At about the same time a new club (I) of very small membership was formed, representing a select group of old Wasco residents, thus separating a group purely on a status basis. This club was organized after the clique had been estab-

lished and it not only maintained a closed membership, but also included only persons who were "permanent" residents, thus giving specific expression to the status value of length of residence.

The secret orders likewise represent different status levels. Club I, for instance, has no members of the outsider class, while many belong to the other organization. Almost all the corporation officials belong to the former, while none is a member of the latter. The distinction was recognized by an officer of the latter group when he stated that his organization was "less exclusive." Another person made the statement that it would be impossible to become a high school principal without membership in the former order. Such a statement in itself suggests the social potency of the group, whether it is actually a true statement or not, and would never be asserted for the second organization.

The hobbies, games, etc., of the amusement clubs are forms of leisure activities and, therefore, in themselves express economic status. Except for the fundamental dichotomy of the social classes, they do not, however, give expression to the levels of prestige within the community.

Individual Status and Club Activities. If the clubs have varying status levels, and the individual gets prestige through membership, this is not to imply that all members of the club have identical social position. For the club⁷ frequently serves as a social matrix wherein the individual attains membership in the group and status in the eyes of the community. Conversely, persons of more or less standing in the organization have more or less control or influence over the club's activities.

It is only in the meetings and other activities of the various clubs that the citizens of Wasco regularly congregate in large groups as participants, and it is through these activities that the individual becomes generally known to the community. This function is recognized by the newcomer to the community, and several women expressed their indebtedness to the club to which they belong, as it enabled them to "get acquainted." Its importance to women whose economic activities are more confining and who, at the same time, have more free time for social

activities is clear. Yet there is recognition of this need by the merchants "on the street." This necessity is, in itself, a departure from the pioneer community. There remains a tradition that the women of the community call on any newcomer, but in practice it is rare, and apparently has been for many years past. In short, the former small town technique for bringing the stranger into the social life of the community is almost defunct, and the club supplies its substitute.

Social participation for many residents, old as well as new, takes place in the club environment. Consider the account of one person who participated in the founding of the women's club. Her testimony to the importance of the institution runs as follows:

I had been raised to believe that if a woman did nothing more than make a home, her life was a failure. And living out on the ranch I got terribly lonesome. So I took all the magazines I had and all the roses and drove our Cadillac around to the homes of different people. They never asked me in, but just asked how much I wanted for the roses and magazines. They never had anyone come to their doors except peddlers and salespeople. There were more neighbors then than there are now [that is, smaller farms and more closely settled farm homes]. One day there were several women together at my house, and I had organized entertainment and refreshments for them. We had such a good time that we decided to get together regularly, and we finally decided that we would form a club, and meet every two weeks, as that would be a relaxation from the daily drudgery of farm work. Club-work had been my life back East, so naturally I wanted to have a club out here. I never would be president.

Membership in associations may come to form a social environment in which a person can exercise his special talents. Playing bridge, reading and reviewing books, acting, handicrafts are all social assets which may operate through a club not necessarily given to that single activity. They therefore not only serve as recreation, but give the individual a personal sense of accomplishment and recognition among his fellows, and at the same time enrich the life of the community. Such special talents may substitute for financial status in establishing the individual within the nuclear group or some particular segment of it. One woman, speaking of her special talent, recognized it as a surrogate for wealth:

You might say that this group represents the cream of society. Most of the women are pretty well-to-do. I don't really belong with them, but then I felt that it would look funny for me to drop out. I can't keep up with them—clothes, and entertaining and all—but I suppose I give something else. I just have to look at it that way. They have promised not to make a great deal of the entertaining, but you know how those things are.

Her activities were not unique. At one time the rivalry between two women for social standing within the community was said to revolve about a certain special talent, and each set herself up as an expert in that field. Neither woman had an economic status that would assure social acceptance, but each had achieved a large measure of status in the community.

The formalization of social acceptance implied by club membership and participation can have a strong effect on the individual personality. It was said of one woman that her personal frustrations were resolved through active club participation: "She fussed with her husband all the time till she became a club member, but now everything seems to be all right in her home."

The social function performed by the formal organizations must be understood in reference to the social structure of the community and the social desires and ambitions of its people. It will be remembered that Wasco society is divided into two groups, one of which includes all those who participate in social organizations, while the other includes only persons who remain outside of such activities. The former is, in turn, divided into three separate levels of status, which must be recognized as rather fluid groupings between which social relationships are not barred. Among persons falling in the marginal level, participation in the clubs and organizations offers public evidence of acceptance in the nuclear group of the community. For persons of middle standing, active participation becomes a means of asserting and advancing in social status, while among the upper stratum, the social organization is a matrix for social leadership. Those persons whose top standing in local society is beyond cavil need not participate in clubs of the kind that are available to all of nuclear society, and when they do, they will frequently

give it only perfunctory attention. The members of this elite in Wasco can be assured their status with respect to other members of the community, but they characteristically direct their social attentions to a wider community such as the elite of the county. In this environment their status is no longer to be taken for granted. One such person, for instance, had a party for city guests rather than participate in a general community festivity. Thus what is the desideratum of the lower group, and the framework for social expression of another, may be disdained by a third.

Clubs and Civic Action. The club, then, becomes at the same time a criterion for social status and a matrix in which status advances can be made. It will be well to describe some of the outward aspects of that club life. Most of the energies of most of the clubs of Wasco are directed toward maintaining the club's existence (elections, etc.), or its recreational activities. But the leading non-fraternal organizations maintain a tradition of public works which lends them prestige in the community, and causes them to serve as more or less powerful pressure groups.

The minutes of the meetings of one of the special interest clubs were examined for a period covering one year, and approximately three-fourths of the items recorded during that year had to do with the business necessary to the continuation of the organization and its recreational activities. The remaining fourth had to do with maintenance of a few civic activities; namely, bringing pressure to bear upon the construction of a highway underpass, arranging for the establishment of a Boy Scout troop, objecting to the existent cemetery district, furthering a volunteer fire department, participating in community charities, and aiding in the creation of a community baseball league.

In general, the business of the service clubs is conducted by the board of control or similar body vested with authority, while the meetings are devoted chiefly to entertainment. Yet a certain amount of business is transacted at each meeting. The several service clubs are asked to express their views on matters of general public concern, and it is not only interesting but also very significant that the assumption is made that their views

express those of the community. In regard to the reorganization of the cemetery district, the district trustees serving the county asked the several clubs to vote on the matter, so that they could be "guided by the voice of the people." Wasco was not incorporated and therefore did not provide regular elections to serve this purpose. It has since been incorporated. The three clubs, representing only the business element, were considered a sufficiently accurate sample. And sufficiently accurate it is, within the accepted point of view of the social boundaries of the community. The same attitude was exemplified when one service organization sponsored a public discussion of city incorporation. There were neither Mexicans, Negroes, nor agricultural workers present. The vote of this group was considered sufficient to express the attitude of the people.

Insight into attitudes regarding the rights of various persons to participate in community affairs was gained from questions raised at the meeting and in conversations after it. One farmer felt that he should have a right to vote on the matter of incorporation because he owned town property, though he did not live in the area. Another questioned whether a person might vote if he did not own property in the proposed area of incorporation. That this was assumed to have reference to members of the outsider group was apparent from a conversation with a local merchant who was in favor of the issue. He said: "That is a foolish question. Of course, it doesn't seem right for these people who just come here for a little while and who don't have any real interest in the community to vote on questions pertaining to it—these Okies for example. But then, it's in the constitution, and has been a principle of our government for a long time." In discussing the failure to get a representative group of people out to decide on community problems, one of the leading corporation representatives expressed the dominant point of view. "Yes," he said, "what this town needs is a good active Chamber of Commerce." Thus firmly entrenched is the presupposition that the business people and the community are one and the same; that an interest in the community means a vested economic interest only.

Just as the club is used to determine public opinion, so it is

a means of influencing public policy. Since the town is unincorporated and relatively few matters are determined by vote of the local populace, the clubs exert a not inconsiderable influence upon community activities. If a recreational project is undertaken, if a new civic enterprise is desired, if a change in existing public or private services is wanted, the service and civic clubs are utilized as the institutional mechanism through which these things are accomplished. And since membership in these clubs is highly selected not only on the basis of income but also of occupation, the direction of the public activities are highly selected on the basis of economic interest.

Similarly, the club is an instrument for the formulation of public opinion. The tradition of the regular speaker of the meeting lends itself naturally to a discussion of matters of public policy, and the use of the club as a means of influencing public opinion is readily recognized. For instance, attitudes regarding *The Grapes of Wrath* were crystallized in a speech at the leading service club, and the vituperation against the book was echoed by persons who heard the talk or read of it in the local paper, but who had not read the book itself. More subtle and probably more penetrating than the formal talks are the effects of crystallization of opinion regarding Federal controls, taxes, unions, foreign governments, and other matters external to Wasco itself, through the informal discussion at the dinner table. In a social environment selected for common economic interests the prejudices and points of view of the members receive the moral support of group sanction. And since, in the dominant club at least, the leadership is in the hands of the representatives of outside corporations, the direction of these prejudices are not determined solely by the problems of the local community.

Community of Interest and the Geographical Community. In Table 20, showing the occupational characteristics of the club memberships, it was made clear that the organizations represent largely the business and professional groups in the community, and that the laborer has virtually no voice in the club life. In short, the club does not represent the geographical community, but merely a segment of it, selected on an occupational basis. We have pointed out that the club is a vital influence in com-

munity activities. Because of these factors, it is of extreme importance that the club is rarely a purely local product, but represents a continuum of interest and has direct connections with the outside world. Every club and order of major importance in the community is either a chapter of or an affiliate with some general national or international organization. This means very simply that the institutional machinery of the non-governmental socioeconomic activities bring together not members of a geographical segment of the social universe, but a class segment determined on occupational-economic lines. The visiting banker has entree to the dominant clubs of the community to which the local agricultural worker does not have access.

Here the significance is apparent when we contrast the service clubs of today with the original organization established by the colonists just a single generation ago. The old Improvement Club was established to determine the policy of the settlers with regard to a community fund that had been created by the system of land allotments. This club, and the first women's club as well, were organized for the purpose of determining specific policies regarding local problems, more especially such problems relating to the development of agriculture as crop research, rabbit destruction, and, above all, water supply. Though there were differences of economic interests which were expressed in heated debate in meetings, there were no exclusions from participation. Furthermore, the club was a local growth, meeting local problems. Briefly, it was community in character, including all white residents (racial barriers have always existed) and excluding all outsiders.

This is simply a reflection of the situation of the time, for Wasco was then a small group of farmers fighting for subsistence, with no room for class differentiation, no large labor group, and, above all, a set of common enemies against which united action was possible and necessary. In the space of a third of a century a shift to the opposite pole is evident, with the virtual exclusion of labor from community participation, and differences between labor and management as the major source of the breach in the society.

The Club Meeting. We have discussed the socioeconomic

aspects of club life at length because they furnish the institutionalized mechanism for most social activity within the community. They establish class lines; they are determinative of social position within these class lines; they present the matrix for social action, prestigious, economic, and political. Perhaps a simple description of the nature of club activities can present more concretely these social facts.

The members of a leading service club foregather in front of the dining hall and engage in small talk, shaking the hand of each newcomer and greeting him informally. As they file in, each selects the badge with his name, business, and nickname, and takes his place at the table. After the "Star-spangled Banner" is sung, they sit down. During the meal there is good-natured banter and small talk about events of the day. It is tabu to address fellow members by their surnames. A breach of this tabu is punished by a ten-cent fine, and in the course of the dinner a dozen or so members have been fined on this pretext or some other. This money is raffled at the end of the meeting. By these trivial techniques, an atmosphere of comradeship is created which is intended to induce a spirit of good feeling among these business rivals and associates. One cannot escape the observation that this performance acts as a form of ceremonial license to divest the members of their normal social attitudes of self-interest. Toward the end of dinner, business is introduced. "President John," says a corporation manager, "a member of the cemetery board of trustees asked me to get the voice of the club before deciding what action to take in regard to the re-formation of the cemetery district." There is confused discussion ending in a vote, which, as already stated, is taken along with that of a few other clubs as the public opinion regarding the matter. After the ice cream, a speaker is introduced, and perhaps a visiting member from another town says a few words.

The women's clubs have their own meeting house, and usually gather in the mid-afternoon. Their meetings, far from fostering an environment of informality, are conducted along rigorous parliamentary lines, in itself a form of ceremonialism. After a pledge to the flag and recital of the motto, there follows a regular business meeting, according to the procedure set forth

in Robert's *Rules of Order*. Rarely is there any business not connected with the club's own activities, though these clubs occasionally take part in community matters. After the business has been conducted, the meeting is turned over to the program chairman, who has arranged for a talk or some other form of entertainment.

This may be considered the general pattern for club life in the community, though the smaller clubs tend to hold less rigidly to the formalization imposed by Robert. Patriotism is a frequent keynote; sentimentalism often evidenced. Welfare work, such as the making of layettes, individual charity, such as the giving of Christmas candies, provide the semblance of meaning to the club's existence, but merely camouflage the major functions already defined.

Age-grading and Sex Division in Club Life. We may note also an incipient tendency toward age-grading and sexual dichotomy in the clubs; a tendency which correlates with the divergence of social interests along these lines, and with the failure of the family to provide the major outlet for social and recreational activities. Thus in Wasco there are a women's club and a men's service club for adults under thirty, while the children are, of course, separated on a rigorous age-grade system by the schools. The same applies to the religious organizations and other large clubs, which usually have their young people's groups. Similarly the fraternal orders have "women's auxiliaries," while all the major clubs are rigorously divided on a sex basis. Sex and age segregation not only serves to keep persons together who are of like tastes, but also eliminates intra-organizational rivalry between these groups. It effectively gives women and young people a means of expressing their status drives in a society where age and sex traditionally carry certain prerogatives.

THE CLIQUE

Though the club serves as the institutionalized framework for much of the non-economic activity in the community, it is too large a unit for the everyday forms of social recreation. For these there is a smaller and more natural unit, the clique. The clique

may be defined as a small group of persons who, from personal choice, congregate for most non-economic and unformalized social activities. The club is, as a rule, too formalized, almost always too large, and frequently must include persons of divergent tastes and attitudes, to furnish the truly sympathetic and intimate group. Hobby clubs and special sections of the larger clubs could perform these functions, but essentially they are aggregates formed out of special interests, and not from the general interests which characterize cliques. Terming the cliques natural and saying that they are the result of personal choice does not deny their social implications, but asserts them. They are "natural" in the sense that they develop out of socially conditioned predilections and prejudices and not out of artificial or legalistic barriers. They are not merely fortuitous. The racial and class segregations are immediately apparent. The tendency to form within age levels is also obvious. The most elite group includes people of middle age with grown children; another clique consists of married couples, most of whom have young children; there is a "gang" of boys out of high school that congregate at one of the restaurants. Above all, the clear tendency to congregate into economic status levels prevails. The wives of the managers of two large corporations and of a leading farm operator form a small closed group. A group of seven couples—five corporation officials, an entrepreneur and a cattle rancher—forms another. The most elite women's clique in town has formalized its group by establishing an exclusive club (and becoming part of a national order). But even within this group of fourteen women there is at least one clique made up of the socially dominant few, women who shop in the city, who keep horses, and maintain other forms of leisure-class conspicuous consumption.

The groupings on a status and tabu basis are the closest social units beyond the family. They replace the neighborhood as a social entity, for the prevalence of the automobile has made space obsolete as a criterion for social relationship. They have taken over the function of socializing the individual to the minor overtones of community life, for in them are carried out the major portions of the non-economic forms of social inter-

course. The community as such has largely lost its power to establish sanctioned forms of behavior, except through its legal machinery. The churches fought school dances and the use of liquor, but the outside world has been too much with them. The Protestant churches can still maintain a tabu on dances, the theater, and drinking, but they cannot make of these the basis for social acceptance, since other social groups exist which tolerate these forms of behavior. The religious neighbor who pries into the affairs of a drinking person can be told off without loss of social or economic position. This is not to deny the existence of a sense of belonging to the whole community—that is, among the nuclear group—but merely that the community has ceased to function as a selective agent for particular forms of morality. There is some evidence that a new morality is set by the community, but this does not emanate from the church.

Different cliques are generally recognized by members of the community, but no one knows all that exist, and since they are highly fluid groupings, it would be artificial to attempt an enumeration. The clique serves, however, to establish the social position of its members, not only with respect to status values, but also with respect to their moral predilections and social behavior. Though it is impossible to assert that no cliques exist within the outsider group, it is quite apparent that the outsider has relatively few such social units other than among the church members. All the agricultural laborers interviewed denied having any regular coterie of friends or pattern of visiting relationships, except one group of interrelated families, and the members of the strictly outsider churches.

COMMERCIAL ENTERTAINMENT

The commercial entertainments of the small town differ little from those of the city, from which, in fact, they are imported. Status, social membership, and prejudice appear only on the fringes of the activities associated with these forms of leisure-time pursuits.

The Motion Pictures. The motion picture may well be considered the most important commercialized entertainment on

the Wasco scene. The single theater is operated by a small syndicate, showing three separate bills and usually five separate "feature" pictures each week. The pictures include the latest and best from Hollywood, as well as thriller serials and Westerns. These latter are shown on the week ends, presumably because they appeal to the children who should not be kept up late during the week, but also because they appeal to the laborers. The local manager made the statement that many of the outsider group would ask if the picture had any shooting in it, and would not see a show that had none. One of the syndicate officials stated that most of the patrons were of the laboring class, and if this is the case they are apparently as willing to see the most publicized pictures as they are the thrillers, for the most popular pictures of the year 1940-41 include only so-called "class A" shows.⁴ The theater takes the general point of view that it is not responsible for the moral welfare of the people, and books its pictures insofar as possible on the expectancy of returns at the box office. The local women's organizations protested the showing of *Of Mice and Men*, but there is no organized means of restraining the theater owner. In this instance the operator refused to comply with the request because of the investment he had already made in booking the film. The show was censured on the basis of alleged immoral precept which would have a bad influence upon the children, and the operator took the point of view that the parents were responsible for their children's attendance. There was no community protest against the showing of *The Grapes of Wrath*, which deals more directly with the local problem of farm labor, and this picture was, along with *Gone with the Wind*, the best attended show of 1939-40. Many objections to the portrayal of farm life, however, were received from the people.

⁴ The theater manager listed the following as best at the box office: *This Thing Called Love*, *Philadelphia Story*, the *Hardy* series, *Road to Zanzibar*, *Love Thy Neighbor*, *Return of Frank James*, *Western Union*, *The Westerner* (the last three are class A Westerners), *Foreign Correspondent*, *Buck Private*, *In the Navy*, *High Sierra* (gangster), and *Knute Rockne, All American*. These thirteen are selected out of a total of 312 shows in the year ending August 1, 1941. The theater owner did not divulge attendance figures.

Probably the most reliable source of information regarding the distribution of the use of the movies as a form of entertainment can be obtained from the Consumer Purchases Study, which shows from 84 to 90 per cent of the population attending, according to the various occupation groups, for village and country people in the Pacific area. There is more variation with income, yet in the lowest income bracket 70 per cent of the families indicate some attendance. Furthermore, approximately a third of all expenditures for recreation of families of all occupation and income classes are spent on the moving picture, more than on any other single item. Table 22 shows that this form

TABLE 22.—RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF RESETTLED MIGRANTS IN KERN COUNTY (8 COMMUNITIES)

Nature of recreation	Number of responses	Proportion of families ¹
Moving pictures	73	40
Radio	53	29
Social functions (schools, churches, etc.)	54	30
Outings	47	26
Reading	50	27
Visiting	37	20
None or very little	28	15
Other	32	17

¹ Proportion of families in sample responding specific item of recreation; many gave more than one response.

of recreation was most frequently reported by migratory laborers in Kern County.

A questionnaire taken from a sample of the population in Arvin and Dinuba shows a similar dependence upon this type of recreation. Three-fourths of all families reported some movie attendance, with weekly or even more frequent attendance. One-fourth of all families reported that motion pictures formed the sole recognized form of social recreation. All occupation groups

attended in great proportions, but the laborers generally are more dependent upon this recreation than are other occupation groups.⁵

The theater, like all the forms of commercial entertainment, does not serve to unify the participants in the way clubs do. Nevertheless, the proximity that results from group attendance violates the sense of social segregation sufficiently that the managers find it desirable to separate racial groups. Such segregation cannot apply to the white agricultural laborer, for obvious legal and social reasons, but the minority groups of outsider status—Negro and Mexican—are expected to sit in a special section.

The Radio. The social impact of the radio is similar to that of the motion picture. The radio is a completely external form of entertainment requiring no social participation, having no differential with respect to social class, and affording vicarious participation with the outside world. According to the advance releases of the Consumer Purchases Study, 93.7 per cent of the California farm families and 92.4 per cent of the Pacific village families had radios in 1936. In the survey made of resettled migrants, the radio was second only to the movie as a stated form of entertainment among this group, approximately a fourth mentioning it as a form of recreation.

Reading. According to these same schedules, reading is almost as important an item in the recreational activities of the resettled migrant group. Among the nuclear population, reading must be very much more widespread as is indicated by the magazine stalls and the library records. Magazines are more frequently found in homes than are books. According to one merchant dealing in magazines, the women's journals, especially the *Woman's Home Companion* and the *Ladies' Home Journal* are the most popular, but it must be remembered that the trade in pulp magazines is divided among innumerable different titles. This dealer handled forty-four detective and adventure titles,

⁵ See chapters VII and VIII for a discussion of recreational activities in Arvin and Dinuba, the other two California communities studied. These aspects of social life are presented in detail in the final report on the study of those two towns (see footnote 1, chapter VII).

fourteen love-story magazines, and eleven movie magazines, practically all of the pulp class. Another form of reading has pervaded the school age population, the comic-book magazines, of which some eighty titles are handled. One merchant maintained he sold six hundred of these magazines per month, each of which is regularly traded among the children. According to teachers, these magazines satisfy the reading desires of many of the students, even in high school.

A major source of recreational reading is the local branch of the County Library, which had a circulation of about 30,000 books in the year ending June, 1940. The increase in circulation in the past decade has not kept pace with the population increase, and this may largely be accounted for by the fact that the outsider group does not utilize the library to the extent of other classes. Table 23 shows only one unskilled laborer using

TABLE 23.—OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LIBRARY SUBSCRIBERS

Occupation class	Number of borrowers	Proportion of users	Users per 100 registrants
A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	181	25.7	78.4
B. Farm operators	50	7.1	25.4
C. Clerical workers	87	12.4	66.9
D. Skilled laborers	270	38.3	78.0
E. Unskilled laborers	116	16.5	24.1
Total employed	704	100.0	46.0

SOURCE: Kern County public library records.

the library for each four registered as a voter, compared to 3 in 4 of both the professional-entrepreneurial and the skilled labor classes. It is interesting, however, that farmers and farm laborers show about the same proportion of users. Furthermore, agricultural workers frequently mention reading books their children bring home (not included in this count of users). However, it must be remembered that a larger proportion of farmers

vote, and that these figures show only readers per voting population. No investigation has been made of the selective factor of books used, except that fiction is by far more popular than non-fiction.

Within the nuclear group there is a clear prestige value in owning books, and some of the middle group and elite are subscribers to book clubs, buying books they frequently do not read. But, for the most part, books other than occasional gift copies and the Bible are rarely found in the parlors, whatever the social status. The prestige value of intellectual interests is even better exemplified by the existence of a reading group. A former teacher, an exceptionally widely read person, started a class made up entirely of women of elite status in the community. In her own words, "I had a class of women who wanted to learn things, and they let me do the reading for them. . . . I had to be pretty careful about politics. . . . Last year we studied world history from 5000 B.C. to the World War. Of course, we never got up to the war. This year we are studying absolute monarchs, people like Caesar, Jenghiz Khan, etc. We are making it a practice to do our own study work these last two years. I thought it best, for they had gotten in the habit of being dependent."

Other Commercial Entertainment. There are in Wasco several establishments where drinking, pool, cards, and dancing are made available to the general public. One bar, in conjunction with a hotel, offers dancing and occasional traveling road shows, and caters to the business people from nearby cities, as well as to the upper brackets in the local social hierarchy. Here the differentiation is on a purely status basis, that is, not merely racial. This was exemplified by a recommendation voiced by the patrons that the place charge more for drinks "in order to keep out the riff-raff." Two other bars are attended by local citizens of good standing. One of these offers cards, the other dancing. Neither has the prestige of the first, but both are regularly patronized by the business people. Two bars are run in connection with pool halls and operated by a local entrepreneur in conjunction with establishments in other towns, and card games are in progress much of the time. Much of their clientele is made up of laborers. There are also bars in outlying districts,

which are frequented mostly by the farm operators. The Mexicans and Negroes have several separate bars or stores where liquor is available. Public drinking and gambling more than other commercial forms of entertainment follow the major social cleavages, though the nature of the business enterprise makes this an imperfect separation.

Other forms of commercial entertainment are the temporary shows, carnivals, etc., that pass through the community. A traveling skating rink is set up during the busy season; various clubs sponsor professional shows and carnivals, sometimes as methods of making money, sometimes for the prestige value of the production.

The processes of urbanization in the field of leisure-time pursuits are taking place in several ways. The commercial entertainments are the imported products from the city, and play the same role with the same impersonal atmosphere of similar establishments on the urban scene. The social recreations segregate the social classes, serving to develop internal bonds within the nuclear group and to establish the exclusion of the outsider. At the same time they establish formalized connections with persons of similar status outside the community, and in this way negate pure localism as a basis for social attitudes and actions.

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL STATUS AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

CHURCHES AND THEIR APPEAL

"THE CHURCHES in Wasco tend," according to the minister in its leading church, "to represent the different elements in the San Joaquin Valley." Such a statement leads us naturally to a closer scrutiny of the position of the church in the social hierarchy. The church—at least the Protestant church—is as much a social institution as it is a religious one. When a resident decides to belong to a church, and when he selects the denomination to which he will adhere, he makes a fundamental social choice which will affect his associates and his social behavior for the duration of his residence. And his choice is as much influenced by social considerations as by religious ones. Because the church plays an important social role—one of the most important of any institution in community life—it must be subjected to careful analysis. The value judgments made with respect to these institutions are evaluations of their social position and do not reflect upon their religious tenets, which are outside the province of this study. Nor is there any implication that congregations elsewhere have the same relative social position that they display in Wasco.

There are ten Christian churches for whites alone in the community, not counting a small Mormon group and the one or two unorganized religious groups which meet in private homes. Besides these, there are three Negro organizations and there was at one time a Mexican Pentecostal group. Before examining the nature of social separation of these denominations, it will be well to acquaint ourselves with the variation in religious content of some of the more important Protestant sects serving the whites of the community.

The first church in the community has a moderately elaborate structure surrounded by shrubs and lawns, with a special recreation room, and an air of middle-class well-being. It is the congregation of the elite. Its leading patrons are select, even among this elite. Its services are quiet and orderly; its sermons innocuous admonitions to moral conduct, or intellectualized explanations of the workings of God with man. It is said that an earlier minister left at the behest of one of the leading contributors because he preached the doctrine of equal rights, co-operative activity, and sharing of wealth. The sermon is preceded by a fixed ritual, including music by a vested choir, organ accompaniment, and the funereal hush of the carpeted and insulated edifice. Lay participation is hardly more than in the Catholic ritual, two or three hymns and the reading of the responses constituting the whole. To this service the congregation takes its obligation lightly; rarely are there more than two or three dozen well-clad substantial citizens present. Communion with God may be had or left, as the spirit moves, so long as the appearances of membership are maintained.

Coming down but half a step, we may place two or three congregations on a social level, the differences between them not being those of social status. Comfortable, unelaborate structures, completely adequate in size to meet the requirements of the congregation, house the religious services. The sermons are more fervid, the spirit is less subdued, and the lay participation is more spontaneous. Correlatively the congregation is more active, the pews are more nearly filled each week, revivalistic meetings are undertaken, and the emotional appeal of Protestantism more manifest.

These congregations endeavor to bring together persons from widely different walks of life. Their success has not been great among the outsider group, yet they are not entirely without representation from farm laborers. The influence of social factors upon church affiliation is illustrated by the case of a person of Mexican ancestry who has succeeded in becoming identified with the nuclear group in the community. This shift not only involved acquiring a white-collar job and marriage outside the Mexican group but also the rejection of the Catholic church,

to which most Mexicans in Wasco belong, in favor of a Protestant congregation. According to several statements, teachers formerly considered it incumbent upon them to affiliate with the social elite church in the community, but now readily join either congregation at the next level or none at all. While this is a form of emancipation from social pressure, it is also significant that this change is associated with the general lowering of the social status of the teachers as a whole, who are no longer exhorted to attend church and take part in club activities, but appear to be discouraged from the latter.

Stepping down once more in the social scale, we arrive at the level of the revivalistic churches. The buildings compare favorably with the preceding churches; they are newer, but not quite so nicely designed, so carefully finished, so well appointed, nor so centrally located, lying rather in the poorer sections of the community. The preachers are graduates of religious colleges but not graduates of general schools of higher learning. Informality may be considered the keynote of the services; for want of better clothes the congregation is modestly clad, the services are filled with colloquial expressions and homely illustrations, the participation of the congregation is easy and unself-conscious.

The emphasis on personal salvation and the intellectual-emotional appeal to the personal experience, following the pattern described in the Bible for the night of Pentecost, are not the annual or biennial expression of an itinerant evangelist, but the week-by-week fare of the Sunday services, heightened by the temporary elaboration of the revival meeting. The nature of the appeal of these sects and the spirit of their meetings can perhaps be caught in a sermon, and for that reason one is reproduced here very nearly as it was presented. For background, it may be added that this sermon was accompanied by the "Amen!" of the audience, as well as the presence of twisting and crying children and the informality of persons entering and leaving the congregation.

You know, folks, the other day, I was visiting some friends of mine on a farm back East. I took a couple of days off and had a visit with some people. The farmer asked me if I had ever seen a mechanical

corn-picker, and I said I'd like very much to see one, for I never had. Well, he got out his tractor and rigged up the corn-picker. It had some boards to the side, set together about an inch or two apart, and the stalk went between these and they just lifted the corn off the stalk and a belt took it back and put it in a wagon that followed. That was fine, but I still wasn't convinced, and I asked my friend what they did about stalks that were blown down, and he laughed, and said that they had taken care of that. They have experimented and bred for years and they have gotten a pure bred corn that will stand up. It sends its roots way down in the soil, and the wind can blow and the rains can come, but that corn stalk stands right up. The farmer pays twice as much for that corn, because it is pure bred, and will stand up no matter how hard the wind blows.

What we need is more people that will stand up. We need to have people who are firmly rooted in their faith, and when the winds of adversity blow they stand right up to their God. We need real blue bloods. You know, a lot of people think that blue bloods all live in Kentucky, but the real blue bloods are those who are firm in their faith. You know there are plenty of blue bloods in the church, for in heaven everybody is a blue blood—no matter how poor you are.

Well, I just got off on this story. The collection is taken, and so you won't have to pay an extra dime for it.

[After a reading from the Bible] So no man can know when Judgment Day will come. There will be nothing different in the air, there will be no signs to show that Judgment is coming, one hour or one day or one week or one month before Judgment Day.

[The story of the flood was presented] Nobody paid any attention to the warning, for they were all living a life of sin. They ate, they drank, they married and gave in marriage, the night before Judgment. There was no difference between the night before Judgment and the night before, or the week before or the month before.

Abraham was willing to leave Egypt when God told him to. He didn't say he was too old to be moving. He didn't say, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," and refuse to go. He went out to the promised land. Abraham later left, and went to Egypt. He said that the grass is greener over there. But he should have stayed and prayed the rain down from heaven, and made the grass green where he was. The same is true of the people in the church. They should go to their own church to pray, and not go to another one because it is doing better.

Abraham divided the land with Lot, saying there is enough for all of us in this wide world. And Lot went into the valley, and Abraham into the mountains. It is good to go into the mountains once in a while, and be alone, and pray, where the filth of man does not keep God away.

And three spirits came to Abraham, and he ran out to meet them, for he recognized them, and he welcomed them into his house. He didn't have to go to Sarah and tell her to put these cards away, and to hide that bottle, and to get rid of those *True Story* magazines. They may be true stories, but if they are, I'd pray to God that I could forget it and that He would forgive me. Amen, brother, amen.

The Lord decided to tell Abraham what He had planned, and He stayed behind after the others left. He decided to tell Abraham, because he managed well his household. Note that, he managed his household WELL. His daughter didn't manage his household, his son didn't, but Abraham managed his household. The son didn't come home at 2 A.M. and then when his father said, "Get up, go to Sunday school," he didn't answer, "No, I don't want to." He probably took them behind the woodshed. The woodshed is a fine place to learn things—more is learned there than at any college. Maybe the methods of impressing aren't the same, but you learn there. I remember the lessons that I learned behind the woodshed—and they didn't hurt me any, I don't seem so bad off.

About two years ago I visited in the home of a deacon, I won't say where, but it wasn't in California. The son came in and said, "Give me the keys. I want to use the car this afternoon." The deacon handed over the keys, and said, "Where are you going?" The son said, "I'm going to the movies with some friends. By the way, give me some money." "Well," said the father, handing over some money, "come back early for I want you to go to the young people's meeting." Why, that boy shouldn't pollute the church with his presence, after going to the movies on Sunday afternoon. Before I'd let that boy go to church, I'd scrub him good and clean with soap and a scalding bath, and I'd have him pray for about two hours, to get that filth off of him. And I'd take that deacon, that would let his children act that way, behind the woodshed. And I'd take his deaconship away from him.

Abraham tried to get the Lord not to bring destruction upon Sodom and Gomorrah. He asked the Lord if He would leave the city if he found fifty righteous men. Then he asked forty-five, then forty, and so on. He jewed the Lord down till He was willing to have ten good men in the city. He must have been counting—there's Lot and his family, and there are almost ten, right there.

The Lord went to Sodom and called on Lot. Lot wouldn't let the Lord sleep in the streets, for he knew the corruption of the people in the city. He made Him come into the house. The Lord told him what He planned, and Lot went to his sons-in-law, and to the people. They just laughed at him. They said, why Lot has been out to visit that crazy uncle Abraham out in the mountains, and he has been talking again. They ought to lock him up. And the people tried to get the angels, but the angels brought Lot out and with his wife and daughters.

They led them out of the city. And as they walked away from Sodom, Lot's wife said, "I have to look back. All my friends back there, that I will never see again." "The Lord said that we must never look back." "But our friends are back there. We used to play a few innocent hands of bridge, and have such good times together." And she looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt. But Lot did not look back.

You have it better than Lot's wife, for you have a chance to repent. She would have been happy to repent a million times over, but the Lord didn't give her a chance to repent, nor did He give the fallen angels a chance to repent. But, you, my friends, can repent now, before it is too late.

And the day before Judgment was no different from any other day. They were not able to notice any difference between the day before Judgment and the day before that, nor the week before that, nor any other time.

The son of Nebuchadnezzar was drinking wine, and he ordered that the great chalices of some temple be brought in, filled with wine, and they all drank from that. God saw this, and He sent a warning—just the handwriting on the wall, no arms, body, or anything else. They were all afraid, as all wicked people are of supernatural things. They called in the fortune-tellers, and all the people who thought they might be able to read the handwriting of God, but none of them could. Finally, the king's wife said that she knew a man of God who might be able to read, and they brought David out from the dungeon. God always has somebody in the gap, so that the people had a warning. David wasn't afraid to tell the king that his kingdom would perish and that it would be divided between the Meads and the Persians—he wasn't afraid to tell them, though he had been brought in from the dungeon. And the next day one in every two was taken away.

And the last night before Judgment was like all the rest. It was no different from the day before, nor the week before, but was like all the rest.

After the sermon was over and the prayer offered, while the choir sang "Almost Believing," the evangelist came through the audience, and spoke to each man separately. Meanwhile most of the congregation went forward to the altar and were kneeling and praying, each aloud and for himself. The evangelist put his hand on each man's back, drew each to him insinuatingly, and asked them in a lowered voice, "Have you been saved? Don't you want to be saved today? It would be terrible to have to face Judgment Day without being saved, wouldn't it? Why wait, why not come up now?"

This sermon may be taken as a typical, though somewhat highly organized, example of the appeal that the churches on this level make to their audience. The major theme presents clearly the familiar fear psychology appeal for adherents based upon the threat of eternal retribution, plus the salesmanship technique of "act quickly, limited offer." If we examine some of the asides we glean still more of the special aspects of the appeal the institution has for its followers. Note first the homely quality of the illustrations, the corn-picker, the references to bridge, to the woodshed, to those familiar items of family quarrels, car keys, and the movies. Above all, we have here just an aside, a reference to the dominance in the hierarchy of values in the putative society of the Kingdom of God: "The real blue bloods are those who are firm in their faith." "In heaven everybody is a blue blood—no matter how poor you are."

This revivalistic religion has direct emotional appeal for salvation; it is presented in the homely fashion of the layman, and individual participation is heightened not only by *A mens* and much singing but also by shouted prayers, each person to himself. Still, as we shall see shortly, it is far more subdued than the schismatic churches. Its appeals are not pure release; there is a direct call to the reason. The individual does not merely shout his woes publicly; he is exhorted to make a rational choice, within the frame of reference that has been set.

Here, then, is a homier atmosphere for the people who have been accustomed to attending church "where you're just raised up among folks" and "you could go [dressed] any old way," and, as will shortly be shown, it has drawn many from the established churches. The special appeals of the homier atmosphere and the lay participation draw heavily on that part of the population whose ties are with the churches which in Wasco are serving the nuclear class. In their social aspects, rather than in the special sectarian tenets, lies their particular attraction to this group. This has been forceful enough, not merely to catch a few strays, but to create a major shift in church participation.

As between one and another of the denominations which are on this same level, there is little to choose, and consequently no major shift has been observed. As between the belief in the

ability to talk in tongues and the rejection of that belief, little in itself can affect the ordinary layman to whom the refinements of Biblical interpretations and theological philosophy are of minor concern. The ministers of these churches themselves treat lightly the existence of the different sects, comparing the situation to that found with commercial services, where personal whim leads to one or another grocer, and where space limitations require multiple gasoline stations. In part, this negation of sectarian differences is an attempt to create the illusion of unity with the churches on a higher social plane. The seminary ministers are quite conscious of the social distinctions between congregations; they minimize the agricultural labor adherents on the one hand, and the sectarian differences on the other.

The schismatic Pentecostal church represents a still lower level on the scale of formality, a higher one on the scale of emotional appeal. The small frame building housing this group stands in an outlying section of town. Inside there is ample evidence that "people living in tents would not feel uncomfortable." The pews are unfinished benches, embellished with the carved names of the bored unimpressed. Behind the altar the choir is seated on similar furniture and on the wall behind them are religious pictures, an electric sign advertising the young people's association and another proclaiming "Jesus Saves." A flag, a calendar, and other embellishments further relieve the dirty blue walls.

The services are conducted by a "brother" who "swamps" on a potato truck during the week. On one Sunday there were not over twenty persons, mostly women above forty, but some men and younger women. Several had children in their arms, while one young man sat in the rear, aloof to the whole proceedings. Young people sometimes go to these meetings, they say, merely for their entertainment value. They are more numerous in the evening services, when in the rear of the church flirtations and courtships are carried on, another aspect of the social appeal of the church. But these young people are not left unaffected by the services, even when their attention appears to be directed to other things. The description of part of a Sunday service from field notes will indicate the nature of this religious observance.

At the time I entered, a woman in the choir was giving testimonial and asking prayer for a young couple who had just come from Oklahoma. "And you just pray that those two children will get work. They came out here without a cent, and they have gone North now, but they will need work." This is to the accompaniment of "Hallelujahs" and "Amens" by the preacher and a few in the congregation. Immediately as she sat down another woman arose and asked prayer for her daughter and son-in-law, "I just asked that boy (and I know he's a good boy at heart) if he had ever been in church and had the Lord grip him, and he said that one time he did, and he had often wondered about that. I think he can be saved, and I just hope that you will pray for those two and help them." A third arose and asked that we pray for her neighbor. "Her husband was in the insane asylum and she came to church and almost got religion, but just then her husband got well and came back." Now he is sick again. She told me that if she hadn't backslid she believes her husband would never have suffered so. "I think we should pray for her, and get her back into the church."

After these testimonials, everyone kneeled, bowed his head upon the bench and prayed aloud. At first only the voice of one or two individuals could be heard in agonized prayer, then more and more voices were raised out of the indeterminate murmur, shouting indistinguishable words. As each person finished he sat on the bench and waited till the rest were through, finally, only one shrill voice remained.

A hymn was started, the last praying woman arose and composed herself. After the song, there was a standing prayer led by the preacher, who walked up and down the platform, frequently turning his back on the congregation and looking upward stretched his arms over his head and shouted, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus." The sermon followed.

At the outset the preacher explained that the Lord gave him his sermon, and that he considered this better than the usual method of asking blessings of a sermon already rendered. The sermon itself quite lacked coherent structure, it also lacked modulation. It was alternately a passage from the Bible and a few shouted comments regarding the content such as "the Lord says that if you are dirty you should wash, but He isn't speaking of the dirt of the earth, but the dirt of sin." In closing, he struck the salesmanship note, "Satan is working hard in the world today, because he knows his time is short. I can see that Jesus is getting ready to make His appearance soon, that the earthly kingdoms are destroying themselves. It is good to know we have the thing in hand for Jesus."

At the close there was a second standing prayer, then a duet in the inimitable flat nasal voice so typical of the singing in these churches, and the service was closed. Each person shook the hand of the others and said, "God bless you."

Personal participation, emotional release, informality, equality are all fulfilled in these services, three times each week for the fervent. We can hear their own expression of social anxieties and tensions in excerpts from their testimonials and prayers. The feeling of belonging was expressed in the Sunday evening testimonials. One said, "We should all pray for one another, pray for young and old alike. . . . We should pray for brotherly love. . . . There is no wrong in our acting like one big family, for that's what we are." A release from the personal sufferings is expressed in the following: "I've got a son in Oklahoma who's in trouble. Sometimes it takes trouble to make us appreciate the Lord. . . . It's wonderful to have someone to count on, but it's best to be in the arms of the Lord." But the greatest suffering of all, the common suffering of the selected group, is the economic worry and the feeling of inferiority engendered by the social system. For this reason a putative society is created by their wishful-thinking philosophy, a society in which they claim equality but in which they really feel themselves superior, for they are the saved. This is the society of the Kingdom of the Lord, and they "are all as precious in the eyes of the Lord." One called out in testimonial, "I've been broke, but you feel good if you know the Lord is watching you." Another professed that "I believe the less a person has of the world, the more they appreciate the Lord because they have to call on Him more." Again, "Sometimes I think I am worth nothing to the Lord or to anybody else, but when I realize what I am in His eyes, it makes me want to pray all the more."

Thus publicly proclaimed before their fellows and their God is their status in the commonly held dream world and the public negation of the real world of sin and disorder. There is little wonder that the depressed are drawn to this church, and that the more satisfied are repelled by it.

STATUS SEGREGATION IN THE CHURCH

Some of the psychological appeals of the different denominations were presented in the preceding account. There is another aspect to the appeals of the several churches—that of belonging

to a group of kindred spirits. This is a potent factor in the selection of members on a class basis. People like to "be with their own kind" when being with others means remaining always on the peripheries of participation. Yet people do not want to associate with people who are "beneath them." These social aspects have led to class segregation and such segregation is a specific denial of the basic tenets of the Christian philosophy. The church members deny any policy of exclusion, and can document their denial with examples. Yet the exclusion is of such an insidious nature that it is felt at both ends, and there is a tacit recognition that certain churches are for certain people, and this is sometimes given overt expression.

The first exclusion is on a racial basis. No Negro and white person attend the same church, even though their religious convictions coincide. This exclusion is specifically denied to be mandatory, yet it is without exception maintained. A leading minister toyed with the problem that would arise if a Negro would ask to join his congregation. His statement in this regard suggests, however, the reality of the unformalized type of exclusion.

I would take it up before the Board of Deacons and recommend highly that he be admitted. There would have to be some reason, for instance he might be a teacher who had gone through our schools. I believe they would pass it. I would then let the church vote on the matter, and if there were dissenters, I would try to make the action unanimous. After that it would be a closed matter. If anyone objected, I would point out that this is a democratic organization and that the rule of the majority must be accepted. I think he would be taken in. I think he would have to—it would be all over town one way or the other.

A member of one of the poorer churches maintained, on the other hand, that her group has encouraged the Negroes to join, "but they just don't join. I don't know why unless it is because back East they don't mix with whites, and they don't feel free to."

The leading Negro congregation is Baptist, but all the white religious organizations have helped it to build its church, and they take what can only be called a patronizing attitude. The

young people's organization of a leading church invited the Negroes to a meeting. The question of refreshments (raising the problem of Negroes and whites eating together) was solved by passing around nuts. The Negroes invite the whites to come to services, and the white pastors make a special point of trying to get a good turnout and make up a good collection for them.

The Mexicans stand in an apparently different relationship, with regard to the church, for they are almost all members of the Catholic congregation. But the segregation is nearly as great, for though they attend Mass together, they remain apart socially. This distinction was pointed out by the priest, who said:

There is a large Mexican colony but there are also many Germans. There used to be one service in Spanish for them, but we have discontinued that. We make no distinctions between the two groups. Once a year we have a Spanish Mission for the Mexicans, which lasts a week.

The Mexicans are children of nature, and do not take their religion very seriously. They have a kind of inferiority complex and feel that they are looked down on. Many of the Mexicans have devotions in their own homes—they have little altars. They like the trimmings better than the essentials; it is better that way than if they had nothing.

We have card parties and socials to raise money. The Mexicans do not come to these. They would rather be with their kind. Every once in a while, usually in the spring, they have a fiesta. They have a good time. Some of the others come—it is open to everyone.

Here we have the internal segregation of the Mexicans. Since they are traditionally Catholic, we would expect very few among the Protestant churches, and in actuality there is but the single case mentioned.

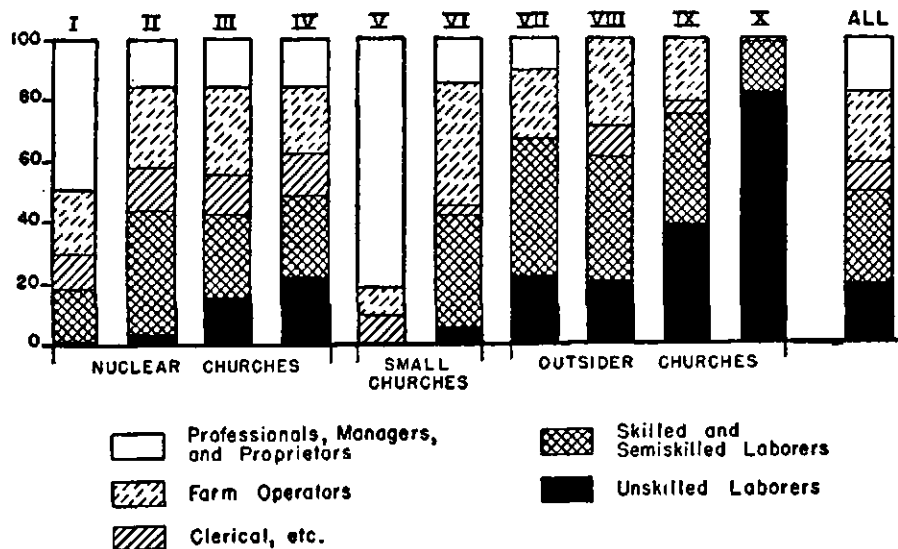
But the segregation of the religious institutions on an economic basis interests us more here, and the segregation is striking, if not so complete. Table 24 and Chart 7 present the occupations of the members of the ten Wasco churches and show the clear differentials with regard to the occupational characteristics of the several congregations. If we look at the first of these churches, we see the statistical substantiation of the pastor's statement that his congregation is made up of "the progressive business men, the creamery people, the solid farmers and

TABLE 24.—OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHURCHES

Occupation class	I Con- grega- tional	II Meth- odist	III Bap- tist	IV Cath- olic	V Chris- tian Science	VI Seventh- Day Advent- ist	VII Naza- rene	VIII Assem- bly of God	IX Church of Christ	X Schis- matic Pente- cost	All
A. Professionals, man- agers, and pro- prietors	50	16	16	16	82	15	11	0	0	0	18
B. Farm operators	20	26	29	22	9	40	22	30	22	0	24
C. Clerical, workers	11	14	12	14	9	3	0	10	3	1	9
D. Skilled laborers	18	41	28	26	0	37	45	40	36	17	30
E. Unskilled laborers	1	3	15	22	0	5	22	20	39	82	19
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

SOURCE: Data obtained from membership rolls and by interview. The number of members of each church for whom occupation was determined, were, in order named: 152, 154, 180, 93, 11, 59, 72, 60, 80, and 72.

OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHURCHES WITH DIFFERING STATUS



SOURCE: Table 24.

CHART 7

the school teachers." The agricultural laborers are completely unrepresented in this group. Of the relation with them the pastor said:

The migrants don't come here. You can see why from the people who I said belong. We have a [missionary] camp of our own for the laborers on a large ranch. I didn't take the Government camp for those fellows are too well taken care of. Any minister will go there, for it's quite comfortable. But those workers are trying to do things for themselves. They have much to learn, and are trying. I think the situation is hopeful.

The migrants don't come into our church because they don't feel comfortable. There isn't any feeling against them, but they aren't comfortable. They don't have the clothes, and we have a very pretty church here. They are more at home in the Church of Christ and the Nazarenes. Those churches are more like their homes. They can live in a tent and feel more comfortable there. I don't know whether my congregation would accept them. I haven't had any experience. The Methodists and Baptists might be able to give you information on that. These three churches represent the substance of the community.

Turning back to Chart 7 we see that these three Protestant churches of "substance" (I, II, and III) have fewest laborers and most of the entrepreneurial-professional group, leaving out the two small congregations. The Catholic church (IV) represents very nearly a cross-section of churchgoers in the community (compare the right-hand column). As we proceed down the line of outsider churches we find diminishing numbers of the top groups and increasing proportions of skilled and unskilled laborers, until we get to the schismatic Pentecostals (X) where virtual unanimity of workers is reached. This chart shows clearly the social divergence of the several sects in Wasco.

SOCIAL MOBILITY OF THE CHURCHES

Perhaps the most telling documentation of status differentiation among the religious bodies of Wasco may be gained from an understanding of the changes of status that the different churches as wholes have undergone. The leading churches—the four which make up the substance of Wasco—have not just recently attained their places, though their relative status may

have undergone some modifications with the building of new edifices. But in the lower brackets, those called by the nuclear population the "Holy Roller" churches, the evidences of status change are manifest. One person recognized this change when he said, "I used to live across from one of those Holy Roller churches. My, but they were a noisy lot. They seem to have quieted down since then, though. They have built a new church and I suppose they have to live up to their new respectability." Such an observation might be written off to a development of understanding or acclimatization, but we have the following testimony from one of the ministers:

The first two ministers here were just farmer-preachers who had had no education. They attracted most of the transient migratory workers. Many of the transient migratory type were attracted by his type of leadership, but my predecessor and I have kind of—now I don't want to put it so you misunderstand, but our special appeal is to the middle class. Poor people get a sensual or physical thrill and in that there is an attraction. I have had a frank Pentecostal preacher tell me that many of his congregation come to church for just that thrill. That is shallow thinking. Those poor folks get no other thrill out of life. But you can't build a church on that kind of element. My predecessor and I have appealed to a more sturdy and consistent type of people. We are appealing to the professional type of person. We are giving a sane intelligent presentation of the Gospel Truths.

This church, according to one of its own historians, grew out of the holiness movement of the latter half of the nineteenth century, which was the result of dissatisfactions in the Protestant churches and a desire for salvation through personal experience. It was established only in 1908. The church in Wasco is but a decade old, yet it has grown from meetings in a private home through a tent and two small buildings to its present plant, valued at \$20,000. This new and elaborate plant has, itself, furthered the growth along the lines of conservatism, for "the work has taken on an impetus with the building of the modern church." Another cause for this growth "is the intensely sacrificial nature of our people. Our class is the middle to upper-lower class, and those are the most sacrificial. [There are] a half dozen field laborers, but the biggest part is middle class."

Another church of similar status is affiliated to the Assemblies

of God. Like the preceding, it was organized in Wasco under a lay minister. Though the original congregation was largely made up of small farmers (this pastor also made a general disclaimer for any large labor membership), actually many agricultural laborers are included in the congregation. But the evidence for social advancement, at least in the relative scale, in the Wasco social hierarchy (for this church preceded the extensive growth of the white outsider group) can be seen in the nature of the schism that has taken place within the Pentecostal movement. The Pentecostal movement itself was away from "modernism" and "higher criticism" and toward a "return to the old truth," namely, "infillment of the spirit" and the "second personal crisis." The movement was also imbued with a spirit of democracy, and even an active participation, intellectual and emotional, by the laity.

But the processes of status advance by the church, with the acquisition of property and a history, and perhaps a vested interest in its own permanence as an established institution, have taken their toll from the original tenets, and in the past ten years there has been a schism on a nation-wide basis. The older church is the one discussed above, and the schismatic faction is represented by a Pentecostal group, a fully outsider religious body, poorest in equipment and with the poorest membership of all the churches of the community. (Column X in the preceding chart.) Of this split perhaps the statement of a former (lay) minister of the schismatic group is most telling:

There is no difference between our church and the other Pentecostal church except that we believe that the spirit has the right of way. The Council has tightened down and become formalized. Back East they are free, but here (especially in Southern California) many of the churches have tightened down. Educated ministers and college students who are stiff shirts came in and some of the people fell for it.

This inhibition of the spirit which has resulted from the formalization was given expression by a classic statement of a person whose affiliation was with the older Pentecostal church back home. She did not like their congregation in Wasco because "they set you down," that is, "they won't let you get up and shout when you get the spirit, and that isn't right."

The church with lay participation, especially the emotional participation through the religious experience as exemplified by the shouting, talking in tongues, rolling, etc., of the revivalistic churches, is the special province of the underprivileged. They are manifested in the Negro churches, in the revivalistic cults of the Indians of North America, and other primitive groups in contact with western civilization, as well as in the white community that is our particular subject of study. But in this last, where the underprivileged persons succeed in advancing somewhat in the social scale, there are pressures upon the institution itself toward social advancement. An emotional church appealing to the "sensual" draws in a group, and a building is erected on a "faith basis." It grows under the impetus of lay participation, its coffers increase, and its building, outgrown or outmoded, is replaced with a more imposing structure. It becomes unseemly for the now relatively affluent church to have an uneducated minister, who, it is argued, cannot devote his full time to the congregation, so a preacher is hired from one of the seminaries of the parent church. Education, however, vests *de facto* authority in the minister's hands, inhibiting the congregation by precept, if not by direct effort on his part. "The sane intelligent presentation of the gospel" results in the "setting down" of the fervent adherents. The appeal goes out to the "stabler elements" who tend to take over the church. But this stabler element is made up of those who have made peace with their milieu, most frequently in terms of a fair amount of economic security; there still remain those distressed individuals whose emotional needs are not met by the intellectualized gospel of the seminary students. It is their turn for the new schism, the establishment of the new church where the "spirit has the right of way." And so the cycle is repeated.

Just as the poorer persons require the psychological reinforcement of the emotional religion and the negation of worldly goods, so do those better off find such a statement of the ethical situation at variance with their psychological needs. And as, first, the church exists in an environment in which prestige is expressed by evidences of economic worth, and, second, the congregation is exhorted to support the church to its fullest glory,

there is a bourgeoisization of the church, to coin a phrase, that parallels the development of individual interest in worldly goods. The dilemma of the ethical system of the Protestant faith, which exhorts its followers on the one hand to reject the things of the world as unsuited to the servants of God, and on the other hand to the great virtues of industry, thrift and frugality, has not gone unheeded. Max Weber in his *Protestant Ethic* points out that "the whole history of monasticism is in a sense the history of a continual struggle with the problem of secularizing influence of wealth," and that "the same is true on a grand scale of the worldly asceticism of Puritanism."¹

As a matter of fact, John Wesley himself recognized this very problem which he expressed in the following:

I fear, wherever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore I do not see how it is possible in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches. How then is it possible that Methodism, that is, a religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay tree, should continue in this state? For the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal, consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionally increase in pride, in anger, in the desires of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of the religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away.²

This frequently quoted passage from the Methodist leader implies what is clearly true, that the philosophy of emotional salvation for prestige in a putative society and of the negation of worldly systems of value appeals to the poor, and this for obvious reasons. That it applies to the church as a whole, as well as to the individual, is demonstrated in the data at Wasco, where the successive schisms of the Christian church, especially the Protestant, are demonstrated.

The Christian sects, from Catholicism through the Protestant factions of an earlier era, now serving stolidly a solid middle

¹ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, p. 174.

² Quoted in Southey, *Life of Wesley*, Chapter XXIX, 2nd American edition, II, p. 308, and again by Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

class, down to the Evangelical groups of modern origin, are represented in Wasco. Within the Evangelical sects the different stages are present. There are unorganized and unaffiliated groups meeting in homes representing the newest in point of time and the poorest in social status. Next are the schismatic Pentecostals, whose removal into an old building from a tent is less than two years old. Another church has but now obtained a full-time minister (completely dependent upon his services to the congregation for his livelihood), while two have attained plants rivaling the middle-class churches in value and elaboration, and these are completely dominated by the "stiff shirts" produced by the seminaries.

INDIVIDUAL STATUS AND RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION

Thus far the discussion of religion in Wasco has centered about the church as an institution. We have pointed out that within the tenets of Christian doctrine the whole gamut of social classes can be accommodated, but that this can be done only with a variety of separate and very different institutional organizations. These different organizations, furthermore, appeal to persons of different social and economic status. It is therefore necessary to examine the nature of this differential appeal upon the individual.

Two major changes in church affiliation have been recorded for the outsider group in the tabulation of questions from 51 persons in Wasco. These are first, a shift away from church membership to nonparticipation, and second, a shift from churches of denominations which, in Wasco, serve the nuclear group toward those which serve largely outsiders.

Two-fifths of the sample at present attend no church. This figure cannot be compared with that for nonattendance formerly, because most individuals represented under that heading merely did not state their former church affiliations. It shows also that 28 of the 51 are members or attend churches of the outsider type, and that half the sample were formerly members of the nuclear type churches, but are no longer. This shift away from the nuclear churches is shown in the change in total

allegiance of from 25 prior to migration to two at the present time, and neither of the two of this sample had membership in the churches they attended.

The pastor of one of the "substantial" churches expressed concern over such absences of the agricultural workers from the religious institutions. "It is true," he said, "that many of these people have left their religion behind them. I have frequently

TABLE 25.—CHANGES IN CHURCH HABITS OF RECENT ARRIVALS

Present church habits	Total	Before coming to Wasco attended		
		Revival- istic church	Nuclear church	No church (or no information)
Attend no church	21	4	12	5
Attend revivalistic churches	28	5	12	11
Attend nuclear churches	2	0	1	1
Total	51	9	25	17

SOURCE: Data obtained from interviews.

tried to get them into the church, but they don't seem interested. Many of them join the Pentecostal church. I have never thought of just why that might be, but many of them have pretty tough sledding, and also the emotional nature of the church appeals to them. The Baptist church in the region they come from is more emotional too. Most of the people I have talked to say they don't have the clothes to come to church and they don't feel well enough off. We just inducted a couple of agricultural laborers who have just come from Oklahoma. They have quite poor clothes but they don't seem to mind."

Even the churches that are considered by the nuclear population to be made up of agricultural laborers report this change in church participation. One of the pastors said, "Most of the recent immigrants go to the [Schismatic] Pentecostal church.



Gale Goldschmidt photograph

I. The ranch home of an industrial farmer. Landscaping, fine home, out-houses, barns and water tower. The barns stable riding horses, not milch cows. Near Wasco.



II. A modest farm home. Adequate garden and modest houses are found among industrial farmers.



Farm Security Administration photograph—Dorothea

III. Street scene in a little Oklahoma city. Such streets, some better, some worse, are found in every town in the industrialized farming area of California. This one is not in Wasco.



Bureau of Agricultural Economics photograph—Dorothea

IV. Three stages in the growth of a labor home: a substitute for credit. Two years before this picture was taken the family moved to this place with a tent, then constructed the shack and used the tent for overflow. Construction on the permanent home stopped the preceding fall for lack of funds.



V. Hand labor on industrial farms: picking up potatoes. Harvesting potatoes is back-breaking work even where operations are generally mechanized.

Gale Goldschmidt photograph

VI. Hand labor on industrial farms: thinning cotton. Hoeing the cotton is the same rhythmic work found in the South, but the rows are longer.



Gale Goldschmidt photograph



Farm Security Administration photograph Dorothea

VII. The mechanized potato picker in action. The digger blade cuts under the broad furrow, lifts the potatoes up, shakes loose the dirt, rakes off the vines, tamps the earth and drops the potatoes back to the ground.



Gale Goldschmidt photograph

VIII. Factory operations in potato production. The potatoes go from the field to the shed where they are carried through a washer and down the table. The women are sorting out bruised and diseased potatoes while size grading is automatic, as the potatoes are carried to the jiggers at the end who fill the hundred-pound sacks.



Gale Goldschmidt photograph

IX. A center for social activity of a minority group. Mexicans enjoying the Sunday sun in front of a store in their section of town.



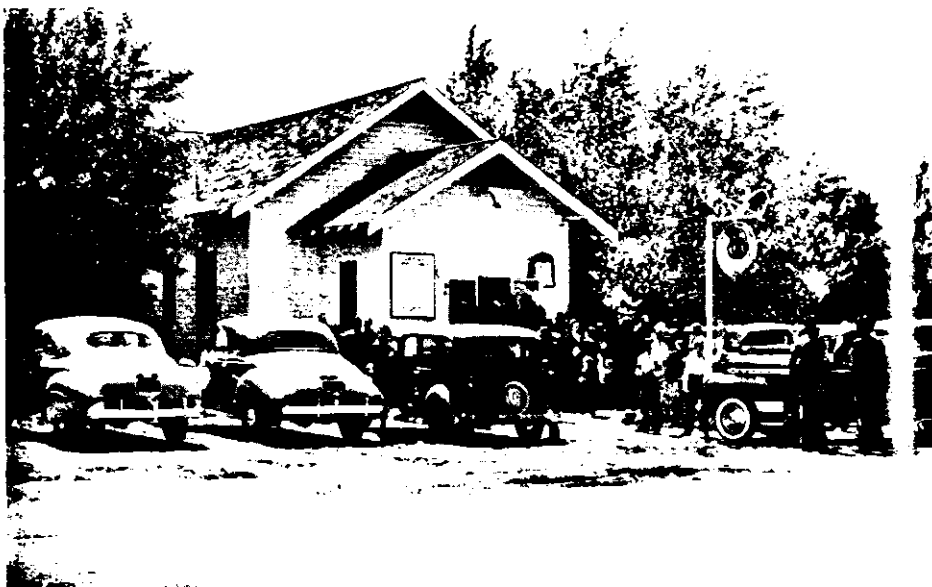
Gale Goldschmidt photograph

X. School entrance: symbol of community solidarity. The fine schools in rural communities of California offer the major institution for community action and the symbol of unity.



Gale Goldschmidt photo 1978

XI. A substantial church and a well-dressed congregation. One of the churches serving the "substantial element in the community."



Gale Goldschmidt photo 1978

XII. A modest church of intermediate status. This church serves laborers, townspeople and farmers together. It is sloughing its emotional appeal for the "sane, intelligent presentation of the Gospel truths."



Bureau of Agricultural Economics photograph - Dorothea Lange

XIII. A church for the dispossessed. "People living in tents wouldn't feel uncomfortable" going to such a church. This one is similar to the schismatic Pentecostal sect in Wasco, in appearance and in the nature of the services.



Bureau of Agricultural Economics photograph Dorothea Lange

XIV. Three institutions that serve the laborers. A church on Sunday, a hall for the union of relief clients and a pay station for relief checks.



XV. Residential street in a prosperous small farm community. The proportion of landscaped gardens, paved streets and walks and substantial dwellings is greater where industrial farming is ameliorated by small secure landholders.



XVI. Residential street in a large-farm community. Crowded one- and two-room shacks along dusty unpaved streets protected only by trees are characteristic of the better homes of farm workers in areas of large-scale farming.

Our bus goes around and picks up about 35 of the migrant families' children. We haven't enough room in the bus to hold the adults. We have a ladies' missionary group, and they go around calling on the people. They can't get the adults. I have found that about 60 per cent of them were church people back home, and you'd be surprised at the number of former preachers who never darken the door of a church here in California. Their excuse is that 'people are so different out here.'"

The statements of the laborers themselves impress us with the direct social factors which they consider sufficient to account for these changes. One squatter said that a neighboring farmer had asked her to come to one of the leading churches. "They are good members," she said, "but we are poor people and everybody that goes there are up-to-date people." The wife of a permanently hired farm laborer had a similar invitation from his employer, but she went to the Pentecostal church. "We belonged to the Baptist back home. To tell the truth, I don't like the Baptist church here because they are a different class of people, and I'd rather stay around my own class. I don't like all the ways they believe in the Pentecostal church though." Here is not only an explanation on the basis of class differentiation, but the statement also that the change was made despite antithetical religious beliefs. Another laborer's wife made the following observation. "The children go to the Pentecostal Sunday School. We were Baptists back home, but we don't go to any church out here. We don't have the clothes. Back home there were little old meetings and you could go any old way. When you're just raised up among folks it's different from the way it is here."

Other shifts in church membership have already been mentioned; the Mexican with membership in the Protestant church and the teachers who no longer took up membership in the elite church at about the time their loss of social status in the community was being felt.

The recreational content of the church adds to the need for status unity. Aside from the relatively formalized church socials and the young people's and ladies' societies the church is an arena where friendships are created and courtships promulgated.

A young agricultural laborer who made the following statement could hardly expect to find his needs met if he went to the best church in town. He said, "I go to the Nazarene here. It's nicest and most up-to-date [his thinking does not even include the best] but I wouldn't say it's more friendly. That is how I get acquainted with the girls I know here. I wouldn't say that's the reason I go to church, for I like to hear a good preacher, but that's certainly one reason." As a matter of fact, the church is the only institutional mechanism available to the agricultural laborer which fulfills this need for expanding the social group beyond the family.

These several instances and statistics show that one feature of any Protestant church which particularly draws the individual is its social aspect, and more specifically its particular social status. The exceptional individual may demand a certain philosophy or religious content, but the vast majority seek to be with people of their own kind, avoiding situations where they feel inferior, yet not associating exclusively with people who are "beneath" them. The content of the services then adjusts, in the shifting process described in a preceding section, to the psychological requirements of the social and economic class of its adherents.

CIVIC INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH

For all the hold the religious institutions of the community have over many persons of different stations of life in Wasco, each in his own way, the coverage of the church is far from complete, and its influence over the community as such is diminishing. Of six thousand or more whites and Mexicans served by the ten institutions here recorded, only about one thousand have direct affiliations. There are many more, of course, who are religious, that is, believe the major tenets of Christian ideology. Some of these frequently attend, others merely feel that if they "stay home and teach their children to do right, and don't bother anything, the Lord won't mind." The influence of the church is still great enough that nobody openly flaunts his disbelief in the major premises, but is no longer so great that it has the power of social ostracism.

The newcomer tells us, "This is one town where the church members don't come around and ask you to join." Probably the most significant indication of this can be seen in the small proportion of teachers who are members of the church, for teachers, as servants of the community, are expected to conform to all the dominant social dicta. Of the 66 teachers in the public schools of the community, only 18 have affiliation with a local church. The elite church still has most of the teachers and none belongs to the churches of the outsider group. This religious tolerance is an aspect of the urbanity manifested by the small community, yet it also reflects the loss of community status by the teachers.

The church was once the dominant social influence in Wasco. No person, public servant or not, could refuse participation without loss of status, and the non-believers and the indifferent felt obliged occasionally to put in their appearance at religious services. The church ban on drinking made Wasco a dry community during its early years. At a later date, about the close of World War I, one of the major conflicts was over the matter of school dances. In part the early victory in this matter over church conservatism was the result of a highly sophisticated school principal, but his very selection and the existence of potent forces of revolt are significant. The church now exerts great influence in the social affairs of only those who for one or another reason desire to be so influenced. In how far this diminution of the sphere of influence is a result of the development of industrialized agriculture it is difficult to say, but certainly the relationship is not purely fortuitous. The very fact of social exclusion and the tendency of each church to serve merely one class or status level are in themselves a voluntary restriction of the sphere of influence. Although their members have increased with the growth of population, the churches have suffered a net loss as a factor of control in the newer class society.

CHAPTER VI

COHESION, CONFLICT AND CONTROL

THE INDUSTRIALIZED character of the agriculture of California has resulted in the establishment of a social system comprised of two basic classes. These groups, with their differing modes of life, are the rural equivalent of the class structure generally associated with urban society; they are the primary mark of the urbanization of California rural life. The existence of these two antithetical groups gives rise to the following problems: Does the social class system create conflict situations; what is the nature of these conflicts; how does the dominant group control the submissive, and what are the checks against this control in the hands of the latter? It may be said from the outset that the social situation is conducive to conflict; that the controls by the nuclear group over the outsiders are substantial; that, above all, this situation is part and parcel of the greater social arena in which the conflict and controls are determined.

The terms cohesion, conflict, and control are used in their sociologic sense in this chapter. Since there are popular uses of these same words, a brief definition is apropos here. By social *cohesion* we mean those personal motivations (and by extension their outward manifestations) which strengthen the ties of any group of persons; in this instance with the community of Wasco. Social *conflict* is used to denote those situations where individuals or groups have interests directly contrary to other persons or groups, the fulfillment of which will act to the detriment of these others. Actual (physical) conflict can arise out of such situations, though it rarely does. Conflict may, but does not necessarily, involve hostility since it is not necessarily directly recognized as conflict of interests with another person or group. Social *control* denotes the influence or power of one individual

or group over others, whether that power rests upon a use of force, upon legally established mechanisms, upon the powers of persuasion, upon established customs and attitudes of the people, or a combination of these. More generally it applies to extra-legal powers built upon custom and persuasion.

All societies carry these elements of cohesion, conflict, and control. The utopian societies without unfair social distinctions, without conflicting situations, and without controlling and submissive elements are formed only in the philosophers' studies. The anthropologists do not report them. Yet each society displays some means of welding the people into a functioning and interdependent whole, serving the social wants as well as the physical needs of its population. These cohesive forces vary greatly, both in kind and in degree. They are more apparent in the simpler societies with more fixed membership than they are in a modern community, particularly an urbanized community, where mobility is far greater. Yet at any one time, it is apparent that sufficient motivation exists to keep the people together. In earlier chapters the lack of cohesive ties between the nuclear population and the outsider group has been discussed in detail. Yet there are strong economic and social motivations which unify the population. Fundamentally, the worker, the farmer, and the townsmen co-operate in producing farm commodities, and each is necessary to the other. Any conflict situation is always mitigated by this economic interdependence.

COHESIVE FACTORS: THE OUTSIDER GROUP

The submissive element in the class structure has come into the rural area from the outside; it has come and it remains of its own free choice, so that the controls to which it is subject must be considered less odious than the economic oppressions of their places of former residence, for "if they don't like it here they can go back where they came from." That many of them do is well known, yet many more have remained in California. And, as has already been pointed out, not only do they remain in California, but also they select a specific community for resettlement and attempt to re-establish permanent homes in

their new environment. Many make a single shift and come directly to their new homes; even those who follow crops often settle in one or another community which they then use as a base for their migratory activities. Before we examine the nature of the conflicts and controls to which they are subject in their new environment, it is necessary to examine the specific attractions which hold them in California and their new community. For, though it may be Hobson's choice, these agricultural workers have cast their lot with the California social situation.

The special attractions of resettlement may be understood under three heads: The immediate economic opportunities, the social emoluments of resettlement, and the expectancy of future social and economic gain. The basically economic motivation of their movement to California has been directly expressed by the migrants themselves. The drought and decreased farming opportunities resulting from mechanized farming (as expressed in the phrase "we are tractored out") have diminished the economic opportunity at the source of migration.¹ A survey of migration and resettlement enquired into the motivation of migrants moving into California (Table 26). From the nearest community included, a total of 45 of the 56 responses indicated the basic economic reason for this migration, while 40 out of 56 gave similar explanations for the choice of their community of settlement.

If the finding of work leads to resettlement in the community, other considerations are conducive to the maintenance of a home there, though it be only a boarded tent on the desert. Regular work contacts can best be established by means of permanent residence, and occasionally regular routes of migration are maintained because of permanent work contacts in different towns. Such work contacts can lead to permanent employment. A second economic factor is the establishment of credit which is an important consideration to the seasonally employed. Public welfare, especially medical aid, and those categories administered

¹ See Paul S. Taylor, "Power Farming and Labor Displacement in the Cotton Belt," *Monthly Labor Review*, Serial No. R 737, 1938.

by county agencies form a very real economic motive for permanent settlement. Finally, the desire to accumulate household goods and other evidences of middle-class well-being make it desirable to have a permanent establishment.

But the pressures toward resettlement in California not only have their economic aspect, but also their social. The Table just cited carries evidence of this. Thirty-five of those who came to

TABLE 26.—REASONS FOR COMING TO CALIFORNIA AND FOR CHOICE OF COMMUNITY OF 45 RESETTLED MIGRANT FAMILIES

	To secure work, reported by				Other reasons			
	Relatives	Friends	Ads	Unsp. ¹	Health	Climate	Visit	Other
Migration to California ²	23	11	2	9	9	1	1	0
Choice of community ²	7	7	1	25	3	1	9	3

¹ This category includes "followed crop," "better work opportunity," and like statements.

² More than one reason frequently given.

NOTE: Data from neighboring community and refers to spring, 1939.

California because of work opportunities learned of these from relatives or friends, and fourteen who settled in the community learned of work in this way. In addition to this, nine of those who settled there first came to visit. Similarly, of sixty immigrants of the outsider group interviewed in Wasco, thirty-two mentioned relatives as a reason for settling in the community, and forty stated that they had relatives in the town.

One of the major considerations in the resettlement of the laborers has been the schools. The attendance figures of the Wasco schools show that fewer withdrawals and delayed entrants occurred in the late than in the early part of the thirties. This indicates a progressive tendency toward maintaining permanent settlement. Some workers declare that they have come

to California, and many that they remain in the community, because of the school facilities provided them by this State. The school is also a socializing agency, in that it is one of the few sources of social activity enjoyed by any of the outsider group. There is also the social aspect of the desire to accumulate household goods of prestige-bearing character, for these become tacit expressions of status within the outsider groups. In short, it is only through resettlement that the outsider can attain a measure of social belonging either to a smaller group or to the community itself, and this he is anxious to attain.

This desire to attain standing in the new community leads to the third basis for his choice of resettlement: the expectancy of future social and economic gain. The primary desires, as expressed by many workers, are a "steady job" and "a place of their own." The former is, of course, relatively rare, and when available often has specific drawbacks. The latter has in many cases been fulfilled, as is readily seen by driving through the "Little Oklahoma City" area of Wasco, or of any other small community in the California intensive farming area. In a study of resettled migrants, Fuller has pointed out that almost half of them have purchased real property.² Such homes represent not only economic advancement but also social gain, according to the standards of social worth set by the community and adopted by the outsider. Beyond these, and frequently in their stead, are the desires for consumer goods: cars, refrigerators, radios, and the like which are at the same time sources of physical satisfaction and emblems of the middle-class well-being for which they are striving. An often expressed, but rarely satisfied, desire is for a farm of their own. One worker says, "Above all, I would like to farm—I've done farming and I like it best of anything." A worker's wife says, "My husband is a cement worker for the WPA. We came out here on the desert [squating on unimproved land] in the hopes of saving money so that we could buy some sort of place. We would like to buy a lot. We would like to buy a place and raise some chickens, and maybe later get a cow." This person is thinking in terms of the farm

² Varden Fuller, "Resettlement of Migrants in Rural Communities of California," Ms., p. 159.

enterprise of the East, rather than realistically of farming in this irrigation area. Such was also the case of the laborer who claimed he could make a living out of a farm here, even if he "just had a couple of acres." It is, nevertheless, the expression of a great majority of these resettled migrants, though occasionally one who has had the opportunity recognizes the limitations of marginal farming in the region saying, "It costs too much money to farm here in California." Finally, the expectation of future economic gains is in terms of ambition for children, who are to go to college, and here it may be that the realization can be fulfilled, for of the next generation this study cannot make any factual report.

SOCIAL MOBILITY

If these are the desires of the outsider group with respect to the community, it becomes essential to examine to what extent they are attained. For it is an essential characteristic of the open-class society that upward mobility is more than a theoretical possibility, and upon the ease or difficulty of such mobility rests the future of the social pattern.

Some evidence for social mobility can be obtained from the changes in occupation status of a sample of persons who entered California during the decade of the thirties. A survey of such families was made through the schools by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in 1939. This survey elicited responses on questions as to the occupation of the parent of the child in school at the time of the survey and prior to coming to California. Table 27 presents the figures for the occupation at the present time according to occupation prior to removal. The subsequent tabulation (Table 28) summarizes some of the content, showing that four persons out of ten are working in the same occupation class, while of the remaining six, five are in an occupation bracket with less social status than prior to removal to California, or a net loss of 40 per cent in economic status. Referring back to Table 27, it is possible to note where the incidence of occupational shifts has occurred. A very large group has shifted into the relief brackets, and this shift has occurred in about the same proportion from every occupational bracket

except the entrepreneurial-professional group. Many, but not all, of those persons in the relief bracket are seasonal farm laborers, for the survey was made at a low point in the annual labor

TABLE 27.—OCCUPATIONAL SHIFTS OF RECENT ARRIVALS INTO WASCO

Present occupation	Former occupation						Total
	A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	B. Farm operators	C. Clerical workers	D. Skilled laborers	E. Unskilled laborers	R. Unemployed ¹	
A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	7	3	2	1	1	0	14
B. Farm operators	2	10	0	4	1	0	17
C. Clerical workers	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
D. Skilled laborers	6	13	1	34	10	0	64
E. Unskilled laborers	3	32	1	12	37	2	87
F. Unemployed ¹	0	11	1	10	18	1	41
Total	18	71	6	61	67	3	226

¹ Unemployed or recipient of some form of public assistance.

TABLE 28.—SUMMARY OF OCCUPATIONAL SHIFTS

	Number	Per cent
No change in occupation class	90	40
Upward change in occupation class	24	10
Downward change in occupation class	112	50
Total	226	100

SOURCE: Table 27.

demand cycle. (See Chart 3.) A large amount of shifting takes place between skilled and unskilled workers, but the shift is approximately equal in both directions. The most significant shift is, however, from farmer to lower status. According to the data presented in the Table, 71 persons were farmers prior to coming to California. Only ten of these have remained farmers,

while 56 have become laborers, or are on relief. If we simplify our classification to form a farmer-white-collar group and a laborer-relief group, there are only seven individuals who have raised their status as against 68 who have fallen into a lower bracket. These are indicated by the upper right and lower left boxes, respectively, on Table 27. Examining the seven more closely, we find only two who were agricultural laborers prior to coming to California. One of these has become a tenant farmer; the second operates a camp for migratory workers, and like all persons whose economic advancement derives from service to the outsider group, he does not have status within the nuclear group that is the normal concomitant of his occupation classification. Of the remaining five who have had this status advance, one is at present a real farm leader, one has had the help of local kinspeople of high status, and a third operates a service station. The other two might be called marginal farmers.

In order to arrive at an understanding of the nature of the adjustment of persons coming into the area in recent years, it will be well to examine a few cases in somewhat more detail. Ten synopses of individual histories, representing different types of adjustment to the local scene are therefore presented. The first five have become farm operators; the remainder are laborers. Of the latter, two have become integrated in the town, and one has obtained permanent employment on a farm. The other two have not become integrated into the community at all. Case A, that of a farmer now quite successful, indicates the ease with which economic advancement could be made under the expanding economy of the middle twenties—a degree of social mobility that he realizes as well as anyone else was not possible during the depression. To account for this change, he points to the labor displacement of mechanized farming practices on the one hand, and the increased size of farms on the other.

A. Boom period immigrant. Came to neighboring town from Oklahoma, where he had been farming, in 1925, after relative sent him newspaper clipping of farming opportunities. Both husband and wife had job arranged as agricultural laborers before coming West. Before year was over worked for gin, and gin manager persuaded him to take

over a farm—"almost anyone could get a farm at that time." Farmed forty acres on a share basis. Now owns 100 acres and rents 360 more.

Is well known in community but does not participate a great deal in activities. Is a member of Co-op gin and has refused to join Associated Farmers. Formerly belonged to church but has never belonged in California. One child prominent in school, two others in college, one doing graduate academic work.

The second case is of an individual who came to Wasco as a field hand and has become a successful farmer. Note, however, that he had had experience in large-scale cash farming, that he had no dependents, and that his wife could earn and save money and that he could borrow some cash from a relative. His aggressiveness and his ability to work very hard were, however, both essential qualities to his success. While his status in the community is not yet high, he stands a good chance of becoming a leading farmer. The third case likewise indicates the importance of a source of capital and of credit. Case D has utilized his resources as a skilled laborer to become a farmer, a situation which is not infrequent.

B. Agricultural laborer to farm operator. Came straight to Wasco from Arkansas in 1935, after having lost large farm due to illness. Wife remained in Arkansas and worked, only son was permanently employed elsewhere. Man worked as agricultural laborer as follows: hoed cotton, picked potatoes, followed grape harvest, returned for cotton picking, worked in dairy near Los Angeles. Wife arrived in December with \$500 savings. He worked as farm laborer till September, and she in town, until September, when both picked cotton till Christmas. At that time there were two months of unemployment when he "pretty nearly went crazy." Obtained steady farm work till September, 1938, when he rented 20 acres of improved land, with savings plus sum borrowed from relative.

Farmed this land with team and borrowed equipment; aided by finance companies. Next year rented 40 acres and "made about \$20,000." In 1940 operated, in conjunction with son, two tracts totaling 300 acres and claims a cash investment of over \$10,000. Wife still working in town.

Man is well known in community, being subject both to praise and criticism for his aggressive economic advancement. Belongs to no clubs, though asked to join Grange which he declines because he has "never had time," and the Associated Farmers, which he declined because "the way I figure it, that organization is made up of a bunch of big fellows

who run things, and I'm not one—yet." Wife a pillar of an outsider church.

C. Migration involving no change of status. After "eight drought years" sold farm in Western Oklahoma and came to Los Angeles in 1937. Spent three months at "a pretty good job," but became interested in farming in the San Joaquin Valley. Rented a farm from a man "who was hard to get along with" with \$1,200 savings and financing made available because he had "friends working for cotton financing company." Now cash renting one place and share renting another, hires two regular hands at \$65 and perquisites, keeps cows, chickens, and garden and plans diversified farming. Intends to make Wasco permanent home and wants to buy a farm.

Is known to farm circles, and belongs to Co-op gin. Has refused to join organizations and does not go to church.

D. Oil worker to farm operator. Raised on farms in Texas and Oklahoma, and spent some time in New Mexico and Arizona. Came to California in 1920 and worked as oil driller. Relatives in Wasco persuaded him to start farming. Farmed 40 acres as share tenant in 1930 and increased to 80 acres the following year. Leased land for three years, and bought land out of profits of high-priced 1936 potato crop. Has periodically throughout this time and is at present working in oil fields, maintaining that it is impossible to buy farm land in Wasco area without some other source of income, but wants to farm because of taste, and of greater security in old age. He now owns 100 acres of land and is referred to as a "wealthy man," but himself makes the observation that "you can't get out from under the finance company unless you work awfully hard and get the breaks." Belongs to Co-op gin, Grange and Masonic lodge, and formerly belonged to Farm Bureau. Refused to join Associated Farmers. Wife does not care for clubs.

The farmer in Case E is operating a small unit on share rental that furnished him a bare minimum income. Such units are rare in the area. This individual has no certainty of remaining a farm operator, and still has the social status of laborer, which is his more usual occupation. Advancement may follow, of course, if he is able to keep the farm and especially if he succeeds in expanding his operations. With farmers, size and tenure are important considerations for advancement, and the prevalent attitude is that a person cannot maintain a farm of less than 40 acres.

E. Marginal farm operator. Came to California in 1929, visiting relatives, worked on large corporation-ranch and then for two years on

smaller farm where work was hardest he had ever done because "they put too much on you." "We worked regular except during the winter when work was slack and we were laid off. We moved here in 1934 and started buying this house in 1937. Since then have worked for different people. Rented 20 acres in 1935 for \$1,000 with equipment and water furnished, but could not get the land the following year as owner did not want tenant. It was much better working by the day." This year renting 20 acres again, on share basis. Belongs to no organizations, and not known to community, lives in poor house and poor neighborhood. One daughter left school to be married secretly to truck driver by minister of outsider church, one son in high school who has no expressed ambition.

The remaining case histories present much more usual forms of adjustment. The first two (F and G) are persons who have achieved the upper status of the outsider groups, and are beginning to be known as "good workers" or "fine people" to members of the nuclear group. They would be pointed out as "dust-bowlers" rather than "Okies" by those who know them personally, though they have not attained membership in the nuclear group. These families have made a sincere effort at adjustment in terms of nuclear group values, and consider their social interests to be connected with the community. Any permanent semi-skilled or skilled job in the town would in time bring them into the nuclear group.

F. Agricultural laborer resettled in town: 1. Farmer all his life until "it got so you couldn't make a living in Oklahoma." Had a sale of stock and equipment to cover mortgages. Went to Arizona and back to Oklahoma "saying we wouldn't leave again, but in six months we were ready to go." Went back to Arizona and to California in spring of 1938, chopping onions and picking up potatoes. Husband now working for creamery for \$3.50 per day. Have had help from local farmer, as well as from relief agency. Have purchased small home in "Little Oklahoma City." Do not go to church or "belong to any clubs or anything," though children go to outsider church. Not known to community, except one farm family who has befriended them, but say "we have done better than most people here . . . because we have worked hard."

G. Agricultural laborer resettled in town: 2. Came to Wasco in 1934 when times were bad in Arkansas and a cousin wrote of work. Worked for public utilities company during first summer, then worked as truck driver at dairy for four and a half years, at \$110 per month, later did carpentry and miscellaneous agricultural labor and received public

assistance for a short while. Meanwhile, had bought lot in "Little Oklahoma City," bought a house and moved it on lot. Also bought two shacks and moved them on lot and kept boarders during period of employment at creamery. Now working as cook in nearby city where defense work has created labor shortage.

Living in very neat and pleasantly furnished house. Woman claims to have been member of leading woman's club but dropped out because she "didn't care for it"; woman belongs to outsider church and hopes to send son to college to become minister. Son wants to go to Junior College and become civil servant—"something like a postmaster."

The wife in Case H expresses the values achieved by the two preceding ones in that she wants to "have a place of our own in town," even though it would probably be less adequate than her present exceptionally good accommodations. Her sphere of acquaintances is limited by farm living, but even more by her own reticence for she refuses to go to the established church with her employer because of a feeling of class inferiority, according to her own statement.

H. Regularly employed farm laborer living on farm. Was sharecropper in Arkansas till came to California in 1931. Returned in 1932 and came back to California in 1935, working in the potatoes in Wasco. Started working for present employer in November, 1939, but "wouldn't say it is better to work this way than just to work when you can get it. You don't make so much money when there is lots of work, but then it's steady." Hasn't tried to farm and on basis of relative's experience doesn't consider it feasible because "it just takes too much money." Woman wants to buy home of own in town for "we haven't ever had a place of our own since we have been married," but husband recently bought new car.

Live in new and very well built house belonging to farmer. Participates in no clubs or church, despite sincere effort on part of employer to get them to join the latter. Have adequate household furnishings including electric refrigerator. Plan to remain in California largely because children like the high school. They "can't say [they] are better off here; have more money to spend than back East, but back there you don't eat out of paper sacks."

The fourth of these laborers (I) represents the type of adjustment that involves the rejection of any settlement or integration into the community. His income as a migrating farm laborer is sufficient to maintain some aspects of middle-class standards and he prefers the wage advantages of migration to the social ad-

vantages of resettlement. Such workers frequently have work connections in several communities, but they have no vested interest in any particular one. Being less concerned with the prevalent attitudes of the elite, he has less reason to reject the union, and he is an active participant in that type of organization. Case J expresses a similar disregard for the community but is further characterized by not having broken her ties with the region of origin. Her migration back and forth between California and her home state is not an unusual occurrence and denotes complete failure to integrate into the California community.

I. Adjustment to seasonal migration. Came to California in 1933, obtained public assistance and agricultural work. At one time owned small tourist camp for agricultural workers, but sold this in 1939. Has relatives in Wasco working for oil company.

Now owns new car and home-built trailer house, and has regular migration route, working in grapes near Fresno, the cannery at Monterey, and picking cotton in Wasco during slack season. Wants steady job in oil fields but unable to find, and considers it better to move around than to remain in Wasco which he has tried. Belongs to AFL union though he resents the fact that the "big boys have kind of a racket." Wife formerly belonged to outsider church.

J. Not adjusted to new environment. Single woman who came to Wasco in 1938 for first time and had been back to Oklahoma three times by 1941. On last trip back to California was in accident and is temporarily unable to work in fields so is anxious to go back to Oklahoma. Works in harvesting crops, and has been on public welfare, whence she is now getting support. When in California lives with relatives in tent behind farm house, where the chief items of furniture are an electric washing machine and refrigerator, and a number of beds crowded together. Belongs to no clubs or church, finds entertainment in shows and dances.

As these cases indicate, social and economic advancement is a possibility, yet it is of rare occurrence. In order to advance to farmer status some private source of capital is necessary, and also, as one person stated, a few "breaks." Another condition is previous entrepreneurial experience. For the most part the adjustment is made on the outsider level, with economic and social desires oriented according to the standards of the local

community, which means, among other things, adopting the prejudices of that group. Even workers following the crops become adjusted in this way through the use of one community as a base for operations, though some, as illustrated by cases I and J, have not acquired roots in any community.

Another form of advancement may be said to occur over generations; that is, through the advancement of the children. Here, of course, we cannot study the *fait accompli*, but certain observations may well be made. It has already been pointed out that the school is the chief integrating element in the community. Though there is some evidence of social segregation of migrant children, the school enforces a high degree of democracy. Competitive sports help give status to migrant and minority race children whose athletic prowess has been notable, and thus, tend to lessen the prejudice against these groups. Teachers state that social distinctions between the local people and the migrant are tending to disappear, and one agricultural laborer's child recently achieved the highest scholastic standing of his class. The frequent expressions of a desire on the part of parents for their children to attend college are also an indication of the recognition of this form of social advancement, though its achievement will be much rarer.

COHESIVE FACTORS: THE NUCLEAR GROUP

It is not only the laborer, but also the community which has had to make adjustments to the influx of migrants. Though its members complain of the changes wrought in the community by the immigration of destitute workers, they have derived many benefits from it. Above all, the farmer is completely dependent upon the seasonal worker under the established pattern of agriculture, and the large army of workers has made it possible for him to harvest his crops when and as he wants to, and at a cheap rate. This cheap harvest labor has been written into the value of the California farm lands.³ Prior to the immi-

³ *Vide* Varden Fuller, "The Supply of Agricultural Labor as a Factor in the Evolution of Farm Organization in California," *La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Part 54, p. 19878.

gration of white workers this labor had been done by a series of minority races who survived on a low standard of living. That they have been wanted, at least by some groups in the valley, is demonstrated by their specific efforts to obtain them.⁴

The nuclear group profits from the large laboring class by the shopkeeper's sales and enhanced real estate values. The growth of Wasco during the decade of the thirties, from a town of less than 1,600 to one well over twice that figure, means a necessary correlative increase in total business turnover. For instance, the total money orders of the Wasco Post Office increased from \$83,000 in 1934 to almost \$178,000 in 1940, and similarly the gross receipts for stamps more than doubled from about \$8,000 in 1933 to nearly \$17,000 in 1940.⁵ The credit extended to these workers, not only for groceries, but also for household goods and cars, suggests that this asset is recognized by the local merchants.

Similarly, the local realtors have recognized this business asset, and Wasco, like most agricultural communities in the region, has its areas of cheap housing. One large tract, subdivided by several different property owners as early as 1925, sold at that time for \$125 for a 45-foot lot and these were worth in 1940, according to subdividers, from \$300 to \$350 a lot. One real-estate broker subdivided 5 acres in this area in 1937 into 22 50-foot lots which have all been sold at \$300. These he sold on a long-time payment plan, sometimes as little as \$5 per month, and he claims that there have been no delinquencies.

⁴ Recruiting of labor from the East has been practiced by farmers in both California and Arizona. Tetrau reproduces handbills and newspaper advertisements distributed and printed in Oklahoma and sponsored by the Farm Labor Service (*Migratory Cotton Pickers in Arizona*, WPA, Div. of Research, ch. VI, p. 61 ff.). California city newspapers carried articles quoting Frank Palomares, manager of the San Joaquin Valley Agricultural Labor Bureau, stating the need for farm hands in 1935, 1936, and 1937 (*La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 51, pp. 18843-18848). Payments for advertisements and labor scouts were made during these years and others (*idem*, pp. 18848, 18849). Workers state that advertisements in Oklahoma for California employment have been seen since 1938, but none so identifiable has been reproduced.

⁵ These data were obtained from the local records of the United States Post Office of Wasco.

SOCIAL CONFLICT

Though the new social situation had clear advantages to both social groups, it is rife with latent conflict which gets expression in the more degrading phases of social exclusions, occasionally appears in open conflict, and has at certain times resulted in actual battle and bloodshed. Though the preceding chapters have indicated the nature of the social divergence between the two groups, the actual conflict situations remain to be discussed.

Economic Conflicts. It must be remembered that the outsider group in Wasco is a laboring group, made up of persons who, when working at all, are working for wages, and that those wages are always close to the margin of subsistence—would often have been below it if it were not for the public assistance received. The nuclear group may be considered an employer group, even though most of its members are actually working for salaries or wages. They are to be considered as employers because they have accepted the standards and leadership of the employer as the “natural system,” and accept the ideology of this group, understanding social advancement in terms of degree of approximation to the employer’s status. This does not necessarily mean that each person within the group approves the specific actions of the dominant element, but it indicates the basic dichotomy of the community regarding conflict situations.⁶

The economic conflict between these two groups in agriculture is a latent one, rising to the surface occasionally either as

⁶ An advertisement which appeared during the cotton strike in the *Tulare Advance-Register*, demonstrates the assumption of certain dominant attitudes and at the same time implies their lack of universality. It reads: “Notice! To the Citizens of Tulare. We, the farmers of your community, whom you depend upon for support, feel you have nursed too long the Viper that is at your door. These communist agitators must be driven from town by you, and your harboring them further will prove to us your noncooperation with us, and make it necessary for us to give our support and trade to another town, that will support and cooperate with us. Farmers’ Protective Association.” Quoted by Paul S. Taylor and Clark Kerr, “Documentary History of the Strike of the Cotton Pickers in California, 1933,” *La Follette Hearings*, Pt. 54, p. 19974.

individual and personal grudges or as mass action in the form of strikes. Twice during the depression the hostility developing out of the conflict situation rose to the point of physical violence. Such hostility is most apt to appear during times of stress, so that the decade of the thirties saw more open conflict than would appear during periods of economic stability or a boom period. Yet the essential conflict situation remains at such times too.

During the period, January, 1933, to June, 1939, inclusive, a total of 180 strikes were recorded in California agricultural industries, of which 150 were in field operations.⁷ These 150 strikes in California varied by year from a third to all the agricultural strikes in the United States (43.5 per cent of total) and involved even larger aggregate proportions of workers (70 per cent of all agricultural workers).⁸

Of the strikes in California during this period, thirteen occurred within Kern County, of which five involved civil and criminal disturbances. Several of them are indicated as occurring in the vicinity of Wasco.⁹

The cause of over two-thirds of the strikes, according to this report, was wages and hours, while most of the remainder were for union recognition and discrimination.¹⁰ Another tabulation with different definitions was compiled by J. C. Folsom.¹¹ It shows that of 96 agricultural strikes in California between 1933 and 1938, 63 were for "wages, hours and working conditions"; 14 more for "wages, hours and recognition"; 7 for "recognition"; 4 for "organization"; and 8 for other reasons.

These data demonstrate that Wasco lies well within the regions of strife in the most strife-ridden state so far as agricultural labor is concerned. Furthermore, this conflict is often accompanied by violence. Finally, the conflict is clearly rooted in the nature of the economic relations between the groups. Of these strikes, two were particularly virulent in the Wasco

⁷ Henry R. Fowler, "Strikes in Agricultural Industry," *La Follette Hearings*, Appendix, p. 18380.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Exhibit 7925, p. 17381.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Exhibits 7922 and 7928, pp. 17379 and 17385, respectively.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Exhibit 7926, p. 17383.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Exhibit 7927, p. 17384. Quoted from J. C. Folsom, *Labor Disputes in Agriculture in the United States, 1927-1938*.

area, and the most important of these has been well documented.¹² The strike of 1933 started in Wasco, spread throughout the cotton area of the San Joaquin Valley, and resulted in several fatal shootings, innumerable arrests, and widespread ill-feeling. It involved not only the growers and processors on one hand and the workers on the other, but it also engulfed the whole of the community. Some of the social forces which lie behind strikes are shown by the following statements. "The Kern County Committee to resist the strikes, which was formed with the approval and support of a large meeting of growers held at Wasco, was composed of the directors of the Kern County Farm Bureau, the Executive Committee of the Kern County Chamber of Commerce, and representatives of other organizations."¹³

Again, "a number of school children were attracted to the cotton fields, and it was suggested that the schools be closed. . . ." ¹⁴ As a matter of fact, the growers made direct appeals to the citizenry by advertisements, such as one that appeared in the *Advance-Register* of Tulare, California, and quoted above,¹⁵ and strenuously objected to what they considered the merchants' unfair siding with the laborers. Taylor and Kerr say:

It greatly incensed the growers that the merchants should aid the strikers by extensions of credit and gifts. As one grower said, the merchants gave the farmers more trouble during the strike than any other element in the community. Or, as an official sympathetic to the workers put it, "The small local merchants are among the best friends of the laborers." The growers, regarding themselves as patrons of the merchants, believed they were entitled to full support in resisting a wage advance; they ignored the fact that the pickers are also patrons.¹⁶

If individual merchants considered their profits to lie with the laboring group, that is not to assert that the community as a whole, or even in large part, felt itself so aligned. For instance, in a neighboring community, "committees representing the Women's Club, P.T.A., Legion Auxiliary and American Legion . . . unanimously [agreed to] pass a resolution to declare the

¹² *Ibid.*, Exhibit 8764, Pt. 54, p. 19945. "Documentary History of the Strikes of the Cotton Pickers in California, 1933," by Paul S. Taylor and Clark Kerr.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 19963.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19970.

¹⁵ *V. supra*, p. 163, footnote 6.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19974.

[strikers' emergency] camp a health menace, and thus gave sanction to the health authority's closing them.¹⁷ Shortly after the strike, the American Legion Post passed a "resolution expressing the Legion's disapproval of the appearance in Wasco of any speakers of avowed Communistic tendencies and asking that the churches, schools, etc., ban the presentation of any such speakers in any public or semi-public building. . . ." ¹⁸

This 1933 strike involved shootings at which Wasco farmers were said to be present with guns. This strike, which raised wages from 60¢ to 75¢ for picking 100 pounds of cotton, is most vivid in the memory of the people of the community. A later strike in October, 1938, was much less effective and resulted in no violence. Nevertheless under the letterhead of the Associated Farmers the license numbers of cars connected with the strike were sent to farmers in nearby counties, with the notation that ". . . several caravans of strikers and agitators have gone from field to field in an endeavor to influence other pickers to leave their jobs."¹⁹ This strike order led to at least one riot with a number of arrests, though these did not take place in Wasco.

Conflict over Unionization. If social and economic conflict exists over the matter of wage scales, as illustrated above, the conflict over unionization is much more real in the minds of most persons of the community, and the union has no status whatsoever in community life. It would, for instance, be impossible to propose that the sentiment of the union be canvassed on public issues in the way that other organizations in the town are unofficially polled. One young farmer said, "They ought to take a machine gun and shoot these [union] fellows down," and expanded his opinion of the union as an institution, and especially the vicious designs of their leadership. One of the major objections to the existence of the government farm labor camps was the fear they were the seed bed for radical activities, some going so far as to claim that the governmental agencies

¹⁷ Quoted from the *San Francisco News*, Oct. 18, 1933, by Taylor and Kerr, *ibid.*, p. 19976.

¹⁸ Minutes for November 15, 1933. Strike leaders were generally called communists in the daily papers.

¹⁹ *La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 51, p. 18623.

sponsor communism. This double standard toward organization was derided by a liberal-minded small farmer speaking of one of his neighbors, "He used to be a construction laborer and you know they are all unionized. Now he says we must stop the workers in agriculture from joining unions."

The president of the local creamery is reported to be opposed to unionization. He is quoted as having planned the curtailment of trucking operations rather than reaching an agreement with the teamsters' union, which had been endeavoring to organize that aspect of the industry. One laborer stated, "I worked for them until they had this strike. The Old Man wouldn't have anything to do with unions, and he said he would go out of business before he would hire union labor. He cut off a bunch of workers, preparing to go out of business, and I was one of those let off. I didn't strike; it was the truck drivers who were striking. I didn't belong to any union—I was just laid off. The Old Man was a darn nice fellow—a good man to work for."

Later in this chapter we shall present some of the pressures against unionization. Here it is only necessary to point out that the union has neither any place in the organized social life of the community nor in the minds of its members as an acceptable means of achieving social and economic ends. Objections to the union may be vituperative as indicated by the person who simply wanted to shoot the leaders, or they may be rationalized by pointing out some of the evils attendant upon unionization, such as racketeering. The frequent acceptance of these attitudes by the persons who stand to gain by united economic pressure is manifested in the statement that "I haven't had to join a union yet," or more simply and directly "my husband doesn't belong because his boss doesn't believe in unions."

Political Conflict. One incident in Wasco showed more clearly than anything else the ramifications and intensity of the social antagonism and direct conflict between the nuclear and the outsider group beyond the economic sphere. On the day before an election for school board trustee, the phones of the nuclear members were busy carrying information that there was a campaign afoot to elect a "State Relief Administration candidate"—that is, a person currently receiving direct relief from the State

—as a member of the board of trustees, and advising all to be certain to vote the following day. The relief recipients had requested that school lunches made from surplus commodities be given their children without cost, and had been refused this request, and the “scare” developed that they were attempting to place their own member on the board. The assumption was that there would be a late hour attempt to rush the ballot box and write in the name of the two recipients of state aid who were leaders in the Workers' Alliance, a union of relief clients. The next day, though there was not a single ballot cast for these two persons, the vote was much heavier than in former years²⁰ and a long line of nuclear members awaited their turn at the booth during the closing hours of balloting. One nuclear member, who felt that the original request for free lunches was justifiable, said that she felt that it would not be bad to have a person on the board who represented those people, yet that if they got one member on this year, they would realize their power and eventually get control of the schools. Most of the persons felt that the original request was preposterous—“these people have gotten so they want everything for nothing”—and were fearful of the prospect of farm labor controlled schools.

It was impossible to determine the origin of this “scare.” One of the “candidates” hotly denied the implication that he had entertained such an idea, and there certainly existed no mechanism by which a sufficiently large group could be organized to vote in that way, for neither the agricultural workers' nor the relief recipients' union was active enough. The validity of the “scare,” however, has nothing to do with the implications of the situation; the important thing is that the sentiment of the nuclear group was so well organized against the outsider that the “scare” could have brought out such overwhelming reaction.

Other Sources of Conflict. Another manifestation of the social prejudices against the outsider group is the feeling toward the

²⁰ The newspaper showed votes of 415 and 422 for each of the two opposed incumbents, who were re-elected to the school board (June 13, 1941), as against a total vote of 191 for the two opposing candidates in the election of the previous year (June 14, 1940). In short, the number of ballots increased from 191 to 422.

labor camps established by the Farm Security Administration. Hostility toward these camps was frequently expressed. One preacher felt that those who were not living in such camps (who were, in fact, living in growers' camps) were "trying to do something for themselves." Farm operators frequently expressed their dislike of the Farm Security Administration's camp near Wasco, and often refused to obtain labor from it. When pressed for reasons, they usually mentioned inefficiencies in administration or lack of satisfaction with previous experiences, or the unfortunate experience of a neighbor. These camps were referred to as hot-beds of radicalism, and as already stated the agency was accused of being communist controlled. The objection to these camps received official statement in the recommendation that they be discontinued.²¹

Such overt reactions to the latent hostility and mistrust, which have developed as a result of the general social exclusion described in the previous chapter, are rare. Yet enough instances of social antipathy have been adduced to indicate the existence of hostility toward the outsider group. It gets its clearest expression in feelings toward such institutions that serve the outsider class: unions, relief administrations, migrant camps, and even the revivalistic churches.

EXTERNAL LEADERSHIP IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

These evidences of conflict in the social and economic spheres make more poignant the social dichotomy already described and lend more credence to our characterization of the social life as urbanized. What is more outstanding is the fact that the social conflicts which exist in Wasco are not only part and parcel of the conflict over a wider area, but are also very largely inspired from the outside. For the most part, the local small farmer, the local laborer, and the townsman are not interested in the generalized social conflict. Each is, of course, interested in his own economic gain and his own social position, with the result that

²¹ *Brief of Land Use Survey of Kern County; Description, Problems, Recommendations, by County and Community Committees of Farmers, 1940, and quoted infra, p. 174.*

the psychological and social background for conflict exists, but he prefers to deal with his needs and desires in his own way. The 1933 strike, so well documented by Taylor and Kerr, had its very inception from outside the strike area. On September 21 the Bakersfield *Californian* reported, ". . . schedule for cotton picking is set at 60 cents for each 100 pounds at Fresno conference," while on the 25th the San Francisco *Western Worker* made rejoinder "Cotton pickers prepare to strike."²² Thus, the opening shot for both sides was fired quite outside the region of conflict.

While the basic economic conflict existed in the agricultural area, the leadership of both factions came not only from outside Wasco but also, to a large extent, from outside agriculture. Wages to farm labor are set by a meeting of farmers before the San Joaquin Valley Agricultural Labor Bureau.²³

This Bureau, according to its own by-laws, is made up of 17 members. It includes a high proportion of large business representatives, namely, a member from each of the seven San Joaquin Valley Counties (Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, and Kern), of the County Farm Bureau, and of the County Chamber of Commerce ("or in lieu of each organization accredited civic commercial organization") and one member each

²² Quoted by Taylor and Kerr from newspapers cited, *La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 54, p. 19948.

²³ The *La Follette Hearings* give testimony to the method of setting wages, as follows:

SENATOR LA FOLLETTE: Now when it comes to the time of harvesting, what is your policy so far as the amount advanced to pay labor for picking is concerned, for example?

MR. JENSEN (Credit department of the Western Production Co., The Interstate Cotton Oil Co., the San Joaquin Cotton & Oil Co.): The policy is, within reasonable limits to advance those sums which the growers request with which to pay their harvest labor.

SENATOR LA FOLLETTE: And what standard, if any, did you set up to determine whether the growers' requests are reasonable and proper . . .

MR. JENSEN: Well, there is a custom in this state and in Arizona for the farmers to gather together prior to harvest and discuss a uniform picking rate of wage. The custom is also included, after that scale, so to speak, has been arrived at and agreed to, to request not only of us, but the other financing agencies, of which there are quite a number, that we assist them to conform to that. In effect, it amounts to a request that we advance a

from the fresh fruit, the dried fruit, and the cotton industries, including all processors, marketers, shippers, and the like.²⁴

According to the manager, the Bureau does not set the wages in the industry, but merely calls together farmers for the purpose of setting the wages. They are fixed in these meetings and the recommendation taken by the financing agencies as the basis for computing advances on harvesting the crops. There is no sliding scale nor any account taken of perquisites furnished. One farm operator has the following to say regarding this practice: "I never went to the meetings in Fresno where the farmers decided on the price scale. The gins are run by fellows who are [farm] operators, and they all go to those meetings. I can't get away. They should have meetings in each county. I usually pay above the set price. Most people around here pay more than the set prices. I figure those prices are for fellows who furnish houses to their people."

On the other side of the ledger, the laboring group was dominated by union and communist leadership. The 1933 strike was called by the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union, an affiliate of the Trade Union Unity League, and was considered to have been led by persons from outside with well-known communist affiliations. There were but a handful

certain scale, a certain amount per pound of lint cotton, and we, with some variations, largely conform to that. . . .

SENATOR LA FOLLETTE: Now, as I understand you, you say that the farmers get together in the various districts and fix or determine on what wage they are going to pay. How do you do that, do you know?

MR. JENSEN: In a general way. In both California and Arizona, there is an organization that serves as a labor bureau, so to speak, and it has a board of directors. Prior to the harvest time it sends out notices to the farmers that there has been called by the board of directors a meeting to be held at a certain date and requesting their attendance. Large numbers of farmers attend and after some debate they arrived at a scale of wage to be paid. . . .

SENATOR LA FOLLETTE: Do you know the name of the bureau in California?

MR. JENSEN: Yes. It is called the San Joaquin Valley Agricultural Labor Bureau (*La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 51, pp. 18582-3).

²⁴ By-Laws, Agricultural Labor Bureau of the San Joaquin Valley, reprinted in *La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 51, p. 18809 ff. The needs for a quorum (of ten) are met when "two agricultural members" are present. These may, by the statement of the by-laws, be corporation executives. (*Idem*, p. 18816, Exhibit 8427.)

of workers in Wasco affiliated with the United Cannery, Agricultural Packers, and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA), and a few more with the Workers' Alliance (union for the recipients of public assistance).

It has already been shown that many of the outsider group have accepted the nuclear group attitude toward the union. This was recognized by the district organizer for the UCAPAWA himself, when he stated that "these people from Oklahoma aren't very class-conscious. It isn't in their background." By this he meant not that they fail to recognize their social position, but that they are unwilling to act in terms of class unity, preferring to establish themselves as individuals and thus to avoid public actions which will identify them to the community as laborers.

The predominantly external origin of the conflict situation that develops hostility and open strife does not mean that there is no local conflict. The behavior of the nuclear group with respect to the school board election demonstrates the hostility, and the general social segregation has been documented in earlier chapters. The social and economic background for this class conflict exists and is a major characteristic of present day rural life in California, but the conflict in Wasco is but a part of a larger outside one.

SOCIAL CONTROLS

The externality of the economic conflict between outsider and nuclear groups brings to the fore the whole matter of social controls, to which our attention must be turned. By social controls is meant the exertion of influence or coercion by one person over other persons or groups, beyond any legally established powers. This is not to be construed as meaning that such controls are illegal, but merely extralegal. Neither does it mean that controls necessarily meet with opposition, or are even resented by the controlled group, for the most effective controls, those exerted over the employee by the employer, rarely meet with opposition. These are the "natural" controls of our social and economic system. Controls may vary in potency, according to the degree of effective resistance, and according to the num-

ber of persons so controlled. Social potency may be considered as pyramided.

Domination of Outsider Group by Nuclear Group. It will be best to begin with the lowest level of control, that which the nuclear group as a whole exerts over the outsider. We have already characterized the nuclear group as the one that has inherited the community, its institutions and its prerogatives as well as most of its assets. There has been sufficient demonstration of the fact that the civic organizations are made up almost completely of the nuclear group, and the example of the school board election shows clearly the popular horror of losing any of the political authority to the outsider class. As a matter of fact, no agricultural laborer is represented on any public board—school trustees, cemetery and water district trustees, or state or federal agricultural committees. The legal controls of these groups remain in the hands of the nuclear element of the community.

These are, of course, legally constituted authorities, and it may be assumed that in the course of time representatives of the outsider groups will appear in these capacities, and that the failure of the outsider to gain representation is merely an indication of its numerical minority situation. However, when civic problems are raised for which no vote is required, the "consensus of opinion" and the "cross-section of the community" are obtained through reference to the civic organizations made up entirely of nuclear members. Thus the whole matter of re-vamping the public cemetery, useful almost exclusively to the impoverished elements of the community, was debated within the service clubs, and the only spokesman for the poor was the Catholic priest, who had a few words to say on the matter. Similarly the water supply of the community is controlled by the nuclear group. When a WPA project was obtained for the purpose of installing a sewage system, a petition signed by 59 Negroes requested that the "honorable body . . . extend the sewer now in process of being constructed by the Wasco Public Utilities District into [the Negro district]." ²⁵ This district lies

²⁵ Minutes of the Public Utilities District for October 7, 1936.

outside the limits of the utilities district but is furnished water at the regular charge made to subscribers within the district. The request was refused on a technicality and the matter dropped.²⁶

At the meeting over incorporation, the question was raised as to whether the agricultural laborers had a legal or a moral right to vote on the issue. Again, a petition requesting free school lunches, presented by public assistance clients, was denied by the school board.

The laborer was not represented on the Land Use Planning Committee (a government-sponsored local body which recommends policy), or the Agricultural Adjustment Administration local committee, and this becomes significant when they deal directly with labor problems. In the summary of land-use problems of the 1940 report there are several references to the labor situation including the following problems under the heading "Relief."

1. Influx of homeless people create heavy relief cost, as well as serious housing, school, social and public health problems.

2. Relief payments too high to encourage work on farms, creating shortage of temporary help in some areas in spite of the presence of more workers than are needed, even in peak periods.²⁷

The recommendations to meet these problems are as follows:

1. It would be better to eliminate the Government Camp and have housing provided by the farmers.

2. Relief payments and rules should be organized to encourage acceptance of farm work.²⁸

The Wasco community recommendations were virtually the same, adding the specific recommendation that "wages on relief

²⁶ "The petition was read by the clerk and ordered filed, as the territory . . . lies outside the district and could not be considered at this time." (*Idem.*) It may well be noted here that fire hydrants and mains were installed after fire ravaged a part of this subdivision.

²⁷ *Brief of Land Use Survey of Kern County; Description, Problem, Recommendation, by County and Community Committees of Farmers, 1940*, compiled by Agricultural Extension Service of University of California, and the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bakersfield, p. 3.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

should be less than farm labor rates to encourage relief clients to accept farm jobs."

Setting aside the extraordinary quality of the *non sequitur* in problem and recommendation number 1 that the housing shortage should be met by eliminating Federal housing facilities, there remains evidence that these recommendations have in mind only the welfare of the farmer group, and assume a position of antipathy to the interests of the laboring population.

There remains one quasi-political control exerted by the governmental agencies; namely, the activities of the health department in eliminating squatting on idle land. During the middle thirties, dwellings were placed along the roadside and in fields wherever this was possible, but these have largely been done away with. This elimination is the work of the health officials who desire to reduce the unsanitary housing conditions. Almost the last squatters in the Wasco area were removed in the arrest reported in the local newspaper as follows:

Charged with squatting on property without permission of the owners, six men and one woman were given sentences of 30 days in jail or the county road camp, which sentence was suspended on condition they move off the property within 5 days.

They were brought before [the] judge . . . on a complaint signed by [a member] of the County Health Department.

This treatment meant that the families would have to pay rent out of their small incomes, in many cases for houses inferior to those they had themselves built. One person had just spent, according to his own statement, thirty-five dollars, and "it came pretty hard after that outlay of capital."

Despite the general attitude of the evicted squatters, who considered the reasons of sanitation as merely a ruse, there can be no doubt that the health officers were motivated by the best interests of the public in bringing these charges. The fact remains, however, that the sanitation in camps operated by large growers is frequently inferior to that of the better squatter camps and the crowded conditions are much more dangerous to the public health.

A control of a somewhat different character is exerted by the landholders who have established neighborhood restrictions on

building, which effectively prevent the construction of homes below certain arbitrary standards. These restrictions have never been established on an administrative basis, but have been written into contracts by those who have subdivided their acreage holdings. In effect this means that the agricultural laborer cannot live in certain sections of the town as he does not have the capital or the credit to build within the restriction limits. Since social worth is in part a function of neighborhood, the worker is prevented from attaining that form of prestige until after he has achieved economic status. In view of the fact that it has become the custom for the resettling laborer to build by slow accretions—his technique for circumventing his limited credit facilities—the disadvantages of geographical restrictions become more poignant as his dwelling improves.

One major controlling technique of our society is the control of the employer over the employee; a control which has become so thoroughly accepted that only under extreme provocation is it met with sanctioned counteraction. Since employee status is tantamount to outsider status, this means that a large part of the daily life of one segment of Wasco society is subject to the will of members of the remaining segment. The farm laborer, like any other, has the privilege of refusing or quitting his job, but if he accepts it he accepts also the conditions of working that are presented with it. Characteristically, the hours of work, the speed of work, lay-offs for whatever reason are determined by the employer. In order to prevent effective quitting by the working force, it has been of interest to the employer of large bodies of farm workers to maintain an oversupply of wage labor. The history of California farming is replete with examples of employer groups sponsoring movements into California from various parts of the world, from the introduction of the Japanese to the importation of Mexican nationals during World War II. California production depends upon an adequate number of wage workers, yet there is general recognition of the fact that employers overestimate the number of such workers needed. During the period of relative shortage of labor one of the chief complaints heard from farmer groups has been that it was impossible to maintain adequate control over labor to assure that

the work could be performed under conditions demanded by the operators. It is in protection of these prerogatives that the employer group often opposes unionization, and this is explicit in the frequent complaint that "the unions are trying to run things." Indeed, the union is a mechanism not only for obtaining counter-control, in this case for the outsider group, but it is also trying to overthrow the mores of social control. For it is a part of the cultural tradition that social control is the prerogative of capital and the employer, a tradition that is accepted not only by the employer, but also by the outsider group.

Social Controls in the Nuclear Group. Within the nuclear group controls are of a somewhat different and more subtle nature. This group has already been characterized as maintaining many aspects of the primary group, capable of direct social pressures without economic weapons, that is, capable of ostracism and assigning status, on bases other than (but in conjunction with) economic position. The subtlest and probably the most effective is the establishment of patterns of behavior and the presumption of conformity. The influence by precept may be a strong one on the outsiders, whose desire to attain social recognition often results in a high degree of conformity, but since he does not belong to the social group, the major pressure, that of ostracism, cannot be brought to bear. This desire for conformity among the outsiders is at present one of the chief barriers toward unionization.

Within the nuclear group the pressures of this nature are stronger and more varied in character. It has already been shown that they are not so strong as they had once been; that the pressure to church attendance, the pressures against drinking, and the like, are not maintained. The "normality" of these controls makes it difficult to secure evidence of their existence, though occasionally the conflict appears on the surface. The pressure toward conformity of the young liberal thinker in the community was manifested repeatedly. The fear of "being caught" with books of liberal or radical social thought, or of expressing any politically unacceptable ideas, were indicated by several persons. The complete ostracism of the social worker attached to the State Relief Administration is a case in point here, the quite

general assumption being that "all those relief workers are radicals."

It is highly significant of the urbanization of Wasco that these social pressures have changed their sphere of influence from the field of "morality," as exemplified by the earlier religion-drink-dance conflict, to the field of politico-economics, wherein the conflict between the social classes lies.

There are also less subtle pressures influencing the behavior of members of the nuclear group, economic pressures of the market place. The issue over incorporation expresses most clearly the nature of coercion which may manifest itself. As previously stated, the question was raised in a service-club-sponsored open meeting at which no person of the outsider group was present. It was raised by small shopkeepers, because of the economic benefits to them through the lowering of utilities rates, the elimination of private watchman fees, and the decreased competition from itinerant merchants. Attached to their banner was also the "intangible value" that organized community action might create. There were two groups bitterly opposed to incorporation: the farmers who were absentee owners of town site lands, and the large corporations, both for the reason that the benefits, which the small merchants would get for the increased taxation, would be burdens upon them. Incorporation had previously been dissipated by a legal suit brought by the absentee owners. The relative merits of the case are of no consequence here (it is clear that some would benefit while others would suffer loss), but it is of extreme importance that most of the small merchants would not take part in the discussion for fear of alienating customers. The lawyer who presented the issue in public meeting carefully avoided showing any prejudice in its favor, and was relieved when he received the approbation of known opponents to it. Reportedly the newspaper did not commit itself openly to a policy favoring the issue, for fear of reprisals by the advertisers, though the editors were so well known to the community that there could be no doubt of their attitude in the matter. One merchant wanted to print a series of articles in the paper but would not sign them. Another person said, "I can't take a stand because if I did the people would just take

their business elsewhere." These restrictions are felt in other expressions of sentiment in public. A similar reticence was manifest in the discussion of national and international issues in public forums.

Social Controls of the Elite. These controls within the nuclear group are not distributed in a random fashion, but rather certain groups and individuals have higher degrees of potency. The social influence of the social organizations in the community has been demonstrated, and these organizations are the province of the nuclear group. But if we select those individuals who each belong to several organizations, we find a clear selection for certain occupations.²⁹ The overwhelming preponderance of the professional, manager, and proprietor class is not fortuitous. Of the fourteen persons of this category who belonged to five or more organizations, eight were the representatives of large corporations. Their repeated appearance and their status within these clubs are evidence of their important position in the society as local policy-makers. It contrasts clearly with the fact that only three small local entrepreneurs were represented.

Just as club membership and social leadership are sponsored by the corporations as a major source of public good-will, the skilled workers in the corporation offices are encouraged to participate in the lesser social affairs. The control that the corporation has over its representatives and employees may involve requiring them to join certain organizations, to move to a new community, to leave their families, or to inculcate manners, if not actual social attitudes, and may even influence their living arrangements. Usually, to be sure, any inconveniences are compensated for by added pay or covering expenses. For the most part they are accepted as "part of the job."

External Controls. This influence of the corporation, of course, leads us directly outside the community, for the local managers

²⁹ Families with memberships in three or more of the ten organizations analyzed consist of the following proportions: (A) Professional, managerial and proprietary, 53 cases; (B) farmers, 10 cases; (C) clerical, 3 cases; (D) skilled and semi-skilled, 23 cases. Of the 15 who belong to five or more, only one belonged to any class other than the first, and he was the local constable. Many farmers belong to farm organizations which were specifically excluded from this analysis.

are themselves the employees of others. This is 'quite clearly not an unimportant point, for when the major conflicts of the society are examined, the influence of the external social matrix is seen to be dominant. We have shown the influence of the large corporations in establishing a wage rate for hired labor, which is in turn enforced by the simple procedure of advancing that specified sum to the farmer for payment. The *La Follette Hearings* carry the testimony of the farm operator who paid higher wages because he financed himself.⁸⁰ The same situation occurred in Wasco. One farmer, financed through the local branch of a chain ginning corporation, said, "They never told me what to pay. They won't advance more than the wage scale for picking, and one year my wife and I got out and picked cotton ourselves so we could make up the difference between what we got and what we paid." The gin advanced money for wages on the basis of pounds picked, and this farmer was able to use that money financed for his family labor in order to pay what he considered a fair wage. During the violent strike of 1933 he gave the following account: "I didn't attempt to get pickers. They were striking for \$1.00; the price was set at 60¢ and I was paying 75¢. There were several who said they would pick for me, but I told them not to. To tell the truth, I was pretty well caught up, and my wife and I went out and picked what there was. Lots of people objected to my attitude about the strike because I wouldn't go out and help. They don't seem to hold it against me now. One of the gin owners said he knew about my attitude, but for me to just forget about it, that I was a good customer, and he would continue to give me credit."

These statements, carrying no hint of persecution, show at once the controls and the acceptance of these controls by a person known for his liberal attitudes. He was not told what to

⁸⁰ SENATOR LA FOLLETTE: How did it happen you set your wages above the scale? [i.e., at \$1.00 and \$1.15 for first and second pickings].

MRS. NICHOLS: Because we finance ourselves.

SENATOR LA FOLLETTE: What do you mean by that?

MRS. NICHOLS: We don't have to take finance money from the gin.

SENATOR LA FOLLETTE: And how does that make any difference?

MRS. NICHOLS: We are not told what to do. We can be our own boss. (*La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 51, p. 18635.)

pay, yet he avoided the determination only at extreme physical sacrifice. Again, the gin operator forgave the farmer a transgression of what he must have conceived as the farmer's simplest moral debt; namely, to aid in breaking the strike.

It is not only in the overt threat and conflict that the controls appear. The criticisms of *The Grapes of Wrath* by persons who had not read the book reflect the phrases of speakers at the service clubs. The popular disrespect of the Federal agricultural workers' camps is but the reiteration of a set of attitudes handed down from outside of the community itself. They are the continuation of attitudes promulgated by the Chamber of Commerce³¹ and by the California Farm Bureau Federation³² before the camp near Wasco was created.

This policy with regard to the Federal camps is exactly the one that formed the basis of the illogical recommendation of the County Land Use Planning Committee, that housing conditions be improved by the abolition of the Federal camp.³³ We find it likewise expressed by farmers of Wasco, who refuse to hire labor from these camps.

The same situation obtains with respect to union attitudes and, while the development of prejudicial feeling far antedates

³¹ Excerpt from report of the Tenth Annual State-wide Meeting of California State Chamber of Commerce, November, 1935 (Los Angeles), which recommends that housing facilities be created and furthermore that "camp supervisor be under control of individual grower or committee or group of growers" and that "camp should be strictly limited to migratory labor for needed workers during harvest season, and that strict regulation be enacted against establishment of permanent residence of any group or groups in relation to relief conditions." (*La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 68, p. 24927.)

³² *Vide* letter signed by Ray Pike and obtained from their files, dated December 11, 1935. It says in part:

"The subject of Migratory Laborer Camps has been much discussed throughout the State during the last several months. This has been largely brought about because of the fear that one of the Federal Departments may proceed with its plan for establishing 15 or more very large camps throughout the State, and that they will be operated by Federal appointees, favoring the communistic viewpoint.

"It is our belief that no Federal aid should be accepted for the building of such camps unless the camps may be locally operated and controlled by the farmers operating in the district. . . ." (*Ibid.*, Pt. 68, pp. 25169, 25170.)

³³ *Vide supra*, p. 174.

the existence of the present local anti-labor farmer organizations, this propaganda has been continuous and effectual.³⁴ It is, as a matter of fact, the very core of the interests of the Associated Farmers. The arguments against unionization are as old as the conflict itself, and are reiterated in speech after speech by the organizations dominated by the large growers.³⁵

Walter Garrison spoke to the California Fruit Growers and Farmers in 1936, saying that "for many years the farmers of California have been the victims of vicious assaults. . . . The records of [the Associated Farmers] office . . . show that of the last thirty-six agricultural strikes in California, twenty-four were controlled and dominated by a few known Communists."³⁶ A press release from the Associated Farmers states, "Farmers will not submit to the organization of their workers . . .,"³⁷ while Philip Bancroft sums up the whole attitude of this group in a speech before the California Fruit Growers and Farmers in 1937. He says: "We [farmers] believe that unionization of farm labor, under existing conditions, would be absolutely ruinous to us as well as to the laborers themselves, [because] . . . first, . . .

³⁴ The development of the philosophy of rural life which identifies the farmer with the business man, and opposed to the laborer, is given trenchant examination by Paul H. Johnstone in his essay, "On the Identification of the Farmer," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1940.

³⁵ *Vide La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 68, pp. 25184-25270, giving speeches, press releases, and correspondence on this subject.

While the present discussion is developed out of data presented to that committee in 1939-40, preoccupation of the Associated Farmers with the labor situation continues. In the annual meeting of the Board of Directors in December, 1945, six resolutions were passed, including (1) a recommendation to transfer the Federal Farm Placement Service to the Department of Agriculture, that governmental employment agencies be returned to the State, and that farm labor be handled separately from industrial labor, (2) opposition to extension of unemployment insurance to agricultural labor, (3) opposition to so-called liberalization of the California Unemployment Insurance Act, and (4) the continued (and increased) appropriation for farm labor activities of the War Food Administration and Agricultural Extension Service (labor importation). Of twenty-four other items, all of paragraph-length, discussed in the December 20 issue of the *Associated Farmer*, ten were reports on unions and union activities, eight referred to other matters pertaining to wages, five referred to Communist or Socialist activities and one had reference to farm prices.

³⁶ *Idem*, p. 25184.

³⁷ *Idem*, p. 25185.

the perishable nature of his crops, . . . second, the typical farmer is much closer to his workers and on a much friendlier basis with them . . . third . . . most of the farm work is seasonal . . . [and] finally, the farmers are not able to pass on their increased costs to the consumers. . . ." ³⁸ Rather than quote more examples of anti-union attitude in the higher brackets of this farmer organization, we can show not only this attitude, but also the very purpose of the Associated Farmers, the most active of the state-wide employer groups, in the following statement made by its executive secretary: "The Associated Farmer . . . was not organized for any purpose except to defeat the unionization of farms and to stop the agitation of radical organizers. . . ." ³⁹

It must be understood that every community or group in America is subjected to the efforts of many persons and organizations to crystallize and direct public opinion. The success achieved by the various sources of opinion formation are dependent only partly on either the inherent correctness of such opinions or the skill in presenting them, but rests in very large measure upon the climate of opinion and the social relationships and attitudes that exist in the community. For this reason, of the many forms of propaganda to which the people of Wasco are subjected, those which have real appeal to the community are the ones which both emanate from the elite in the community, and conform to traditional attitudes carried over from an earlier period. It is therefore not surprising that attitudes toward governmental innovations, to union activities among workers, to the Farm Security Administration camps, and public welfare activities tend to reflect those of dominant business interests and the large farmer. They also are made to appeal to traditional behavior in American rural society. The adoption of such attitudes by persons whose economic status is indifferently involved or adversely affected is a public assertion that the individual has identified himself with the group that expounds those ideas. Such attitude formation expresses itself within the

³⁸ *La Follette Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 68, pp. 25187-8.

³⁹ *Idem*, p. 25194. Letter to the editor of the *Saturday Evening Post* in reference to an article by George Creel, dated February 6, 1934.

nuclear group, but is effective beyond that group to the outsiders. Farm operators and community members generally indicate a strong disapproval of relief, particularly emphasizing the external control. The economic basis for their attitudes becomes explicit when they assert that relief should be discontinued for all persons whenever farmers need labor and should at all times be below prevailing wages. As a matter of fact most public assistance followed such policy but the rapidity and universality of termination and the level of wages was still unsuitable. Such attitudes among the nuclear group act as a strong incentive for outsiders to get off welfare rolls. Similar attitudes with respect to union activity prevail. At no time was a member of the nuclear group heard to express publicly his approval of unionization, while many condemned them mildly or violently. Sympathetic attitudes toward such organization, particularly among agricultural workers, was kept quiet. In such an environment it is not surprising that workers indicate reluctance to participate in union affairs if they desire to acquire social acceptance in the community.

Governmental Agencies and Social Controls. It is true that federal and state agencies organized to meet depression and war conditions, and backed with governmental sanction and large blocks of money, have taken powers which were historically in the hands of private citizens. They have influenced the rate of wages through relief standards, determined amounts and the nature of crops through AAA regulations, effectively competed in the credit market, both for farm operations and personal services, and they have affected the building trade through Federal assistance for private housing. And to most of those activities a vociferous leadership finds exception, for there has been a real invasion of local autonomy. But these forms of social control were not taken away from the local merchant and the small farmer. Rather they were taken from an elite which largely represents another outside influence, that of the corporation. We have shown how they have influenced wages through wage-setting hearings, influenced farming practices through financing, taken leadership over community affairs, and have been influential in directing public sentiment on subjects of national and

local policy. Resentment of large corporations has often been expressed and occasionally still is, but these expressions are rare compared with those toward governmental and union controls.

SUMMARY

Controls over the behavior of Wasco residents are circumscribed by American law and custom and by the potential mobility of the population. Within the framework, the degree of influence exerted by persons of higher social status over those of lesser standing is considerable. These controls rest largely upon the direct control of the employer over his employee, the controls of the market place, and the influence exerted by the force of prestige itself. The areas of behavior in which conformity has come to be expected appear to have shifted from the sphere of morality to politico-economic attitudes and actions.

But the most insistent implications of the data on both social controls and social conflict are the strong influences exerted from outside the community. While the essential conflict situations are inherent in the economic and social structure of the community, they are in reality but the reflections of similar conflicts found in the industrial society of the nation as a whole. Examination of the sources of action in conflict situations and of controls exerted immediately carry one outside the community itself into the fountainheads of divergent ideas and desires.

CHAPTER VII

VARIATIONS IN THE SOCIAL PATTERN: SMALL FARMS

INTRODUCTION

IF THE characteristics of the farming community are indeed a function of the industrial pattern of farming operations, then they should appear throughout the area of industrialized agriculture. Furthermore the degree of urbanization should vary with differences in the degree to which the agricultural operations take on the character of the factory. Such a test has been made possible by the subsequent detailed analysis of two communities lying near Wasco, in the area of intensive irrigated farming, which are the subject of this and the succeeding chapter.

Dinuba and Arvin, the two communities subjected to this later analysis, lie north and south of Wasco, within about fifty miles. They enjoy the same general characteristics in soil and climate, have been subjected to the same major influences of the agricultural economy and are part of a single culture area. Their chief divergence lies in the fact that one of them, Dinuba, is surrounded by farms of modest proportions while the other is to a great extent farmed in large tracts. It was indeed this difference which motivated the investigation, for the analysis of these two towns was originally made in order to determine the nature and extent of the effects of large-scale farming operations upon the local community.¹

¹The study of Arvin and Dinuba was designed to furnish specific information with respect to the acreage limitation provision of Reclamation Law as applied to conditions in the area to be served by the Central Valley Project of California. A series of studies (Central Valley Project Studies) were instigated by the Bureau of Reclamation, with one problem raising the question of applicability of the law to California, and another assessing the

Since scale of operations is an important element in the industrial character of farming, it would be expected in terms of the fundamental hypothesis of the present volume, that certain important social differences appear between Arvin and Dinuba. Yet, because industrialization is not entirely dependent upon large acreages in common ownership, certain essential urban characteristics so vital to the proper understanding of Wasco society appear in both Arvin and Dinuba.

DINUBA AGRICULTURE

Industrialized farming has the following primary characteristics: intensive cultivation, high per-acre and per-farm capital investment, high specialization in single crops on individual farms, highly mechanized operations, large requirements of wage labor hired on an impersonal basis, and large-scale operations. On each of these counts, with the single exception of large farms, Dinuba farming fits the industrialized pattern. When the farming is examined in greater detail, we can see the extent to which these characteristics appear and dominate the farming scene. Dinuba agriculture is specialized to the production of

social effects of the project upon the State. The assumption of value in small farms to the welfare of the nation rests upon the existence of a causal relationship between size of holdings and the nature of society. A detailed comparative study using the insights gained from the investigation at Wasco was designed to test the validity of such an assumption.

The investigations utilized many of the same techniques applied in Wasco, but without the same intimate knowledge because of time limitations. On the other hand, three sources of statistical information are available for these two communities which did not exist for the earlier study: (1) a schedule of population, social participation and level of living taken from a 10 per cent random sample, (2) analysis of Agricultural Adjustment Agency records for size and type of farming, and (3) analysis of sales tax data for volume and characteristics of the business enterprises of the community.

A detailed description of the social and economic aspects of Arvin and Dinuba, and an analysis of the effects of large-scale operation upon community life in areas of industrial farming has been published elsewhere. Walter R. Goldschmidt, *Small Business and the Community, A Study in the Central Valley of California on Effects of Scale of Farm Operations*, Report of the Special Committee to Study Problems of American Small Business, United States Senate (79th Congress, 2nd Session). Government Printing Office, Washington, December 23, 1946.

raisin grapes. Of the 34,000 acres within the area of Dinuba, over 16,000 acres are devoted to orchard and vineyard, and by far the greater portion of this to the latter. Of the remainder, nearly 5,000 acres are devoted to forage crops—alfalfa and sorghums, and nearly 3,000 acres to cotton and vegetables.²

Orchard, vineyard, forage crops, cotton and vegetables are all irrigated crops. Together they comprise about three-fourths of all the land in the area. They produce a gross income of from \$32 per acre for forage crops to \$108 per acre for orchard and vineyard. These figures are based upon average yields and 1935-1939 prices. The forage income is low because the figures do not include value added by feeding livestock and selling meat and milk. The total annual value of fruit and grapes is one and three-quarters million dollars, while total production of all commodities has an annual value of two and one-half millions. These figures are indicative of the intensity of crop production.

The degree of farm specialization is extremely high. Three-fourths of all farms depend chiefly upon fruits as a source of income and over two-thirds of these have 80 per cent or more of their total acreage in fruits. About two-thirds of the remaining farms are devoted chiefly to summer field crops. Diversity in operations is the exception rather than the rule.

Labor requirements on farms in Dinuba are very great. An estimated 3½ million man-hours of labor are demanded by the crops in the community, or 133 man-hours per acre of used land each year. Such a demand on human energies—especially when the degree of mechanization of field work is considered—is a further sign of the intensity of land use.

These data indicate the amount of hired labor required. Because farms are small the relatively large number of farm operators can perform, if they work full time, 60 per cent of all farm labor in the community. In addition approximately 550 family heads work at farm labor as their chief or only means of support and another 600 persons work part-time in the fields. They

² These figures apply to the year 1940, and are based upon the records of the Agricultural Adjustment Agency. The area surrounding Dinuba within which the people go to that town for normal shopping and service needs was determined by interview, and that area included in statistical analyses.

cannot work the full year—indeed can expect full employment only three or four months of the time. Despite this fact, about 1,600 additional workers are required for farm operations during the month of September, when harvesting activities are at their peak. Thus, while nearly two-thirds of the work can be performed by the 722 farm operators, an additional require-

TABLE 29.—LAND USE AND VALUE OF COMMODITIES IN DINUBA

Commodity	Acreage		Value	
	Acres	Per cent	Dollars	Per cent
Orchard and vineyard	16,295	50	1,752,000	69
Row crops	2,646	8	212,000	8
Forage crops	4,749	15	152,000	6
Grain	1,020	3	24,000	1
Other land uses ¹	7,818	24	.....	...
Livestock ²	.....	...	400,000	16
Total	32,528	100	2,540,000	100

¹ Not including lanes and buildings. Includes range, pasture and fallow and idle lands and a few acres of unclassified cropland.

² Value of livestock deducting cost of feed, except pasture. Locally grown feeds accredited to value of land in specified crops, though produced for feed locally.

SOURCE: Records of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration.

ment of 2,700 workers must be met out of the ranks of labor. Such workers are characteristically employed in large crews, frequently through contractors, and the personal relationship to the worker implied in the phrase "hired man" is a rare exception, even when farms are small.

The small scale of operations in Dinuba affects the social picture. It has the direct effect of cutting down the proportion of the dependent laborer population and of increasing that of the independent, stable and secure farmer group. The average farm in Dinuba contains 57 acres of land, including idle land and land devoted to homes and buildings. Nearly 90 per cent

of all units are less than 80 acres in extent, and they contain nearly 60 per cent of the total acreage. Only about one per cent of the farms have over 320 acres and these contain but 8 per cent of all cropland. While farms are small in Dinuba compared to Wasco or Arvin or to the general size of operations under the industrialized pattern of farming, it must be recognized that these farms are not small in the more general sense of the term; that they still require great investments of capital and labor and bring adequate incomes even with the unfavorable prices of the late thirties.

DINUBA POPULATION

There are about 7,000 persons living in and around Dinuba who look to that community for their basic needs, supported directly or indirectly by the 2.5 million dollar annual agricultural production. Some of these must, of course, seek employment elsewhere part of the year, while outsiders must supplement this group during harvest season. Approximately one-third of the employed family heads are farm operators, another third are agricultural wage workers, while the remainder are divided among the different working groups in the town (Table 30). Exact comparison with the Wasco data (Table 14) is not possible, but they indicate broadly that the independently employed and salaried groups (the first three categories in the tabulation) are more important numerically in Dinuba. Over half of the gainfully employed fall in these brackets in Dinuba, against between a fifth and a third in Wasco. The Wasco farm population is less than half as great as that of Dinuba according to these estimates.

Dinuba is an older community than Wasco. Its start came from the development of irrigation in 1882 when the "76 Land and Water Company" was formed to convert the wheat lands to intensive irrigation uses. In 1888 the present irrigation district was created as a public organization under state law, and the town of Dinuba began. Schools had already been in operation in the area, and by 1900 a high school was created. The town was incorporated in 1906. The steady growth of the community,

both in its physical aspects and its population continued through World War I but when the demand and the price for raisins dropped in the early twenties the town suffered economic distress and lost somewhat in population.

The greater age of the community not only means a more firmly established set of institutions, but also affects the charac-

TABLE 30.—CLASSIFICATION OF DINUBA POPULATION ACCORDING TO OCCUPATION

Occupation class	Family heads		Average size family	Total population	
	No.	Per cent		No.	Per cent
A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	264	13.8	3.31	874	12.7
B. Farm operators	661	34.5	3.27	2,161	31.4
C. Clerical workers	61	3.2	3.31	202	2.9
D. Skilled laborers	313	16.3	3.45	1,080	15.7
E. Unskilled laborers (farm)	557	29.0	4.22	2,351	34.2
Unskilled laborers (non-farm)	61	3.2	3.45	210	3.1
Total	1,917	100.0	3.43	6,878	100.0
Non-employed	244		2.17	529	

SOURCE: Schedule data.

ter of the population. An analysis of the age distribution shows a larger proportion of the population above seventy years of age than for the San Joaquin Valley as a whole, and considerably more than in Arvin. One result of this older population is a relatively small average-size family and a relatively larger number of small families. Thus 9 per cent have but a single member and an additional 30 per cent include only 2 persons. The occupational differences in size of family are also revealing. Farm operators have smaller families than the traditional occupation groups of the towns—merchants, professional, and white

collar workers. The really large families are found among the farm workers.

Though Dinuba is old enough to have a fairly stable population, and though there has been no increase in its population for the past 20 years, nevertheless, only half the family heads have had 20 years' residence in Dinuba, and nearly one-fourth have come in 1940 or later. This instability is found predominantly among the laboring group, for three-fourths have less than 20 years' tenure and over a third have arrived in the town in 1940 or later.

Eighty-one per cent of the family heads are American born and the remainder represent a wide array of origins, including Asiatic, Armenian, Mexican, Russian, and Canadian. A small Japanese colony had been evacuated at the time the studies were made, but a Korean colony remained. Nineteen per cent of the family heads were California born, while the remainder have come from various parts of the United States with a slight preponderance from the states of Oklahoma, Texas, and Missouri—the source area for the migration of farm labor in the thirties. The largest ethnic groups in the area are the colony of Armenians, the Koreans, and before evacuation, the Japanese. A group of Mennonites made up of persons of various nationality backgrounds, chiefly Russian, German, and Canadian, form a separate community based upon common attitudes differing from those prevalent in Dinuba.

The population of Dinuba may be characterized as an aggregation of persons from a wide variety of backgrounds but predominantly American whites, with a relatively large proportion in the older age brackets, and with a large number displaying a high degree of mobility. About one-third are farmers, one-third are farm laborers, and the remainder engaged in the various service occupations of the town.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The significant segregations of the population of Dinuba, like those of Wasco, are occupational and ethnic. While the general pattern is the same, and similar relationships between

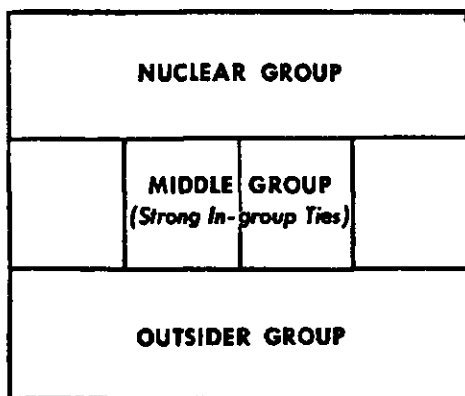
the several classes exist, the lines of cleavage are less sharp and the social distance not so great in Dinuba as they are in Wasco. There is a greater wealth of institutions, a larger and more diversified stable population, and particularly more persons whose social affiliations are determined not by the dominant pecuniary values of urban society but rather by the specific attitudes and ethos of one or another cultural subgroup. It is significant that while in Wasco the major ethnic groups were considered simply as outsiders and had a status commensurate with laborers of the white race, in Dinuba these groups generally had greater economic independence and a higher social position. In Dinuba the Armenians, the Mennonites, and to a lesser extent the Japanese (before Pearl Harbor) and the Koreans are occasionally accepted in community institutions in a manner that does not take place with respect to either the Mexicans or Negroes of Wasco.

Evidence of economic well-being, as reflected by material possessions and reported income, was obtained from the Dinuba sample interviewed. About one-eighth of the population fell in the upper quarter of each of the three indices developed from this data, and this group must be viewed as an elite. Only one out of the 26 families included in this elite obtained his livelihood as a laborer. A large group of persons have free social access to this elite by belonging to the same clubs and churches so that, though gradations in prestige exist, this larger group must be viewed as a single social class, comprising about a third of the total population.

Of the remaining two-thirds there are many whose activities center about some focus of interest, usually a church, and who have a common bond with others, thus forming a sub-community or strong in-group. Here would be placed all the Armenians and Koreans, and the Mennonites, and other minor religious colonies. These groups breach occupation barriers, including among their numbers both farm operators—usually small landowners—and farm laborers, plus a few in the service and industries of the town. They are by-passed by the dominant community pattern of pecuniary values and are far less urban-

ized. Within each sphere the individual is known to all and a more rural and homogeneous atmosphere prevails, while the relationships between members of these groups and the dominant elements of the community are fairly remote. This latter relationship is, however, vitally different from that which characterizes the relationship between outside and nuclear groups in Wasco. For these strong in-groups maintain a solidarity on their own volition, rejecting the value system of the community for their own, usually religiously inspired one and eschewing any close social ties with the community. Furthermore, they have stable tenure, permanence in the community and are not an impoverished class. A third or more of the population must be included in this category.

There remains, however, a third class whose relationships are those of the outsider to the community, and whose status and social conditions correspond exactly to that group in Wasco. It is comprised almost entirely of farm laborers living in poor economic circumstances and having only the most tenuous ties with the dominant elements of the community. Eight per cent of the total population sampled participated in none of the affairs of the community whatsoever and many others in very little more. Thirteen per cent of the residents stated that they did not consider Dinuba their home town. These social relationships can be visualized in terms of the following diagrammatic sketch:



SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Of the categories of social activity and recreation subjected to investigation, church attendance exceeds all other forms in Dinuba, while motion pictures are second. Over 80 per cent of the families have members in churches and over 70 per cent report moving picture attendance. This is a greater degree of church attendance reported than for Wasco (Table 21), while it is a smaller movie attendance than reported in the Consumer Purchases study for village and country people in the Pacific. No other category of social activity or recreation involves over half the population. Table 31 shows the relative importance of the different categories of social activity.

TABLE 31.—PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN DINUBA

Type of activity	Families reporting ¹		Individuals reporting ²	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Clubs ³	103	47	...	..
Churches	175	82	370	72
School events	70	33	203	28
Other community events	86	40	231	32
Dances	49	23	98	13
Card parties	29	14	55	8
Picnics	91	43	288	39
Motion pictures	145	71	456	62

¹ Based upon a sample of 206 families.

² Based upon total population of sample, or 731 persons, except in the case of churches, which is based upon total population aged 12 years old and over, or 515 individuals.

³ Data for individual participation not available.

SOURCE: Schedule data.

Though membership in the various non-religious associations is not as frequent as are other activities, the importance of such organizations should not be underestimated. In Wasco member-

ships in the dominant social clubs not only assured upper-class status in the community, but were necessary in order to have the opportunity to participate in many of the decisions affecting community welfare. Since Dinuba has elective officials the civic importance of the social organizations is somewhat diminished, yet there is little doubt that the clubs set the tone and character of the community.

A meeting sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce is in point. This public dinner meeting was called by a group of community leaders to discuss the problems and prospects for planning community improvements. Not only was the meeting called jointly by two associations, but almost every speaker called upon represented some such group. The individual comes to be represented in important community decisions by the elected representative of his social group.

A complete catalogue of Dinuba associations is difficult, but a list of the better known organizations is indicative. There are two merchants' associations, three service clubs, a local business men's club for social purposes, and the volunteer firemen who form a closed social group. There is an active Legion with its auxiliary, a chapter of the Masonic order (with its women's, girls', and boys' auxiliaries), a local chapter of the Modern Woodmen of America, and the I.O.O.F. For women there are four recognized associations and one P.T.A. The Red Cross is not without its social aspects. Farmers have, aside from commodity associations and an organization which aids in obtaining labor, a local Farm Bureau Center and a chapter of the Grange. The Legion, the Women's Club, the Red Cross, and two fraternal orders each have their own meeting halls. In addition one service club has sponsored a recreation hall for youth and two others have each furnished meeting places for Boy Scout troops. Most of these buildings are generally available to the public—or to segments of the public—for recreational and meeting purposes.

As in Wasco, most of these organizations are the province of the upper group in the community, and particularly of the merchants and professional people. Labor is sparsely represented among them. In Dinuba nearly half of all memberships re-

ported were held by persons gaining their livelihood from white-collar activities while 89 memberships were held by the farmer group and only 40 by all laborers combined. There were 158 memberships for each 100 persons in the white-collar category, 57 for each 100 persons in the farmer category and only 16 for each 100 labor persons. This pattern follows closely that of Wasco.³

The service clubs and the American Legion have the widest representation of memberships, while fraternal orders are represented among only 15 per cent of the families, and farm organizations among only 12 per cent. Less than one family in ten has a member of a woman's organization. Ninety-eight per cent of all Rotary Club members whose occupations could be determined were of the farmer-white-collar group; 96 per cent of the Dinuba women's club and 79 per cent of the Legionnaires fell in this category. Here again the pattern established in Wasco in which laborers rarely have the intimate contacts of club association, is found in Dinuba. Comparable data were not obtained for other organizations.

It is also significant that, though the community consists in very large part of people who work as wage labor, unionization has not proceeded very far. Only five per cent of the families interviewed held membership in any union, and no local chapters were reported. Here again the Wasco pattern is reflected.

DINUBA CHURCHES

Religion affects the lives of a large proportion of the Dinuba population, judged by the proportions who belong to or regularly attend one of the fourteen or more local congregations. Seventy-two per cent of the population 12 years old and over reported religious participation, with very little difference between the separate occupation classes except that farmers appear

³It should be noted that in Wasco, information was obtained from club records while here it was obtained from persons. Since farmer organizations were not included in the Wasco data, but were for Dinuba, one would expect Wasco farmer memberships to appear more rarely. Since the figure is actually somewhat greater, there is clear evidence that Wasco farmers participate much more in social organizations.

to be more devout. Differences in sources of data make direct comparison with Wasco impossible, but the number and kind of churches and the heavier participation among the laboring group suggest that a similar pattern exists. The fact that there are more churches with a smaller total population and that the churches appear to be much more fully attended suggests that the degree of religious affiliation and participation is greater in Dinuba than in Wasco.

The Dinuba churches include the Presbyterian, Christian, Methodist, Baptist, two Seventh-Day Adventist congregations, a Zion Mennonite and a Mennonite Brethren, Church of the Nazarene, Assembly of God, Church of God, Church of Christ, Four-Square Church, Korean Presbyterian, and Armenian church. Prior to evacuation of the Japanese there was a Japanese Buddhist group; there was a Mexican Pentecostal for a while, and Mormons, Catholics, and Lutherans periodically meet in Dinuba. These congregations, like those in Wasco, tend to "represent the different elements" in the community. These may be divided into four categories: churches of high, intermediate, and low social standing, and churches which serve some particular segment of the community which has strong in-group ties and which cannot readily be assigned social status in terms of the dominant pecuniary values. The first four churches have high status in Dinuba, the Nazarene and Assembly of God have intermediate status, while the Church of God, Church of Christ, and Four-Square Church have little or no social standing. The Seventh-Day Adventists (with their own school) and the Mennonite churches and the churches serving persons of common racial or ethnic origin must be considered as part of the fourth category. Judgments with respect to social standing are based upon general observation of type of service, age of the institution and character of the building, and upon expressed attitudes of the people. They are corroborated by the data on participation (Table 32). Only one-third of the four congregations with high status are laborers, while in the churches of intermediate and low status two-thirds are laborers. The proportion of laborers in the in-group congregations correspond closely to the proportion of the laborers in the whole community. Though

TABLE 32.—CLASS CHARACTER OF DINUBA CHURCHES

	Per cent of membership among:	
	Independently employed	Wage laborers
High status churches	67	33
Intermediate status churches	36	64
Low status churches	37	63
In-group churches	45	55
All churches	55	45

SOURCE: Schedule data.

the pattern of social segregation is similar to that found in Wasco, Dinuba churches afford more opportunity for social contacts between different occupations.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNITY ACTION

The city of Dinuba is incorporated and therefore represents a body which can act in response to the expression of public sentiment. Herein lies the greatest civic difference from Wasco. Incorporation is nearly 40 years old, and expressions of pride in the city's achievements are frequently heard.

A council of five is elected for a four-year term, three at one time, two at another. Each councilman has charge of one particular phase of the city's activities—police and fire, finance, city properties, parks, and waste disposal, or streets, sewers, and water. The operations of particular aspects of city government are therefore subject to the direct review and approval of the electorate. A heated election had taken place immediately prior to the period of field investigations, resulting in the deposition of one of the councilmen whose policies were objectionable to a segment of the population. Feeling in the matter was still in evidence on both sides.

Physical improvements—paving and a sewage system—were inaugurated before World War I. Early in the twenties the community, in expectation of continued growth commensurate with that which resulted from the highly favorable raisin prices, inaugurated a civic development which included paving and lighting virtually every street, laying sidewalks throughout town, completing the sewage system and establishing a water system and parks. As a result the physical appearance of the community was and remains one of the best of any town its size in the area. The slump in grapes during the early twenties left an indebtedness that destroyed property values and burdened the community for fifteen years.

This development came at the time when speculative farming in the area was at its peak. It was the result of the adoption of pecuniary standards by the rank and file of the population, and of a money prosperity which distorted both values and judgment. It is Dinuba's counterpart of the 1936 potato prices in Wasco, on a bigger scale over a longer period and with more far-reaching effects. At the same time it was the civic counterpart of the "silk shirt" era.

Many individuals lost heavily as a result of individual and community spending, based upon the capitalized value of wartime raisin prices. But the community has managed to straighten its affairs by a system of refinancing and the sale of tax-deeded lands. As a community, therefore, it is now in excellent condition, with a great many public improvements and a low bonded debt. Improvements continue to be made. The current mayor (at the time of field research) prided himself upon his contribution to community welfare—a municipal garbage disposal system and cleaned up alleyways.

The city furnishes a number of services. In addition to street paving, street lighting, and sewage and garbage disposal, the city has a municipal water system and has established two parks and has the property for a third one which is currently being improved. The city maintains a four-man police force and a fire department which is largely manned by volunteers and works co-operatively with the county fire department.

Civic leadership in Dinuba, like that in Wasco, rests largely

with a small group of merchants, teachers, and other professional persons. The influence of the Chamber of Commerce meeting, the action of organizations in setting the patterns of behavior and the discussions with local citizens all offer testimonial to that effect. In the recent election, for instance, the candidates were associated in people's minds with certain organizations, even though no official sponsorship was announced. Yet there is a real difference in the fact that the mechanism exists in which the people may express a preference, irrespective of creed, color, or social affiliations.

The broader base for democratic action shows itself by the continued existence of the larger of the two newspapers, a semi-weekly. It has long maintained an outspoken attitude, both with respect to internal politics in the community and with respect to the encroachment of outside interests upon the community. The editor claims to have publicly fought the acquisition of the two local banks by the chain banking system, the development of large-scale farming enterprises and similar economic interests, and to have maintained his paper by subscriptions in the face of a boycott by advertisers. All these statements were not checked, but some editorials were examined which expressed opinions undoubtedly free of any coercive pressures by economic interests. This local paper continues to take a positive stand with respect to major local issues, along with furnishing a vehicle for the expression of social solidarity in the community. The wartime phase of this latter service has been to print all pictures of local servicemen submitted, by printing a special sheet of hometown news for them, distributed by the local Rotary, and by publishing an annual volume containing pictures and records of local people in the armed forces.

Social activity takes place outside the political sphere, and important civic enterprises are sponsored by various groups in the community. The Legion and Rotary have each sponsored Scout troops and furnished them with a meeting place. The Y's Men's Club has initiated a downtown recreation center, and weekly dances are held in the clubhouse of the Women's Club. It will be seen that the influence of formal organizations

upon the welfare of the community is very great, and that this influence is made to reach beyond class lines, though leadership rests with those of upper class status.

SUMMARY

The community of Dinuba presents a significant variation on the pattern of industrialized farming. With a large number of small units and very few acres held in large tracts, there is a large body of stable farm population with community-centered interest, while the proportion of the population with negligible interests remains small. This appears to be the result on the one hand of the absence of a wealthy class with social ties in great urban centers and on the other hand, of the relatively small population having poor circumstances and few roots in the local community.

CHAPTER VIII

VARIATIONS IN THE SOCIAL PATTERN: LARGE FARMS

ARVIN AGRICULTURE

ARVIN IS the community center for an area devoted predominantly to large-scale industrialized agricultural enterprise. About ten thousand acres of the exceptionally fertile land in the area is held and operated by the DiGiorgio Fruit Corporation. This organization, with its subsidiaries and affiliates extends the length and breadth of the United States, and is a potent influence on the marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables. This, at least, was the opinion of a federal grand jury which indicted the owner and a number of corporations in its control for their monopolistic practices, an indictment to which the accused plead *nolo contendere*, on the basis of which the corporations involved were subjected to fines.¹

The average Arvin farm is large—497 acres. While 40 per cent of all units are less than 80 acres in extent, these comprise but 4 per cent of all the acreage. The 22 units containing a section or more of land each, on the other hand, hold over two-thirds of all the acreage in farms within the community. Arvin, therefore, is not without its small farmers, yet these are few in contrast with Wasco and especially with Dinuba. Farming is dominated by a handful of larger growers who hold most of the acreage.

¹ United States *vs.* California Fruit Growers Exchange, *et al.*, No. 15167 (criminal) District Court of the United States for the Southern District of California, Central Division, September Term, 1941. The accusation read in part that the indicted were “. . . engaged in a wrongful and unlawful combination and conspiracy to fix, control, regulate and stabilize prices at which citrus and deciduous fruits are marketed and sold in interstate commerce . . . by controlling and restricting the channels and methods of distribution, which combination and conspiracy has been in restraint of trade and commerce.”

Not only are Arvin farms large in scale, but they have all the other attributes of industrialization. The proportion of land devoted to intensive uses within the boundary of the community is somewhat less than in Dinuba, but the absolute acreage was equally great in 1940, and has since increased, as the area of intensive crop use has been expanding greatly in response to wartime prices. Nearly half of all farm land was devoted to irrigated agriculture, and this area accounted for over four-fifths of the two and a half million dollar value of crops produced (Table 33). The value of the crops from these irrigated

TABLE 33.—LAND USE AND VALUE OF COMMODITIES IN ARVIN

Commodity	Acreage		Value	
	Acres	Per cent	Dollars	Per cent
Orchard and vineyard	7,875	18	847,000	35
Row crops	8,980	21	1,009,000	41
Forage crops	3,774	9	163,000	7
Grain	15,994	38	222,000	9
Other land uses ¹	6,037	14	.....	...
Livestock ²	.....	...	197,000	8
Total	42,660	100	2,438,000	100

¹ Not including lanes and buildings. Includes range, pasture and fallow and idle land, and a few acres of unclassified cropland.

² Value of livestock deducting cost of feed, except pasture. Locally grown feeds accredited to value of land in specified crops, though produced for feeding locally.

SOURCE: Records of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration.

lands is \$100 per year, based upon prices of the late thirties and upon average yields.

Arvin's production is more evenly spread over a variety of commodities than either Dinuba or Wasco, though the individual farms tend to be highly specialized. Two-thirds of all farms having fruit as their major crop devote over 80 acres to that one category, while a third of all farms are devoted chiefly to row crops. There is a growing tendency among the very large opera-

tors to diversify their land use in order to maximize the use of their buildings, equipment, and managerial labor, and incidentally to improve their bargaining position for labor. The Di-Giorgio interests in Arvin have endeavored to grow a variety of fruits and vegetables in order that the flow of commodities through their packing sheds is continued for as long a season as possible. Yet this diversification is different in character from the old-fashioned "general" farm, for each product is a highly specialized operation, each is produced for cash sale to Eastern markets, and none is utilized simply for rotation to soil building crops.

The intensive character of farming means great requirements for labor. Cotton and potatoes each require well over 100 man-hours of work per year for each acre of land, while deciduous fruits require over 500 hours of labor for each acre. A total of 2.9 million hours of work are required for the commodities produced, of which only a fraction (about one-seventh) can be done by the farm operators, assuming each works full time. Most of the work (73 per cent) can be done by resident hired labor, while during three months of peak requirement it is necessary to import workers to fill out the necessary force. It is not surprising, therefore, that two-thirds of the family heads (940) in the community obtain their living as farm laborers, while nearly 700 additional workers perform such labor on a part-time basis. With this large labor supply, it is still necessary to import nearly 1,200 workers during the peak month of employment (July).

ARVIN POPULATION

Approximately 6,400 persons are residents in Arvin. This is 20 per cent fewer than in Dinuba despite the fact that the value of farm production is the same. Nearly three-fourths of this population is dependent upon agricultural wages for its support, while the proportion who have independent employment represent but a small fraction of the people (Table 34). These population statistics, when viewed in terms of the social and economic position of wage labor in California agriculture, present the most telling story of the effect upon the rural community of

large-scale farm enterprise under industrialized production. For in Arvin more than eight persons out of ten are directly dependent upon a small fraction of the population for their means of livelihood.

In Wasco we have seen that, though mobile, farm labor is motivated toward settling in one community. Arvin has not gone

TABLE 34.—CLASSIFICATION OF ARVIN POPULATION ACCORDING TO OCCUPATION

Occupation class	Family heads		Average size	Total population	
	Number	Per cent		Number	Per cent
A. Professionals, managers, and proprietors	82	5.9	3.50	287	4.6
B. Farm operators	141	10.1	3.57	403	8.1
C. Clerical workers	20	1.4	3.50	70	1.1
D. Skilled laborers	200	14.3	3.90	780	12.7
E. Unskilled laborers	955	68.3	4.75	4,536	73.5
Total	1,398	100.0	4.23	6,076	100.0
Non-employed	81		2.63	212	

SOURCE: Schedule data.

very far in this process. Over half the residents in Arvin have lived in the community four years or less, irrespective of occupation, and three-fourths came in 1935 or later. The proportion of laborers of recent tenure in the community is greater than for the remainder of the population. It must be remembered that Arvin is a younger town than Dinuba or Wasco. It was first subjected to irrigation in 1910, and a school was established at the townsite in 1913. The growth of schools in Arvin and Wasco shows a very similar pattern, with the Wasco school population about four years ahead of the Arvin population until the middle thirties.

Very few Arvin residents are native Californians (4 per cent of the heads of families) while nearly two-thirds of the family

heads were born in either Oklahoma, Texas, or Arkansas. Twelve per cent of the family heads were born outside of the United States, half of these in Mexico. Thus the population of Arvin is made up in very large part of depression and post-depression migrants from the "dustbowl" states, who have settled temporarily where work opportunities exist. The fact that so large a portion of the Arvin residents came to the community since 1940 does not reflect a sudden growth—on the contrary, the student population was less at the time of field investigation (spring, 1944) than it was in 1940.

The age composition of the Arvin population reflects a pattern of family migration, and the effect of the draft and war opportunities upon the community. Forty per cent of the people are under 15 years of age, nearly 20 per cent are in their thirties, and only about 10 per cent are in their twenties. Only a small fraction of persons are 60 and over. Families tend to be much larger in Arvin than in Dinuba, with nearly a fourth composed of six or more persons and less than a fourth composed of only one or two individuals. The average family is 4.23 persons, or nearly a fourth greater than in Dinuba. This difference in part reflects the larger proportion of labor whose families are far the largest of any occupation group. The younger composition of the population with families relatively intact, is also a factor contributing to this difference. As in Dinuba, Arvin farm families are about the same size as those of professional and business people, whereas the truly large families are found among farm laborers (3.57 for farmers as against 4.75 for farm laborers).

While a heterogeneity of origins can be recognized among the people of Arvin, by far the greatest bulk of the population are farm laborers recently come to the community from the Southwest—and serving as wage labor in the fields. The most striking characteristic of the population is its great proportion of such labor and the small fraction of persons with relative independence, security, or long tenure.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

If occupation is the diagnostic criterion of social status, it follows that in Arvin the proportion of persons of outside posi-

tion is far greater than those whose position can be described as nuclear. This is clearly the case. Whereas social distinctions in Dinuba are less finely drawn than in Wasco, they are far sharper in Arvin than in either of the other communities. As a matter of fact, a great social hiatus between the farm laborer on one hand and the farmer and white-collar worker must be recognized. These two groups represent two separate worlds with but the most tenuous ties between them.

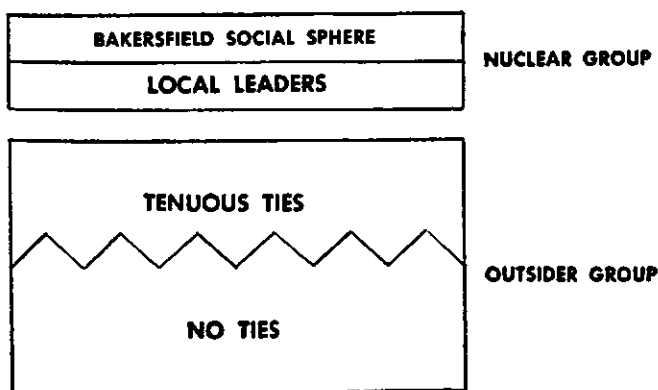
Ten of the 132 families interviewed in Arvin were in the top quarter of the brackets of each of the three indices of economic well-being: income, material possessions, and condition of home. Nine of these were from among the farmer and merchant class, and all these nine belonged to the single leading church, or to no church at all. Among this group there were 23 persons twelve years old and over. They had a total of 53 club memberships including all but one of those reported for the two major civic associations. Another 8 families in the same occupation categories had above-average living conditions and income, and held 15 club memberships among them. Some of them belonged to the poorer churches. A third group of the farmer-white-collar category had poor economic circumstances, rarely participated in any associations and never in the leading church. Only eleven families of the laboring group fell in the upper half of the three indices of economic well-being. One of these belonged to the high status church, and among them they had nine club memberships. Possibly a single skilled laborer in the sample was in a position to associate freely among the social group made up of the dominant farmers and merchants.

These facts show that while being in the farmer or in the business and professional categories is virtually a necessity for participation in the leading affairs of the community, such occupation does not insure top social position. In the upper bracket of the Arvin social structure, we can certainly include all the first group of 9 families, probably the second group of 8 families, and one labor family. These 18 families in our sample of 132 represent 14 per cent of the resident population. They are not a homogeneous unit, though they have easy and fairly

close social relationships. A small portion, mostly operators of larger farm units, participate chiefly in the social affairs of the nearby city of Bakersfield and, like similar elements in Wasco, find their true social status in this larger environment.

Of the remaining 114 families only 21 hold any membership in associations of the local community and only 71 hold membership in some local church. In all, about 75 families (two-thirds) participate in some local activity, though these ties are frequently tenuous and with but a handful of persons of similar status and with equally tenuous ties. Thus if we eliminate those whose only membership is in the churches of lowest social standing, the number of families drops to 50. Twenty-seven of the 75 families denied participating in any community-located recreation and nearly half did not consider Arvin their home town.

From an examination of the behavior of these families it is apparent that the degree to which they have ties varies considerably, and that about half of them have absolutely none with Arvin while the remainder have established social contacts within their status group and have begun to look upon Arvin as their home. In summary, the status system in Arvin can be illustrated with the following diagrammatic sketch:



Perhaps the segregation of the two worlds can best be illustrated by two statements of a single member of the top echelon

group. In one context she referred to the nuclear group as "All Arvin" while in another context she considered Arvin an "Okie Town."

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Participation in the social affairs of Arvin is largely limited to the nuclear group. As in Dinuba, the degree of such activities is limited or widespread according to the degree of social contact the activities imply. Thus two-thirds of the population go to movies, which does not imply any social intercourse, one-third go on picnics, which are generally limited to a family or a very small group of families, while only very small groups participate in the more social forms of recreation—dancing, school, and other community events (Table 35).

TABLE 35.—PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN ARVIN

Type of activity	Families reporting ¹		Individuals reporting ²	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Clubs ³	41	31	...	..
Churches	91	69	221	59
School events	34	26	88	16
Other community events	12	9	51	9
Dances	19	14	38	7
Card parties	10	8	18	3
Picnics	52	39	209	38
Motion pictures	110	84	387	67

¹ Based upon a sample of 132 families.

² Based upon total population in sample, or 558 persons, except in the case of churches, which is based upon total population 12 years old and over, or 372 persons.

³ Data for individual participation not available.

SOURCE: Schedule data.

There are not many organizations centered in Arvin—a complete list includes two civic groups, the local Boosters and the international Lions, the Parent-Teachers Association, a local

group of the State Guard, the Farm Bureau Federation, a Boy Scout and Campfire Girl group. There are no local chapters of lodges, veterans' associations, or women's clubs, nor any active local union organization. The absence of such organizations at once deprives the community of media for social contact and reflects the lack of community action. As one merchant stated, in discussing the beginning of the Lions Club, "The merchants didn't even know one another. At the first meeting we had a contest to see who could call each other by his first name, and found that none of us knew many of them. . . . I am rarely on the other side of the street and know only one merchant over there."

With so little social contact within the nuclear group, it is not surprising that contact with the labor groups is rare. While 70 per cent of the farmer and white-collar families report club activities, only 17 per cent of the farm labor families have such memberships. Stated otherwise, for every 100 persons in the farm-labor category 7 memberships in some form of social organization were reported. In contrast to this, white-collar workers reported 92 memberships and farmers 124 per 100 persons. Here we see the farmers, where farm operations are large, taking the lead in the degree of social participation. The relative proportions between farmer and towns were reversed from those found in Dinuba and Wasco. This corresponds to other observations regarding the relative social position of the farmer in Arvin, as contrasted with the other two communities. In Arvin the elite is predominantly of the farm-operator group, while the merchants and professional people are secondary. In Wasco the elite rather evenly represented the two groups, while the farmer in Dinuba was rarely a civic and social leader in the community. Income and other social data support this view of the relative status of the two groups. In Arvin, for instance, the median reported farm income was approximately \$3,750 per year, the white-collar workers about \$3,000. In Dinuba these figures were reversed with \$2,800 and \$3,650 respectively.

Examination of club memberships shows the degree to which social activities are the province of the nuclear group. The two major civic organizations have a combined membership of 124.

Seven of these memberships are held by persons in the labor category, 119 of them by farmers and white-collar workers. The only adult organization to which workers belong to any great extent is the Parent-Teachers Association. About three-fifths of its 40 members come from the laboring group.

The exclusion of outsiders must be understood in terms of the behavior of both groups. Social distinctions which exist operate both upon the included and the excluded. A Parent-Teachers' president claims to have endeavored to bring the laboring people into the association, but found it difficult to develop interest among them and to get the other parents to accept these outsiders on terms of equality.

The records of one other club were examined, the Farm Center. This organization is devoted to farmer interests and has only a few sustaining memberships from other occupations. Operators of farms in all size categories are members of this organization; in fact the distribution by size of farms owned by members is the same as the size distribution of all Arvin farms. Yet it is of interest that an officer of this club remarked that "the small farmers attend Center meetings more regularly . . . but the larger farmers seem to take a more active part in the working of the organization."

To a far greater extent than either in Dinuba or Wasco, social activities within the community are limited to a small segment of the population, while there exist few media for social intercourse between persons independently employed and those who work for wages.

ARVIN CHURCHES

The pattern of church participation follows that found in Wasco with a sharp segregation of a single church which serves almost exclusively the nuclear group and a number of other congregations serving the outsiders. The absence of a stable middle group in the society is reflected in the fact that there is only one congregation serving the stabler element and adhering to the older established Protestant faiths. According to the schedules taken in Arvin, half the members of the single con-

gregation serving chiefly the upper class consisted of farmers and white-collar workers. Forty per cent of that occupation category reporting church participation, referred to that congregation. In this count, persons attending church regularly were included, whether actual members or not. When membership rolls were analyzed, the congregation proved to have three-quarters of its membership from farmers and white-collar workers, and only a tenth from the farm-labor category. Intermediate status churches showed a fair representation of persons from the farmer and white-collar occupations, but congregations with low social standing included very few participants other than laborers. The proportions, as indicated by the schedules, are shown in Table 36.

TABLE 36.—CLASS CHARACTER OF ARVIN CHURCHES

	Per cent of membership among:	
	Independently employed	Wage laborers
High status churches	50	50
Intermediate status churches	39	81
Low status churches	7	93
In-group churches	18	82
All churches	19	81

SOURCE: Schedule data.

The Nazarene and Assembly of God, like the comparable congregations both in Wasco and Dinuba, have built fairly elaborate churches, have developed a philosophy and a service more like the older sects and have sent out their appeal to the stabler elements in the community. Their history parallels exactly that found among the same denominations of Wasco, with shifts not only in the quality of their housing, but in the character of their service and the type of membership. As a result, a third of the congregation of one of these two churches

is from the farmer-white-collar class, whereas, in the nuclear group church three-fourths of the congregation is so constituted. The Assembly of God and Nazarene congregations are the main source of contact between the outside and the nuclear groups. The ministers have moved away from their working-class heritage in the nature of their appeal.

The third group of churches in the hierarchical order have much poorer facilities, usually unpainted shacks and sometimes no regular place of worship. They are served by lay ministers whose livelihood comes from employment as labor. These religious bodies rarely participate in community events or engage in co-operative endeavors. Membership in these congregations therefore establishes practically no ties between the individual and the community of Arvin; it certainly establishes no social contact with any of the elite.

In this discussion of the hierarchy of religious bodies the Catholic congregation has been omitted. Here, as in Wasco, the activities are so largely devoted to religious service and the social contact so limited, that participation is hardly an act having any status connotations. In some ways its standing is like those churches in Dinuba which show strong in-group affiliations, but unlike those, the church does not serve as an active social center and the members do not find in it a common source of social action within the community.

CIVIC ACTION IN ARVIN

The fact that the civic organizations are virtually the exclusive province of the nuclear group takes on added significance when the nature of civic action in Arvin is examined. Arvin, like Wasco and in contrast to Dinuba, has never been incorporated. Therefore no machinery exists for making civic decisions, and the actions of the clubs in the town take on a double importance. The manner in which such decisions were arrived at in Wasco has already been illustrated. That a similar procedure characterizes such action in Arvin was attested to by the statement of a county official before one of these clubs. "You will have to let me know about your community problems," he

said, "for you know more about your needs than I do. You have to let me know how you want the law administered, because I don't want to run your labor off to some other town." Not only do the county officials respond to the will of this segment, but action is occasionally initiated by them for community improvements and changes.

The key to civic action in Arvin lies in this situation. That such a process, whatever its merits, does not utilize the democratic processes, and fails to recognize the inherent right of every resident to a part in the decisions affecting his home town, goes without saying. That the process has not provided a complement of community facilities comparable to Dinuba and many other towns of equal resources, offers further criticism of this method of decision-making.

The reason for the failure of many communities in California, after they have reached and passed a population of 2,500, to incorporate into a body politic is not easy to assess. Undoubtedly there are many contributing causes. We may rule out relative age as a primary cause. For instance, Dinuba incorporated in 1906. A comparable date for both Arvin and Wasco (in terms of years of existence and size of population) would place the incorporation date in the middle or early twenties. A primary reason for the failure must be placed with the transient nature of the population. It has already been shown that a great proportion of the Arvin population has no recognizable or self-recognized allegiance to the community. Such persons will have little interest in incorporation. On the other hand, the nuclear element in the population fears the voting powers of the outsider element. That, at least, is the opinion of some of the local people. In Wasco certain propertied farmers and some outside corporations, who feel they have little to gain by incorporation yet have to pay a large share of the cost, are said to be inhibiting factors to such development. In Kern County, furthermore, a strong county organization, performing many services, has discouraged the incorporation of small towns, furnishing them with certain services at a lower cost to the local taxpayer than they would have if they furnished it themselves.

Failure to incorporate usually is costly to the small shopkeeper, who gets the most benefit from the local police and fire departments and other improvements initiated. But the community as an entity suffers, both from lack of facilities to maintain a proper physical environment and from the lack of community solidarity and spirit. Arvin, for instance, has practically no paving, street lights, or sidewalks. It has been slow in getting adequate water and sewage facilities, and has not had sufficient control over those which do exist. It has no park and has inadequate schools. The town is poorly laid out, the houses are crowded together and there appear to be no restrictions on the nature or location of buildings. The result of such a situation is that Arvin is less a community than an agglomeration of houses.

It has already been shown that the social picture is similar, with at least a third of the population having no ties whatsoever to Arvin as a social entity, with the remainder of the labor population having only the weakest local roots while the elite of the community find their social interests lie in the larger cities of Bakersfield and Los Angeles. There remain very few with the interest of Arvin at heart, and these do not readily recognize the interest of the whole community, but merely that small segment which makes up the nucleus.

The effects of such disunity are far-reaching. Marshaling the support of citizens for civic enterprises, getting them to devote time and energy to social ends rather than to their own personal interests, is, at best, difficult. In Arvin there are very few persons to draw upon. For such leadership cannot come from a group whose tenure is unstable and who have security neither of economic nor of social position. One group from which leadership is usually obtained, the school teachers, find the Arvin environment so uninviting that they most generally live in Bakersfield and commute the 22 miles daily. As a group they offer little to community life beyond the call of their duties as teachers, and this forms a great loss to the local population. In contrast to Dinuba, where teachers not only are leaders of student affairs, but where they have been partly responsible for the creation of civic enterprises, the absence of teacher leadership in Arvin can well be seen. The situation is aggravated by

the lack of a local high school and by the high rate of teacher turnover in the Arvin schools. The very absence of a high school must in part be laid to the fact that there was not a sufficiently vocal and organized leadership to demand the creation of a high school in the community, until many years after a reasonable high school age population existed.

AGRICULTURAL COMPARISONS

The brief presentation of the social organization of Arvin and Dinuba serves to deepen our perspective of the Wasco scene. In the following chapter the implications of similarities and divergences among the three communities are developed. Before entering into such an analysis it will be helpful to review some of the similarities and differences in the economy of the three communities.

The primary characteristics of industrialized farm operations have been stated already. Briefly, they are: production exclusively for cash sale, intense specialization of farm operations, intensive land use, high capital requirements for production, demand for large amounts of labor, and large-scale farm enterprises. In all three communities farmers specialize in single crops, produce practically nothing for home consumption, engage in an intensive form of cultivation on irrigated land with high values, utilizing large amounts of production capital and many man-hours of labor on each acre. In Dinuba fruits, especially raisin grapes, predominate, with little cotton and vegetable crops, while in the other two towns the proportion of the acreage in row crops is much greater.

The major variation in farming, however, is in the size of farms. The older Dinuba was established on a small-farm basis, and in 1940 the average size was 57 acres. In Wasco, farm units averaged 140 acres and in Arvin had an average of nearly 500 acres. Intensity of land use varied somewhat, and if such is calculated into size of unit, the differences become less in extent, though the relationship remains the same. If acreage is standardized according to its capacity to produce income, a fairer measure of farm size is had. It has become customary to stand-

ardize acreage for such purposes in terms of that amount of land devoted to a specific crop which will produce an income equivalent to that of an acre of irrigated alfalfa. Under such calculations half an acre of orchard, seven-tenths of an acre of cotton or seven acres of grain land would be called a "standard acre." The average farm size in terms of standard acres is 84 in Dinuba, 101 in Wasco and 247 in Arvin. Another measure of farm size as it affects a community is the proportion of farms and of farm land held in various size units. Table 37 shows these distributions for Dinuba, Wasco and Arvin.

TABLE 37.—PROPORTION OF FARMS AND FARM LANDS IN DIFFERENT SIZE CLASSES IN ARVIN, WASCO AND DINUBA (1940)

Size categories	Distribution of farms			Distribution of farm land		
	Arvin	Wasco	Dinuba	Arvin	Wasco	Dinuba
Under 160 acres	56.4	72.9	94.1	8.9	31.0	74.8
160-639 acres	27.0	23.5	5.3	23.8	44.9	21.8
640 and over	16.0	3.6	.6	66.3	24.1	3.4
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

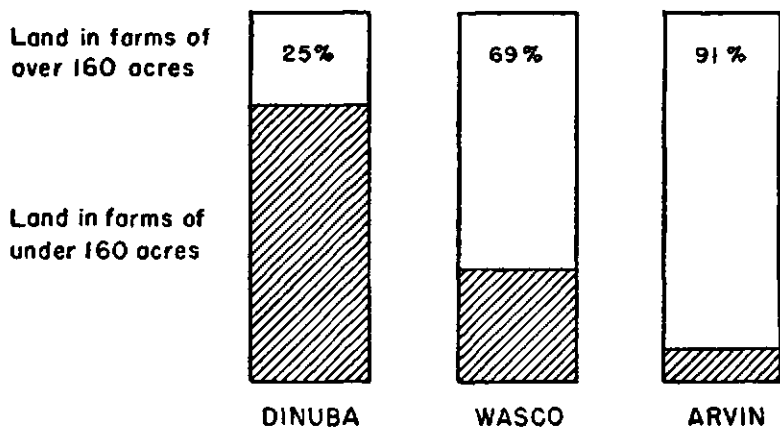
SOURCE: Based upon records of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration.

Scale of farming is an important element in industrialization. It is not in itself a necessary element, for the production may show every other characteristic of industrialization even though farms are of modest proportions. This is true in the three communities discussed here. However, within a common economy, variation in size of farms do produce differences in the degree of industrialization.

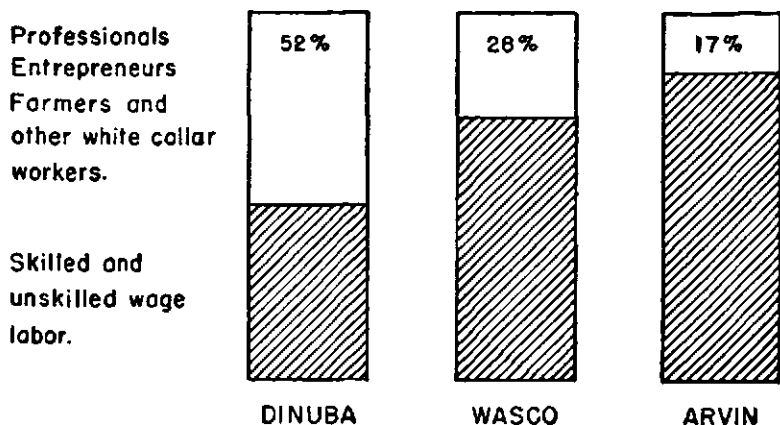
The most important concomitant of large-scale operations is the composition of the population it produces. With a given amount of available land, the larger the farming units are, the fewer will be the number of farm operators. And, if farming is equally intensive, the proportion of farm laborers will increase

SIZE OF FARM AND OCCUPATION DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION OF FARMLAND ACCORDING TO SIZE OF FARM:



DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED PERSONS ACCORDING TO OCCUPATION STATUS:



SOURCE: Tables 14, 30, 35 and 37.

as size of farm units are increased. It is therefore a characteristic of large-scale operations that the community is composed overwhelmingly of laborers and the number of persons independently employed is decreased. This relationship is shown in Chart 8, where the upper bars indicate the proportion of land held in units of 160 acres or more and the lower bars show the proportion of wage workers.

In view of the economic and social position of agricultural workers in the industrial farming areas, this differential in the composition of the population has a decisive effect upon the degree of urbanization of the communities involved.

CHAPTER IX

INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE AND URBANIZED FARM PEOPLE

URBAN AND RURAL LIFE

THE DICHOLOGY between town and country has held the imagination of America. At this point it is necessary to define these modes of life more thoroughly. It is not merely the province of the sociologists who recognize a rural and an urban field within the discipline, nor of the census taker, who for decades has made that segregation a primary one in his enumeration. Far more, it has been a source of divergent political attitudes since the foundation of our nation and repeatedly is made the basis for various kinds of public action. One of its earliest manifestations has been the establishment of political capitals in the smaller cities rather than in the urban centers. Another has been the maintenance of the system of county governments which largely serve the rural people. The establishment of Land Grant Colleges throughout the West, with their emphasis upon rural society, physically and psychologically separated from the universities with their more urban influences, is not entirely unrelated to this dichotomy.

The separation and antagonism between city and country can be found in popular literature and more abundantly perhaps in popular thought. The terms hick, rube, and yokel express contempt for the unsophisticated country-bumpkin. He is a man of narrow horizons perhaps, unaware of the value of money. He is an easy prey to the city slicker, whose sophistication is great, whose evaluation of money is such that he will hazard his soul in order to obtain it from the hayseed newly come to town. Behind such characterizations lies an element of

truth which it is necessary to explore before proceeding to an analysis of the urban quality of California's rural scene.

The German sociologist Tönnies¹ has set up the differentiation in a polar scale, recognizing that no society is purely urban and none purely rural. He suggests the term *Gemeinschaft* as that which characterizes rural life, emphasizing both the commonality of origin and of spirit. The opposite pole is the *Gesellschaft* where the organization is based upon special interests and associations of convenience. Louis Wirth has defined urban civilization in its contrast to the primitive and rural, and his discussion furnishes us the basis for the present one.²

It should be remembered that urban civilization is a product of the massing of people together in the cities, and that this in turn can take place only when the technology and resources are sufficient to emancipate great numbers from responsibility of wresting a livelihood from the soil. Thus, while urban culture is found sporadically in the ancient world, it has been with the advent of the technological development of the industrial revolution that urban society really began to flourish. It is not surprising, therefore, to find urbanism follow technology into rural areas. While urban civilization must be viewed as a product of the cities, it must also be recognized that it is not confined to cities. Indeed, it is the essence of this volume to show that it is not so confined.

Let us first define urban culture as it applies to city life. The best sociological definition of the city is that it is a heterogeneous agglomeration of persons in a large and densely settled area. The heterogeneity furnishes us with the most important element in the growth of urban civilization. Cities have rarely if ever reproduced themselves; they are built up by immigration from

¹ Ferdinand Tönnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, Leipzig, 1887, translated and edited by Charles P. Loomis as *Fundamental Concepts of Sociology*, American Book Co., New York, 1940.

² An excellent discussion of this dichotomy is found in the talks by Robert Redfield and Louis Wirth entitled respectively, "The Folk Society and Culture" and "The Urban Society and Civilization," *Eleven Twenty-Six, A Decade of Social Service Research*, edited by Louis Wirth. Wirth's article entitled "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLII, 1938, was used as a basis for the present discussion.

outside. The origins of these people are diverse; they do not have a set of common customs and common social values. Standards are not uniform. Heterogeneity of origins is matched by heterogeneity of occupations. The economy of city life is, and must be, an economy of specialized functions and high economic interdependence of the individuals composing the society. This means that the individual specializes in some phase of the total economy, and we are only now learning the degree to which such specialization may be carried. This specialization at once reinforces the heterogeneity of origins and creates a situation wherein the individual loses contact with the total society and sees only the fragment which his life activities reach.

Without common background and common activities, the values men live by must seek common expression. In the economic activities of man the money calculus brings diverse wares and activities into a single system. It is therefore not surprising that in the social affairs pecuniary values replace the more personal value system of rural or folk society. If money is good, the possession of money is *prima facie* evidence that the individual is good, and social calculus in urban society rests on this assumption. On such a basis rests a system of social distinctions that differentiates the elite from the masses and presents rungs in the social scheme. This system of pecuniary values is reinforced by the development of common interests within segments of the society resting on the base of similar economic activities. Therefore occupation, or mode of livelihood, comes to play a strong part in the social structure of city life.

Perhaps it will be well to digress here. In primitive societies such as, for instance, those of the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest, the population has a common set of traditions and customs. The norms of behavior are established; they set not only the life activities of each person according to age, sex, and other individual qualities, but they define closely his behavior and his personality. Evaluations are made on such a basis, so that social standing rests largely upon the individual's adjustment to these norms. If ownership of goods—material items, ceremonial apparatus, or magical formulae—bear prestige it is not because they may be translated into other goods or the services

of others, but because such ownership reaffirms the position of the owner *vis-à-vis* the norms of his own society. Even in those primitive societies where a money economy exists, such as among the natives of the Northwest Coast of America, the function that money plays is socially and psychologically very different from that in urban society. It is not, for one thing, used as a common calculator of all values—not at least till the American trader and museum collector makes a money offer. On the other hand, the values these people live by—and each has its set of values—not only are firmly established, but they are continually reinforced by the art, the literature, the superstitions, the religion, and the social relationships of the community. All the activities of the life of a Zuñi or a Kwakiutl reinforce the primary social values; the essential correctness of social judgments are daily proved to be right within the frame of reference the society establishes.

In urban society there is no common set of values and no common ethical system of behavior reinforcing these values. In common parlance, "things don't add up." Or rather, the only way you can add the behavior of the bootblack and the banker, the priest and the panderer are by means of a pecuniary calculus. If perhaps it has not gone that far, it has yet not lacked much. Lincoln Steffens or any of the muckrakers furnish us a ready reference.

Perhaps nowhere does this pecuniary calculus so readily meet the eye as in the housing of the people of the separate social classes. While food differentials are probably more important to the individual's physical well-being, and while clothing makes a ready reference to social status, the house a man lives in is a lasting monument to his social position. The great gulf between the dwellings of the elite set in the midst of vast personal parks and those of the crowded slums is perhaps the most characteristic scene of urban society. And such monuments afford the outsider a judgment neither of the heart nor of the brain of the inhabitant, but merely of his purse.

A fiscal elite, a divergence of social standing, and a tendency toward associations through common special interests together have the effect of creating a system of social controls in which

money is the key to power. For in a society of interdependent economic activities there also grows an internal conflict between the several segments. Such conflict in urban society has repeatedly led to open warfare, both on the grand scale implied by social revolution and on the smaller scale of industrial disputes. For, though money is an important element in social potency, it is not the only source, and the banding together of special groups, motivated by common interests and desirous of a greater share of the values created by co-operative action, can present a formidable counterbalance to the power amassed by the fiscal elite. In urban society the individual generally expresses his social potency through association with fellows who have a common set of interests, and these interests are usually oriented in strictly pecuniary terms. The growing importance of the organizations serving the special interests of some segments of the population is a major trend in modern social behavior. The influence of professional organizations, commercial associations, and labor groups upon national policy is generally recognized, but they are equally influential over social behavior in every community, as we have seen in Wasco.

Simpler forms of society have their own social structure, and the elite of such social groupings maintain their position by recourse to a variety of techniques, of which established custom and superstitious awe are probably the most important. In many ways, the very homogeneity of such a population makes the elite more secure in its social position. It cannot, therefore, be said that invidious social distinctions are the province of urban society. The difference lies in the basis upon which they rest.

If this characterization of urbanism seems a harsh one, the implication is not entirely justified. One must not lose sight of the fact that the technological development in the past several centuries was a product of the urban rather than the rural element in life. Not only is this true of the material aspects of living, but the development of arts, letters, and science, ever since the astronomers of the Nile and the writings of Homer, have predominantly been urban products. The very freedom from tradition that results in a pecuniary social calculus, carries with it the promise of new forms of thought. If on one

hand folk songs and handicrafts are lost in the process of urbanization, the creation of artistic masterpieces is made possible only when the restraints of tradition are lifted.

THE DIFFUSION OF URBANISM IN AMERICA

The polar extremes of rural and urban culture appear overstated, whether we refer to the popular notions of rube and city slicker or whether we have reference to the sociological analysis. It is a contrast, perhaps, between the city life of a New York or a Paris against the largely self-sufficient farming of a backwoods America or a European peasant community. Yet the overstatement is more apparent than real. In the first place, the cities are composed so largely of persons recently from the country, and in many American instances have themselves so recently been rural areas, that there remains a strong ameliorating rural influence. Secondly and more importantly, urban civilization has constantly and persistently diffused into the rural areas of America and in a more attenuated form has reached every primitive outpost in the world. The hill-billy myth is not made up out of the whole cloth, yet nobody seriously considers such characteristics are applicable to a great portion of our agricultural population. The mail-order houses have reached the remote corners of our society, and the mail-order houses are but two or three years behind the finest urban shops in cut of clothes and home decor, and right with them in modern mechanical contrivances.

In its encroachment upon the countryside, urban civilization has left islands of folk culture in the mountain fastnesses and distant valleys. Parts of the Old South, Appalachian and Ozark mountaineers, the Spanish Americans of New Mexico, the poor dwellers in bottom lands and cut-over areas in various parts of the Middle West, and an occasional community with strong religious ties maintain social values almost uninfluenced by the pecuniary calculus of the cities and keep customs foreign to the norm of American urban life. But the great areas of American farm production have been caught in the major current of urban economy. Commercial farming and the first stages

of industrialization are found throughout the great productive areas in the Middle Western states and the Plains area. Consequently, money has come to be a predominant element in social relationships as well as in economic activities. Yet there remains in such environments a great deal of the rural culture. Its continuance rests, above all, upon the relative homogeneity of social backgrounds and economic activity, and the absence of specialization of functions, especially the specialization of the managerial functions from those of labor. The commercial farming of Iowa or Pennsylvania differs from the industrialized operations in the production of agricultural commodities in California. So, too, the urbanization of communities in those regions, though far removed from conditions in similar regions a century or two ago, is a far cry from the urbanization in California. The growth of industrial farming throughout the nation is reserved for later discussion, but clearly California is in the vanguard of this trend. And differences of degree can be found in California.

URBAN CULTURE IN CALIFORNIA RURAL AREAS

In terms of these ideas and on the basis of data presented in the preceding chapters, we can attempt to assess the nature of urbanization in California rural life. The first urban characteristic is heterogeneity. The diverse origins of a pioneer community are to be expected, but the degree to which the population of each of the communities analyzed here is made up by recent immigration does not rest upon their newness. Certainly the growth in each area is dependent upon immigration, but the continual influx and turnover of a relatively old community like Dinuba goes beyond the necessities of pioneer areas. Even in Arvin recency of growth cannot account for the volume of immigration, since half of all the families arrived after its present size was achieved. In all three towns the broad scatter of birthplaces covers most of the United States and includes many from foreign lands. The history of labor in California assures us that each community represents such a wide array of origins.

Diversity of backgrounds is matched by diversity of social

action. In Wasco the nature of the living conditions and of the daily activities of the separate social classes was described. Yet this description involves a degree of generalization and simplification greater than the ethnologist employs in describing the totality of a primitive or folk culture. The lifeways of a potato grower is divergent from those of a grape producer, and increasingly the economic activities of the laborer are becoming more specialized and hence more divergent from one another. The workers on an individual farm do not all perform the same tasks. We have examined the labor composition of a potato-digging crew, a good example of the degree to which special skills and aptitudes are utilized through a fine division of labor, and the degree to which the individual producer of commodities addresses himself to but a small segment of the total production. Such activity does not have to be contrasted against a primitive community, but is sharply divergent from the activities of the traditional hired man on the commercial farms elsewhere in modern America. The essential criterion of heterogeneity, both in origin and in present circumstances, is therefore fully met. It is a characteristic of the production of commodities in Dinuba as well as in Arvin, though in Dinuba there remains a larger segment which can and does diversify its activities.

Pecuniary standards dominate the system of social values throughout the area under discussion. Each community has a social structure which rests upon the possession of wealth and the characteristic occupations which reflect that wealth. The class structure of each community can best be understood in terms of occupation. The association of people in clubs, interest groups, cliques, and even churches follows the essentially occupation cleavage and demonstrate the degree to which occupation determines such associations.

Pecuniary standards show themselves vividly in church behavior where they stand in contrast to the equalitarian ethics of Christian ideology. Not only is this shown by the segregation of social classes in different denominations, but further evidence of the significance of money values derives from the behavior of the newer sects. These religious groups show a pattern of vertical mobility, rising in wealth, in the well-being of mem-

bers and ultimately taking on the airs of the "higher" elements in society.

Nowhere, however, is the pecuniary character of social relationships more clearly shown than on the farm enterprise itself. It is not merely that crops are grown for cash and sold in the market, but it is that cash returns dominate the behavior of the farmers in every facet of their activity. The value of production for household use, when weighed in the scales of cash returns, is found wanting. Sharing of implements and trading labor are so rare as to appear unique in California's fields. A cash settlement is the solution, and practically all share arrangements on equipment are handled on a rental basis. The growth of the independent equipment operator working on a contract basis is a case in point. The calculations of land value carry such exactitude that the farm wife must fight to maintain a screen of garden between the planting and the home until such affluence is attained that conspicuous display is in order. But pecuniary values are displayed most blatantly when money is freed by exceptionally favorable prices in relation to costs. The early twenties in Dinuba and the fortunate break in potato prices and yields in Wasco in 1936 both developed a spirit of conspicuous consumption that accentuated the essentially pecuniary social motivation.

The producer has two fundamental market transactions to make. The first is his bargaining for the services of labor and the second is the sale of his commodities in the market place. Except for such large enterprises as the DiGiorgio holdings, the farmer's potency as a seller is limited. Yet fairly modest growers hire the services of brokers, utilize modern technology and direct most of their personal energies toward a favorable place in the marketing picture. In the market for labor, the farmer generally is in a better position to bargain. His interest in his laborer rarely extends beyond the assurance that he gets labor at the cheapest possible cost. The almost universal application of piece-rate wages serves completely to destroy any vestige of personal relationship between the buyer and seller in the labor market. The rare exception noted, of the cotton grower paying above market price—which he rationalized in terms of good in-

vestment—not only appears unique to the outside observer but marked him locally as a person apart.

The emphasis upon money values and the other aspects of urbanization are not limited to large farms. They are found throughout the area where operations are carried on in the intensive, expensive techniques of irrigated specialty crop production. But large operations have been influential in the establishment of the pattern. Historically, they set the pattern of production-for-market and established the pool of low-cost labor. Currently, they are a dominating factor in the functioning economy, so that even where whole communities consist of modest operations their influence is inescapable. Where groups exist which form an exception to the pattern they are always found to be small growers. Thus in Dinuba the existence of special "in-group" churches were recognized, and the membership of these had a degree of social cohesion based upon common origins and common ethical values resting upon a non-pecuniary base. These represent islands engulfed by the dominant stream of social forces in the larger community. That they should be found in the community of small farms is to be expected, since such groups invariably are made up of small farmers. Yet a similar group with a high degree of social cohesion is found just outside the boundaries of the Arvin community. These, too, are small operators whose commonality rests upon their common Danish origin and the strong sense of co-operation engendered by their forebears. Such exceptions should not blind us to the more overpowering cultural tendency in rural areas any more than would the similar social groups found within the confines of the city. Yet their effect, where their number is as great as it is in Dinuba, has a strong ameliorating influence. That religious bodies can sometimes prevent the schools from giving dances is a measure of their force in preserving older rural Protestant mores.

It is essential to realize that a money-oriented society is in turn based upon the controls of the market place and the hierarchy of elites that exist in the greater society. The extent to which this dependency is developed, determines in large measure the extent to which this outside influence pervades

the social relationships within the community. The nature of these controls has been indicated in a preceding chapter. They rest upon the need for urban goods, the demand for capital, the dependency on nation-wide markets and above all upon the recognition of common interests along occupational and class lines rather than within the local community. In Wasco we have shown the influence of the great corporations upon the activities of mundane civic affairs—corporations which are caught up in the major structure of American economy.³

With a society segmented along economic class lines, of which occupation is a fundamental criterion, it is to be expected that civic action and social force operates through associations of persons with common interests. The common economic interests of farmers as a group have long been recognized. Organizations such as the Farm Bureau and Grange have a long history of speaking for the farmer, and as such represent the first step in this direction. Their organizations are community oriented—that is, endeavor to bring together farmers from a single community as a unit. There is still sufficient common interest to maintain active local groups, but a newer basis for organization along even more highly specialized lines is rapidly gaining in popularity. This is best exemplified by the commodity associations, formed in order to settle problems common to the producers of single crops. The associations of various fruit producers have long been active, while new groups are continually coming into being. Characteristically such commodity associations bring together the growers over a larger region—a hundred or more miles if the crops are grown over so large an area. Such associations have not been analyzed in this study because they do not form a part of community life. They go outside of it. It is not surprising that such associations appeal particularly to the large growers rather than to the small. It is not only that the large growers have greater mobility or that they have the

³ Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Southern California Edison Company and Bank of America, whose local representatives take an active part in Wasco's civic affairs, are listed among the 200 largest non-financial corporations and the 50 largest financial corporations in the report of the National Resources Board, *The Structure of the American Economy* (Part I, Chart I, p. 158), Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1939.

freedom to engage in these "managerial" capacities, but these growers generally find their social associations over a wider area and have less interest in the purely local milieu.

If the farm operator is thus influenced in his social action, it is not surprising that the townspeople themselves are so associated. Unlike the producers of agricultural commodities, the merchants can rarely be associated in smaller interest groups specialized to one or another type of activity. However, they do have several such organizations in the two communities which can possibly support them. In Wasco, at least, such groups represent status differentials. Their effectiveness in civic affairs and their bland assumption of representativeness have already been demonstrated.

In such a milieu of special organizations, their absence among the farm-labor population represents a real exception. The failure of laboring groups to band together in order to promote their own interests rests upon several factors. In the first place, the origin of the laboring population must not be overlooked. The typical farm worker of today is a recent migrant from Oklahoma, Arkansas, or Texas. These are regions which have preserved more of the rural qualities than almost any other states in America. This background does not include a society organized along special interest lines, and they are slow to acquire such behavior. Again, their occupation history shows that a large proportion of them have been farmers in the past. They do not identify themselves with a laboring class because they are only temporarily non-farmers, and certainly only temporarily farm laborers. At least that is the way most of them feel. And it is certainly the way in which they want to be identified to the community in which they live, where they readily recognize that labor status means no social status.

Yet these elements in their cultural background and their social position do not form the full explanation. They are sufficient to keep them from organizing of their own accord. But urban labor organizations, as we have already seen, have made repeated and conscientious efforts to form permanent and lasting unions among the farm workers, yet only the shed workers are organized in any numbers. But we have also seen the con-

certed efforts made to prevent and inhibit such organization. The very need for such effort on the part of the farmers in order to maintain unorganized labor is evidence of the great pull—perhaps one should say push—toward organizations along special interest lines. And though labor organizations are still unimportant in California's fields, they do exist.

In this discussion of the urban character of the rural community stress has been placed on those elements which are basic and fundamental rather than those which are superficial. Yet it would hardly be proper to overlook those characteristics which are generally recognized as indices of urbanization. Such characteristics as crowded slums areas, small families, and high insanity rates are generally found among urban societies. Information on the first two of these is available.

The rural slums in California have received their fair share of attention, and it is not the purpose to elaborate on them here. They were described for Wasco. In that community three separate neighborhoods within the town were distinguished: one almost exclusively Negro, which did not have the advantage of all the public utilities available to the other areas; a second predominantly Mexican but including others as well; and a third known as "Little Oklahoma City," made up mostly of migrant workers. In addition a number of outlying areas were devoted to makeshift housing, the most dramatic of which was the open land "on the desert," on which homes were built from scraps of lumber and tin. Particularly inadequate were the houses in this last and in the Negro area. In Arvin the degree of crowding was far greater. Only for two blocks along a single street were lots universally 50 or more feet wide and 100 or more feet deep. Elsewhere, where such lots existed, a pattern of placing two or more units on each lot was established, so that half the houses front on the alleys. Crowdedness within such units is also marked. Nearly three-fourths of the Arvin population had one person or more per room in the house, and 44 per cent had 1.5 or more persons per room. Crowdedness of dwelling units form only one measurement of poor living conditions, but the quality of the board shacks which house great proportions of the Arvin residents is in keep-

ing with this index. When farmers furnish labor homes, these are generally close together, frequently utilize common plumbing facilities or outdoor toilets, and rarely have two or more rooms. A fourth of the Arvin families had no water in their homes.

One of the features which marks Dinuba off from her two sister communities is the relatively few quarters which may be designated as slums. A housing map shows only a few areas where separate units are close together. One of these is the area inhabited by Asiatics. Other areas showed some crowding. Only one-fourth of the homes had more than one person per room, less than a fifth had 1.5 persons per room, only one-tenth failed to have water piped into the house.

Small families are an index of urban centers. Family size has steadily declined in America as her earlier rural heritage has given way before encroaching urbanization. The place of the industrialized farm community in this trend is of interest. The average family unit in America in 1940 was 3.78 persons, but the farm population had an average family of 4.25. In the South, where both industrialization and urban production is at a minimum, the family averages 4.50 persons. But the farm population in California shows only 3.61 persons per family—less than the total national average. The data from schedules taken in Arvin and Dinuba show average families of 4.23 and 3.78 respectively. It would seem, therefore, that family size in Arvin indicates less urbanization than Dinuba, and that both communities are less urban than the average for California farm population.

However, if the data for the two communities are broken down by occupation, it is shown that the farmers themselves tend to have small families: 3.57 in Arvin and 3.27 in Dinuba. These are very nearly the same as those found among the merchant and white-collar classes. The large average family is the result of the large proportion of agricultural workers who characteristically have large families (4.75 in Arvin and 4.22 in Dinuba). Because there are so many of this class in Arvin the total effect upon the average is greater. Those very families who bring up the average size are the ones who have migrated from the Southwestern states in recent years, an area which has been

least affected by urban characteristics. The index of urbanism presented by family size suggests that the farmers and small-town merchants have accepted urban standards, though the laborers have not. This is in accord with other evidence that it is only the farm laborer who maintains traditional rural attitudes. The index does not show any significant difference between Arvin and Dinuba.

DIFFERENTIALS IN URBANISM

It has been a corollary of our major thesis that the degree of urbanization varies with the degree to which farm operations have become industrialized. Thus while the three communities represent a high development of urban culture, it should be greatest in Arvin and least in Dinuba, with Wasco in the intermediate position. Certain statistical evidence is at hand which is an indication of the differentials, especially between Arvin and Dinuba where data are fully comparable. There is the evidence of slum conditions, the evidence of associational activity, and finally the evidence of family size. Other data of a descriptive nature further develops the relationship of the three communities.

The housing conditions in Arvin were shown to be consistently worse by measurements of crowding and by other measures. Level of living indices of material possession showed the failure of many families to have items generally accorded to be desirable in modern life. Observations on the condition in which the home was found showed marked divergence. General observation, however, is sufficient to show the differential with respect to inadequate housing. Such observation may be summed up simply as follows: in Arvin inadequate homes were the rule, in Wasco there were large areas of inadequate housing but other areas of good and superior homes, while in Dinuba the areas of poor housing were few and small, while substantial dwellings were the rule.

With respect to size of family, the data suggest a greater degree of urban development in Dinuba than Arvin, though the non-labor population in both communities follows closely

the urban pattern. This difference, however, reflects the newness and greater population turnover in Arvin, but does present an exception to the other data available.

The heterogeneous quality of the population is not easy to assess. It is clear that the number of persons born in California was greater in Dinuba than in Arvin, while the number of persons coming into the community from outside in recent years was far greater in Arvin. Data from the school survey made in 1939 suggests that Wasco has a central position with respect to this index of heterogeneous origins. At the same time, there are more groups in Dinuba which maintain within themselves a separate set of cultural attitudes. Similar groups do not exist in Arvin and are relatively unimportant in Wasco. Yet these groups have, in themselves, folk culture. The very fact of their group activity based upon common non-pecuniary values stands in contrast to the extreme individuation among the farm-labor class in all three communities. This labor class is clearly largest in Arvin and smallest in Dinuba.

Social expression through association of like-minded individuals appears upon first blush to have the highest development in Dinuba. Here again, the occupational differential must be examined. If this is done it will be seen that the farmer in Arvin participates in such activities more frequently than in Dinuba, while Arvin merchants participate less frequently. The two groups combined in Arvin participate more than the two combined in Dinuba. It is the large proportion of laborers, who in both communities rarely engage in associational activities that reduces the over-all social participation in Arvin to below the figures for Dinuba.

Little positive can be asserted on the basis of these indices of urbanism, though they are suggestive. Closer scrutiny of the social scene clarifies some of the differences. The orientation of social action along interest-group lines typifies urban conditions while action encompassing the community and directed toward common welfare typifies rural life. In Arvin, Wasco, and Dinuba, such community-oriented action as exists consistently excludes the laboring class, and therefore contains an element of urbanism at the outset. The broader the base of activity is, and the

more directly it is concerned with community-wide problems, the less it denotes urban behavior. A review of some of the kinds of group activities for community welfare in the three towns is therefore in point.

In Dinuba community civic affairs are resolved by popular vote. The fact of incorporation assures the community of a degree of action based upon residence that is not available to the other towns. Wasco has a vestige of such action in the formation of a public utilities district, through which a few decisions are made by popular vote. Arvin has no such group, other than those provided by state law. Here, then, a clear distinction in degree and direction is manifested.

Civic action, however, involves affairs outside the legal framework, even where a corporate community exists. The character of social action can best be judged by the analysis of an example. The community dinner called by the commercial organizations to discuss postwar development is illustrative for Dinuba. Though no special interests and economic conflict were involved, the dining hall was crowded with the hundred and fifty participants. It is significant to our discussion of the urban character of community action that each speaker represented some organized group, with the exception of one who represented an outlying neighborhood. Yet the representation covered very nearly the whole range of interests, always with the exception of labor.

In contrast to this meeting stands that held in Wasco to discuss the issue of incorporation. Here the attendance was not half as great, though an issue was involved. More significant, however, was the fact that the dominant spirit was hostile to an idea which, whatever its alternative defects and merits, was designed to increase community solidarity. The difference between these two meetings is difficult to catch in an objective description without going into great detail, yet it was a very wide one. In Arvin there were no opportunities to observe a community meeting, and it is doubtful that one has ever been held. The failure to continue community social affairs because of lack of interest and leadership, and the development of social action through the two dominant associations is indicative of

the manner in which civic decisions are made—when they rest upon local choice.

One more illustration will suffice. In Dinuba there are two newspapers. They have a long history of community action and one is particularly oriented to local interests. Its practice during the war of publishing an average of a half dozen or more pictures of local service people—regardless of race or occupation—in each issue and its other community-interest activities have already been described. Its news is almost all local, and it reports on as many as five separate local neighborhoods or nearby communities. The editor claims to have weathered an advertisers' boycott, brought on by a fight for local enterprise, by getting subscriber support. The Wasco paper is overwhelmingly supported by advertisements from outside corporations and it is doubtful if a stand could be taken against the interest of that group. The paper is devoted chiefly to local news, but it has less such information. The Arvin paper is very much smaller in volume, and has very little local news. These newspapers reflect the differential in local interest of the population of each community.

On the basis of civic action it seems apparent that the degree of urbanization varies among the three communities generally with the degree to which their basic resources have been organized along industrial lines. Their differences, though they make for considerable variation within the general pattern, do not obscure the more fundamental similarities which differentiate California rural life from truly rural folk society or even from areas where commercial farming predominates.

CHAPTER X

SOCIAL DIRECTIONS

STEREOTYPE AND SOCIAL REALITY

FARM POLICY must be formulated in full recognition of the growing urbanization of rural society. For the past quarter century farm programs have been developed in terms of a stereotype of rural life which no longer reflects social reality. It is this failure to adjust agricultural planning to the world of today that has, more than anything else, spelled out the failure of our vast farm program to accomplish its stated ends. The picture of Wasco and the urbanity of its people serves as an important background for the re-evaluation of American rural policy.

Farm policy has been written for a rural world that is backward, homogeneous, and submissive. The backwardness of the farm population is implied by the elaborate structure designed to bring adult education to our rural people. No other element in our population has a government-sponsored program such as the Extension Service which is designed to teach farmers how to increase their productiveness and their wives how to make their hats. The value of this program of education cannot be questioned and its original formulation grew out of an era of rural backwardness. However, the assumption that the farm population, or more specifically the farm operators, are the group most in need of such information is of doubtful validity. The assumption of backwardness this program implies is unsubstantiated.

The homogeneity of the farm population is implied by the programs created for the relief of distress among them during and since the depression. It is not the place here to go into the historic development of, the rationalization for, nor the calculations of the parity principle and the creation of the Agricultural

Adjustment Agency. It is sufficient to point out that the need for some form of farm relief was clear even before the general depression of the thirties, and that low prices for farm commodities was a contributory cause to rural economic distress. But no other relief measure created during the depression was based upon an occupation or industry group in our society. Furthermore, every other relief measure made requisite a verification that the individual needed such relief. The parity price program, however, was the relief of an industry which not only assumed that the industry as such needed aid—the only comparable situation in American life is the subsidies to the merchant marine—but that help should be given in direct rather than in inverse proportion to individual well-being. The only assumption under which such a program makes sense is that the farm population is a homogeneous one—that differences in wealth among them are insignificant.

The inability of the farmers to protect themselves against the depredations of a more militant urban population—which for want of a better term has been called submissiveness—is implicit in the multitude of laws which exempt farmers from labor-union action. During the twelve years of the Roosevelt administration laws were created to protect the process of collective bargaining, to set minimum standards for employment conditions, and to insure workers against the hazards of illness, old age, and unemployment. Virtually every legal restriction upon industry for the protection of the worker and of his right to organize exempt the farm operator. Such exemptions not only imply a homogeneity in which restrictions are unnecessary, but that farmers have a peculiar quality of meekness which requires that they must themselves be protected.

As we have seen, rural society is not characterized by such terms as backward, homogeneous, and submissive. Certainly not that half of the farm population which produces 90 per cent of the commodities which enter into commercial channels, and least of all those operators whose farms are organized along the industrialized pattern existing in California. It is indeed for a stereotype rural society that farm policy has been written, and it is this unrealistic quality which must be overcome if our rural

climate is going to fulfill the expectations that the people of America have for it.

What, then, has protected the myth of the country yokel in our national life? It is supported at once by sentimental tradition and the profit motive. The farm home, with sons helping father, with mother in the kitchen and the hired man a part of the family; with Sunday night suppers and social decisions reached around the cracker barrel—this picture is "as American as apple pie." It is hallowed in our poetry, our art, our novels, and our soap opera. It grew out of homesteading and free land, and has in the past been a real and living tradition for a segment of our farm population. To be sure, it was not applicable to much of our rural society, and the area of applicability has long been dwindling. Yet it has its basis in an historic reality; reality which appeals most particularly to that segment of the urban population which somewhat wistfully remembers an earlier farm life somewhat, if not exactly, like that tradition.

With such a sentimental basis the rural stereotype is a natural means of appealing to the public and its legislative representatives. Whenever the appeal serves the interest of some special pleader it is readily called forth. It has been under this appeal that the price support legislation has been developed on one hand and farm-labor exemptions maintained on the other. The advantage of both sets of laws to those very farm operators who least fit the characterization needs hardly any discussion; employers generally like support for their prices and dislike legal responsibility for the welfare of their labor.

The stereotype has one other advantage over reality. Reality is far more complex than a putative social order and such complexity makes legislative decisions far more difficult. The California industrial farm, the Iowa homestead, and the Southern plantation are different kinds of economic organizations with inherently different problems and surrounded by different social worlds; the problem of creating farm policy which meets the needs of each yet does not do harm to the other is not simple. The lawmakers' task, especially for our world in transition, cannot be an easy one.

THE NATIONAL TREND TOWARD INDUSTRIALIZED FARMING

If the story of Wasco were the story of some small cultural island within the body economic of United States agriculture, the need for special recognition in the laws of the land would be negligible. There are many small areas in the American scene which for some reason or another have not been caught up in the main current of American life.¹ But Wasco is characteristic of rural society in most of California, while more and more evidence arises to indicate that California stands merely at the vanguard of what is the major trend in American agriculture. Indeed the inexorable progress of the industrial revolution has touched all phases of modern life; and where it has once touched the old form appears ever supplanted by the new. It would be difficult to conceive that there could be any turning away from mechanization of farming; and it is equally difficult to visualize such mechanization without growing industrialization and the urbanizing influences that follow.

Census data are indicative of the trend. Average farm size has increased fairly regularly since 1900, and between 1930 and 1940 increased 11 per cent. This average obscures real events, for many new part-time farms (less than 20 acres in extent) also came into being during this decade. Each size group between 20 and 260 acres has decreased in importance during the decade of the thirties, whereas the number of farm units over 1,000 acres in size increased by a fourth and the acreage of such units by a third. It is those very units which most nearly fit the stereotype of farming in America which have shown the greatest mortality.

Farm mechanization has grown with farm size, but at a more rapid pace. The number of tractors increased by two-thirds during the decade of the thirties, despite the industrial depression that prevented many a grower from buying what he wanted. Farm electrification more than doubled during the same period.

¹ The difficulty encountered by James West in finding a subject community that would fit this stereotype without also involving foreign groups is significant. See the introduction in *Plainville, U. S. A.*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1945.

Since the 1940 census the amount of machinery has increased greatly. Not only have the number of tractors and combines increased, but a great development of new forms of farm machinery has taken place—the Rust cotton-picker, corn-pickers, cane cutters, the development of “sheared” sugar-beet seed that eliminates hand chopping, and dozens of minor developments. These war-borne inventions have not come into their full use; much less have their full effects been felt by the farming population. They cannot fail of furthering the processes of industrialization.

That industrialization is engulfing broader acres of American farming is a matter that has received official recognition before now. In the opening remarks to the *Supplementary Hearings* held by the Committee on Free Speech and the Rights of Labor in Washington, Senator La Follette pointed to the growing area of influence of the industrial farm.

The peculiar problems raised by the so-called migratory farm family which follows a nomadic way of life precluding any normal home or community advantages is not confined to California. The irrigated areas of Idaho and Arizona; the Yakima Valley of Washington; the Willamette and Hood River Valleys of Oregon; the beet-sugar areas of Colorado; the Rio Grande and Winter Garden areas of southern Texas; the Mississippi Delta and Texan cotton area; the berry regions of Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas and Michigan; the Florida vegetable and citrus area; and the truck and vegetable farms of eastern Virginia, Maryland and New Jersey—all receive an annual influx of migratory farm workers. . . .

Nor is California the only locale in which industrialized agriculture has developed to a degree worthy of observation. . . . Although California leads all of the other states in the number of its large-scale farms, they have developed or are beginning to appear in substantial numbers in such widely scattered states as Arizona, Texas, Washington, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oregon, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. As yet this problem . . . is restricted to less than 1 per cent of the Nation's farms. . . . But there is great significance in this 1 per cent of the Nation's large-scale or corporate farms, when one considers the large number of their employees, their increasing share of agricultural income, and their impact upon the future welfare of the “family farmer” in a competitive commercial agriculture. . . .²

² *Supplementary Hearings*, S. Res. 266, Pt. 1, pp. 2, 3.

Paul Taylor made a trip through the Corn Belt in 1940, and found that the mechanization in that area had proceeded far. He says:

To most Americans the "migrant problem" seems a long way off. The trek to the Pacific Coast is not just the product of a great drought on the Plains. That stream of distress is the end result of a long process going on from New Jersey to California and from North Dakota to Florida. . . .

Still fewer Americans know that in the Corn Belt, citadel of conservative, stable farming, the same forces are at work—excepting drought—which produced the Joads. . . . Today opportunity for the common man is narrowing over the lands of the Corn Belt. Only last August a regional official of the United States Department of Agriculture told the House Committee on Interstate Migration that twenty-five thousand Middle Western farmers are not able to find farms to rent. . . .

One result of mechanization is bigger farms and fewer men. Another is transformation of the occupation itself. Steadily, and in recent years rapidly, it is doing to farming what machines have done to domestic handicraft production over the past century. The results of the process to both industry and agriculture are decidedly upsetting, if not revolutionary. Where industrialization of agriculture runs its full course the term "farmer" no more suggests a man with hand on the plow than "manufacturer" now means what it once did—a maker of things by hand.

The march of mechanization is not limited to corn. It has been sweeping at an accelerated rate over one section or another of the Wheat Belt for fifteen years. In 1932 Edwin Bates described the spread over the Inland Empire of what a leading wheat farmer called "virtually a factory system of production" . . .

Power farming in important sections of the Cotton Belt is producing effects comparable to those in corn and wheat. . . . Within the past generation fruit and vegetable production has run far on the course of mechanization. It is characterized by large-scale operation, in competition with which small family farmers find survival difficult. . . . On the muck lands of the Florida Everglades the large-scale pattern of commercial truck farming is being repeated. . . . Even in the cattle industry similar forces are at work, with mechanization.³

Industrial farming is therefore not merely something to be dealt with in California; it is not simply a function of an his-

³ Paul Schuster Taylor, "Good-by to the Homestead Farm, The Machine Advances in the Corn Belt," *Harper's Magazine*, May, 1941, pp. 596 ff.

toric tradition and a favorable physical environment—it is a new mode of production that will transform the American landscape and make ever rarer those scenes of rural well-being and simplicity that fit the stereotype of art and politics. Senator La Follette continues in his statement:

There are ominous signs that the Nation is confronted with a transition from the traditional "family farm" toward industrialized or corporate agriculture. Farming as a way of life is threatened. This transition challenges long-accepted national ideals of the farmer on his own land. If our national agriculture faces the same cycle that changed the form of industry from 1870 to 1930, the problem should be fully recognized.

Industrial farming does indeed carry a threat to tradition; it carries a promise as well.

FARM POLICY SINCE 1933: PRICE SUPPORT

In this chapter we shall endeavor to suggest certain characteristics that farm policy should have in the light of social conditions in the California community. In order to do this, it is necessary briefly to examine farm policy in somewhat greater detail. Two aspects of that policy have been crucial from the point of view of rural society—price support and labor legislation. Other programs, conservation (as distinct from price support), credit, farm purchase programs, debt moratoria, and educational activities, have all had their effect upon rural conditions and the support of farmers, but none has been so important to the American agricultural plant as price support and labor legislation.

The watchword of the price support program is "parity." Parity is a concept of a "proper" ratio between farm commodities and other goods on the market. A parity price is that price which meets this standard of equity between farm and non-farm goods. It may be, and has been, calculated according to a variety of formulae, but fundamentally it is a price for cotton or wheat or some other "basic" crop, which would give to the farmer the equivalent in purchasing power of the same amount of goods produced in the "base period," usually the average between 1910 and 1914, and taking into consideration the cost of

production and increased technical proficiency. This price-guarantee program has been attached to a crop curtailment one, on the principle that low prices have resulted from surplus commodities and that decreased production would thereby tend to raise prices. Such curtailment would, of course, only represent an advantage for the individual farmer if all farmers reduced their productivity. Since it was always better for the individual to stay out of the program it was necessary to induce farmers to enter. Thus parity prices were not guaranteed an individual unless he reduced his own production. Actually, he did not reduce production, but merely reduced the acreage of the land devoted to that crop and planted a soil-building one instead. He could, however, intensify production on the remainder and he could rent or purchase additional lands, and cultivate them in the same manner, without foregoing "parity payments."

A great deal of discussion has been centered about the proper calculations of parity; about the relative merits of various base periods, and about other factors in the calculated formula. Such discussions can mean many dollars to this or that group of producer and are therefore subject to rigid examination. By nature, however, they overlook the more fundamental issues that are involved. One of the few really to see beyond the arithmetic and into the morality of the parity principle is T. W. Schultz.⁴ Schultz points out that the purpose of the parity price system was twofold: to re-allocate agricultural resources and to redistribute wealth among farm people. Schultz claims it met neither end. We need not concern ourselves here with the former, but the latter is of extreme importance to our interest in farm policy.

The parity program, like federal relief, bank holidays, and other measures undertaken during the dark days of 1933, was essentially one of relief. But unlike other measures taken for the welfare of people, this one was for the welfare of an industry. Its philosophy is based upon the principle that agricultural commodities deserve a "just" share of total national income, irrespective of efficiency in production or the willingness of people to buy the commodities. Not only does it assert that there is a

⁴Theodore W. Schultz, *Redirecting Farm Policy*, Macmillan Co., New York, 1943.

just share of the national income which should go to agriculture, but it completely fails of apportioning that share equitably within the industry. For whatever changes have been made in the amount and nature of the payments and qualifications for payments, one principle has always held. Stated negatively, that principle is that individual need shall never be a criterion for receiving payment under the Agricultural Adjustment Act. In positive terms, payments to farmers have been made in proportion to his pre-existing well-being, for the bigger the operations the more money he is "entitled" to. In later years an upper limit of \$10,000 has been placed on the amount of payment to any single farm, but even this limitation is not upon an individual, who may have a number of separate units. Such a policy has, of course, had the effect of eliminating the stigma of relief from the program, and as we have seen in Wasco, such a conception of the program is completely absent in its operations. It of course can be a very major source of income on big operations while it can be of very limited assistance to the small farmer whose production, because of little or poor land, is already low. Such a program cannot possibly have a beneficial—that is, equalizing—effect upon the distribution of income among farm operators because of the very basis upon which parity payments rest. When tenants, sharecroppers, and laborers are considered, the effect upon income distribution appears to further the economic differences between the wealthy and the underprivileged.

Certain facts lead us to believe that the agricultural adjustment program has increased the gulf between the advantaged and the disadvantaged classes in farm production. Schultz points out that "White operators in Mississippi with incomes of \$1,000 or less received about \$55 from AAA, whereas those with incomes of \$3,000 or better averaged well over \$1,000 in cash payments from AAA. The effect of the commodity loans upon the distribution has been similar. When the loan rates have been above market prices, farmers with the most land and crops have gained much more from the loans than have farmers with low or inadequate incomes." ⁵

⁵ Schultz, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

But inequality and disproportionality in payment is not the only means of creating a differential. In general owners are better off than tenants, tenants than sharecroppers, and sharecroppers better off than farm laborers. Yet the effect of the AAA has been to help the land owner to displace tenants, to reduce sharecroppers to wage workers, and to curtail the opportunity for farm employment for the workers. Professor Gillette pointed out that in certain areas of the Wheat Belt, farms were being operated in increasing numbers by managers rather than by tenants.⁶ Thus, the working farmers were being displaced in order that the owner could get the full benefit of governmental subsidy. Others have pointed out that the tendency toward farm mechanization was hastened by the AAA payments, which afforded the landowner both the means and the incentive to replace the sharecropper system with a system of hired labor. Under the provisions of the Act, the government payment was to be shared, in proportion to the general crop-sharing arrangement, between the farmer and the cropper. But there was no provision which effectively prevented the farm owner from doing away with the sharecropping system and instituting a hired labor operation which gave the former tenant an even smaller share of the total production as laborer and none of the government check. Finally, the farm program carried no guarantees for the laborer. On the contrary, since the payments to farmers were tied in with crop reduction programs, the net effect of the parity policy was to reduce the total employment opportunities, and insofar as it was an effective instrument in crop curtailment, and insofar as it was an incentive to further mechanization, the program inevitably had the effect of worsening labor conditions.

It is clear that the inequalities in the farm enterprise cannot all be laid at the door of the farm program of the past dozen years, and indeed it cannot positively be asserted that the rela-

⁶ "Two or three men in Bottineau County [North Dakota] are operating forty-five quarter sections of land, with a very few men as hired laborers. Incidentally, the undertaking is to garner in the federal allotment rather than for bona fide production. This alone has caused the displacement of many small farmers and scores of laborers." J. M. Gillette, "Social-Economic Submergence in a Plains State," *Rural Sociology*, Vol. 5, No. 1, March, 1940, pp. 64-5.

tive position of the disadvantaged agricultural classes was worse under the program than it would have been if the depression conditions of the early thirties had been allowed to continue without aid. Still it can readily be seen that the program itself failed to relieve distress where that relief was most urgent and failed to equalize conditions in agriculture. Furthermore, whatever ameliorating effect the parity program had was partially or totally off-set by their influences toward the further reduction in economic status of the more disadvantaged groups in agriculture. The reason for this failure lies in the fundamental misconception that is at the philosophical root of the program; the misconception that results from directing a farm program in terms of a fallacious stereotype rather than social reality.

FARM POLICY SINCE 1933: LABOR

The second major aspect of farm policy during the New Deal era in America is the relationship between the farmer and his labor. It has been an extremely negative policy. It is an ironic fact that during the dozen years when industrial labor gained a series of rights and privileges, those workers with the worst conditions of any large group in America were rigorously kept outside the scope of such legislation. The policy is therefore negative with respect to farm labor, but it is positive with respect to the farmer himself.

One of the earliest developments in social legislation was the attempt to curtail the use of children in industrial occupations. Very little of the body of law created to protect children against exploitation and to assure their opportunity for education and advancement has been made to apply to farm labor. Yet, according to Beatrice McConnell of the U. S. Children's Bureau, in testimony before the La Follette Committee in 1940, more children were employed in agriculture than in all nonagricultural occupations combined.⁷ She quotes from a series of studies made of agricultural activities under industrial conditions throughout the United States which point to the prevalent use of children under sixteen. The purposes of child labor laws are three-

⁷ La Follette Committee, *Supplementary Hearing*, Part 3, p 790 ff.

fold: to protect growing youngsters from unhealthy physical environments, to insure their continued education, and to protect them from human relations in which they are at a disadvantage because of immaturity. Agricultural exemption from such laws is predicated on the assumption that farm children work for their parents under healthy conditions: physical and social. The fact is that the majority of hired child laborers in agriculture are seasonally employed, work in groups for persons other than relatives, and often do work far too difficult for frail bodies. Parental employment is usually exempted from these provisions irrespective of the character of work, so that special agricultural exemptions are unnecessary.

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 exempts farm labor from its provisions. Under this exemption, it has been ruled that all field employees and all those engaged in the first processing of fruits and other perishable goods are agricultural labor. Packing industries are exempted from 14 weeks of their seasonal operations, except that they may not employ a person more than 12 hours per day or 56 hours per week. Thus, except insofar as state school laws effectively prohibit young people from working, or where state welfare codes rule on the conditions for the employment of children in agriculture, there is no control over working conditions for young people on farms, either family or industrial.

Workers engaged in purely agricultural pursuits were excluded from both the old-age and the unemployment insurance programs under the Social Security Act of 1935. According to A. J. Altmeyer, this exemption was made despite the general recognition of their need for protection, because of the administrative difficulties involved.⁸ Yet by the time the Social Security Act of 1939 was passed, when half a million or more people, previously covered, were excluded by the adoption of a broad definition of farm labor, techniques for covering all industrial farm employment had long been known. Broadening of the definition of farm labor to include all possible cases offered a direct rejection of the policies advocated by the administrators

⁸ A. J. Altmeyer, "Social Security for 'Industrialized' Agriculture," *Social Security Bulletin*, Vol. 8, No. 3, March, 1945.

of the Social Security program. Altmeyer gives the following explanation as to the logic behind such a policy:

This broadening of the definition of agricultural labor was largely motivated, according to a report of the House Ways and Means Committee, by a desire to relieve a tax inequity, said to exist under the definition used in the regulations, between large and small farm operators. It was argued at hearings on the amendments that the small farmer ordinarily did not process his product on his farm but turned it over to commercial processors or co-operatives. These establishments, being off the farm, were not exempt from the payment of social security contributions, and the costs of their contributions, it was contended, were passed back to the small farmer. On the other hand, it was pointed out, large farm operators, having sufficient production to justify the maintenance of a processing or packing plant on their farms, were not required to pay social security contributions. Exempting the activities of the commercial processors and co-operatives would, it was believed, remove the competitive advantage enjoyed by the large farmers.⁹

The fact is, of course, that inclusion of farm labor would serve to protect the small farmer, who must compete against the large operator hiring cheap labor without guarantees, and who thus devaluates the worth of a day's work.

Farm labor is also excluded from the unemployment insurance feature of the Social Security Act. Because this portion of the program is administered by the state, individual states may define this as they see fit. But field hands remain without coverage at any time. The Wagner Act, which protects the bargaining and unionization rights of workers likewise excludes farm workers. During the war farm labor was subjected to special laws administered by separate agencies from those which covered urban workers. Thus wage ceilings were set by an agency attached to the Department of Agriculture, which had always devoted itself to the interest of the farm operators. Special employment offices were created, and these were attached to the Extension Service, and were closely aligned with the farmer group. Finally special draft exemptions and labor importation both served to maintain artificially a large supply of farm workers—a protection that no other industry, however basic to the war effort, received.

⁹ Altmeyer, *op. cit.*, pp. 2, 3.

Harry Schwartz discusses these sanctions as follows:

. . . After the passage of the Farm Labor Act of 1943 in the spring of that year, the determination of "prevailing wages" to be paid foreign and domestic workers transported under this act came largely under the control of growers in each community. In this way grower wage-fixing action received government sanction and aid in making it effective.

Similarly, the government war program for regulating farm wages has in part become identified with farmer wage fixing. Thus, the government order setting ceiling wages for picking raisin grapes in 1943 specified exactly the same rates as those set by the growers acting through the San Joaquin Valley Labor Bureau. This sort of government intervention strengthens growers' hands in fixing wage rates since it lends these rates legal sanction, and threatens severe fines or imprisonment for farmers willing to raise rates. Such one-sided government action—in which workers have had almost no representation to date—seems of questionable wisdom from a social viewpoint.¹⁰

Special legislation of this kind can best be understood in terms of Congressional attitudes. The following is the statement of a Congressman regarding labor relations in agriculture:

The habits and customs of agriculture of necessity have been different than those of industry. The farmers and workers are thrown in close daily contact with one another. They, in many cases, eat at a common table. Their children attend the same school. Their families bow together in religious worship. They discuss together the common problems of our economic and political life. The farmer, his family, and the laborers work together as one unit. In the times of stress, in the handling of livestock or perishable agricultural commodities, of impending epidemics and at many other times the farmer and laborer must stand shoulder to shoulder against the common enemy. This develops a unity of interest which is not found in industry. This unity is more effective to remove labor disturbances than any law can be.¹¹

Such an idyllic picture does not hold for Wasco or Arvin, nor even for Dinuba where small-scale industrial farming is the rule. Indeed it does not hold for any of the over three million seasonal workers in agriculture, nor for very many of the seven hundred thousand "hired hands," whose position most closely

¹⁰ Harry Schwartz, *Seasonal Farm Labor in the United States*, Columbia University Studies in the History of American Agriculture, New York, 1945, p. 72.

¹¹ *Congressional Record*, Washington, Feb. 23, 1939.

resembles the Congressman's portraiture. Indeed, farm-labor policy is predicated on the same fallacy that parity payments are; that rural society is homogeneous and unified, where cupidity is unknown, and tranquillity the keynote. The nature of farm wages, the conditions of work, the character of social controls, and the economic and social status of labor, as these appear in Wasco, suggest that those very laws from which farmers are exempt are most clearly needed if rural society is to meet even those standards of life that are offered by the cities.

Indeed, the essential paradox in farm policy since 1933 has been that policies which were created to serve a fallacious stereotype have tended inexorably to destroy the elements of truth behind that stereotype.

PRINCIPLES FOR A FARM POLICY

Legislation for agriculture in terms of a stereotype out of keeping with reality can serve neither the interests of the land nor of the nation. The course of American land policy was set with the Preëmption and Homestead laws of nearly a century ago. The Far West and the South were outside of the main current of that tradition. The South because of its devotion to cotton, and the West because of its remoteness and relative undevelopment, seemed mere aberrations hardly to be taken seriously by policy makers. Now the Far West has not only become of major importance (and less remote), but evidence is at hand that its pattern has influenced agricultural production throughout the nation.

Before World War I farm policy rested largely upon the principle of homesteading and the family farm. The existence of plentiful good land strongly influenced all of the American economy. It meant that, indeed, the industrious and willing had no need to suffer a secondary role in society, for independence was theirs for the work and the asking. It meant that free men could not be exploited; that an underprivileged class could not be maintained. Only in the South where elaborate legal machinery was established and a strong cultural tradition enforced, and in California, where an army of legally restricted foreigners

ignorant of law and discriminated against by it, could such undemocratic forms continue. But free land is gone, and the single base for American farm policy—both legal and economic—has thereby gone, too. The tradition remains; the social stereotype brought from an earlier era resounds in the halls of Congress, even as the very laws created by it are hastening the processes of industrialized farming and an urbanized farm society.

Formulation of a farm policy is imperative. The present transitional stage presents the opportunity still for preserving the good in the American tradition and at the same time capturing the inherent values of efficient production on an industrialized basis. The absence of formulated policy and recognized goals leads only to chaos, and under chaotic conditions strong-willed men can serve their own interests at the expense of the public good.

Three fundamental principles must underlie any constructive farm policy consistent with American democratic traditions:

The full utilization of American productive capacity to insure the welfare of all the people and the strength of our nation;

The preservation of our natural resources to insure that maximum production can continue without loss from earlier exploitation of the land;

The promotion of equity and opportunity for those whose life work is devoted to the production of agricultural commodities.

The tradition of scarcity economics—so firmly rooted in a past of insufficiency for life—is out of keeping with the needs and capabilities of the modern world. The efforts made artificially to maintain scarcities in the interest of the producing group served inevitably to further the impoverishment of the nation. The social cost of scarcity—artificial or actual—and of the failure to promote full consumption was writ large during the recent national emergency when millions were found unfit or inadequate for the duties that had to be performed. Little further need be said concerning the first principle in sound agricultural policy; its formulation does not emerge from the present

study but its overwhelming importance requires that it be mentioned.

Conservation of natural resources is again so fundamental and obvious an element in sound policy formulation that it need hardly be belabored here. Conservation of resources is actually a part of full production. It is the assurance that full production can be continued indefinitely through time. The two principles are not in conflict, for full production can only mean maximum production without depleting the resource base from which it is derived. In the past we as a nation have lived largely on our capital. The depletion of minerals and forests has left us poorer than we should presently find ourselves, and the mining of soil and misuse of land has been a grave error. Foresighted men of affairs have seen this and deplored it for at least half a century, and more recently concerted efforts have been made to stem the tide of destruction. It yet remains, however, to make conservation a fundamental basis for determination of agricultural policy, transcending all other considerations. If this principle appears self-evident, consider only our many failures to act upon its obvious wisdom.

To understand the principle of equity for the producers in agriculture, it is only necessary to review existing inequities in both the legal and social structure of the agricultural community. Of the nearly fifteen million producers of farm commodities, the major economic sanctions developed during the past 12 years serves only about three million commercial farmers. Programs designed to help them, often in direct violation of consumer interests and the principle of full consumption, have been supported by money counted in billions. And this money has gone in disproportionate amounts to that portion of this group which has the highest economic status.¹² At the same time, farm labor received nothing except relief, economically the

¹² Mr. Rudolph M. Evans, administrator, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, in testimony before the Tolan Committee pointed out that 90 per cent of the payments were under \$150. In response to a request from Congressman Osmer of the Committee, a tabulation showing portion of payments in various size categories shows that the remaining operators received over half the total payments by dollar value. *Hearings*, Part 8, pp. 3232 and 3244.

most inefficient and socially the most derogatory of all public welfare expenditures. And it has been tellingly argued that relief is a direct subsidy to the hiring farmer, for it holds his worker during the season he is not needed without expense to the farmer himself. Not only did the legislation of the thirties fail to assure equity to the farm worker, but it also denied him those guarantees against poverty and distress which protected the industrial worker.

Stated in positive terms, equity as our underlying principle of farm policy means that all public policy must be designed to support the working farmer against the aggressive economic policies of growing rural industrialists, and the rights of labor against oppressive actions of small groups seeking personal aggrandizements. This in no way implies the necessity of breaking up corporate holdings or collectivizing farm production, but merely that those legal apparatuses which now serve the interests of a minority be jettisoned and new legal forms supporting the farm worker and the working farmer placed in their stead.

THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUITY IN POLICY

Thus far our discussion of farm policy has remained detached from the situation in the California rural community. Its burden has been that farm policy was not tied to social reality and that therefore it could not possibly serve its own stated ends. It has been shown that in actual fact it has not fulfilled its purposes in the past, despite great and commendable organization and, in terms of peacetime expenditures, vast sums of money. In order to understand specific policy, three principles upon which it should rest were enumerated, of which the one that interests us here is the principle of equity.

The present discussion assumes the continuation of the parity principle—that is, the principle that the total agricultural enterprise in America will continue to get a “just” proportion of total income, most likely based upon a price calculus. But whereas policy in the past stopped here, we shall use this as our point of departure, and consider, the question of equity

among the different groups engaged in agricultural production.

Our discussion of equity resolves into two fundamental questions: (1) equity for whom and (2) equity in what. For it is necessary to see who fails of getting his share in the values of rural life and what these values are which are not fairly apportioned.

Equity for whom means equity for all those engaged in the production of farm commodities—whether industrialized operator, family farmer, hired hand, or migratory worker. We have seen that in Wasco there were between 6 and 8 in the labor category for every 10 persons engaged in farming. In Arvin, this proportion rose to about 9 out of 10. In the United States as a whole the proportion is not so great, yet it is highly significant—far more so than generally recognized. A statistical analysis recently made attempts to determine the importance of various groups helping to produce farm goods.¹³ According to the estimates presented, the total working force in agriculture is about 14.5 million persons, and is divided into the following employment categories:

Commercial farmers	
employing more labor than they perform themselves	1,000,000
employing only supplemental labor	1,200,000
employing no labor	1,100,000
	<hr/>
Total commercial farmers	3,300,000
Wage laborers	
sharecroppers	600,000
“hired hands”	700,000
seasonal workers receiving 8 months or more of farm work	500,000
seasonal workers receiving less than 8 months of farm work, but constantly in labor market	1,500,000
workers only seasonally in farm labor market	1,500,000
	<hr/>
Total wage workers	4,800,000
Others in farm-working force	
unpaid family labor	4,200,000
non-commercial farmers (part-time, residential and sub- sistence farmers)	2,200,000
	<hr/>
Total others in farm-working force	6,400,000

¹³ Walter R. Goldschmidt, “Employment Categories in American Agriculture,” *Journal of Farm Economics*, in press (August, 1947).

This tabulation demonstrates what raw census data obscure. The hired labor category is nearly half again as great as the commercial farm category, and is more than double the number of operators who hire labor. Only one million of the agricultural working force are more concerned with the problem of hiring than they are with the productivity of their own labor. While farmers hiring labor produce the major portion of the farm products which enter into the commercial market, they constitute but a small segment of the population engaged in the production. Such a tabulation further shows that a farm policy of protecting the hiring farmers against the farm worker is not protecting the interests of the "agricultural" population. It shows, too, that the farmer hired by the month—the traditional "hired hand"—makes up a very small portion of all wage workers in agriculture.

The question of equity for whom means equity for these different employment groups—it means legislative protection for the noncommercial farmer, the sharecropper, and the farm worker equivalent to the protection for the commercial and labor-hiring farm operators.

Wherein does equity fail? What form must equity take in order to assure us that these groups in agriculture will get their fair share of the economic and social rewards of which agriculture has claimed its full deserts?

First, there are the basic amenities of life which are the expected heritage of Americans. We have seen that these were available to the worker in Wasco to but a limited extent and that as a result not only was his mode of life below acceptable standards, but his opportunities for higher expectations, either for himself or for his children, were also impaired. These low standards rested first of all upon low wages. A recent study of farm wage rates shows that in terms of purchasing power, farm wages have remained the same as they were in 1910.¹⁴ California wages have been slightly, but not materially, above national levels, but when adjusted for higher living costs even this difference appears to be absorbed. At the same time industrial

¹⁴ Louis J. Ducoff, *Wages in Agricultural Labor in the United States*, Tech. Bul. No. 895, USDA, Washington, 1945.

wages and industrial labor's purchasing power has nearly doubled. Also, concurrently, the productivity per worker in agriculture has nearly doubled, as it did in industry.¹⁵ In California, during the thirties, the proportion of crop value that went into wages dropped from 25 to 15 per cent, and remained there as late as 1939.¹⁶ Comparisons between farm-labor earnings and industrial earnings from 1940 to 1944 show that the latter are consistently double the former.¹⁷ Agricultural wages are lower than that of any category of worker except hotel employees, whose income is largely derived from tips. Such measurements give statistical precision to the generally recognized fact that farm labor is poorly paid labor.

But the low economic level of wage workers is not wholly dependent upon low wages. We have seen that in Wasco, there was a sharp variation in demand for labor at different seasons of the year. Such a demand curve is forced by the seasons of the year and the fact that farmers do not organize their operations to maximize the employment opportunity for their labor. In California as a whole it is possible for only 60 per cent of the workers required during the peak season of employment to get as much as 6 months work during a year, assuming that all labor is used to its fullest capacity.¹⁸ This seasonally enforced underemployment is a grave source of economic distress.

During times of economic depression this underemployment is far graver than that resulting from seasonality of demand. For as wages go down more members of the family enter the labor market and the employment opportunities are spread ever thinner. During times of industrial depression the entry of urban workers into the market depresses agricultural wages and further

¹⁵ *1946 Agricultural Outlook*, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, USDA, p. 15.

¹⁶ "Supplemental Statement on the Trends of Farm Agricultural Income and the Industrial Wage Bill in California, 1924-1939," prepared by James E. Ward, La Follette Committee, *Hearings*, Exhibit 9574, p. 22518.

¹⁷ William H. Metzler, *Two Years of Wage Stabilization*, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Berkeley, 1946.

¹⁸ California Emergency Farm Labor Project, *Labor Requirements for California Crops*, Agricultural Extension Service, University of California and U. S. Dept. Agriculture, March, 1945.

spreads work opportunity, thus doubly affecting the economic position of the farm laborer.

The principle of equity in agriculture therefore means the assurance that a fair share of the returns to agriculture be distributed to those who have in the past been a highly underprivileged group. Agriculture as a whole has asked for income "parity" with the urban industries. If the principle is good, then it is proper to ask for a parity for the laboring element of the farm population. Statistics are available to show that they have not, in the past, had such parity. But because parity calculations based on group income are not conducive to equity, another mode of calculation must be applied. This would be a guaranteed minimum wage for work, and a recognition of the opportunity hazards of the job in the form of unemployment insurance.

But a host of other aspects of farm conditions separate from, though not unrelated to, economic circumstances also require the ministrations of an agricultural program. The social instability is as real as the economic insecurity. For the social position of the farm laborer is much like that of the farmers themselves fifty years ago, before rural education programs had been instituted. The Extension Service developed the social potentialities of the rustic farmer by offering him a meeting place, inducing him to participate, and furnishing him with educational materials. This service has been an important agency in overcoming the less good aspects of rural society by the very process of making the farmer a more social being. Today it is the farm wage worker who needs these services: a meeting place, an inducement to participate socially with his fellows, and a source of information and education. Such a program would create among the presently out-caste workers that same sense of belonging and personal security that the Extension Service developed among the farmers.

We saw in Wasco that aside from a few churches the farm worker had no social institutions. The degree of social isolation of the average farm worker is very high. The absence of community feeling, the failure to participate in social decisions, the lack of representations in the machinery of government and of

quasi-official agencies, all converge to create a sense of personal frustration and above all of inferiority. Coupled with these isolations is the effect of a migratory life, the impermanence of residence that results from a constant search for work opportunities, and the resulting failures to form strong social attachments of an informal nature. There exist, too, the constant under-current of social hostility, the social isolation of the students in school, the absence of greetings from employers, and the latent hostilities which arise with an issue or an imagined issue such as the school election. Finally, and most devastating, are the memories of open clashes, of past strikes, of hostility to the agencies who endeavored to help them during their worst times, and the very remoteness of the source of decisions affecting their every-day lives.

It is a truism that one cannot legislate social equality and social acceptance. No law, constitutional or otherwise, can make one man look upon another as an equal. But laws can and have made it possible for one group to gain its self-respect and thus, inevitably, a measure of respect from others of their community. Equity in agriculture means, therefore, a program which will aid in bringing the farm laborer into community life, not as an equal, but as a full citizen. Several steps are required. First, efforts must be made to reduce the demand for migration, and aid the individual worker in settling in one community. The strong drive in this direction among the regular farm workers is evident, but the economic deterrents are great. Second, a program of education and assistance, for which the Extension Service, with its use of local organization and its social aspects, offers us an excellent pattern. Finally, a protection of the right of farm workers to organize their own groups based upon common economic and social interests is requisite. Such protection, as we have seen, is required because the climate of hostility and the active preventative measures have effectively hindered the successful development of organizations of laborers.

A farm policy designed to produce equity among the working force in agriculture must recognize the right of all groups to a fair share of the products of their work. It must not only offer economic satisfactions adequate to the needs and deserts of the

workers, but must recognize those social values subsumed under the phrase *full citizenship*. It must afford to the farm workers and minor producers those values which have been developed among the commercial farmers in the past half century.

TOWARD THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EQUITY IN RURAL SOCIETY

Urban life has invaded the countryside. Its characteristics will in time pervade every aspect of the rural scene while the bucolic life which is now a tradition will become a memory. Already it is no more than that in the vanguard of our production areas in irrigated California—and in New Jersey, Florida, Texas, and elsewhere where intensive efficient farming is the watchword. It carries with it the promise of more food for the consumer, cheaper production, more income for agriculture and therefore a better life. Wherever the industrial revolution has touched, it has carried this promise of greater wealth and leisure for humanity. Wherever it has touched it has, ironically, carried with it the threat of estrangement, depersonalization, and impoverishment. It carries now to agriculture and rural society both this promise and this threat. Yet the enrichment can be assured only if the impoverishment is prevented. It is for that reason that the principle of equity takes on particular significance in the formulation of rural policy.

Let us review a few fundamental facts:

1. The industrialization of farm production is well under way and follows the general pattern of industrialization that has taken place in other branches of production.
2. The increased and ever-increasing machinery and equipment will make it possible to produce food in plenty with an ever-decreasing working force on the production end.
3. With industrialization has come a class system and a social pattern in agriculture that is essentially similar to those found in urban areas.
4. With only the rarest exceptions do any of the legal protections for wage workers in agriculture exist, though the agricultural industry has been and without doubt will continue to be allocated its share of total national income.

5. The conditions of farm workers, both social and economic, are substandard and not conducive to a healthy social order.

6. The number of wage workers is greater than the number of agricultural employers, while the farm operators who do not hire labor, and many who hire some supplemental work done, derive their income from the value of the work they perform rather than from their entrepreneurial profits.

7. Farm policy has not been successful in halting the trend toward industrialized farming, and there is evidence to show that both price and labor policies have actually hastened the process.

8. Efficiency of operations, when measured by productive use of land or income returns to the farm-working force is not greater on large-scale farm operations than it is on farms of moderate size capable of utilizing modern small-size power equipment.

9. The rural values are generally translated into pecuniary terms and therefore social status and personal self-respect are in a very large measure determined by the financial condition of the individual.

10. Rural society under industrial conditions has not only excluded from social participation the wage-working group, but has effectively and in many instances advertently prevented the development of associations within the laboring group itself, thereby preventing it from developing a sense of, and capacity for, social belonging as well as from participating in community decisions.

11. The exclusion of labor from participation in the community is also the result of their poverty, poor living conditions, low educational opportunities, and the instability which results from the necessity of constant migration.

The implementation of the equity principle in agriculture cannot be accomplished by a single legislative panacea. But it can be done within the framework of laws already existing, or laws patterned after similar ones applicable in other parts of our economy. In developing the legal framework it is first assumed that all three principles of sound policy enumerated in an earlier section of this chapter will be adopted: that produc-

tion at full capacity will be maintained and land resources conserved. Presumably the former, in times of economic stress, will mean the continuation and further development of consumer subsidies while the latter will involve direct aid to farm operators in soil building and protection activities. It is presumed also that price support, which according to law now continues at least through the year 1948, will be continued indefinitely under some reasonable formula. It is, however, assumed that the implementation of these policies will mean, on the one hand, that crop curtailment for the purpose of reducing production will be discontinued. On the other hand, soil conservation and building programs, in the interest of national welfare and with proper compensation for the service, will become compulsory. The former assumption takes away the odiousness of compliance while the latter takes away the choice.

The first legal device necessary is the establishment of minimum wages. The extension of minimum wages and of conditions of working, regulation of hours and provision of compensation for over-time to farm workers has long been advocated. We have already seen that it is administratively feasible, and Senator La Follette introduced a bill providing for such extension into the Senate as early as 1941. Such an absolute minimum, based upon minimum standards of decency for living, should represent a floor under which wages cannot go. The assurance of farm prices and consumption will carry the guarantee that the farm operators can pay such prices as will meet those minimum standards.

But minimum wages do not guarantee reasonable equity. As the value of a man's work rises, either because technological development renders him a more efficient producer or because price rises make his products worth more on the market, the worker has a right to share in such increases. If farmers' parity prices rise because of increased cost of living, the worker's income should most clearly rise proportionately, since he will suffer similar increases in expenditure. Such a share arrangement can be attached to the parity payment principle. Indeed, it is the only way the parity principle can overcome disparity. Thus guaranteed parity prices will carry with them a guarantee that

as prices rise, minimum wages will also be increased. Since parity prices are calculated on the basis of costs of other commodities, fixed minimum wages can be set with respect to an assumed set of parity rates. As parity prices increase above this figure, a proportional increase in farm wages will not act as a hardship upon farmers but will assure parity wages for the workers.

A word must be inserted here on the position of the small farmer—the traditional American farmer—with relation to wages and prices. While the stereotype painted in an earlier section has been shown as false, this does not deny the existence of small-scale farmers with high personal independence, nor does it deny that farm policy should not be directed toward maintaining such operators and integrating them into the picture of industrialized farming. It is frequently asserted that high wages place a hardship upon these small farmers. There are three reasons why this is not true of those farmers who do more of their own farm work than they hire done. First, since as a nation we are committed to a policy of supporting all people at some level of decency, unemployment and low wages, which go together, create burdens on the taxpayer and a subsidy for the hiring farmer. Second, farm income is derived from commodity prices and these in turn rest upon high consumer income, so that the farmer gains from high wages. Third, the farm operator who does his own work gets compensated for it in the sale of his products in direct proportion to the value of his labor; if farm wage workers are getting paid a small wage, then his work is worth only that wage. Obviously these factors apply only to the general wage level—not to the wages that he himself pays (though we have seen in Wasco the payment of wages by small growers above those set by the large). There are an estimated 80,000 farm operators in America whose operations are highly dependent upon farm labor and only a million whose production is dependent upon as much or more hired work than the farm operator performs. In contrast, there are well over two million commercial farmers who hire no labor or who do more work than such labor as they do hire. If there is any truth left behind the family-farm tradition, it resides in this group rather than in the employer group.

The attachment of wages to the parity principle has another important effect. In our discussion of the operations of parity it was shown that it had a tendency to reduce sharecroppers and farm tenants to laborers, while landowners took over the operation of farms themselves. Such an effect results from the failure of parity to provide for equity. If the assurance to farmers carried with it the assurance to laborers in fair measure, then the profit would not accrue to farm operators from creaming off the additional worth of a day's work performed by others, but would go, as it should, to the workers in just proportion. In this way the parity principle could be maintained without continuing to disrupt the established economic order. The displacement of labor and the amalgamation of farms would rest upon economic principles of efficiency and not upon governmental subsidy.

Thus it appears that minimum wages—particularly parity wages—not only offer economic assurance to the wage workers themselves, but carry with them the promise of continuing that very element of farm life which has the highest value from the standpoint of American tradition—the independent farmer.

The second legal device is the establishment of agricultural workers' right to organize, the establishment of machinery for collective bargaining, and for the arbitration and determination of wages and conditions of work. The development of a minimum wage law, like the concept of a parity price, does not displace bargaining. It merely places a floor under the prices for a commodity and a day's labor.

The extension of the principles set forth in the Wagner Labor Relations Act to cover farm workers is necessary for several reasons. The most important of these reasons is that in the past there has been concerted and organized effort to prevent farm workers from organizing and a complete absence of the fundamental principles of collective bargaining. In the absence of machinery for the fair establishment of the value of work in agriculture, both farmer and laborer have lost. Labor because it has, in the nature of things, suffered wages and working conditions and living conditions that would not be tolerated by urban workers. Farmers because in the development of wage

policies set in the high councils of industrial farmers, they have had to suffer insecure labor supplies, disorganized labor market, and strikes in which they had little to gain and much to lose.

But the economic necessity for the establishment and recognition of labor organization is not the only one. We have seen in the communities presented here the complete absence of secular organization among that third or half or two-thirds of the total community whose income is dependent upon farm wages. We have seen community decisions reached—decisions affecting the laborer as much or more than they did the other elements in the community—without a voice raised by or for the working group. Even when local citizens realize the failure of representation from the working group in civic affairs, there is in fact no means of reaching them. The urban character of social relationships means, as we saw in the preceding chapter, that the individual must participate in the total community as a member of a group whose interests are held in common and must be presented through spokesmen for such a group. If a labor union, or some other organization whose membership represented the farm wage worker, had existed in Wasco when the cemetery question arose or when the incorporation decisions were raised, or if it had existed in Dinuba at the time the Chamber of Commerce held its post-war planning session, then labor would have at least had the opportunity to be heard. To be sure, if labor were represented by organized groups, the threatened attempt to elect a representative to civic bodies would become a reality, and the promises of county officials to run the government according to the needs of the employer segment would not be so readily made. We have seen that the absence of such organization has not been fortuitous, and that its failure has been detrimental to democratic action in the rural community.

A third major device is necessary to the establishment of equity among the agricultural working force. For wage rates and economic well-being, organized activity and social participation all require a measure of security in tenure as farm workers and as community residents. It is for this reason that the extension of the principles of social security, and most particularly the payment of unemployment insurance, is requisite for the

development of equitable economic and social conditions. We have seen that the economic conditions of farm labor rest heavily upon seasonality of employment and over-crowding of the labor market. Such seasonal fluctuations in the labor market as are unavoidable inevitably create hardships and costs to someone. That these hardships and costs should be borne, as they were in early years of California agriculture, by the laborers themselves is hardly in keeping with the principle of equity. That they should be borne by the public at large in support of the few to whom labor availability is a direct advantage, is likewise of doubtful equity. So long as this is the case the operator who hires labor has no personal incentive to utilize the worker in such a way as to maximize his employment opportunity. Without a system of employment security the guarantee of minimum wages is meaningless, for no reasonable wage can, of itself, carry the family needs on the basis of six months' employment. Without employment security union protection of employees' rights is also meaningless, for the fluctuations of the labor force will make impossible the necessary continuity of the farm-working force. But with a measure of employment security, it will be possible to induce employers of large amounts of labor to organize their farm work along lines which will spread the season of employment. Some large operators have found such a system advantageous for economic reasons, but where specific pressure is absent few have adopted such a policy.

These three fundamental extensions of legal protection for the economic and social welfare of the farm worker make possible and in a large measure require certain laws of lesser but nevertheless significant proportions. Here again, nothing new in legal devices nor in administrative problems arise. These lesser problems are (1) the development of an adult education system patterned after the Extension Service, (2) the creation of an employment service operated from the standpoint of getting the worker jobs, (3) the development of community labor pools among farmers, and (4) the establishment of a housing program to fit the workers' needs.

The Federal and State Extension Service, designed primarily to bring new techniques in production and living into farms

and farm homes is, theoretically, open to the use of all comers. The very nature of its administration and the natural direction of its energies has made it, in fact, almost exclusively a farmer welfare and educational program. Certainly the farm laborer never joins the Farm Bureau meetings and rarely gets service from the extension agent, at least under industrial farming conditions. Yet the need of educational service is far greater among farm laborers than it is among farm operators.

Such a program should have two facets: the education of the worker to enable him better to serve agricultural production and enhance his personal value, and the education of the householder to the full potential usefulness of a limited income. Farm work, like industrial work, is improved by the possession of skills. As industrialization progresses, new and more skills will be required of the worker. The need for information to new workers in agriculture of even such simple operations as the picking of fruit, was recognized during the war emergency. But education of workers in the care and treatment of farm machinery, and in the execution of simple repairs, will become increasingly important as more farms become mechanized. The value of such a program will be great to the farm operators who have complained loud and bitterly, and not without cause, of the damage done to equipment, stock, trees, and soil by careless handling. Yet even more important than this aspect of an education program is the homemaking aspect. For a knowledge of purchasing, of saving, of full utilization and of those arts which will make life esthetically more satisfying are of the greatest importance to the redevelopment of the personal self-respect of the farm worker.

The simplest expedient for the development of such a program would be to attach it to the existing agricultural extension program. A common program might be developed in time, or in areas not yet industrialized. But it is doubtful if such a program could function in Wasco or Arvin, for instance, if it were attached to the county agent's office. The mutual antagonisms and the distrust between farmer and laborer would repel the worker. They would not participate for, like the worker who was invited by her farmer employer to accompany her to church,

they would want to be with people of their own class. Until such a program has developed the group self-respect of the working class, any educational program must remain separate from the Extension Service and from farmer participation. It must also be administered by those whose primary consideration is the welfare of the worker. But if such a program is to succeed, it can best pattern itself after the Extension Service, which has so raised the standards and capabilities of the farming population. Most particularly can it emulate this group in the development of social relationships among its constituency and of leadership and spokesmen for the group as a whole.

An agricultural employment service is requisite, if rationalization of the farm-labor market is to be achieved. The great oversupply of workers, the long, expensive, and useless migrations, and the lack of adjustment of employee capabilities to employer needs can all be ameliorated by an information and placement service. The need for such service has been recognized by farm operators during the period of wartime labor shortage. If full employment is achieved, the continued need of such a service will be demanded by farmers, who cannot recruit their workers individually and in mutual competition and maintain an effective production force. If unemployment should again create the distress that existed during the last economic depression, then the need to help the worker get employment with the least cost to him in time and money will be equally important.

Such an employment service should be equipped with information on the character of employment and the volume of workers at hand in various parts of the state. It should have a knowledge of the work requirements of various tasks, in order to direct employees to the kinds of work for which they are capable. In this way both employer and employee will have a central meeting place for workers not only within the community, but over the entire area of potential migration. Operation of social security and fair labor programs will require the existence of an employment service for the certification of agricultural employees to eligibility for its benefits. The effective operation of such a program like that of education, requires that

the agency be an impartial one. The development of an employment service under an agency which is aligned with either group would immediately nullify its effectiveness because the other would avoid its use.

In order to increase the efficiency of the working force and to maximize the season of farm employment, the continuation of a wartime expedient is recommended. During the war, organizations of farmers have been established for the sole purpose of creating a labor-demand pool. Such co-operative effort among farm operators was made necessary by the program of labor importation, for it was necessary to guarantee such workers a minimum period of employment. What was done as a wartime expedient for foreign labor can certainly be made a peacetime policy for citizen workers.

The creation—or continuance—of such organizations can serve the farm operators in many ways. It will effectively eliminate labor pirating and the bidding up of wages during periods when workers are scarce. It can develop the local labor market, so that a large part of the labor force has permanent local residence, thereby enriching the community in many ways. It can also serve as a bargaining agency for farmers in the establishment of agricultural wages. In this way the local farmer who cannot attend wage hearings in distant places can make his own attitudes and desires known in the processes of reaching group decisions.

Because of lack of residence and other disadvantages of farm-labor work, much welfare legislation has been unavailable to the laboring class. Among these are aids to aged and sick. The stabilization of farm work will go far to alleviate this situation, because it will make the worker a full-fledged local citizen. One further aid, made available to low-income workers in other categories of employment, is the extension of assistance in housing for farm workers.

The physical need for housing among farm workers is a well-known reality. Housing as a psychological need among farm workers has been demonstrated in an earlier chapter. The need is not merely for better temporary housing in operators' camps or other emergency facilities in areas which need large harvest

crews. Such housing has in the past been furnished workers, though much more, and much improved units, could be provided. But the housing need is for homes, separate and personally owned.

The farm worker now serving agriculture is a man who has always been close to the soil. Many came from non-industrial farms. Most of them, and more particularly their wives, have a strong desire to own a house and some land. Industrial farming does not make the very small farm—under 10 acres—feasible, but it should not deny the half-acre plot or the city lot to its workers. But in the absence of security of tenure as a farm worker and the resulting handicap to credit, the farm worker has been able only to buy land at high prices in poorer sections. These he could buy on credit furnished by the seller, but his house had to be pieced together out of scraps.

The result of this has been the continuation of poor housing and the creation of economic neighborhoods which are virtually slums. Residence in such houses and in such areas carries with it a social stigma and supports class feelings in the community. Any program of housing for the workers should recognize that most of them want and should have permanent residence in some one community, that they want to own houses personally rather than rent them, that they should be separate and placed where the individual wants them, that they should have adequate land to allow for home gardens and poultry, when these are desired, and that they should be modest but in keeping with the social values recognized by the community.

RURAL SOCIETY IN THE WORLD OF THE FUTURE

Industrial agriculture brings an urbanized society, and industrialization is taking over the rural scene. But the kind of urban society that exists in the future depends upon the agricultural policy that develops in the next few years. If we continue to promulgate laws based upon an outmoded and unrealistic stereotype, our rural communities will be peopled with unstable and insecure workers, spotted with rural slums, broken

by class schisms, and devoid of those democratic qualities that have served rural America in the past.

But what will rural life be like if we plan for it in terms of actual rural values and social relationships, in the manner of the program just outlined? It will not be made to fit the stereotype, to be sure, but it can be made to fit American ideals.

The legal structure outlined would first of all professionalize our farm labor. A professionalized farm-labor group will be a stabilized one; capable, self-conscious, and self-respecting. The farmers in such a community will not be able to profit from inadequate wages and lack of responsibility to labor but will be able to operate more efficiently because of stable supply of workers who have the requisite skills. The economic status of the farmer will rest more heavily upon his own efficiency and skill than upon his opportunity to take advantage of low-cost labor and government expenditures. The rural community will therefore become more stable, more democratic, and economically more sound.

Not only will programs which insure maximum employment, unemployment compensation, educational and informational services, and housing stabilize the life of the individual farm workers. It will also stabilize the wage worker as a group. For three-quarters of a century a series of workers have been imported or have come into California to do the field work, and as each came it as rapidly went. It is a significant fact that no single group has dominated the agricultural working force for more than a generation. Each has sought escape from the work and the working conditions as soon as the opportunity presented itself. Not only does this suggest condemnation of the conditions of work, but it also creates a hardship upon the farmer who must always have an untrained working force. A stable group, recognizing farm work as their life work and capable of making it a satisfactory one will therefore tend to become more competent and responsible.

Such a labor force will be self-conscious. The workers will engage in more and more mutual activities, and the union or other farm-labor organization will take an increasingly prominent place in farm life. As group action makes for a sense of be-

longing and the mutual reinforcement of attitudes and ideals, the personal humility now found among the group will be replaced by the normal dignity that man should have. This replacement of personal attitude will be a primary factor in the development and the fulfillment of standards of behavior of the community as a whole among the working element. More than any single factor, it will do away with the need for those escapes from reality provided by drink and emotional religion. It will make possible joint action in affairs with other elements in the community, because the embarrassment of insecurity will be lifted.

A professionalized working force will have other effects. It will, of necessity, remove farm work as a category of employment which anyone can have. The recognition of a group having a prior claim to the work opportunities on farms will mean that the unemployed industrial workers, the housewives, and school children can only get farm employment when the supply of recognized farm workers is exhausted. An efficiently operated rural economy would have enough professional workers to fill all the long-term jobs in the industry but would require a seasonal emergency force. Such a force can be, as it has been, recruited from persons not normally in the labor market.

The farmers in a rural society in which the principle of equity was maintained by protection of the workers, would prosper in proportion to their own proficiency as farmers. The creation of large-scale enterprises would rest upon the inherent efficiency they may have, rather than upon inadequate compensation to the workers and their dependence upon public money for their off-season support. The working farmer, dependent upon his own labor, would find his work worth more in terms of production if large-scale farming cannot undersell him by producing with low-paid labor. These policies would therefore act as fully to protect the small farm as it would serve to improve the conditions of labor.

We may confidently expect that one result of such a rural social order would hasten mechanization on farms. Mechanization is frequently viewed with considerable alarm, though its opponents are never willing to carry their position to its logical

reduction to absurdity. Mechanization, however, can bring agricultural products to market and to the consumer at a lower cost. It is therefore generally beneficial. It will also increase the total national production and reduce the amount of farm employment required. If, however, these tendencies take place in a world of full employment, they need not cause distress. If unemployment exists and we cannot afford to purchase the commodities produced, then it will be our failure to utilize efficient production rather than efficiency itself which is to blame.

The community serving rural people will become a more stable and democratic one if equity is achieved among the farm-working force. It will become more stable because it will have a constant population. The merchants will find that a group of stable and solvent farm workers will increase their business and thus further prosperity. Social institutions, churches, and schools will be able to plan for a future of relative certainty because the constant shifting both in numbers and in degree of well-being will be replaced by relative stability. Above all, the community bound together by common geographical location can become a community bound by common ties. The creation of a professionalized labor force will not do away with the natural conflicts between employer and employee, it will not result in social equality that makes all men have the same amount of prestige, it will not create a utopia; but it will create a social body in which the individuals all participate, and in which they have, in accordance with American tradition and law, an equal voice in the decisions facing the community. We discovered the paradox that agricultural planning in terms of a fallacious stereotype of rural society tended inevitably to destroy those vestiges of reality behind the stereotype. It is equally true and equally paradoxical that planning in terms of social reality can create those very values which were characterized in that social stereotype.

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