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THE 1933 SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COTTON STRIKE:
STRIKEBREAKING ACTIVITIES IN
CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE

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Introduction

In October 1933, the San Joaquin Valley was rocked by a labor strike that paralyzed cotton farming operations in several counties. The conflict involved from 12,000 to 19,000 workers, held up harvesting for almost four weeks, and threatened to impede the harvesting of the state's cotton crop which was valued at more than \$50,000,000. (1)

The Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union (C.A.W.I.U.), a labor organization affiliated with the Communist Party, spearheaded the organization of the striking cotton pickers, 95% of whom were Chicano. (2) The C.A.W.I.U. was established in July, 1931, as a result of a cannery workers' strike in Santa Clara County. The union was active in organizing agricultural workers in the 1930s primarily in California. Thus, when the 1933 cotton strike unfolded, the C.A.W.I.U. had already gained prestige and experience in labor conflict in California's peach, berry, cherry, pear, sugar-beet, pea, and grape industries. (3) The strike was instituted because the cotton growers rejected the workers' demands for an increase in wages from sixty cents to \$1.00 per hundred pounds. Although the union finally settled for a lower pay rate of seventy-five cents, the strike was considered a victory for the workers.

The 1933 cotton strike is a landmark event in California's labor history. Carey McWilliams wrote that the strike was the "largest in its kind in American history." (4) The strike resulted in vigilantism, bloodshed, and the death of three strikers. It represents a classic example of racial-class

conflict pitting the C.A.W.I.U. and Chicano farm workers against cotton growers and ginning companies located in California's core regions of commercialized agriculture. The purpose of this paper is not to present an overview of the cotton strike. (5) Its objective, rather, is to examine the various methods employed by growers and ginning companies to suppress the strike since the union's decision to accept the seventy-five cents wage scale was due to a series of events aimed to undermine the labor walkout. From the outset of strike activity, the cotton producers adopted various schemes to break the strike. The platform for strikebreaking included: (a) violence and vigilantism, (b) "red-scare" hysteria and the Communist issue, (c) racial attacks and the threat of deportation, (d) the use of law enforcement officials as strikebreakers, (e) the denial of federal government relief for strikers, and (f) the threat to close down the strike camp because it violated health standards. The efforts at strikebreaking are important to examine because they demonstrate certain continuities and changes that have developed in the relations between agribusiness and labor. These tactics were used during the 1930s to combat Chicano strikers and more recently against Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers.

Violence and Vigilantism

Violence in the cotton farms followed the C.A. W.I.U.'s decision to organize picket lines in the fields. The utilization of extensive picket lines spurred growers and ginners to organize vigilante "protective associations" to resist strikers and to protect the relatively small group of pickers who remained in the fields. (6) Organizations such as the Agricultural Protective Association and the Farmers' Protective Association were formed in various counties of the valley. Growers and ginners were the chief organizers of these vigilante

groups. In Kern County, for example, these organizations were linked with prominent growers, ginning companies, the San Joaquin Valley Labor Bureau, and the Chamber of Commerce. (7)

The first outbreak of violence occurred at Woodville on October 7 during a union meeting. The growers motored to the town with the intention of disrupting the meeting and driving out the workers from the area. The two groups clashed, and the farmers, outnumbered by the strikers, were forced to retreat. Two growers and one Chicano striker suffered injuries. When Sheriff R. L. Hill of Tulare County and his deputies arrived on the scene the fight was over and the situation was peaceful. (8) Immediately after the brawl, Guy Lowe, a representative of the growers, expressed the hostile attitude of the cotton farmers of the area in a statement addressed to the strikers entitled "Notice to the Public at Large:"

We the undersigned being Agricultural Producers and Businessmen, operating in the Porterville, Poplar, Woodville and Tipton sections of Tulare County, State of California, do hereby, by mutual agreement, declare ourselves to be in frame of mind of protecting ourselves from present STRIKE AGITATORS and STRIKERS, and do hereby incorporate ourselves into an AGRICULTURAL PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION, with full intentions to legally disperse all strike agitators from our locality. (9)

Because of the conflicting economic interests and the tactics resorted to by each faction, widespread picketing by the union and vigilantism by the opposition, the stage was set for the violence that broke out at Arvin and Pixley on October 10. The cotton producers were firm on the wage rate of sixty cents and they refused the offers of mediation by state officials.(10) Because of the stale-

mate, on October 9 Governor James Rolph, Jr., ordered Frank C. MacDonald, the State Labor Commissioner, to settle the strike. Shortly after his arrival, MacDonald expressed concern that an outbreak of violence was imminent. The expressed determination of the growers to hold out against wage increases, the reports that growers and their supporters had armed themselves and united into vigilante committees to drive out radical leaders and strikers, plus the fact that striking cotton pickers and their families had been forcibly evicted from their shacks and hovels on the cotton farms, brought a stern warning from MacDonald: "They're sitting on dynamite. They're ready to go outside the law. If a little judgment is used the situation should quiet down, but if the growers continue in their attitude of defiance and advocacy of force, a most serious situation is threatened." (11)

The following day three strikers were killed and fourteen wounded at the towns of Pixley and Arvin. At Pixley, a small town in Tulare County, strikers and their families led by Pat Chambers, the leader of the C.A.W.I.U.-led strike, gathered to protest the arrest of seventeen striking cotton pickers on rioting charges. While Chambers was addressing the group across the street from union headquarters, a number of farmers arrived, having been warned that "trouble" was brewing in Pixley. (12) The armed growers, who later claimed to be members of a posse, surrounded the strike meeting. Suddenly a shot was fired by one of the growers and Delfino Davila, a Mexican government consular representative at Tulare and a non-striker, tried to disarm the individual responsible for the shooting. Davila, however, was knocked down by another grower and shot to death. A great deal of shooting followed and the strikers dispersed. Dolores Hernandez, a striker, was also killed by a farmer's bullet and eight other strikers, including a woman, were wounded. The growers, still armed with their weapons, jumped into their cars and fled. Two California Highway patrolmen gave chase and captured the growers and "seized rifles

and shotguns still warm and strong with the odor of powder." (13)

The violence at Arvin, a small town in the cotton growing area of Kern County, erupted on the same day. At Arvin 250 strikers attempted to halt the picking of the cotton crop by twenty-five workers employed at the E. O. Mitchell ranch. (14) Opinions vary as to the immediate cause of the violence. One striker maintained that the growers were armed and that Mitchell, the owner of the ranch, started the fight by slapping a striker. Hugh S. Jewett, a prominent grower and active member of the Agricultural Protective Association, was badly beaten in the brawl. He claimed that the instigators were the strikers, one of whom had "molested a picker." (15) The fight lasted about half an hour. Growers used gun butts as weapons while the strikers used clubs and grape stakes. Shooting broke out for several minutes, and in order to restore peace, sheriff's deputies fired tear gas bombs at the crowd. When the smoke cleared, Pedro Subia, a striker, was found dead with a bullet in his chest, one striker lost an arm to a shotgun blast, and another suffered a bullet wound in the neck. Several growers were badly beaten and required hospitalization. (16)

The deaths of fellow workers created a stronger union among the striking workers and led to the storage of weapons to protect themselves from armed growers. Enrique Bravo, the Mexican Consul at Monterey, California, reported on October 13 that he counted 400 rifles at the five camps that he visited and that strikers had maintained they were going to defend themselves against future attacks. (17) Despite the bloodshed at Arvin and Pixley, the cotton producers also continued with strike-breaking activities. The Kern County Land Company, a large cotton producing corporation with \$264,063 worth of land holdings in the county, spent \$3,522 in trying to break the cotton strike, and it played an important role in vigilante organizations. (18) Hugh S. Allen, general manager of the firm, was a leader of the vigilante movement. A day after the

shootings at Pixley and Arvin, Allen addressed the following letter to the officers and directors of the Kern County Land Company in San Francisco:

Gentlemen: The cotton strike situation is still very serious. The fight in Arvin county yesterday and the demonstration staged last night convinced the Sheriff of Kern County and the District Attorney that they must do something so that now they are prepared to move the crowds off the roads and arrest the leaders. We have been trying for a week to get the Sheriff to do this but it took yesterday's melee to bring this about. (19)

On October 17 state and federal government officials established a Fact Finding Commission to arbitrate the labor conflict in the cotton fields. The Fact Finding Commission met on October 19-20 at Visalia to hold public hearings. Members of the committee included: Archbishop Edward J. Hannah of San Francisco, Dr. Tully Knoles, President of the University of the Pacific, and Dr. Ira Cross, a faculty member at the University of California at Berkeley. At these hearings the interested parties, "striking cotton pickers and cotton growers, and their representatives, were accorded full opportunity to present all their evidence to the commission." (20) On October 23, the commission addressed the following decision to Governor Rolph which included a statement condemning the violation of the civil rights of strikers through acts of violence:

Your Fact Finding Commission appointed to investigate strike conditions in cotton areas in the San Joaquin Valley after two day session at which both sides had full and ample opportunity under leadership of attorneys and other representatives to present their cases, begs leave to report

as follows: It is the judgment of the Commission that upon evidence presented growers can pay for picking at a rate of seventy-five cents per hundred pounds and your Commission begs leave therefore to advise this rate of payment to be established. Without question the civil rights of strikers have been violated. We appeal to constituted authorities to see that strikers are protected in rights conferred upon them by laws of State and by Federal and State Constitutions. (21)

The commission's report was approved by Governor Rolph and George Creel, the regional director of the National Recovery Administration, who served as the federal government's representative.

Red-Scare Hysteria and the Communist Issue

Since the strike was led by a Communist union, red-scare propaganda was employed by the opposition to defeat the strike movement. The growers tried to undermine the strike through public disclosures that the strikers, especially those at the Corcoran camp, wanted to return to the fields at the sixty cent wage scale, but had been forced to support the walkout because of intimidation by Communist leaders. An editorial by the *Hanford Sentinel* which appeared in the October 24 issue of the *Visalia Times-Delta* blamed the Communist organizers for the strike. The newspaper branded them as "paid agitators whose business it is to stir up strife between workers and employers. Generally these discontents are Communist, better termed 'reds' - professional nonworkers. By terrorist methods many of these foreign workers have been kept from deserting." (22) Moreover, the growers maintained that strike leaders, in order to continue strike agitation, had not informed the striking workers of the compromise offer of seventy-five cents. These reports cannot be accepted as statements of fact. According to the

Taylor and Kerr report, "All available evidence points to the conclusion that the inhabitants of the Corcoran camp were not held by threats of violence, that the Communists did not rule by force, and the Mexicans were not kept in ignorance of compromise offers. (23) Growers, ginners, and their supporters took advantage of the anti-Communist hysteria and argued that the conflict was simply between Communism and patriotic hard working farmers of the region. The La Follette Committee reported that,

emphasis on the political origins of some of the strikes and of the union leadership, the issue insofar as many of the employers, townspeople, and law enforcement officials are concerned is not one of hours, wages, working conditions, or union recognition, but the form of government and society. The breaking of a strike and the smashing of a union becomes a patriotic crusade for home, country, property, church, and all that men hold dear. In efforts to crush strikes and organizing drives where communism becomes this issue or discolors the problem, many of the normal incidents of constitutional law and civil rights are openly ignored. (24)

Thus, red-scare hysteria was used by the cotton growers and ginners to convince the public that the strike could be settled once Communist organizers were driven out. Since newspapers of the valley supported the growers, press editorials were instrumental in publicizing that perspective. An editorial published in the *Visalia Times-Delta*, which appeared three days after the Pixley and Arvin killings, claimed that,

As the smoke of battle clears away, it is becoming increasingly evident that the main causes of trouble between cotton

strikers and growers has been the result of bad advice, and the desire of Communist agitators to stir up trouble A little saner counsel originally would have saved a lot of turmoil and loss of lives and property. (25)

Newspaper editorials also tried to undermine the strike by discrediting the Communist leadership. The press portrayed Communist strike leaders as professional agitators. For example, an editorial entitled "People Getting Weary of Communist Agitators" which appeared in the *Fresno Bee* stated,

(The Communists) do not work themselves except in stirring up strife and disorder. They look to their dupes (the strikers) to supply them with food, clothing, shelter, and spending money. They loaf between working seasons and descend upon the scene like vultures who have smelled carrion from afar. (26)

Despite using anti-Communist propaganda, the cotton producers of the valley were unable to break the strike. Nevertheless, it is important to note the extent to which the red-scare conspiracy was utilized to influence public opinion against Communists and those perceived to be Communists. Indeed, a minor political protest by seven students from the University of California at Berkeley who had joined the picket lines in support of the strike, had provoked A. J. Elliott, chairman of the Tulare County Board of Supervisors, to request that the government undertake an investigation to determine whether the university was a training ground for "radicals." (27) In support of Elliot's suggestion, the *Bakersfield Californian* published an editorial condemning the faculty of that university who were held responsible for the students' behavior for preaching subversion at the campus. (28)

*The Racial Ingredient
and the Threat of Deportation*

The cotton strike had a racial ingredient in addition to the traditional separation of employee-employer relations which Communist organizers capitalized on to win the workers' allegiance. Since the majority of the agricultural laborers were Chicanos, many of them citizens of Mexico, the cotton growers and their supporters used racist and xenophobic views to try to undermine the strike movement. Many growers upheld the idea of Anglo racial superiority over the Chicano worker. (29) Certainly one important cause for the mistreatment of Chicano strikers was due to the racist attitudes of nationalistic Anglos who viewed the strikers as backward subservient foreigners. Indeed, the idea of Anglo racial domination seemed to condone the coercive measures used to suppress the strike. Vigilante associations typified the idea of Anglo racial superiority through acts of violence which were justified on the grounds that the opposition was both Communist and Mexican. (30)

Farmers argued that the backward Mexican foreigner did not need any increase in wages or a better standard of living. The Chicano cotton pickers standard of living evoked from one grower the following statement:

Picking cotton, that's their lot. They come from nowhere, they go nowhere. They do the country no good. It don't make any difference whether you pay them 15 or 35 cents an hour. Their women wear shoes only when someone will see them. They buy Buicks and don't know how to spend their money intelligently. They're stupid. (31)

By adopting this attitude, that the Chicano worker was ignorant, racially inferior and could survive without higher wages, the growers tried to justify the low salaries paid to cotton pickers.

The press was a powerful ally of the cotton producers in most newspapers of the San Joaquin Valley. (32) The press attacked the Communist-led cotton strike, supported the growers' asserted inability to pay a higher rate for picking cotton, and also published racist, xenophobic editorials which sought to turn public opinion against Chicanos as low-class ungrateful foreigners. One of the most forceful editorials which illustrated these attitudes of the press *vis-a-vis* Chicanos first appeared in the *Corcoran News* and was later reprinted in the *Visalia Times-Delta* on October 21. The editorial threatened the strikers with mass deportations and physical abuse:

Practically all of the striking cotton pickers are Mexicans, so this article is addressed to people of that nationality.

First of all, many of you are visitors in this country, here only through our suffering. You have been fools, many of you, trying to reach a goal that is not possible for you to reach, the right to dictate to American employers what they shall pay, whether they can or not. With cotton at the price it is today, and the wage demanded by you Mexican cotton pickers, cotton growing in the San Joaquin Valley will be a thing of the past. Because you killed the goose that laid the golden egg! If the cotton grower is finally required to pay \$1.00 per hundred for picking his cotton, it is a sure and certain thing that he will not pay it to you striking Mexicans.

What fools many of you have been in this strike! Most of you want to work and all of you should be at work. In fact many of you will have to go to work very soon or go back to your own country.

If this strike continues it is more than likely that every last one of you will be gathered into one huge bull pen and given the opportunity of proving your right to be in this country. And, what will a bull pen mean to you? Many of you don't know how the United States government can run a concentration camp. First of all every last one of you will be deloused. That does not mean that any of you need it, but it will be the first step to prevent typhus. Then comes vaccination for smallpox, inoculation for diphtheria and what not. The ordeal will be sufficiently rigorous to prevent the outbreak of any disease. Do you want to face the bull pen? Do you want to be deported to Mexico? That is what you face, and don't fool yourself about it. (33)

Through such editorials which exploited the racial and anti-foreign elements, the press may have influenced many readers to support the growers.

The first report linking the police and the border patrol with deportations occurred on October 11, the day following the Arvin-Pixley killings. (34) Efforts at deportation became more energetic as the strike progressed and strikers became more defiant. In Tulare County a petition from local officials called upon the federal immigration authorities to deport Mexican pickers taking part in the strike. The petition was signed by District Attorney Walter C. Haight, Alfred J. Elliott, chairman of the Tulare County Board of Supervisors, and James R. Fauver, foreman of the Tulare County Grand Jury. The telegram addressed to the United States Commission of Immigration in Washington D. C. read:

We appeal to and urgently request you to at once take the necessary steps to deport all those aliens, the majority of whom are Mexicans, now in this country

who have become public charges, who are a menace to public peace and health, who are now and will continue to be a heavy and impossible charge on the resources of the county and who are subject to deportations under the treaties between the United States and their respective countries. (35)

The evidence available does not indicate that a large number of Chicanos were deported as a result of the strike. Nevertheless, there were rumors of mass deportations and the threat of deporting strikers was used to intimidate the workers. (36)

Law Enforcement and Strikebreaking

In the conflict that developed, the strikers gained the backing of a small group of citizens from the local community, Labor Commissioner MacDonald, several students from the University of California, the Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, a liberal organization linked with Lincoln Steffens, the Visalia Ministerial Association, a group of concerned clergymen from the area, the International Labor Defense League, and the American Civil Liberties Union. (37) The nature of the base of support for the growers and ginners was instrumental in shaping the strategy that was employed to break the strike. The cotton producers had the support of the press, the chambers of commerce, the local farm bureau, the city councils, the boards of supervisors, the law enforcement officials, the courts, the district attorneys, the sheriffs, and the California Highway Patrol.

The social and racial cleavages that separated the striking workers from the cotton growers were noteworthy. Because of the social, political, and economic standing of the growers in the farming areas, law enforcement officials discriminated in favor of the farmers. In his seminal study,

Stuart Jamieson wrote:

Agricultural workers who organized unions and participated in strikes were subjected frequently to legal and extra-legal intimidation and violence. Suppression of many kinds could be employed safely against a group which was heterogenous in composition, low in social status, weak in bargaining power, poorly paid, lacking in political influence, and denied the benefits of protective labor legislation. Seasonal farm workers in California . . . were politically impotent because large numbers were disfranchised by their alien citizenship or their inability to maintain a stable residence which the right to vote required. Hence they could count on little protection from elected representatives of the law in communities where they worked in short periods of time. Local residents and law enforcement agencies usually sided with the grower-employers. They tended to be violently opposed to unionism and strikes because of the high perishability of farm crops, and the alleged irresponsibility of casual and migratory laborers. (38)

The cotton growers were favored by the law because they were socially and politically influential and their crop was a valuable asset to the community. The law discriminated against strikers because the majority of them were Chicanos, at the bottom of the social ladder, and had interrupted the harvest of a precious commodity. (39) A Kern County deputy sheriff stated that many representatives of the law were prejudiced in their treatment of growers and strikers: "We protect our farmers here in Kern County. They are always with us. They are our best people. They keep the country going. They put us in here and they can put us out again, so we serve them. But the Mexicans are trash. They

have no standards of living. We herd them like pigs." (40)

Law enforcement officials, the various sheriff departments and the district attorneys in the valley played an important role in containing the strike. These officials organized meetings with growers weeks before a particular crop was harvested to inform them of the measures they could legally adopt in case of a strike. Thus, weeks before the 1933 cotton harvest, in late September, a number of cotton growers met with members of the San Joaquin Valley Peace Officers' Association in Fresno, an organization representing eight counties, which was especially active in strike activities. (41) The farmers discussed the possibility of a cotton strike and what assistance they might expect from the law. At the meeting, Deputy District Attorney Arthur C. Shephard of Fresno County explained the officers' duties during strike conditions and the legal limitations of the police in handling strikers. Shephard informed the officers what sections of the penal code could be used against strikers when the "agitators" advocated violence or indulged in violence. Among the laws cited were disturbing the peace and inciting riots. Sheriff George J. Overholt of Fresno County, president of the peace officers' association, spoke on the repression of Communism and argued that Communism was more of a public problem than the police problem. He added, "You must have the cooperation of the public if you hope for any success in the suppression of Communist activities." (42)

A central concern throughout the cotton strike was the belief that the cotton crop had to be harvested at all cost because of its monetary value. Sheriff Overholt stressed this point in discussing the grape strike which broke out in the San Joaquin Valley in August 1933. Overholt's comments are noteworthy because they illustrate the attitudes of the police vis-a-vis the importance of agribusiness in the area:

Down in the San Joaquin Valley we have, -

right now, quite a problem facing us. I have talked with a good many of the different sheriffs here concerning it. There doesn't seem to be anything in the way of suggestions that would be effective in handling the situation About the only thing we have got that we can handle . . . strikers and strike leaders with... is "disturbance of the peace" or something like that is very effective, and I don't know what is going to become of us down there if that thing gets started in a big way with us, because when our harvest naturally commences it must be taken care of because that stuff is very perishable. (43)

In their efforts to protect the cotton industry, law enforcement officials also helped organize and support the vigilante associations which were created to suppress the strike. E. Raymond Cato, regional chief of the California Highway Patrol, explained why the vigilante groups were desirable and that the sheriffs and district attorneys were instrumental in their development:

My experience in . . . (the 1933 cotton strike) that we had was that we knew we didn't have enough peace officers to combat the situation. So that through the cooperation of the sheriffs of the county and peace officers, and the district attorney and the citizens' committees (vigilante groups), they had prepared to combat this very menacing situation. That frightened these fellows more than any of the police officers. They feared the uprising of the honest citizens against them. You might call it what you please. Some said it was a vigilante committee. To my way of thinking it was not a vigilante committee. These people were operating under the advice of the

sheriff and district attorney and were acting legally. (44)

The police arrested strikers and strike leaders many times under trumped up charges in the effort to break the strike. Law enforcement officials arrested one hundred and thirteen strikers, many of them strike leaders, in connection with the strike but interestingly enough not a single grower was jailed. (45) The police officers, following the recommendations of the district attorneys of the various counties, arrested strikers on charges of disturbing the peace or inciting a riot. Certainly many arrests were justifiable since strikers would on occasion drag workers off the fields. However, many arrests were unwarranted, as was, for example, the arrest of two strikers on the charge of "disturbing the peace" when they swore at cotton pickers working at a Pixley ranch to induce them to leave the fields. (46) In Tulare County, Sheriff Hill's policies made it particularly difficult for strikers to operate picket lines. Hill implemented the policy whereby "strikers will not be allowed to stop on roads, they will not be allowed to double back on roads, shouting into the fields will be forbidden and none of the strikers will be allowed to get out of their automobiles." (47) We're going to try to force them to obey the law," Sheriff Hill said, "If they won't obey, we're going to have a scrap, that's all." (48)

Deputy District Attorney Sherwood Green of Madera County advised cotton growers to "give agitators a dose of castor oil rather than shoot them. Murder is a dreadful thing." (49) Sheriff W. C. Rhodes of Madera County also "advised the farmers to not permit the agitators to bluff them but to call his office at once." (50) The arbitrary interpretation of the law by peace officers and district attorneys prompted Jamieson to write, "The legality of picketing was subject to rather flexible interpretation by law enforcement authorities particularly as regards the distinction between peaceful persuasion and intimidation." (51)

Sheriff Overholt expressed frustration in making arrests of strikers in the grape strike that preceded the strife in the cotton farms by two months. The sheriff admitted that on numerous occasions the police violated the law to arrest strikers.

We are well equipped to handle riots, we are not afraid of any overt act they might commit. In fact, that is the thing that troubles us; they don't commit any overt act, don't give us a chance to help ourselves by legally getting out and getting them by the neck. They just agitate and keep the farmers unsettled. (52)

To control the strike, police officers were supplied generously with funds to purchase more shotguns, tear gas, and to hire "special deputies." The increase in manpower and weapons followed the killings at Arvin and Pixley. The *Visalia Times-Delta* reported that "the Tulare County Board of Supervisors today vested Sheriff R. L. Hill with full power to take all steps necessary to hold the strike situation under control, authorizing him to swear in as many deputies as he wants and purchase all needed equipment, particularly gas equipment." (53) The several hundred special deputies that were sworn in to assist the sheriffs of the three counties were drawn from the Anglo communities in the cotton districts. Many of the deputies were growers, foremen and gin employees who were antagonistic toward Chicano strikers and Communist leaders. (54)

After the Arvin-Pixley shootings, law enforcement officials plotted to arrest strike leaders in the attempt to break the strike and prevent violence in the cotton fields. Pat Chambers was the first leader arrested. He was apprehended on October 11 by Sheriff Hill of Tulare County on a charge of criminal syndicalism. Chambers was accused by a Pixley farmer of making a speech that advocated violence just prior to the shootings. His bail was set at \$10,000, a rather exorbitant a-

mount. (55) Arrests of other strike leaders followed: Leroy Gordon, Don Odom, Forde Feldt, W. E. Hammett, R. Medina, Milton Thompson and Louis Bradley. Gordon, Odom, Feldt and Hammett were held in the Kings County Jail on vagrancy charges and their bail was set at \$1,000. (56) Thompson was arrested in McFarland on charges of disturbing the peace and had to post \$500 bail. Bradley, operating in Fresno County, was assessed a \$1,500 bond and was later sentenced to six months in jail on a charge of "rioting." Medina was jailed for disturbing the peace in the Lindsay district. (57) The arrest of strike leaders and the high bail bonds posted was an overt attempt at strikebreaking by police officers and the courts.

Court proceedings in the Arvin-Pixley assassinations also demonstrated that the local judicial process sympathized with the growers. It is true that the majority of the strikers arrested were freed and few were actually tried and sentenced. Indeed, after the strike was over, even strike leaders were freed. For example, the charges against the strike leaders Hammett, Odom, Gordon, Feldt and Frank Lopez were dropped. (58) On February 5, 1934 the charges of criminal syndicalism against Pat Chambers were also dismissed because of insufficient evidence. (59) However, the court's inquiry into the deaths at Arvin and Pixley showed that the courts were incapable of carrying out an impartial trial. At the Arvin riot, reports conflicted as to who was responsible for the killing of Pedro Subia. Shortly after the shooting a strike leader was arrested but was later released. The coroner's inquest held on October 14 concluded that only the farmers were armed and that the five to one-hundred rounds fired at the scene came from the growers' side of the road. No one seemed to know who fired the shot killing Subia. The growers maintained that the shot was fired by a striker aiming at Deputy Sheriff Thomas J. Carter but instead had shot Subia. (60) The strikers' version blamed the growers for the killing. At the coroner's inquest, Mrs. Eliza N. Margrave, wife of a striker, said she

heard a farmer, a man in striped overalls say, "I would not have shot (Subia) but he was about to shoot an officer." (61) Due to the lack of evidence, a coroner's jury at Bakersfield returned a verdict that Pedro Subia, age 57, Arvin cotton picker, "died from a gunshot wound in the chest inflicted by a party unknown." (62)

At Visalia, the eight growers arrested and charged with two counts of murder for the killings at Pixley were freed on February 1, 1934. The eight ranchers had the support of an influential segment of the local Anglo community, and in fact, their individual \$15,000 bail had been paid by the ginning companies of the area. (63) The jury deliberated only three hours to return a verdict of not guilty. The prosecution maintained that the defendants fired without warning into a group of men, women and children massed around strike headquarters at Pixley. The prosecution declared that strikers were unarmed and offered no resistance until after the volley of shots ripped into their midst. The defense argued that the strikers started the fight by shooting at the growers as they tried to arrest Pat Chambers. According to the defense, the defendants were acting as a "posse" called by Deputy Sheriff Jack Hill to maintain order at Pixley. (64) As a result, the ranchers were set free because "there was no evidence that any one of the men actually fired a fatal shot." (65)

Although the evidence against the growers was considerable, the verdict was not surprising to many observers. A. L. Wirin, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, wired a telegram to Governor Rolph on behalf of that organization and the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, stating that a fair trial was impossible through the local court in Visalia. Wirin urged the governor to replace District Attorney Walter C. Haight with Attorney General U.S. Webb to prosecute the cases against the growers. Wirin dispatched the following telegram to Governor Rolph:

Answering your suggestion you desire evi-

dence district attorney Tulare Co. cannot be relied upon to handle strike cases fairly we submit following evidence: We have copy sworn affidavit of District Attorney Haight that court cannot be conducted Visalia 'without disorder, riot, and bloodshed.' We submit as evidence grand jury being used as strikebreaking agency by indictment sixteen strikers participating peaceful picketing indicted for rioting and resisting officers. We renew request attorney general take over all criminal prosecutions. (66)

Governor Rolph replied that he was powerless to instruct the attorney general to take over the prosecutions.

An editorial published in the *San Francisco News* entitled "Prosecute Them For Murder" also charged that the local judicial system was partial in the case. The editorial petitioned the governor to change the trial to another county under an impartial prosecutor:

Every one of the Tulare County farmers against whom warrants have been issued should be taken to another county and prosecuted for murder in the first degree by Attorney General Webb or some impartial prosecutor chosen by him. We call upon Governor Rolph at once to direct the attorney general to proceed to Tulare County and to take charge of the prosecution of these bullies and ruffians who have disgraced California by deliberately firing into the ranks of unarmed strikers.

The men guilty of this massacre are not honest California farmers. They are criminals who deserve the severest punishment provided by the law for wanton homicide. (67)

*The Denial of
Federal Government Relief*

Federal relief for strikers had been under attack by the growers and ginners shortly after it was first allocated on October 15. The California Emergency Relief Administration, a federal agency operating with federal funds, rendered material assistance to the strikers in their plight as needy unemployed. Indeed, according to the Taylor and Kerr study, "this was the first large labor conflict in the United States, perhaps the first in size in which a federal agency gave food to hungry strikers, and it established a precedent of importance." (68) The strikers had received some assistance from the C.A.W.I.U. and union supporters. Local government relief agencies, such as those headed by the Tulare and Kern County Boards of Supervisors, supported the farmers and refused to render aid. (69) Federal aid to the strikers had been committed on October 12 after Governor Rolph ordered R. C. Branion, Director of the California Emergency Relief Administration, to the valley. The governor overrode federal regulations stipulating that aid could not be rendered until strikers submitted to arbitration. Rolph stated, "We're not going to force these strikers into arbitration by starving them out. Not in my state. These people are hungry. Branion, get down there--fly down there by plane and feed them as soon as you can." (70)

At first the aid was refused. At the Corcoran camp most of the milk and fuel were refused at the insistence of strike leaders. Strikers refused the assistance because strike leaders believed that in signing a state agency card to receive aid bound them to go back to work at sixty cents. According to a different version, the strikers refused signing these cards because of the fear that they would be used to check their records to initiate deportation proceedings. (71) Federal relief was accepted probably because of the desperation of poverty-stricken families and assurances that accepting aid would not compromise the strikers nor be used a-

gainst them for deportation purposes.

The decision by local county officials to deny relief to strikers and the attacks by growers of the federal aid granted to union members were part of a plan to "starve out" the striking cotton pickers. The growers expressed dissatisfaction with federal relief because it had prolonged the strike. The farmers maintained that the aid gave strikers a means of support without having to work. A telegram sent to federal officials in Washington by the Citizens' and Growers' Committee of Kern County illustrates the attitudes of valley farmers and the Anglo community:

There is bountiful use of federal funds for welfare relief through federal state agencies, which has made and is making it more pleasant and desirable for labor to accept charity than work. Little if any investigations are made by welfare workers and we have evidence that practically anyone can obtain help whether needed or not in amounts greater than necessary. This is keeping many workers from working. (72)

The efforts to deprive the strikers of relief did not go unnoticed. A *San Francisco Chronicle* editorial attacked a conspiracy to starve out the workers: "When we read that county supervisors, district attorney, and sheriff and chief of police and 'other officials' sat in on the consideration of a plan to starve out the cotton field strikers, we realized how necessary it is for the state to step in with impartial authority to stop the conflict." (73)

The issue of providing aid to strikers was included in the growers' offer for strike settlement. Committees representing the cotton farmers of the area agreed to pay seventy five cents per hundred pounds for cotton picking only on the condition that, first, non-striking workers were protected against attacks by strikers and, second, that fed-

eral aid was denied to those laborers who refused to work for the wage offered. Governor Rolph assured the farmers that "law and order shall be maintained and that strikers and others returning to work will be given full protection against molestation or violence." (74) Branion also reassured the cotton producers that "federal relief would be withheld from any able-bodied individual striker who is given a bonafide offer of work at seventy five cents per one hundred pounds of cotton picked, and who refuses such employment." (75) After these guarantees, the growers agreed to a settlement on October 24. At a meeting held in Fresno under the auspices of the San Joaquin Valley Agricultural Labor Bureau, the seventy five cent pay rate recommended by the Fact Finding Commission was endorsed. The growers' decision to accept the increases in wages read:

Governor James Rolph, R. C. Branion, Federal state relief administrator, and George Creel, representative of the federal labor board, have assured growers and citizens that federal state relief will be denied those who refuse to work and that the law will be upheld and workers will be protected against intimidation and violence if the picking of cotton at 75 cents is set.

We believe that the 60 cent rate established is a fair rate and all that the grower can afford to pay. However, in order to salvage what is left of value in the cotton crop, in the interest of good American citizenship, law and order; in order to forestall the spread of Communism and radicalism, and in order to protect the harvest of other crops, we accede to the recommendation of the governor's fact-finding committee to increase the price of picking cotton to 75 cents per 100 pounds of seed cotton. (76)

In response to the wage offer, the C.A.W.I.U.'s central strike committee issued a statement on October 24 recommending that the strikers hold out for eighty cents and recognition of the union. (77) The following day Frank MacDonald informed the union that the growers had accepted the findings of the commission, and, that since the C.A.W.I.U. had agreed to the hearings as a platform for arbitration, the union was equally subjected to the commission's decision as were the growers. MacDonald ordered the union to end the strike and for strikers to "proceed with picking cotton in the aforesaid six counties at the rate of 75 cents per hundred pounds. (78) The strikers, however, voted to fight for the eighty cent wage.

*The Corcoran Camp
and the Threat of Eviction*

With the union's refusal of the fifteen cent pay hike, the strikers were denied federal aid. The withholding of assistance was an important factor in the eventual capitulation of the strikers. Equally important was the threat to close down the strike camp at Corcoran. The events that transpired at the strike camp during the last few days of the strike explain why the union finally accepted the seventy five cents per hundred pay rate.

As the strike came to a close, strikers were coerced to accept the growers' offer through the denial of relief, the arrests of strikers and strike leaders, and through the threat of forced evacuation of the strike camp. The Corcoran camp was threatened throughout the strike because it was the operational center of the strike movement. The Corcoran camp grew after the forcible evictions of striking workers from housing which growers provided on the cotton farms. The evictions were followed by the establishment of a strike camp on October 8 on a rented forty acre farm just outside the eastern city limits of Corcoran. (79) Workers migrated in large numbers to the camp which in-

creased to shelter more than 3,700 striking cotton pickers and their families. Enrique Bravo visited the Corcoran camp on numerous occasions and explained why the camp was established:

Many families were evicted from their homes within 24 hours after receiving notice of eviction and the law requires that a person has three days to leave the premise. I found that in many cases the water had been shut off to drive the people out of their homes. I also found that many of the first arrests were made by armed men; who without cause or reason walked up to Mexicans and placed them under arrest. (80)

Previous experiences in strikes had demonstrated that one effective way to close down strike camps was to have health authorities declare them health hazards. Thus, in addition to efforts to deny relief to strikers, growers and their backers called attention to the camp's unsanitary conditions. Numerous unfounded reports of the sickness and unsanitary conditions that existed at the Corcoran camp were publicized. Although three deaths occurred at the camp, two infants and one young mother, "these fatalities were more the products of the conditions usually prevailing among migratory workers than a result of the particular situation in the Corcoran camp." (81) On October 15, rumors circulated that a typhoid epidemic had broken out at the camp. The report was disproved by officials from the California Department of Health, who found that the striking Chicanos were suffering from minor ailments. The Department of Health, however, informed the strikers that sanitary conditions had to be improved otherwise the camp would be declared a public nuisance. A few days later various Corcoran based organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, the City Council, the Women's Club, the Parent Teachers Association, and the American Legion auxiliary demanded that health authorities proclaim the

camp a menace to health. (82) George S. Morgan, inspector of the Department of Health, reported that certain sanitary improvements required in a notice served on camp authorities had been met, and that if additional improvements were fulfilled, the camp could not be considered a menace to public health. (83) Despite sanitary improvements and compliance with health requirements, on October 18 District Attorney Clarence Wilson presented the camp with an ultimatum that the water works system prescribed by the Department of Health had to be installed within twenty four hours. (84) Upon learning of these rumors and complaints about the unsanitary conditions at the camp, the California Emergency Relief Administration provided medical attention to the strikers. Dr. Giles Porter, Director of the Department of Health, also informed the public that a doctor, three public health nurses, and two workers from the health department would look after the medical care and sanitation of the camp. Porter also said that as long as the Department of Health's requirements were complied with, there was no cause to shut down the camp. (85)

The press was also used to publicize the camp's unsanitary state. Chapin Hall of the *Los Angeles Times* was antagonistic toward the strikers. Hall's bombastic description of the situation at the camp was republished in an editorial of the *Visalia Times-Delta* on October 25:

This camp is the danger spot. I visited it today, and it is a dreadful place. I don't wonder that the residents of the town are terrorized. No one in state employ with jurisdictional authority should consider that mess of corruption with anything but shame.

Thirty-seven hundred men, women and children are herded in a ten acre barren field on the edge of town. There is no shade and the sun is cruel. At night it is cold. The equipment consists of a few

ragged pup tents, but mostly a shakedown on the ground. There are no sanitary precautions. No water for bathing; not much for drinking. Three or four shallow latrines for nearly 4,000 persons. Long lines of misery marked humanity await their turn. There is some sickness. There is grave danger of epidemic. Promiscuity is unlimited.

As nearly as I can estimate the feeling, at least 80 per cent of the strikers are willing and anxious to return to work, but they are in deadly fear of the leaders. These leaders are only interested in keeping the strike going regardless of price fixing or any other consideration. If the authorities succeed in breaking up the Corcoran pest hole and detaching the leaders from the grip they have on San Joaquin farm labor, plus the discontinuance of food distribution, the strike will be over in a few hours. (86)

While efforts were made to close the Corcoran camp because it posed a danger to health, tension increased in the strike, resulting in two attempts to close down the camp by force, first by the growers, and second by the county sheriff. Strikers had become more defiant in picketing because they knew the jails were crowded and deputies could not arrest strikers in large numbers. In retaliation for the beatings suffered in brawls with strikers on October 22, the growers decided to clean out the Corcoran camp through force, but they were "talked out of it" by sheriffs officers and highway patrolmen. (87) On October 25, Sheriff R. V. Buckner of Kings County and deputies armed with revolvers and gas bombs tried to vacate the camp by alleging that health authorities had declared the camp a health hazard. (88) The strikers protested to the state labor commission that Sheriff Buckner's ultimatum was illegal because the camp had not been condemned

by health officials. The strike leaders also insisted that they had not had time to vote on the growers' recent wage offer. They promised Labor Commissioner MacDonald that they would reply with an acceptance or rejection of the seventy five cent pay scale the following day, on October 26. MacDonald convinced Sheriff Buckner to postpone the evacuation of the camp for another twenty four hours so that strikers could vote on the proposal. (89) MacDonald urged the strikers to accept the seventy five cent pay rate. He stated that it was foolish to prolong the strike because the difference between the seventy five cent and eighty cent wage only amounted to a ten cent per day increase for the average worker. Moreover, MacDonald informed the strikers that plans had been made to import 5,000 workers from the public charges in Los Angeles County if the union did not accept the terms. These factors, the threat of forced evacuation, and the fact that relief was terminated, convinced union leaders to accept the offer and the strike came to a close.

Conclusion

The 1933 cotton strike is not unique among the numerous labor struggles that have evolved in California agriculture. The 1928 Imperial Valley cantaloupe strike, the 1933 berry strike, and the 1947 Di Giorgio strike at Arvin also offer similar case studies in which the various issues examined in this study can be researched. Although conditions have changed considerably in agricultural employer-employee relations, some of these strategies for strikebreaking have been used recently against the United Farm Workers; the use of violence, anti-Communist hysteria, and law enforcement. New methods have been invented, however, such as the use of undocumented workers as scabs during strikes, while others are tailored for the mass media; the growers use of television to try to gain public support by suggesting that the United Farm Workers have in-

fringed on the rights of property owners, that the union is militant, unreasonable, and advocates violence.

In addition to studying the causes of labor conflicts, it is equally important to examine the various methods employed by workers to win strikes and those that growers adopt to defeat them. By examining these aspects of labor struggles, scholars will not only discern the continuities and changes that have developed in the relationship between employers and workers, but also will provide regional case histories through which ethnic relations on racial-class lines can be further researched and understood.

NOTES

1. Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1939), p. 222; Sam Kusner, *Long Road to Delano* (New York: International Publishers, 1975), p. 70.
2. Paul S. Taylor and Clark Kerr, "Documentary History of the Strike of the Cotton Pickers in California, 1933," in U. S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Education and Labor, *Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor, Part 54, Agricultural Labor in California, Hearings* before a subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, Senate, 76th Cong., 3rd Sess., (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1940), p. 19957. Under the leadership of Senator Robert La Follette, a senate committee was created to investigate agricultural labor in California because of the outbreak of numerous strikes and the reported violence committed against labor. The La Follette Committee had a staff of thirty five workers, including attorneys, investigators, economists, and stenographers. To gather information, it opened offices in Los Angeles and San Francisco. From December 1939 to January 1940, the committee held twenty eight days of public hearings in these two cities, calling approximately four hundred witnesses, and amassed a voluminous record to document the changing pattern of agricultural labor relations. The hearings cited in this study are part of the documentation collected by that committee.
3. Stuart Jamieson, *Labor Unionism in American Agriculture* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1945), pp. 19, 90, 100.
4. McWilliams, p. 224; according to Stuart Jamieson, "the San Joaquin Valley cotton strike of 1933 was the best organized and most successful of any large-scale walk-outs led by the C.A. W.I.U. or any other union in agriculture." See Jamieson, p. 119.
5. In a study in progress, I will examine the structure of agribusiness in the area and the causes for the conflict that unfolded in the cotton farms.
6. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 6, 1933, p. 1.
7. *Bakersfield Californian*, October 6, 1933, p. 13; October 7, 1933, p. 7.

8. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 9, 1933, p. 6.

9. "Report of State Labor Commissioner Frank C. MacDonald to Governor James Rolph, Jr., on San Joaquin Valley Cotton Strike, September-October 1933," in *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19900. Indeed, growers charged that Tulare officials and businessmen in particular had aided the strike movement by providing money and supplies to strikers. In order to prevent storeowners and local officials from supporting the strike movement, the Farmers Protective Association printed the following advertisement in the *Tulare Daily Advance Register*:

"Notice to the Citizens of Tulare. We, the Farmers of your community, Whom You Depend Upon FOR SUPPORT, FEEL THAT YOU HAVE NURSED TOO LONG THE VIPER THAT IS AT OUR DOOR. THESE COMMUNIST AGITATORS MUST BE DRIVEN FROM TOWN BY YOU, AND YOUR HARBORING THEM FURTHER WILL PROVE TO US YOUR NON-COOPERATION WITH US, AND MAKE IT NECESSARY FOR US TO GIVE OUR SUPPORT AND TRADE TO ANOTHER TOWN THAT WILL SUPPORT AND COOPERATE WITH US."
(October 9, 1933, p. 2.)

10. *Fresno Bee*, October 10, 1933, p. 5B. According to Sheriff Buckner, picketing seemed to raise tension among growers. The sheriff stated that when pickets were used the "trouble comes from the farmer. The farmer wants to go out and kill every Mexican in sight. That is our great difficulty, to keep the farmers quiet. Their patience is worn out, the crops are there and must be picked. In some cases the differences of two days may cause a loss of perhaps \$1,000 to him. If the picket comes off the road and runs off the few pickers he has, he gets out of patience and you cannot control him beyond a certain point. It resolves itself into a problem with each individual case." Quoted in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Education and Labor, *Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor, Part 75, Supplementary Exhibits: California State Peace Officers' Association*, hearings before a subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, Senate, 76th Cong., 3rd Sess., (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1941), p. 27614.

11. *Fresno Bee*, October 10, 1933, pp. 5B, 1A. Police officers were informed that growers would use violence against strikers. Farmers from Madera County reportedly informed officers of the California Highway Patrol that they "would blow to hell every striker who as much as laid a hand on the fences of their property. See *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 13, 1933, p. 1.

12. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 11, 1933, p. 4.

13. *Fresno Bee*, October 11, 1933, p. 4A.

14. *Ibid.*, October 11, 1933, p. 1A.

15. *Bakersfield Californian*, October 11, 1933, p. 1, 9.
16. *Fresno Bee*, October 11, 1933, pp. 1A, 8B.
17. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 14, 1933, p. 6.
18. U. S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Education and Labor, *Violations of Free Speech and Rights of Labor, Part 72, Supplementary Exhibits: Associated Farmer Units of Four Cotton Counties*, hearings before a subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, Senate, 76th Cong., 3rd Sess., (Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1941), p. 26454; *Employers Associations and Collective Bargaining in California*, Report of the Committee on Education and Labor, Senate Report 1150, 77th Cong., 2nd Sess., (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 203.
19. *Hearings, Part 72*, p. 26515.
20. "Report of Frank C. MacDonald," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19902.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 24, 1933, p. 2.
23. Taylor and Kerr, "Documentary History," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19979.
24. *Report on Employers' Associations*, p. 30.
25. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 14, 1933, p. 2.
26. *Fresno Bee*, October 6, 1933, p. 12B.
27. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 28, 1933, p. 6.
28. *Bakersfield Californian*, October 30, 1933, p. 6.
29. See Mark Reisler, *By the Sweat of Their Brow: Mexican Immigrant Labor in the United States, 1900-1940* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), Chapter 6. Carey McWilliams wrote that the general attitude of the growers vis-a-vis the Mexican could be summarized in a remark made by a ranch foreman to a Mexican worker: "When we want you, we'll call you; when we don't, get." See McWilliams, p. 126.
30. Taylor and Kerr, "Documentary History," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19992.
31. Paul S. Taylor and Clark Kerr, "Uprising on the Farms," *Survey Graphic XXIV* (January 1935), p. 22.

32. For example, the *Corcoran News*, the *Hanford Sentinel*, the *Tulare Times*, and the *Bakersfield Californian*.

33. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 21, p. 2.

34. *Bakersfield Californian*, October 12, 1933, p. 11.

35. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 23, 1933, pp. 1, 6; *Fresno Bee*, October 23, 1933, p. 1A.

36. *Bakersfield Californian*, October 12, 1933, p. 11.

37. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 12, 1933, pp. 1, 2; *Fresno Bee*, February 1, 1934, p. 1A.

38. Jamieson, p. 39.

39. In a federal government report, Paul Taylor concluded that "Mexicans in the United States, both aliens and citizens, are frequently subjected to severe and unequal treatment by those who administer the laws." See U.S. National Commission on Law Observance, *Report on Crime and the Foreign Born*, No.10 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931), p. 243.

40. Taylor and Kerr, "Documentary History," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19992.

41. The Peace Officers' Association was led by sheriffs, chiefs of police, and high ranking officers of the California Highway Patrol.

42. *Fresno Bee*, October 1, 1933, p. 4B.

43. *Hearings, Part 75*, p. 27601.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 27608. In a March 1934 meeting of the association, Sheriff W. C. Rhodes of Madera County also stated that the sheriffs and district attorneys of Tulare, Kings, Kern, Fresno and Madera counties helped organize vigilante groups. Rhodes reported that with his official support a secret organization was established in 1933 to control strike agitation. According to Rhodes, the secret organization was led by a "secret committee of sixty that . . . met each Monday night contacting not only men in agriculture, but lumber, quarry, and anything where there will be a concentration of men." See *Ibid.*, p. 27613.

45. In Tulare County forty strikers were taken into custody, twenty eight in Kings County, twenty two in Kern County, seventeen in Fresno County, five in Madera and one in Merced County. See *Fresno Bee*, October 27, 1933, p. 3A.

46. *Fresno Bee*, October 10, 1933, p. 1A.

47. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 24, 1933, p. 6.
48. *Ibid.*
49. *Bakersfield Californian*, October 9, 1933, p. 2.
50. *Ibid.*
51. Jamieson, pp. 101-102.
52. *Hearings, Part 75*, p. 27603.

53. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 12, 1933, p. 1. As a result, more than two hundred men were deputized in Tulare County. The *Visalia Times-Delta* reported that "shotguns, rifles, and pistols were used to arm the men sent out today, and a number of them were furnished with gas shells and gas bombs." See *Ibid.*, October 24, 1933, p. 6.

54. *Report on Employers' Associations*, p. 513. Testimony before the La Follette Committee suggested that county sheriffs were financed by growers and ginners to deputize a considerable number of deputies to contain the strike and thus violated the rights of striking workers. Several sheriffs of the area were subpoenaed to explain the role of their respective departments in the strike, specifically whether any deputies had received "any compensation from any firm, person, or corporation, or in any way, from any funds that were not publicly appropriated." See *Violations of Free Speech . . . Part 47*, p. 17332. The sheriffs, however, refused to provide the committee with departmental records. Sheriff Overholt justified his decision not to cooperate with the committee with these words: "I am not hiding anything particularly. I am just standing on what I consider my rights. In this country we all have our opinion of these things and my opinion is that my county would be put in jeopardy in many ways by me disclosing those things." Sheriff W. O. Justice of Madera County was equally uncooperative: "in the interest of the public it is not best for the sheriff to expose all the records he has in his files." See *Ibid.*, pp. 17122, 17127.

55. *Fresno Bee*, October 12, 1933, p. 9A; *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 12, 1933, p. 1.
56. *Fresno Bee*, October 18, 1933, p. 10A.
57. *Ibid.*, pp. 10A, 4B.
58. *Ibid.*, November 3, 1933, p. 3B. Lopez had been charged with disturbing the peace.
59. *Ibid.*, February 6, 1934, p. 5B.
60. Taylor and Kerr, "Documentary History," *Hearings, Part*

54, pp. 19990-91. See *Fresno Bee*, October 11, 1933, pp. 1A, 8B for a report on the Arvin riot by two sheriff deputies.

61. *Fresno Bee*, October 12, 1933, p. 1A.

62. *Ibid.*, pp. 1A, 9A.

63. *Bakersfield Californian*, February 1, 1934, p. 1; *Fresno Bee*, November 2, 1933, p. 1B; November 7, 1933, p. 5B. To illustrate the favoritism of the law, compare the \$15,000 bond demanded of each grower charged with two counts of murder with the \$10,000 bail bond set for Pat Chambers who was accused of committing a misdemeanor.

64. *Bakersfield Californian*, February 1, 1934, p. 1.

65. *Fresno Bee*, February 1, 1934, p. 1A.

66. *Ibid.*, October 18, 1933, pp. 1A, 10A.

67. Quoted in *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 13, 1933, p. 2.

68. Taylor and Kerr, "Documentary History," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19993.

69. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 12, 1933, p. 1; *Bakersfield Californian*, October 16, 1933, p. 1.

70. Taylor and Kerr, "Documentary History," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19995. Branion reportedly stated that his office would do "everything within its authority to see that no needy unemployed family goes without relief pending arbitration." See "report of Frank C. MacDonald," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19902. The total expenditure by the California Emergency Relief Administration for assistance in strike areas amounted to \$10,707.48 which was distributed in the following manner: Kern County \$5,233.48, Tulare \$1,848.19; and Kings County \$3,637.59. See Taylor and Kerr, "Documentary History," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19995.

71. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 14, 1933, p. 1.

72. *Bakersfield Californian*, October 21, 1933, p. 7. This charge was also made through press editorials. See for example the *Hanford Sentinel*, October 23, 1933, p. 2.

73. Quoted in the *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 13, 1933, p. 2.

74. *Ibid.*, October 25, 1933, p. 6.

75. *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 6.

76. *Ibid.*

77. "Report of Frank C. MacDonald," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19909; *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 25, 1933, p. 6. Other demands by the union included "no discrimination in rehiring because of race, color, creed, or union or strike activities," and the "immediate unconditional release of Pat Chambers and all arrested strikers."
78. "Report of Frank C. MacDonald," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19903.
79. *Fresno Bee*, October 9, 1933, p. 1A.
80. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 12, 1933, p. 4.
81. Taylor and Kerr, "Documentary History," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19976.
82. *Fresno Bee*, October 15, 1933, p. 2B; *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 24, 1933, p. 1.
83. *Fresno Bee*, October 18, 1933, p. 10A.
84. *Ibid.*, October 19, 1933, p. 2B. Wilson refused to believe the camp director, J. E. Morgan, that the water system had been approved by the health department. The strikers fulfilled that requirement and a pipe line was installed to bring water into the camp.
85. *Ibid.*, October 22, 1933, p. 2B.
86. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 26, 1933, p. 4.
87. *Ibid.*, October 23, 1933, p. 6; October 24, 1933, p. 1.
88. *Fresno Bee*, October 26, 1933, p. 4A. It seems that Sheriff Buckner acted independently of health authorities in his decision to close down the camp. Dr. Giles Porter later denied that he had advised camp evacuation on the basis of unsanitary conditions. In fact, Porter said his requirements for camp improvements had been met by strikers.
89. "Report of Frank C. MacDonald," *Hearings, Part 54*, p. 19903; *Fresno Bee*, October 27, 1933, p. 3A.
90. *Visalia Times-Delta*, October 26, 1933, p. 1; *Fresno Bee*, October 27, 1933, p. 3A.