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PARLIER: THE HUB OF RAISIN AMERICA

A Local History of Capitalist Development

by
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Introduction

This paper will analyze the impact that the development of capitalist agriculture has had on the social relations between Anglo-Americans and various racial minorities in California's San Joaquin Valley. The focus is on the impact of this larger development on the small rural community of Parlier, California. Parlier is located in the heart of one of the world's richest agricultural regions--California's Central Valley. Because of its highly productive grape and raisin crop, the community is often referred to as "The Hub of Raisin America." This predominately Chicano community, (eighty-five percent) is particularly significant because of a political revolt that took place there in 1972. In that year Chicanos changed the long standing Anglo control of local politics by sweeping the political elections.[1] The following paper emerged from a larger study on the significance of that revolt. In order to fully understand the impact of capitalist agricultural development on Parlier, we begin by examining how capitalist relations of production were established in the area. Although a complete analysis of capitalist development is certainly beyond the scope of this paper, a brief sketch can provide the context for interpreting the social history of this community.

1. The Basis of Production

Prior to the conquest and annexation of half of Mexico's territory to the United States through the Mexican-U.S. War (1846-48), California was primarily a pastoral society.[2] During the early 19th century the Spanish missions and the Mexican ranchos (the two major social institutions of colonial California) remained essentially precapitalist.[3] Land holdings granted by the Spanish and Mexican government to the California ranchero class were immense. The land holdings were primarily used for sheep and cattle raising. Mestizos and indians provided the major source of labor on these feudal-like

estates. What agricultural production did exist was characterized by low-level technology and mere subsistence production. The rancheros used their control of the organization of production and political power to accumulate luxury goods rather than reinvesting for expanded production.[4]

The discovery of gold in California paved the way for the rapid transformation of the region's economy. The Mexican economic and political institutions were quickly replaced by Anglo-American ones. With the decline in gold yield in the late 1850's, capitalist speculators turned to agricultural production as a potential source of new investments and profits. The acute shortage of foodstuffs to accommodate the rising Anglo population also prompted this shift in investments. The interest in land speculation caused Anglo capitalists to come into direct conflict with the established Mexican landed aristocracy.[5] Throughout the period from 1850-1880, a major struggle took place between the emerging and declining ruling classes. In the end a few Anglo capitalist speculators, through direct purchase, legislative enactments, litigation and outright seizure, came to control most of California's fertile land.[6] In time, even the less fertile lands became a target of speculation. The desert lands of the San Joaquin Valley were one such target.

Following the lead of industrial mining, and ultilizing modern technological advances, commercial agriculture quickly replaced cattle raising as the center of economic life in the state. Early pastoral production for use was beginning to be transformed to modern capitalist agricultural production for market exchange and profit. Specialization in single cash crops for market, for example, ushered in the "bonanza farms" (McWilliams, 1971). Historian Robert Hines suggests the importance of this introduction as follows: "The bonanza farms embodied vital counterparts of industrial capitalism--the application of machinery to mass production, absentee ownership, professional management, specialization of cheap labor" (1973:164). This process not only realized great profits for land speculators and capital

investors but also totally revolutionized the social relations of production in the area. This accumulation of capital and transformation of agricultural production would, in turn, ignite another movement--the western migration of small farm homesteaders.

The Settlement of Parlier

> "It is a land with advantage for rich and poor--the land of opportunity"

The Homestead Act of 1862, authorizing the free distribution of 160-acre tracts to settlers who would live on and improve land, was the major impetus for the wholesale migration of Anglo-Americans into California. The ostensible goal of the law was to prevent land monopoloy and absentee ownership. (Gates, 1936). The passage of this act opened up possibilities for large numbers of eastern and mid-western small farmers to move to the "golden state". Many, finding no available fertile land, became disillusioned and returned home. Others, who had their life savings in the trip, were forced to become laborers or settle on the barren lands available. One such area in the San Joaquin Valley was Parlier.

Parlier was founded by I.N. Parlier, a French Canadian who was one of a number of small Anglo agricultural entrepeneurs hoping to carve out a small homestead in the San Joaquin Valley of California. Originally from Indiana, I.N. Parlier has been described in the following way:

> On coming to California he was a stranger without money or influence, but by industry and frugality he has accumulated a handsome competency. He practically built up the town of Parlier and has been at times the head of nearly every enterprise calculated to be of material benefit to the community. (Mitchell, 1933:1293).[7]

I.N. Parlier and his extended family initially homesteaded 160 acres, later purchasing an additional 600 acres from the railroad.[8] He built a general store, trading post and post office which became the nucleus of the town. Soon J.F. Hayhurst, R. Trabers, J. Hamilton and others settled in the area. In homesteading the flat barren

land near the Kings River, they chose not especially good land because most of the good land had already fallen into the hands of large capitalist speculators.

I.N. Parlier, like most farmers in the area, dry-farmed the land growing wheat and pumpkins as well as raising some livestock. The economy was "simple" in that any production of surplus was traded and consumed in and around the local community. The arid land was a primary obstacle to the growers, causing them doubt as to whether they would make it from one season to the next. Although a few early growers did maintain hired hands, the bulk of the growers' surplus profit from the product was based upon their own labor and that of their families. Often at harvest time the whole community would gather to sow one another's field.

The founders of Parlier were influenced by Jeffersonianism (the notion that small land owners are the fundamental part of society),[9] midwestern populism,[10] and progressivism (i.e. the notion of personal sacrifice for the good of all).

They were also "rugged individualists" who opposed monopolies and centralized government, they believed these to be "corruptive and oppressive."[11] The small farmers believed in equality, but their notion of equality did not seem to extend to people of color. For example, I.N. Parlier brought with him two black servants, and many other community members actively advocated legislation of the Asian Exclusion Laws. Likewise, they mobilized to form the Labor Bureaus to insure monopolistic control over workers who were largely racial minorities. In fact, the early settlers had a notion of Parlier as a homogenous, classless community only because the Chinese, Hindu, Indian, Filipino, Mexican and other ethnic workers were considered outside of or somehow apart from the community.

The early patterns of community development, centering around the Anglo population, were guided by strong kinship groups, traditions, and religious patterns. The family and church were the major social institutions. Family background was a primary indicator of social

status.[12] An even clearer indicator of social class was Church participation. As one long time resident put it: "You knew the big shots by where they sat in what church."[13] Also related to social class were the fraternal and social clubs of the community.[14]

More than anything, the founders of Parlier saw the town as a center for local farmers who needed supplies and a place for social gatherings. Deep in their consciousness was the "frontier spirit" of the small community. Trade was local, cash exchange minimal, savings small, and little emphasis was placed on capital accumulation. The founders, however, did have great aspirations for the town. Potential investors, merchants, and ranchers were encouraged to settle (if of course they were of the right "stock") in Parlier. Supported by local entrepeneurs, a Chamber of Commerce pamphlet advertises:

> What we want to do is bring men and their families to us who will be industrious, home loving and social people, whom we will be delighted to have for neighbors and cooperating citizens in building up a large and thriving community (1911:14).

Although Parlier was strongly dependent on outside forces for its development, the residents maintained an intense parochial sentiment. The primary ideological push of the town leadership was "local patriotism" and "civic responsibility." This was demonstrated by the town motto:

> Civic progress is first 'Pride in Hometown' and also responsive citizenry, patronage of local stores, constructive municipal government, public improvement and organized effort...(Parlier Progress, 2/3/1911).

This sentiment influenced existing feelings of ethnic prejudice and racism since immigrant racial laborers were viewed as "non-white" outsiders.

Social Change and Class Relations

Parlier's actual heterogeneity became acutely reflected along class lines. The powerful growers and merchants formed a political-economic clique, rotating positions of power in the local government, grower associations (e.g. Sun Maid), and fraternal clubs in order

to combat class pressures from below. They consciously sought to control and manipulate both public policy and public opinion. They maintained a high degree of social solidarity against any outside threat to their power. Perhaps their strongest point of unity was again, their belief in white supremacy. The working class field laborers were primarily composed of various racial minorities--Chinese, Japanese and Mexican. These workers were consciously segregated, both socially and physically, from the Anglo community.[15]

As a result of this forced segregation, several "subcommunities" formed in Parlier. The Armenians settled in the southwestern section of town.[16] The Asian Community was served by restaurants, laundries, a fish market, a saloon, a grocery store, and a hotel along the western part of town. Further west, about half a mile from Parlier proper, was "Mexican town." The key area known today as "La Colonia" is part of "Mexican town."[17]

By the turn of the century, the rapid growth of nearby Fresno as a trade center, coupled with advancement of the local communication-transportation systems, enabled Parlier growers to exchange their commodities with the larger market. As Parlier's market expanded, so did its internal economic structure and activities. Parlier's economy began to be characterized by small-scale family farms and businesses, or what Maurice Dobbs calls a "petty production of worker-owner" (1967:20). Parlier growers were small capitalists, for they did make use of some paid laborers, but they were not large enough to be able to hire a permanent wage labor force. Instead, the success of their venture depended on their laboring in the production of the individual crops. They were primarily self-employed, small-scale producers--the classic petit bourgeoisie.

By the first decade after the turn of the century, then, Parlier could no longer be characterized as a "primitive mercantile" community. It was a thriving trade center offering a variety of goods and services. For example, in 1913 the first National Bank

of Parlier, subscribed to by the local elites, incorporated with $25,000 capital assets (Parlier Progress, 3/12/1913). This, in turn, attracted packing houses, wineries, and other aspects of grape and fruit production to the community. The following year the same elites formed the Parlier Chamber of Commerce and Parlier Merchant Association. By 1915, this accumulation of capital led to the creation of the Million Dollar Company (later becoming Sun Maid).

The Octopus and White Gold

No two single factors are of greater importance in the development of Parlier, than the introduction of irrigation and the building of the railroad.[18] The introduction of water via canals to the Valley suddenly transformed the agricultural land of Parlier and other nearby communities into a very valuable commodity. The development of the railroad also radically changed the economy by opening new markets for the growers' crops. Subsequent technological advances, such as the introduction of the cold storage freight car in 1888 and the development of local water projects, further accelerated the transformation of the area's economic base.

In the early days, Parlier served as the hub for a circle of small towns such as Reedley, Del Rey, Selma, Sanger, Fowler, and Kingsburg. Each of these small towns served as service and social centers for the surrounding farmers. The crops were transported to the larger commercial centers via steamboats up the San Joaquin Rivers. The California Steam Navigation Company had a monopoly on transportation and determined the river tariff rates. Then, in the late 1870's, the railroad began to effectively challenge the monopolistic control of the navigation companies, eventually establishing their own monopoly. The building of the railroad through Parlier immediately changed the community. First, it brought in additional population to do small farming. More importantly, the railroad afforded a means to ship more highly capitalized crops

(e.g. grapes) to West Coast and Eastern markets.

In 1876 the Central Pacific Railway (now Southern Pacific) constructed a line through Fresno County. The railway connected the valley with the large metropolitan trade centers of the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts.[19] Using unscrupulous methods and ethics the railroad barons soon managed to gain monopolistic control of the vital transportation infrastructure of the entire San Joaquin Valley. They bought out all water transportation competition, fixed rail rates so as to control importation of farm machinery, and instituted special concessions, exclusive contracts, and rate rebates to other monopoly powers (e.g. Standard Oil).[20] This monopoly on transportation, discriminated against the small farmer in places like Parlier who were forced to pay higher tariffs and freights.[21]

But even more central than the railroad in the political economy of the area has been the question of water. Paul Taylor poetically states: "The fight over water in the West is as old as the dream to 'make the desert blossom as the rose' through irrigation."(as quoted in Barnes, 1975:13).[22] The Railroad rendered wheat production unprofitable for Parlier farmers since quality wheat could be shipped to California from the midwest (Irrigation in California, 1873:4). Thus, with the rapid growth of West Coast cities, local growers began to consider intensive crops (fruits and vegetables) instead of extensive grains. However, since the land in Parlier was of little value without irrigation, the eventual increase of arable land brought under cultivation through irrigation affected the entire economic life of Parlier.

Not long before organized irrigation became a necessity, Parlier's first irrigation district was organized under the Wright Irrigation Act of 1887 (Fresno County, 1892:56), and was financed by the 76 Land and Water Company. This company sold both land and water rights in small parcels for $25 to $35 an acre. Their advertisements encouraged immigration of "desirable and permanent settlers"

(Reedley Agriculturalist, 1911:52). At first Parlier growers utilized deep wells to draw water using centrifical pumps powered first by gas and later by electricity.

In the mid-1880's the local growers formed the Parlier Canal Irrigation District, a cooperative venture which supervised the pumping of water through open canals to the fields.[23] This cooperative was later sold to the privately owned Kingsburg and Centerville Ditch Company, a local water stock company. The company, in turn, sold it to the Riverbend Gas and Water Company, an outside utility corporation advanced in irrigation technology (Fresno Bee, 4/18/56). Finally in 1943, Parlier bought its own water system. At each stage of technological advancement there were corresponding increases in capital outlay for the expensive irrigation equipment.

These two factors--irrigation and the railroad--had direct effects upon establishing class relations in Parlier. An exploitable labor force became necessary and, in an indirect manner (e.g. through bank loans and mortgages) Parlier's petit bourgeois growers became increasingly dependent upon financial investors or speculators.

Transition to Intensive Production

As previously stated Parlier's early economy was based on small, family-run farms. The only form of surplus came from the rent of land to tenant farmers. With the development of irrigation and the railroad, extensive wheat production gave way to the production of such intensive cash crops as grapes and raisins. Intensive cultivation, as Goldschmidt points out, is characterized by "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 (1947:187)."

Intensive cultivation thus means intensification of land use. Specialized farming also means produced goods being earmarked for sale on the market. The sale of products becomes the main commercial

thrust and the market becomes the focal point. In this way, capitalist commodity production begins to take on a concrete form.[24]

While capitalist agriculture in California followed the intensification process described by Goldschmidt, it is important to note that Parlier did not meet the last requirement of intensive cultivation, i.e. large scale operations. The Parlier growers, although no longer operating "family farms" in the strict use of that term, did maintain the small to medium size farm.

These small to medium size farms, however, were increasingly being forced to conform to the dictates of modern corporate agribusiness. They were forced to do so even though small to medium farms could often prove to be more productive (Fortune, 1972).[25]

While Fresno county became known as the "raisin belt," producing more than half of the world's supply of raisins, Parlier became known as the "buckle of the raisin belt." The average yield per acre in Parlier is 2,000 pounds of raisins compared to an average of 1,500 pounds in the state as a whole.

The grape industry is a highly skilled, year long operation. The Report to the Governor Young's Mexican Fact Finding Committee characterized it as follows:

> Cultivation techniques have been refined through years of experimentation, and the skill goes back generations...Delicate hand operations of prunning and cultivating go on at regular intervals through the Winter, so that a large resident labor force is needed, as well as additional thousands for summer harvest.

The labor requirements per acre of producing grapes varies with the types of grapes. The grapes produced in Parlier (mostly raisin and some wine) require about 16 hours of regular farm labor and 24 hours of temporary labor for the production and harvest of one acre of grapes. The operations for producing raisin grapes include: 1) prunning repairs of the trellis and cane taping (December-February); 2) tillage (March-May); 3) irrigation (1 winter, 1 spring, 5 summer); 4) fertilization (mid-winter); and 5) pest control. Harvesting operations include: ground

preparations, removal of fruit from vine by hand, laying in trays, turning the fruit, rolling trays, boxing, stacking dried fruit, and delivery.

Politics of Raisins

The first vineyards appeared with the early Missions. The Fresno historian Ben Walker notes, "raisins were implicitly a part of the consciousness of any people raised with the Bible" (1946:102). The first commercial raisins from Parlier were packaged as a "French" delicacy and sent to San Francisco (Fresno Bee, 2/20/1952). The development of the dried fruit made it more easily transportable over long distances and at cheaper rates.

In the 1880's and early 1890's raisin growers in Parlier experienced a constant boom in raisin profits. During this period vineyard land doubled and tripled in value. Many growers mortgaged one vineyard to pay for another. The boom also attracted to the area many settlers from the Eastern states and European countries.

Intensive cultivation of raisin grapes soon reached an all time high. Exploitation of land and labor for maximum profits was creating a rapid accumulation of capital in the hands of the local ranchers and packers. The demand was high. However, the depression of 1893 and the heavy planting of previous years, led to overproduction, and the eventual collapse of the market. Packers demanded to work only on a commission basis, and many farms were lost to the local banks. After selling for several years at less than cost of production, the remaining Parlier raisin growers decided to organize.[26]

In 1897, the first cooperative association was formed. It, however, was short-lived, dispanding as it did in 1905. In 1912 adverse market conditions led to the formation of the California Associated Raisin Company. It eventually expanded to control 93% of the raisin market. In 1923 after the war boom it became Sun Maid Raisin Growers Association.

Although initiated as a growers cooperative to help small growers collectively combat monopoly control by the railroads and industrial businesses, Sun Maid used every "cooperative" principal in its quest for monopoly profits. For example, in direct violation of anti-trust legislation, Sun Maid became a commercial organization controlling all phases of production and distribution.

Today the Sun Maid Growers Association is a complete corporate venture. Banks control and dictate the real direction of the association.[27] Because of its control over the raisin industry, it has had a direct influence upon the development of Parlier. Historically an inter-locking relationship existed between political leadership in Parlier and those who sat on the Board of Directors of Sun Maid. (In fact, several Anglos active in the 1972 revolt were retired growers living off their dividends from the Association.)

II. RACE, CLASS AND LABOR

The Agricultural Labor Pool

Much as the Parlier agricultural economy was influenced by larger, external changes in the market economy, the successive changes in the local labor force responded quite directly to changes in capitalist agricultural production. As pointed out in Part I, a critical determinant of the prevailing type of labor force at each stage of the development of agriculture has been the forces of production.[28]

Capital investments brought the corresponding demand for a somewhat dependent, yet mobile, wage labor class. Although the laborers were "free"[29] to sell their labor, social conditions (especially the contract labor system--see below) dictated they enter an employment agreement with the capitalist agricultural employer whose primary concern was maximizing profit, thereby minimizing labor cost.[30] As a result labor became little more than an exploitable commodity.[31] In this part of the paper we will examine the impact of the change in agricultural production on the labor force in general and conclude with a brief look at its effect

upon the development of the Chicano community in Parlier.

Paul Taylor and Tom Vasey, in a pioneering article, summarize the transformation of the agricultural labor as follows:

> During less than a century of agriculture history, the rural work of California has been performed successively by ranch hands, by farm hands, and by semi-industrialized proletarians. Today the latter dominate the rural scene--numerous, mobile, and racially varied to a degree beyond agricultural laborers of all other states (1936:281).

The consequences of this transformation on labor relations were profound. First, because of the nature of intensive production, a demand for large numbers of seasonal migrant labor emerged (California, 1936). The previous trickle of migrant labor into the California fields suddenly became a steady stream which overflowed into places like the vineyards of Parlier during the harvest season (California, 1951). The tributaries which fed this stream were as far away as China and as nearby as Mexico. Whether the migrants came as single men (e.g. Filipinos, Chinese) or as migrant families (e.g. many Japanese and Mexicanos), migrancy uprooted traditional cultures and lifestyles.

An essential point here is the fact that this new farm-laboring working class was comprised primarily of racial minorities. In the fields of Parlier, as was true throughout California, the Chinese, Japanese and Mexicano/Chicano workers filled the pool of exploited labor (see charts 6, 7 & 8). Furthermore, the minimum subsistence wage, insecure employment, inhuman working conditions, and social isolation from community life was rationalized and justified by racial ideology.[32]

California growers found that maintenance of racial cleavages enabled a successful "divide and conquer" strategy. A 1930 California Department of Industrial Relations report on Filipino immigration makes this point clear:

> At times the growers prefer the contractor employ a mixture of laborers of various races, speaking diverse languages and not accustomed to mingling with each other. This practice is to avoid labor

> trouble which might result from having a homogeneous group of laborers of the same race or nationality. Laborers speaking different languages and accustomed to diverse standards of living are not likely to arrive at a mutual understanding which would lead to strikes or other labor troubles during harvest seasons, when work interruptions would result in serious financial losses to the growers. (1930:167).[33]

The creation and exploitation of an agricultural reserve labor pool is a good example of the "structural bases" of racial oppression.[34] The primary purpose of this labor pool is to keep wages depressed, thereby increasing agribusiness profits. Moreover, a labor surplus implies that not everyone will be employed. Thus, unemployment and marginal or under-employment accompanies the creation of the reserve labor pool. The farmworker must conform to the dictates of the employer or there is always a "reserve" to take his or her place.

Not only was the reserve labor pool brought into existence by the agricultural employer's demand for a "guaranteed" cheap, abundant, controlled labor force, but this power relationship was sanctioned by the state. A network of grower and state agencies and organizations worked in harmony to develop and implement policy that would maximize control over labor. Such grower associations as Sun Maid, grower protection associations as Associate Farmers of California;[35] labor bureaus and exchanges as Agricultural Labor Bureau of the San Joaquin Valley[36] and to a lesser degree, labor contractors, worked hand in hand with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Labor, Commerce and Justice, as for example, the Immigration and Naturalization Service.[37] Other state and federal agencies and academic institutions (especially the University of California School of Agriculture and Agricultural Extension Service have likewise been involved in this collusion). Despite the "non-partisan" rhetoric of the state and the "democratic" sounding doctrines of the grower associations and bureaus, their complicity served one purpose--to herd the labor to harvest crops cheaply, quickly and without conflict.[38]

Chart 6

Racial Groups in California Engaged in Agriculture
Classified by Occupational Status, 1930*

	Status of Persons Engaged in Agriculture							
	Engaged in Agriculture		Farm Owners and Tenants		Farm Mgr. & Foremen		Farm Laborers	
	Number	Percent	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mexicans**	42,608	33.3	1,124	2.6	293	0.7	41,191	96.7
Chinese	2,641	12.9	367	13.9	83	3.1	2,191	83.0
Japanese	19,353	52.0	3,135	16.2	1,649	8.5	14,569	75.3
Filipino	16,331	59.4	132	.8	99	.6	16,100	98.6

* From California's Farm Labor Problems, 1934
**"Mexican" here refers to Mexicans according to the census of 1950 and not to "persons born in Mexico."

Chart 7

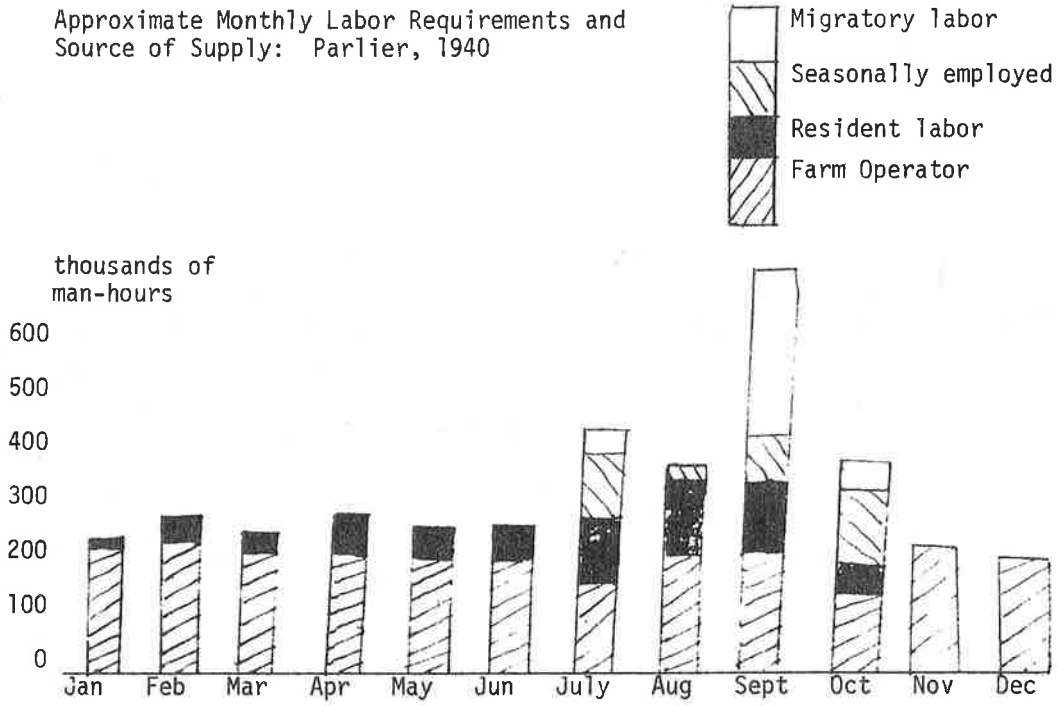
Percentage Distribution of Races Within Each Agricultural Occupation in California, April, 1950*

Race	All Occupations	Owners and Tenants	Managers and Foremen	Farm Laborers**
Native White	50.7	63.7	61.7	42.7
Foreign Born White	22.0	31.4	12.4	16.8
Mexican	12.7	0.9	3.4	20.9
Japanese	5.8	2.5	19.1	7.4
Filipino	4.8	0.1	1.1	8.2
Indian	0.9	0.6	0.1	1.2
Chinese	0.8	0.3	1.0	1.1
Negro	0.7	0.4	0.3	1.0
Other	0.5	0.1	0.9	0.7

*From: United States Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census, 1930.
** Includes unpaid family labor

Chart 8

Approximate Monthly Labor Requirements and Source of Supply: Parlier, 1940



Racial Groups in Rural-Farm Population, 1930*

Race	Number of Persons
Mexicans	38,920
Japanese	33,673
Indians	5,985
Chinese	2,537
Unclassified	10,957

*United States Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census, 1930.

Use of Racial Labor for Grape Production, 1930*

Mexicans	55%
Chinese	5%
Negro	1%
Filipino	15%
Japanese	21%
Hindu	4%

*Based on 506 questionnaire responses from grape growers in Mexicans in California , p. 160

Through this complicity, spearheaded by the emerging agri-business elite, informed by academic and government technocrats, a political power structure became entrenched (see Galarza, 1970: Chapter 2 for an excellent case study).[39] One result was that the loose and individual patterns of racial oppression and class exploitation began to take a structured form. A racially-stratified labor force in agriculture became institutionalized.

Another example of how racial minority farmworkers have been placed in the class structure is through the discretionary use of the law and law enforcement (see Federal Writers Project, 1939a).[40] Although many laws (theft, drunk and disorderly, assault, etc.) and law enforcement practices (stop and frisk, search and seizure, deployment, etc.) were disproportionately concentrated on racial minority farmworkers in rural California, the discretionary use of vagrancy laws was particularly discriminatory.[41] It was a known practice for the Border Patrol (INS) state police, and county sheriffs and local police to saturate communities in order to arrest campesinos on vaguely-defined vagrancy charges. Then, a system, little removed from feudal debt peonage, would ensue. A high bail would be set by the court. The local grower, without informing the campesino, would pay a reduced bail fee. The campesino would then be required to work for the grower until the bail was repaid. The grower often failed to tell the farmworker the bail had been reduced, thus getting payment in work for the original high bail (National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, 1931; Federal Writers Project, 1939b).

The use of undocumented workers (often called mojados, wetbacks, or "illegal aliens") is still another example of dual (race-class) oppression. The undocumented workers were Mexicanos who entered the Parlier labor force sin papeles (without official papers). They were often coercively or fraudulently recruited by contratistas (labor contractors) or coyotes (professional labor smugglers) at a high profit for the recruiters. Never showing up in the "official" farm labor

counts the "illegals" were nonetheless very well known to farm labor contractors and employers. In times of labor shortages or increased restrictive immigration policies between the United States and Mexico the undocumented workers served to calm the troubled waters of the reserve labor pool by keeping a constant unfiltered current of labor flowing to the fields. In fact, because of their particular status and vulnerability of having to work under super exploitative conditions, they were often preferred by the growers.

A final example of the system of maintaining racial minorities in a subordinate position in California agriculture was through the wage policies created by the growers and endorsed by the state. Wages in California agriculture, although relatively higher than other states, have been the lowest of all industry (Federal Writers Project, 1939d). Moreover, in California agriculture any kind of worker collective bargaining has been severely curtailed by employers' pre-season determination of the season wage rate. Agricultural employers, through their associations, meet annually before the season to determine an agreed upon wage rate for that season (Adams, 1946; Lenhart, 1945). These "fixed wage rates", in turn, are supported by the various agricultural agencies of the state. In addition to thwarting collective bargaining by determining seasonal wages in advance, the associations also used these meetings to develop strategies to minimize labor organization and prevent strikes. The growers have preferred and supported racial minority workers over white workers because they can "fix" wage rates low and justify their actions via racial ideology.[42] Recent studies are beginning to empirically document the existence of a "dual wage system", i.e. one wage for whites and an inferior one for non-whites.[43]

Wages also imply payment for the entire labor of the worker. For racial minority California agricultural workers this certainly was not the case. The Japanese, Chinese and Mexicano laborers who worked in the vineyards of Parlier, whether paid piece rate or hourly,

were only paid for the number of flats of grapes they picked. They did not get paid for the time spent being trucked to and from the vineyards, the time spent setting up the flat cars, laying out the raisins to dry, carting the heavy flats to the packing houses, oiling down the dusty roads, or other required tasks in the total process of harvesting the grape crop. Besides this they were constantly cheated on the number of hours worked which were recorded by the contractors or ranch managers. Additionally, besides the fact that agriculture labor was often one of the only jobs opened to racial minorities, certain jobs even within this sector were reserved as "Japanese" of "Mexican" jobs. These were always the hardest and dirtiest jobs.

The various immigrant waves of racial minority workers have not however, accepted this condition passively. Attempts at unionization (Federal Writers' Project, 1939b and 1939c; Lopez, 1970), labor strikes (Bell, 1914; Jamieson, 1945), revolutionary nationalism (Reisler, 1973) and class struggle (Zamora, 1975; Ichioka, 1971) have all been an integral part of struggle in the fields. Because it has been a history of racial groups battling the Anglo power structure, class struggle has taken a racial form.

Equally characteristic of this struggle has been the use of official and unofficial violence (California Legislature, Assembly Select Committee on Farm Violence, 1973; U. S. Senate Committee on Education and Labor, 1940), terrorism (Lowenstein, 1940; Chamberlin, 1959), vigilantism (El Malcriado, 1974) and legal repression (Taylor and Kerr, 1940). Police, for example, would make "retentive" arrests and hold strike organizers in jail for the duration of the strike, crippling any sustained drive by the workers (Fellmeth, 1971). Growers also used their power in the legislature to pass a variety of anti-strike, anti-picketing legislation. Moreover, conspicuously absent has been the support of the white trade union movement for the primarily inter-racial farmworkers' struggle (Cross, 1935; Eaves, 1910; Foner, 1965:v.3).[44]

In this study, thus far, we have argued that racial labor groups have been the backbone of the development of capitalist agriculture in California.[45] We will now turn to an analysis of the concrete contribution each racial group has made to the building of California's agribusiness empire.[46] The general synopsis that follows will be presented with specific references to Parlier.

The Chinese

One of the first groups to be exploited by the Parlier growers were the Chinese. Around 1848 the Chinese began arriving in California on British ships as contract laborers under Chinese masters. The discovery of gold in California coupled with floods, drought, famine, and the Taiping Rebellion in China, plus organized campaigns of labor recruitment and contracting, prompted their journey to America. Many entered the mining boom only to find exclusion as they were beaten, robbed, and lynched (Heizer and Almquist, 1971).[47] Many migrated to the emerging fruit farms of the San Joaquin Valley after completing the backbreaking labor of building the Central Pacific Railroad in 1869. They brought with them to the fields the "head boys" (forerunners of the farm labor contractor), the Tong (the first primitive agriculture union), and skills in cultivation, irrigation and harvest techniques. The technical knowledge was quickly usurped and utilized for profit by agricultural capitalists. The growers highly endorsed the Chinese labor. As the grower newspaper, The Pacific Rural Press, stated:

> The availability of cheap Chinese labor gave the fruit grower hope. They extended their operations and the Chinese proved equal to all that had been expected of them. They became especially clever in the packing of fruit; in fact, the Chinese have become the only considerable body of people who understand how to pack fruit for eastern shipment (quoted in Kushner, 1975:8).

One of the primary contributions the Chinese made to the building of Parlier in addition to supplying the manual labor to harvest the crops, was the building of the Parlier Canal System.

This system played an important role in the development of the economy of the area.

Racial oppression was an overriding aspect of the Chinese experience in the fields. As long as they were critical to the agricultural economy, blatant racist attacks were partially thwarted by agricultural capitalist interests who used Chinese labor. Widespread unemployment in the urban cities, however, heightened the already prevalent racist sentiments, leading to the formation of anti-coolie clubs, ordinances, laws and boycotts.[48] The "anti-coolie" hysteria was supported by the white working class (even its most progressive elements)[49] whose short term interests were supposedly served by the passing of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.[50]

Initially supportive of Chinese labor, the Parlier growers soon supported the anti-Chinese movement. For example, an editorial in the local newspaper read:

> Under the plea of supply...farmers of this country with cheap labor to supply a demand our own race could not supply, organized companies imported in this state Mongolians from China and flooded the land with cheap laborers, and now it has become the problem of the hour, and our Statesmen are not able to answer, "What can we do to protect the laborers of this country from the unequal competition of the Mongolians?" (Selma Irrigator, 1/14/1882:2).

The editorial goes on to indicate that the Chinese are an "inferior race" who should be considered "outside the boundaries of social equality" since.."the Chinaman has made an impress upon the social life of this country that has been felt from the highest to the lowest ranks of society, and has become a very stench in the nostrils of all wellbred people."(Ibid.)

The Japanese

Shortly after the suspension of Chinese immigration in 1882, and during the height of the anti-coolie agitation, vigilante committees began to drive the Chinese from the agricultural fields. The Chinese took refuge in the emerging Chinatowns of the cities

and became factory hands, domestic servants, and small scale proprietors. This created a shortage in the supply of cheap agricultural labor, thus increasing the production costs for the farmers. The farmers, needing a surplus labor force to keep down production costs, began quietly to recruit Japanese labor.[51] This was facilitated by the Japanese Mikado's emperor policy to open the formerly forbidden immigration of Japanese workers to work the sugar cane plantations of Hawaii. Many of the Japanese in Parlier today migrated from the Hawaiian sugar plantations, via San Francisco, to the fields of Fresno county.[52] Most came as contract labor with contractors by steamship companies that made large profits (often via illegal smuggling) off this transportation network (Iwatu, 1969).

The Japanese immigrants were attracted to the fields of California because the wages were higher, more jobs were available, as well as generally better economic conditions than existed in the islands (see Millis, 1915).[53]

Around 1907, about 4,000 to 5,000 Japanese laborers moved into the Fresno County area, which the U.S. Immigration Commission estimated to be about sixty percent of the labor force of the area (see Naka, 1913).[54] About this time the first Japanese labor camp was established in Parlier on the J.J. Eyman ranch with M.H. Yasui as the labor boss (Nickel, 1961). As early as 1901, a Japanese farmer, J. Oda, bought a 40-acre ranch in Parlier. In 1903 I. Kitahara, M.T. Kakamura, H. Okamura, and Y. Wake collectively bought 160 acres and farmed them in 40-acre tracts per family. "The Japanese," as one long time resident recalled, "would buy the land no one else wanted and pay more than it was worth...then they would all get together and fix up the ranch and plant the crop." He also recalled, that "They would hire their own kind and were protective of their men."

At first, according to long time Japanese labor organizer Karl

Yoneda, "The growers welcomed the Japanese because they had fallen into the 'divide and rule' scheme and showed they could produce more (1969:III-3)." By organizing their rank and file as well as under-bidding their competitors, Japanese came to dominate the work force in the Parlier vineyards. Subjected to the same oppressive conditions in the fields that the Chinese had suffered before them, and the Mexican/Chicanos would endure after them, the Japanese were somewhat more successful in organizing pressure groups to demand better wages and working conditions.[55] Although the Japanese workers never organized official unions, they used such tactics as staging slowdown or striking during the peak hours of harvest,[56] refusing to scab and by blacklisting exploitative employers.

There is evidence that Japanese socialists had some impact on organizing field workers around Parlier. In 1906, for example, the Japanese Socialist Revolutionary Party helped organize the Fresno Labor League which addressed itself to the concrete problems facing agricultural laborers (Ichioka, 1971:23).[57]

During that same year, they organized the Central California Contractors Association to maximize wages and prevent exploitative competition. Likewise, in 1911 the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W. or Wobblies) concentrated organizing efforts in the Fresno area [58] to demand both civil liberties for their own cause and better working conditions for farmworkers (See Jamieson, 1945:59-69).[59] There also seems to be some evidence that the Japanese Labor League, as well as the Partido Liberal Mexicano (a party organized to carry out socialist revolution in Mexico and active among Chicano labor in California), cooperated with the I.W.W. in organizing the fields (Yoneda, 1972; Gomez-Q, 1970).[60] By the post-World War I period, however, due to state intervention, police action, vigilante action, and mass jailings on criminal syndicalist charges all contributed to undermine the potential of this socialist movement.[61]

Overall, the Japanese, like the Chinese workers, depended on labor bosses (contractors) of their own racial group to serve as

the intermediaries between labor and employers. The Japanese labor contractors were a contradictory presence. On the one hand, by having monopoly control over wage negotiations, they were exploitative of labor, on the other hand, the contractor worked collectively with labor to increase bargaining power and insure loyalty.[62]

An important element of the Japanese contractor was its role in the transformation of Japanese wage laborers into tenant farmers, farm operators and farm owners (Millis, 1915; Naka, 1918; Poli, 1944). The labor bosses were the first to make this transition. A report on National Defense Migration summarizes this process:

> The contractor system which prevailed in the farming regions of the West Coast created circumstances favorable to the transition from wage earner to farm owner or tenant. Enterprising Japanese bosses, with a ready supply of manpower at their disposal and an intimate knowledge of the operating problems in any given region, were in a position to induce the farmers with whom they negotiate to lease holdings to them under different forms of tenure (U.S. Congress, 1942:67).[63]

Another important factor in the transition of Parlier Japanese from workers to operators and owners was the fact that many immigrants were experienced, skillful intensive-farm agriculturists. Many of the immigrants had engaged in intensive farming in Japan and had working knowledge of the landlord-tenant relationships of tenant farming.[64] Perhaps the most salient factor was the ready availability of excess land for sale when the Japanese came to Parlier.

Their ability to organize labor, experience with intensive farming, coupled with their ability to secure their own land, soon enabled some Japanese contractors to become tenant farmers. At first, because of the Japanese willingness to pay higher share or cash rents, to make improvements on the lands, to pay higher prices as purchases, and their use of "hay" or "marginal" land made them desirable tenant farmers (see Millis, 1915:103-151).[65]

By 1912 many of the Japanese who had been classified as "temporary hands" had left the migratory trail to reside in the area year round. This led to the emergence of the Japanese-American community in Parlier.[66] Although most of the Japanese who settled in Parlier were either small growers or farmworkers, a significant percentage of the population became small shopkeepers. They opened grocery stores, laundries, saloons and dry good stores that served both Japantown and the larger community.

As the Japanese began to systematically challenge Anglo growers hegemony, antagonisms began to increase.[67] Both large and small Anglo growers became more outwardly hostile to increasing land ownership by the Japanese. The large growers saw the Japanese as a threat to their monopolistic control of production and distribution, as well as a loss of a cheap labor force. The small growers resented the Japanese overbidding for land and their competition in the market place. Soon, the ever present and anti-Asiatic sentiment became blatant as the agricultural power structure began to manipulate public sentiment against the Japanese.[68]

This racial animosity was institutionalized with the passage of the Alien Land Acts of 1913 and 1920, making it illegal for aliens to own land in California. It culminated in the enactment of the Immigration Act of 1924 which excluded the Japanese from entering the United States. This legislation forced Japanese farmers to sell to Anglos, therefore, safeguarding white supremacy by safeguarding white economic hegemony.

The growers' response to the "Japanese Question" focused on the role of Japanese farmers and farmworkers in the central valley. Although some supported the Japanese grower an underlying ideology of white supremacy prevailed in Parlier.[69] For example, the Parlier Progress states:

> Personally, we like the Japanese. We admire their industry, their thrift and their persistence, their ambition and their intelligence ...Economically they have been a decided asset to the San Joaquin Valley, although in a social

way...they have been of no great value (1913:2).[70]

The bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 greatly contributed to the re-emergence of anti-Japanese sentiment in Parlier.[71] The Japanese farmers by this time owned 58 farms or tenant farmed another 174 (Fresno Bee, 4/7/1942). Upon being relocated, many sold their farms quickly for low prices while others set up agreements with friends to manage their farms until they returned. Interviews indicated that many of those "entrusted managers" sold the Japanese farms and took off with the profits while others let them go to ruins.[72] It is estimated that only one-half of the Japanese farmers returned to their farms and even fewer regained the pre-evacuation control of packing and shipping interests.[73]

Randon interviews reveal that since the 1950's the younger Sansei (third generation Japanese Americans) have begun to leave Parlier.[74] In the past five years, for example, only one Parlier High School graduate has remained to manage his father's ranch. Many of the youth are leaving to go to college while others are moving into urban-located jobs.[75] It is also clear from interviews that corporate interests are anxiously waiting to buy the land from the Japanese American growers in the area as the era of Japanese American farming in Parlier is coming to an end.[76] Likewise, interviews with several Japanese labor contractors indicate that the remaining first generation Japanese farmworkers (single men who never acquired land) are now in their late 60's.[77] Their legacy, therefore, is fast coming to an end.[78]

The Chicanos

Although Mexicanos had from the beginning been a critical part of California's migrant labor force, it was not until the Chinese and Japanese exclusion movements that they came to dominate the fields of Parlier.[79] To understand the evolution of the Mexicano/Chicano agricultural worker in Parlier, a brief examination of the general socio-political conditions contributing to Mexican immigration to California is needed.[80]

Political and economic conditions in Mexico were shaped by heavy U.S. capital investment and subsequent imperialist control. Mexico's relationship of dependency on the United States became firmly entrenched (NACLA, 1976).

> The United States had over $2 billion invested in Mexico. With such a hold on the Mexican economy, the U.S. capitalism could, through economic and political manipulation, keep the country underdeveloped and dependent.

This set of conditions, spurred by the Mexican Revolution of 1910, created the impetus for Mexican immigration into the U.S. and into the California agriculture fields. The Revolution called for fundamental agrarian reform and redistribution of the country's wealth. During this period many peasants were uprooted and working class unions and local government workers were frustrated by the increased government repression. Social and economic conditions were in a general state of turmoil. Many of the frustrated and uprooted either joined the liberation forces under Villa, Zapata, and others, or migrated north in search of work in the Southwest. In the case of agriculture, one impetus for this movement was that meager wages paid in California were substantially better than those in Mexico, even though conditions were no better in the fields. Also, California growers influenced Mexican political and economic leaders to promote and encourage immigration. The increasing network of railroads into Mexico to haul out the extracted raw resources necessary for capitalist expansion, also worked as an inducement and opportunity for Mexicans to immigrate (Clark, 1908).

Contrary to the dominant historical interpretation, the campesiño (farmworker) who came to work the agricultural fields was not a "dull," "docile," "subservient peon class." (See Mohl, 1973; Clark, 1908.) They represented a cross-section of social classes with varying degrees of political consciousness (Gamio, 1969; Gómez-Q, 1972). While some did reflect a consciousness developed as a result of the historical conditions of caste-bound peonage

and dependency, others carried the spirit of the Revolution--"Tierra o Muerte" (Land or Death) and were participants of militant resistance and key contributors to the development of the California labor movement (Cisneros, 1975; Taylor, 1930).

Many of the campesiños coming to the Parlier orchards during the fruit picking season (June-August) and to the grape vineyards during the grape picking season (July-September) migrated from such diverse locations as California barrios, other areas of the Southwest, the Midwest, and of course, Mexico. One heavily traveled migrant trail led from the Arizona and Texas borders of Blythe, Dagget, El Paso, and Yuma. A more common path to Parlier, however, was from the California border towns, up Highway 99 over the Ridge Route of the Tehachapi Mountains. Many entered the Imperial Valley in the fall to cultivate the early vegetables and fruits, working their way through the cantaloupe season (April-May); then into the San Joaquin Valley to work the citrus orchards (June); deciduous fruits (September-October). They picked crops in Bakersfield, Hanford, and Fresno or crossed the Pacheco Pass into the Salinas Valley, then travelled north to Santa Clara, Napa and Sacramento Valleys. Many campesiños came as single men, but unlike the Filipinos and Chinese, many often migrated with their immediate or extended families.[81]

The growers who supported Mexican immigration attempted to convince the general public, sensitized by a barrage of anti-Mexican propaganda, that the Mexican migrant laborer was only transitory and returned home after the harvest. Statistics, however, show this to be a myth since the Mexican population increased geometrically each decade from 1910-1930 (Fuller, 1939:219).[82]

During World War I, Parlier raisin growers made an all-out effort to recruit large numbers of Mexican labor. The war demand for increased agricultural production created a boom in the

raisin industry. Many Parlier growers sought bank loans or mortgages to finance expansion of their vineyards and/or orchards. The demand for labor to meet the demand for production, coupled with the war shortage of workers, caused a milk panic among the growers. The Parlier growers tried using housewives, students, and even local prisoners, but none could do the work with either the speed, skill or the low cost of the Mexicano campesiño (Fresno Bee, 1/20/1916).

Pressured by agricultural interests, the primary power group in California politics, the Mexican laborer soon became a special exception to the general immigration restriction laws of the period. Agricultural employers argued that: 1) only Mexicans would do the work, 2) agriculture would "stagnate" if Mexican immigration was restricted, and 3) Mexicans could be sent home after the harvest (see Fuller, 1940). [83]

The wartime raisin boom was quickly overshadowed by a post-war economic recession. As one long time grower from Parlier describes: "It was a time when a lot of folks who thought they would get rich off the raisin boom fell on their faces."[84] During this period most of the growers who did not lose their property to the banks, and were desperate to restore monopolistic price controls, formed the Sun Maid Growers Association. The Parlier growers, along with other growers of San Joaquin Valley, also instituted the Agricultural Labor Bureau. The bureau became an incorporated body represented by the directors chosen from the farm bureaus, the Chamber of Commerce and grower associations. In theory, the main purpose of the Agricultural Labor Bureau of the San Joaquin Valley was to eliminate scarcity of labor, therefore relieving farmers of losses due to labor shortages that had occurred in the past seasons. In practice, it had the effect of further refining and entrenching the exploitative use of Mexican labor by institutionalizing them as a "reserve labor pool."

The post-World War I period also marked the resurgence of anti-Mexican sentiment in California. Calling for tighter immigration laws, a beefed up Border Patrol, and more deportations, this anti-Mexican campaign was led by white nativist groups (Taylor, 1930) and backed by urban white labor unions. These groups employed the same racist arguments used earlier against the Chinese, i.e. they blamed the Mexicans for the unemployment of white workers (Cross, 1935). Anti-Mexican advocates further argued Mexicans were "unassimilable," "criminally-prone," and would "thwart technological advancement," (Mohl, 1973; Romo, 1975).[85]

La Colonia: A Labor Community

In their early formation and development, many Chicano Colonias throughout the San Joaquin Valley served more as migrant labor camps than as communities. Legally just beyond the border lines of incorporated Parlier, La Colonia (today officially called West Parlier) was such an area. La Colonia has always been, almost entirely Chicano: Upward to 99% of the present population is Spanish surname. Although the majority of Parlier itself is predominantly Chicano (85%) the Anglo population of Parlier has always referred to La Colonia as "where the Mexicans live."[86]

Because of the economic prosperity in the vineyards during the war, the increasing need for industrial labor in nearby Fresno, and other similar labor conditions, many Chicanos were able to establish minimal levels of economic security and establish more permanent roots in the community. Although no statistical records of the growth in Chicano population in Parlier and La Colonia exist, it is clear from general census data and interviews that the post-war period witnessed the greatest influx of Chicanos to these communities. Some Chicanos found semi-permanent year-round work in the vineyards and packing houses while others found work in related industries (e.g. fertilizer plants, lumber yards, etc.). Still others used

Parlier or La Colonia for their permanent home and migrated to harvest the various crops.

As far as anyone can recall, the first Chicano families to become permanent residents of Parlier occurred as early as 1920.[87] According to interviews, although a significant number of Chicanos in Parlier proper and La Colonia came from other parts of California and from Mexico, the majority of emigrants came from Texas, particularly southern Texas. In fact, La Colonia is sometimes referred to as "little Tejas" because of the majority of Tejanos. Many of these Tejanos originally immigrated to the United States from Mexico, coming originally from the northern states of Nuevo Leon, Zacatecas, and Aguas Calientes, although Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Michoacan, and Jalisco were also points of departure.

Some Mexicanos came to Parlier along the migrant trail to harvest grapes for several seasons and eventually found more permanent work in the grape, raisin, and wine production process. As new jobs opened up, they, in turn, would tell family or friends of the job opportunities. Often the men would come and work, secure a place to live, and later send for their families. Others would come as extended families living in overcrowded small houses until each family could afford their own place. As the economy of the area grew, many families from Uvalde, Eagle Pass, Crystal City and other small Texas agricultural communities, reestablished in the community.[88]

The majority of the Mexican agricultural workers came to Parlier as contract laborers. Labor contractors (enganchadores or contratistas), in conjunction with the growers, utilized the most exploitative techniques to secure the labor. The enganchadores were usually Mexicanos who spoke English and understood the needs of the growers.[89] The campesinos were totally dependent on and at the mercy of the labor contractors (Federal Writers' Project, 1938).

The enganchadores would extract profit at the expense of the campesinos at every stage of the work process. They would create a form of indentured servitude by luring workers across the borders

with false promises of wealth and then charging the workers from 5% to 12% interest on the fare. In addition to profitting from transporting workers to and from the job, the enganchadores collected a commission from the workers for "employment services"--often up to 50% of the salary. They charged workers for rent, provisions, supplies, and field equipment--all at a profit to the contratistas (California, Department of Industrial Relations, 1930). Furthermore, the labor camps run by the contractors contained the most deplorable living conditions (Taylor, 1932).

Since the Mexicano labor contractors were in competition they often attempted to underbid each other for the grower contracts, thus further depressing the workers' wages.[90] Because of the control the enganchadores had, workers were known to work a whole season and actually end up being in debt to the contractors (California, Department of Industrial Relations,1930). Moreover, it was not an uncommon occurance for the contractors to collect the wages due the campesiños and abscond with the funds, leaving the laborers stranded in the labor camps (U.S. Senate, Committee on Education and Labor, 1940).

Another critical point in evaluating the Mexican labor contractor is that, unlike the Chinese and Japanese, the Mexicans could not utilize the labor contractor system to elevate themselves to either land owners or farm managers. By the 1930's, the period of their presence in Parlier, most of the land was no longer available. Additionally, by this time, the state had developed more sophisticated methods of assuring agribusiness control. The Federal Writers' Project reflects this point as follows:

> Available land was scarce and expensive. Small scale farming has given way to large scale and corporate agriculture. Under such conditions, the labor contractor could not advance as in earlier periods...the labor contractor was forced to accede to the dictates of the farm employers or go out of business. Hence, while apparently situated as independent operators, in reality, he served the interest of the employer not the laborer. (1939: page unnumbered).

Despite the fact that the contractors were indeed exploiters of Mexican labor, they themselves were only tools for the real power and capital which rested in the hands of the employers. The labor contractors, much like the colonial administrators under neo-colonial relationships, served as "go-betweens" or intermediaries of capital and labor. At all times the growers controlled the labor process--maintaining absolute power over the conditions of the labor contract. Likewise, the growers had the financial capabilities (and responsibility) to improve working conditions, provide suitable housing, sanitation facilities, and decent wages. There were numerous laws both regarding immigration (most of these, however, were designed for overseas immigration and were easily evaded along the Mexican border) and contract labor restrictions. But the agricultural capitalists, with the support of judicial state powers, placed the legal responsibility of the contract upon the contractor, placing the grower beyond incrimination. Further, as is often the case with most laws affecting corporate interests in a capitalist society, it was usually more profitable to pay the light fines than abide by the laws.

In the 1930's the question of "restriction" versus "open" Mexican immigration became a burning issue. A series of congressional hearings took place on the issue. The Grower Associations, the California Development Association, and various other agricultural, mining, and transportation interests supported continued Mexican immigration. The American Federation of Labor, the Allied Patriotic Society and the Eugenics Society called for restricted Mexican immigration.[91] Labor economist Paul Taylor most aptly summarizes the two sides to the question as follows: "Agriculture will be ruined if we do, and the republic will be undermined if we don't (1930:26)."

That the Parlier growers supported the Valley Labor Bureau's position as reflected in an editorial of the grower controlled Parlier Progress: There are some here in the Valley who believe that

Mexican labor should be excluded but the preponderant opinion seems to be in favor of continuing the present policy (2/6/1930). Another editorial in the same newspaper further states:

> The question of California's agriculture labor supply is essentially a local question. This state has tried Chinese labor and excluded it; it has had Japanese labor and for reasons, some good and some bad, has excluded it. The Filipino is here now and to the number of 50,000 or 60,000 and a new problem has arisen. The Mexican labor has never been a problem in the sense that these other nationals have been. His services are essential. (Parlier Progress, 2/11/1930).

The Parlier growers argued that grapes need a large supply of seasonal labor and that "white folks don't hanker to do the work in the summer heat (Parlier Progress, 2/6/1930)." One older grower put it this way: "The farmers here(Parlier) would have been up against it if we didn't have the Mexicans."[92]

As congressional leaders were debating the Mexican immigration question, the fields of Parlier were full of activity. The Great Depression, with all its political, social and economic ramifications, was provoking a great deal of labor protest.

Actually, the first labor protest by Mexicanos in Parlier took place as early as the 1922 harvest season (Jamieson, 1945:116).[93] Influenced by the Regional Confederation of Labor in Mexico, the Mexicanos formed a union, La Comision Honorifica, to deal directly with the employers and thereby eliminating the labor contractor. While their initial attempt failed, subsequent work stoppages did improve working contitions slightly. In the early 1930's a series of intensive strikes with demands ranging from better wages and working conditions to socialist revolution took place in and around Parlier (Jamieson, 1945). In 1933, for example, the Mexican farmworkers, in conjunction with the Cannery and Agriculture Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU), called strikes in both the fruit orchards and vineyards of Parlier (Parlier Progress, 8/22/1933).[94]

Active revolt by the farmworkers was also met with active repression from the growers. This period also marks the beginning

of the systematic use of state police to intervene on behalf of the growers in farm labor strikes (Federal Writers' Project, 1938a). While the farmworkers won some minor concessions without the backing of the rest of the working class movement, they were no match against the power of the grower associations and state apparatus.

One of the most reactionary of the grower groups to emerge during this period was the Associated Farmers. A chapter of this association existed in Parlier. Comprised of local growers, government agencies and the police apparatus (i.e., local and state police, and the Border Patrol), this organization joined in alliance to crush any farm labor organizing. In Parlier local growers organized ad hoc vigilante actions (including police terrorism) to curb local strikes and to jail strike organizers (Parlier Progress, 8/29/1933). Moreover, as Depression conditions intensified, many Mexicano/Chicano farmworkers, regardless of citizenship or class status were "repatriated" to Mexico (Hoffman, 1972). With racial attacks and vigilantism rampant in the fields, Mexicanos in Parlier lived in constant fear--fear of deportation, of Border Patrol raids, and of violent attacks. One Chicano who lived in Parlier during this period noted: "It was a very bad time for us Chicanos, the growers were going broke and they took it out on us."[95]

The Great Depression had another important impact on Parlier. Economically the town suffered severe setbacks: numerous packing houses closed down, the raisin processing plant relocated, many ranches were lost to the banks and one business after another collapsed. Parlier never reached the commercial activity and economic strength it had prior to the Depression.[96]

The period following World War II was highlighted by technological and industrial expansion of California's economy. Agribusiness, entrenched under corporate ownership and control (characterized by interlocking directorates, centralized policy-

making, integrated production and distribution processes, etc.) was the dominant political force in California.[97] Despite a brief anti-Mexican labor campaign by returning Anglo (G.I.s), Agribusiness elites were able to continue their utilization of the Mexicanos as their source of farm labor. They did so in part through the extension of the Bracero Program,[98] the hiring of new aliens, the use of undocumented workers, and with the assistance of the Mexican government and little resistance from organized labor.

The raisin growers of Parlier were quick to exploit this situation. Through the Sun Maid Raisin Cooperative, they attempted to maintain a wage scale that had remained static since 1917. Furthermore, local growers and merchants (often the same person or family) sold food and supplies at inflated prices to the workers on credit thus creating further grower profit and worker dependency.[99]

The Bracero Program allowed growers to recruit a labor force from Mexico, insuring a surplus labor supply while simultaneously depressing wages and preventing organized resistance. In practice the Bracero Program was a clear form of labor monopoly (Galarza, 1964). The Mexican nationals coming to work under the program were under contract and subject to government control. In the growers' eyes, the controlled-nature of the bracero made them a very desirable labor force.[100] In time, however, they would learn the myth of bracero submissiveness.[101]

Another method utilized by the growers to maintain their hegemony over the work force was to constantly recruit new alien workers. The strategy was to constantly replenish the work force with "new aliens" who could not effectively organize for higher wages or better working conditions. Growers felt these newer arrivals would be less apt to cause trouble, because the conditions in Mexico were worse. Likewise, they felt that more permanent workers were less likely to tolerate their oppressive conditions and more willing to organize to change them.[102] As one Parlier grower put it, "The problem is they (Chicanos) get too much education and

start to complain about work conditions."[103]

The final method of insuring minimum labor cost was the use of undocumented workers. If the supply of local workers were insufficient, or groups like the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, liberal Congressional leaders and clergy pressured growers to limit their use of braceros, many Parlier growers responded by making greater use of undocumented workers. In fact, interviews with growers, labor organizers and campesiños, indicate that Parlier growers did make extensive use of majados, so-called "wetbacks". For example, one grower, in a moment of candor, admitted that at times the majority of his picking crew has been "of questionable legal status."[104] Knowing the undocumented worker lives in constant of "La Migra" (the Border Patrol) growers would often hide them on their ranches. They slept under trees or in tents and eat food generally supplied by the growers. Growers, in turn, charge them inflated prices for these and other services (e.g. liquor and prostitutes).[105]

These conditions not only make the labor more tractable, but also added to the growers profit. They are literally forced to work for the lowest wages. Moreover, unlike the white working class unions (e.g. machine operators, Teamsters, etc.) who demand higher wages for their skills, the undocumented workers often receive the same meager wages whether they work as pruners, pickers, irrigators, machine operators, or truck drivers.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper has sought, through a case study of a small agricultural town, to outline the central structures and processes of capitalist agricultural development in California. More specifically, our focus has been on the influence of this capitalist mode of production on class formation and the organization of racial labor systems. Because of the nature of this research, the material presented here has been descriptive in nature. Such an approach,

while necessary for providing important detail, can mask the central interconnections and contradictions between major historical forces. We can only hope that our discussion has highlighted the more important historical details while not sacrificing the central theoretical issues.

The most salient feature of Parlier's history is the fact that the nature of capitalist production has shaped the life histories of Anglo-Americans as well as Chicanos and other racial minorities in this community. Both in terms of economic and political power, this form of production has created a class segmented society in which race has played a central role.

As a point of departure, we began with an analysis of the role pre-capitalist formations, particularly land-tenure during the Spanish and Mexican periods, played in the evolution of California agriculture. This was necessary in order to show how these early forms of land tenure at least minimally conditioned the form which capitalist agricultural production later took. As Marxist historian Robert Brenner states,"...the analysis of capitalist economic development required an understanding, in the first place, of the manner in which the capitalist social-productive relations underpinning the accumulation of capital on an extended scale originated" (1977:27). One important point, however, should be stressed. While material dynamics largely set the parameters within which social relations would develop, these dynamics did not absolutely determine the ultimate character of production that emerged (i.e., large-scale agribusiness). Put differently, the traditional form of large land holdings under the Mexican period greatly facilitated the fact that capitalist agriculture would rapidly surface as a large scale venture.

Capitalist agricultural production in Parlier followed the lead set by mining (industrial in organization and technique) and expeditiously shifted from extensive to intensive production. Each successive transformation was stimulated by technological changes and brought agriculture further in line with industrial production.

Parlier's introduction of raisin production as an intensive cash crop is a case in point. Only with the technological innovation of irrigation and the refrigerated freight car was such change possible. We pointed out the direct effect these technological changes had on the emergence of class relations in Parlier.

Unlike the large scale operations that characterize modern agribusiness, Parlier growers would maintain small to medium size farms. Several factors seem to be important in the preservation of small-scale production in Parlier. One factor is the mode of entry of the Parlier growers i.e. many originally came as family farm homesteaders. (Other sectors of the states's agriculture developed from large-scale capitalist land speculation). Another element is the fact that pockets of ethnic growers (particularly Armenians and more recently Japanese Americans) settled and developed the area. Strong cultural ties to community, coupled with the blockage from penetrating the infrastructure of agribusiness, have, no doubt, sustained this phenomenon.

A crucial point of the paper was the fact that intensive cultivation required large capital investments and increased labor. Thus, greater emphasis was placed on the creation of a cheap, exploitable labor force. And, most importantly, this labor force would be racial in form.

In succession, the Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican filled the demand for labor. From its beginning, therefore, Parlier's labor force was composed of racial minority workers. The racial stratification created here did have a material basis in the organization of agricultural production and was rationalized or justified by an evolving racial ideology.

The period of the transformation to intensive agricultural production also marks a vastly expanded and more systematic role

by the state in developing racial labor policies and establishing necessary conditions for capitalist development in California. A grower-state complicity emerged, as grower associations and bureaus worked in conjunction with the state to fix wage rates, thwart collective bargaining, and in other ways maximize private accumulation by agribusiness. (One important part of this complicity was the role that the University of California played in offering agribusiness their research expertise. Another was the systematic and coordinated use of local and state police power as an anti-labor force.)

It was the exploitative use of various racial groups, however, that made the most substantial contribution to Parlier's economy. The Chinese, for example, provided the backbreaking physical labor essential to grape production, provided expertise in irrigation techniques, and through their role in constructing the railroad, became the backbone of Parlier's early economic growth. Their further contribution was curtailed, however, when Parlier growers joined the anti-coolie hysteria which gripped California in the 1860's to 1880's. This sentiment would directly lead to the Chinese being driven from the fields.

The historical role of the Japanese labor force in Parlier is of particular importance because it was the first racial group to make a transition from farm laborers to farm owners. Their position as labor contractors, plus the availability of land contributed to this being possible. On the surface, their experience seems to raise some question about the underlying theme of this paper, namely that both racial and class oppression have a structural basis in the development of capitalist agriculture in Parlier. The Japanese case does not disprove our argument but rather sharpens our awareness of the saliency of <u>class</u> in this dualism. A number of historical factors outlined in the body of the paper account for the ascendency of the Japanese to the petit bourgeoisie class in Parlier. Of central importance is the fact that the Japanese, unlike the Chicanos

who would follow them, came during a period when land was still available and relatively inexpensive. Additionally, greater credit opportunities and less sophisticated state support of agribusiness provided limited opportunities to a small number of "labor bosses" to make the transition to land owners. Once the Anglo-based California Agribusiness infrastructure realized the Japanese were a threat to their hegemony, a series of Alien Land Acts and "Anti-Japanese" practices prevented them from moving beyond their petty bourgeois class position. Despite the fact that a small percentage ascended the ranks of agricultural laborers, they have only limited local economic and political power. The Japanese American has never been part of agribusiness' inner circle.

Chicanos were to eventually become the numerically dominant labor force in Parlier. Migrating from diverse locations throughout the southwest, midwest, and Mexico, their skills in grape production allowed Parlier to survive economically. Unlike the Japanese, the Mexican farmworker could not utilize the contract system to become land owners. By the time of their arrival land in Parlier was scarce and extremely expensive. Also, by this period the grower-state complicity against farm laborers had been fully entrenched. The Agriculture Labor Bureau, the grower Associations and state agencies had worked together to institutionalize a stable "reserve labor pool." Labor contractors were forced to side with the growers or go out of business. Moreover, the growers use of braceros and undocumented workers made labor organizing difficult.

Chicanos, like the other racial labor groups, resisted this organized oppression in a rather dramatic fashion. But again, the strength of the state in its alliance with agricultural interests and the lack of support from white labor unions severely impaired their efforts.

By the 1960's the steady growth of a permanent, and even majority, Chicano population in Parlier and La Colonia led to greater stability and cohesiveness among Chicanos. This, in turn, provide the basis for the type of political mobilization that resulted in the political revolt of 1972. It is hoped that this paper, while presenting a local case study of capitalist agricultural development, has also contributed to laying the historical groundwork for understanding why the Chicano political revolt would eventually occur.

FOOTNOTES

1. Parlier, California first came to my attention in 1972 when a headline appeared in a local Chicano newspaper claiming: "Chicanos Take Control of Small California town." Briefly summarized, in 1972 Chicanos won the majority of the City Council seats in this historically Anglo controlled community. The Chicanos electoral victory ended eighteen months of intensive political conflict which included: angry clashes between the police and Chicano youth, mass demonstrations, sniper attacks, incidences of arson, curfew violations, charges of police brutality, a local boycott, picket lines, as well as a recall campaign and intensive voter registration drive. An interest in the causes, process and consequences of the Chicano revolt in Parlier led to an interest in the history of the community.

2. This conquest and annexation was rationalized through racial ideologies prevalent before the conquest. The international debate of the sixteen century Spanish colonization, for example, was whether the Indio of America was "human" or "animal" i.e. whether she/he had a soul. Considered legal wards of the crown Indio laborers were treated like chattel. Their subjugation was justified by the religious ideology of the need to "christianize" the "savages". It was, however, during the debates over expansion and the Mexican War that we can detect the emergence of particular race theories that were to justify the war, expansion, and imperialist conquest of the Mexican people. The term "manifest destiny" was used to argue that the domination of the Western Hemisphere by the Anglo Saxon was both inevitable and predestined and that the natural boundaries for the United States were the Atlantic Ocean in the East and the Pacific Ocean in the West. The usurpation of Mexican land in California (and Southwest in general) was, therefore, the God-given right of the "superior" Anglo race. Social Darwinism provided the backbone of this line of thought--insuring the practice of racial oppression and racism. This use of racial ideology to acquire material wealth is of central importance for it is to continually be used to rationalize the exploitative role of Chicano and other racial laborers in Parlier and the Southwest in general.

3. Social scientists have pursued a debate as to whether the hacienda system was in fact feudal or capitalist. See Immanuel Wallerstein (1974); Maurice Dobb (1947); Andre Gunder Frank (1969); James Lockhart (1969); Eric Wolf (1966); Rodney Hilton, et al. (1976); and Perry Anderson (1974).

4. While emphasizing the point that the pre-capitalist order would have an impact on the capitalist agricultural formation, it should also be stressed that the lineage between the two was neither immutable nor totally deterministic. This is particularly important to point out in regards to Chicano history and culture. The life and society of the Californios, for example, was very different from the Mexicano/Chicano immigrant of the early twentieth century who would eventually settle in Parlier.

5. The land grant system, although not decisive, certainly did influence the subsequent agribusiness relations that emerged. It would create a basis for large-scale land ownership. As in the Mexican period, California came to be characterized by a disparity of wealth and power between land owners and workers. Anthropologist Walter Goldschmidt, in an important study of the industrial nature of California agriculture, points out the important social consequences of the land grants when he states:

> ...by 1934, 8.5 million of the 55 million acres... which had been transferred from the public domain to private ownership as Spanish grants. Their importance is, however, even greater than these figures indicate, first, because the lands under such grants include much of the state's finest, and second, because through the recognition of the Spanish tenure system the tradition of larger land holdings was continued in the American period (1947:6).

6. Such men as William Chapman, Henry Miller (Miller and Lux), Leland Stanford, and such companies as the Kern County Land Company made their initial fortunes during this period. These speculators got a large portion of their empires through extra-legal methods. Miller and Lux, for example, used agriculture college land script, dummy entries, coercion, and force to build their own million acre empire (Wilson and Clawson, 1945:13). Another example is Lloyd Tevis and James Haggins who incorporated the Kern County Land Company. The Kern County Land Company used the Desert Land Act, political patronage, false claims, oil depletion allowances and tax-loss farming to accrue a fortune. The Kern County Land Company was sold to Tenneco Corporation in 1967. Tenneco reported profits of 73.8 million in 1970 while paying no federal income tax (Barnes and Casalino, 1975:15).

7. The old timers in the town that remembered anything about I.N. Parlier have contradictory memories. One person, for example, recalled "This was a fine little community and Isaac Parlier had a lot to do with making it that way." (Interview, 8/20/74).

8. I.N. Parlier's original vineyards are among the most productive today in the valley. And they have the highest assessed valuation of any Fresno County property, according to the records of the tax assessor's office (Fresno Bee, 1/1/1923).

9. Specifically Thomas Jefferson held the position that:

> Whenever there is any country, uncultivated lands and unemployed poor, it is clear that the laws or property have been so far extended as to violate natural rights (in Barnes, 1975:3-4).

10. From historical documents at the Fresno County Historical Society, this seems to be a pattern for most of the small towns around Parlier. Also from random life histories conducted among the Anglo population of Parlier, it seems many of the early residents migrated from Missouri and Illinois.

11. For example, an editorial in the Parlier Progress against the monopoly of Pacific Telephone Company demonstrates this contradiction:

> Where any company has a monopoly of the business they are very liable to be very independent unless there is a big stick over their head which they know they cannot dodge (1911:VI).

12. The names that kept appearing as the local landowners, businessmen, fraternal organization leaders and politicians were: H.B. Quick, I.N. Parlier, J.F. Parlier, W.A. Bodsworth, C. Sayre, W.J. Lohman, J.F. Hayhurst, J. Hamilton, and R. Traber.

13. Interview with Parlier Resident, 7/8/74.

14. The Anglo petit bourgeoisie of Parlier had fraternal orders such as the Modern Woodmen of America, Royal Neighbors and Red Men (whose motto ironically was "Freedom, Friendship and Charity"). Membership in these exclusive fraternal orders was based on social class, and although somewhat related to economic position, it was much more clearly based on ethnicity.

15. The Japanese and Anglo ranchers had some contact via the various agricultural commodity organizations. But many social ties were completely absent. Likewise the Chicanos had contact via the Catholic Church, but again social events, even within the Church, were segregated Each subcommunity seemed to have an especially high degree of solidarity. Besides social segregation (forced) the ethnic subcommunities did not have equal access to the older institutions of the community.

16. Although many of the Armenian immigrants worked in the Parlier vineyards as farm laborers, unlike the Chinese, Japanese and Mexicano, they were not seen as a racial labor force, but instead came as vineyardists. As skilled and experienced vineyardists they played a significant role in the development of the raisin industry from the beginning of their settlement in Parlier. Many of the Christian Armenians fled to the United States between 1894 and 1921 as a result of severe religious repression and outright atrocities under the Turkish rule (Ottoman empire). A large number of them began arriving in Fresno County in 1915 and 1916. By 1920 there were colonies in Parlier (600 populated Parlier), Reedley, and Fresno (Mahakian, 1935:16). A significant point about their migration to the area is that they came "to start a new life." They had no aspirations of returning to their home country. Some tension separated Armenians from the other Anglo growers. One Anglo grower stated, "They were darn hard to get along with." An Armenian grower explained, "The Turks treated us pretty bad, and when we came to this country we didn't know how to handle it." Because of their Aryan background, the Armenians were not restricted by the Alien Land Acts and other institutional barriers prohibiting people of color to land ownership.

17. In the 1930's, a large number of "dust bowlers" displaced from their farms in Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas, also settled in Parlier. They scattered wherever work was to be found and many left once they found better jobs. Several that stayed, however, were critical figures in the 1972 revolt.

18. These same two developments were occurring elsewhere throughout California, and were major forces in the transition throughout the state from petty commodity production into modern agricultural capitalism.

19. Today Southern Pacific Railroad owns 3.8 million acres in California or 5% of the private land, including rich San Joaquin Valley crop lands, irrigated by the state and federal reclamation projects (paid for by taxpayers) and leased to Russell Giffen, Inc., the second largest farm operator in the United States, and Anderson, Clayton and Company, the largest cotton merchandiser in the world. In 1970, just on their mineral and timber rights (held in violation the law), Southern Pacific made 24 million dollars in profit (see Barnes and Casalino, 1974:4, and Fellmeth, 1973:1-29).

20. A railroad commission was set up in the State Constitution of 1879 to theoretically curb monopolistic practices by the railroad, but like most controlling agencies of the state apparatus it was stacked with people affiliated with the railroad interest. For an excellent account of how the railroad barons utilized their control and manipulation of the media, legislature, and legal system to maintain their power and privilege, see Stuart Daggett's Chapters of the History of Southern Pacific , (1922).

21. In 1894 a San Francisco capitalist (sugar refiner baron) Claus Spreckles, in reaction to the oppressive policies of Southern Pacific and backed by some San Francisco businessmen and San Joaquin Valley farmers, attempted to build an alternative railway system--the Valley Road. The project became a test of patriotism as posters appeared in Parlier encouraging local businessmen to champion the railway. By 1895 a station was constructed in Parlier, and the railway did directly contribute to the growth and prosperity of the town. But all hopes of it really being a peoples' railway were dispelled by 1898 when the Santa Fe Railroad bought it out.

22. The politics of water rights is best characterized by the current struggle over enforcement of the 160-acre limitation law. The National Reclamation Act of 1902 outlines this water limitation as follows:

> No right of the use of water land in private ownership shall be sold for a tract exceeding one hundred and sixty acres to any one landowner, and no such sale shall be made to any landowner unless he be an actual bona fide resident on such land, or occupant thereof residing in the neighborhood of said land...

Violations of this law by agribusinessmen has added to their dominance in areas like Parlier. Labor economist, Paul Taylor, and long-time fighter for fair distribution of water rights, points out the macro-political concerns of this battle:

> It is important to note that water subsidies from federal irrigation projects are estimated to range from $600 to $2,000 an acre. It is well also not to overlook the fact that reclamation, despite its location in the west, gives away public waters and public moneys that belong to the entire nation (in Barnes, 1975:116).

23. Interview with former water works engineer in Parlier, 7/29/74.

24. Because of the highly speculative nature of grape production (dependent on weather, market, etc.), community life is affected by both economic and psychological uncertainty and instability. Additionally, because of the speculative nature of grape production, the need for mechanization, dependence on the market economy, and capitalist features (such as banking, finance, credit, and similar institutions for example) began to play a more central role in the local political economy.

25. Goldschmidt, for example in comparing corporate and family farming states:

> ... 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. (1946:22).

He goes on to say:

> It is significant that only from a personal pecuniary calculus do large-scale operations appear advantageous over the more modest farming enterprises. Smaller units are more productive of total commodities, total income and people supported (1946:24).

A 1977 U.S. Senate Small Business Committee currently doing a follow-up study are confirming these 1946 conclusions. The following sources have also reached similar conclusions: Crop Reporter Magazine March 1974; North Central Regional Extension Publication 32, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Fortune August 1972; Division of Agricultural Sciences University of California, Davis, 1977; San Francisco Examiner, May 18, 1976. Even an Agricultural Report from Tenneco Inc. Houston, Texas, 1976 reports:

> From the standpoint of efficiency, there is not effective substitute for small-to-medium-sized independent growers who lives on or near his farmlands...

26. It was organized by M. Theo Kearney along business management lines. M. Theo Kearney was an interesting character in the local politics of Fresno County. His political stand was outspokenly anti-monopoly, yet his method of organization was clearly the first attempt to utilize technocratic practices to organize growers. He was also, like most of the Association members, actively racist (at this time particularly toward the Chinese). The bulk of this discussion on the development of Sun Maid Raisin Growers of California was extracted from interviews of growers of the area (especially informative was an interview on 8/2/74 of an ex-director of the association), from files at the Fresno County Historical Society and Fresno Bee newspaper.

27. By 1931, stock holders and bankers took control of Sun Maid. Merchandising, advertising, and production personnel were brought into the administration of the organization (Fresno Bee Golden Jubilee Edition, October 23, 1935).

28. For a general analysis of the transformation of agricultural production "under the sway of capital" and its effects on labor see Karl Marx, Capital (1967: Vol. I, 500-533).

29. For a more elaborate discussion as to whether the Mexican/Chicano labor was, in reality, free or unfree see Andrés Jiménez Montoya, "Political Domination in the Labor Market: Racial Division in the Arizona Copper Industry", Institute for the Study of Social Change, Working Paper Series #103, U.C. Berkeley, 1977. Jiménez argues: "The formation of the labor force in the United States can be seen as involving a mix of free and unfree labor situations, incorporating both the experience of colonization and immigration as part of the process. As in the case of classical colonialism labor-repressive situations have been tied to the manipulation of racial groups distinct from white European phenotypes, generating a structure of social relationships between the groups involved and the society at large which distinguish them as separate communities." (p.10).

30. Here I use profit in the Marxist sense as a major form (rent and interest being the others) of capitalist appropriation of surplus value. Or as Marx states:

> What, then, is the general law which determines the rise and fall of wages and profit in their reciprocal relation? They stand in inverse ratio to each other. Capital's share, profit, rises in the same proportion as labour's share, wages fall, and vice versa. Profit rises to the extent that wages fall; it falls to the extent that wages rise. (1975:44)

31. Speaking specifically to agriculture, Karl Marx notes in Volume I of Capital:

> As soon as capitalist production takes possession of agriculture, and in proportion to the extent to which it does so, the demand for agricultural labouring population falls absolutely, while the accumulation of the capital employed in agricultural advances, without repulsion being, as in non-agricultural industries, compensated by greater attraction...The agricultural labourer is therefore reduced to the minimum of wages, and always stands with one foot already in the swamp of pauperism.

32. The argument was that these "inferior races" were the only ones who would do this backbreaking work in the baking sun and so should be imported as laborers on that basis.Their slum housing, uneducated children, poor diet, and cultural difference further reinforced the view of them being an "inferior" race. (see issues of the Pacific Rural Press).

33. This pattern seems to be changing in current times as far as Chicanos are concerned. The grower's general policy is that labor crew (cuadrillas) be constituted of only one kind of Chicano. For example, in the Salinas Valley of California, growers use crews of: 1) recent Texas and Mexican emigrants and immigrants; and 2) Chicanos who have been in California for a longer period. The logic, however, is the same, i.e. to keep them from organizing and demanding better wages. With Chicano/Mexicanos being the primary farm labor group hierarchy and division has been converted from inter-racial to intra-racial.

34. The term agricultural reserve labor pool is not used here in the classic sense that Marx used in Capital. On the one hand, it is being used to simply point out the consciously created situation of labor surplus as a result of employer (and contractors') efforts at labor recruitment. But on a more theoretical level, unlike Marx's analysis of a reserve labor pool of agricultural workers of displaced peasants (who, as a result of changes in English agriculture, were forced from their traditional labor arrangements), in California we have the case in which a reserve labor pool is created from a tractable migratory labor force brought from other areas specifically for the harvest season. Marx's original analysis, however, is quite applicable in terms of the consequences, as he states: "...this surplus population becomes, conversely, the level of capitalist accumulation, nay, a condition of the existence of the capitalist mode of production... it creates, for the changing need of the self-expansion of capital, a mass of human material always ready for exploitation (Marx, 1967:637).

35. The Associated Farmers of California was formed in 1933 on the suggestion of the California Chamber of Commerce, Farm Bureau Federation, University of California College of Agriculture and various grower associations and bureaus. The Associated Farmers, it is important to point out, was a direct response to the Great Cotton Strike of 1933. The Associated Farmers was openly organized to plan strategies and tactics to prevent future strikes and general labor organizing. Their barrage of tactics included: "storm-troop mobilization, burning crosses, lynch mob tactics, and highly developed espionage system in cahoots with local law enforcement (Draper, 1968:5)." Professor Auerbach, in his study of the La Follette Committee, summarizes the effects of the Associated Farmers as follows:

> Various chapters of Associated Farmers utilized blacklist, espionage, strike breaking, pressure for anti-picketing legislation, and vigilante tactics in order to stifle organization by workers. This record, the La Follette Committee reported, indicated a conspiracy "designed to prevent the exercise of their civil rights by oppressed wage laborers in agriculture, that anti unionism could muster." Where Associated Farmers successfully implemented its policies the committee concluded, local fascism was the result (1966:187).

36. Carey McWilliams states that the labor bureau has the following function:

> Under this type of control, the growers in a given area, involved in the production of a particular crop, would create an employment agency of exchange. This agency would estimate the labor requirements for the coming harvest season, fix prevailing wage rate and then proceed to recruit the necessary workers... Under this practice, the workers more and more began to be employed by the industry rather than the individual grower...As a consequence, the bargaining power of the growers, through their collective action, was greatly increased at the same time that the workers were wholly without organization and for their own protection (1971:111)

Ernesto Galarza adds to this:

> Its (labor pool) effects were therapeutic as well as economic. Commercial farmers suffer from an occupational nervousness around harvest time...A margin of extra harvest hands offered insurance in two respects. It guaranteed the gathering of the crop, and, by keeping the supply rather than the demand side competitive, held prices down (1964:36).

37. In 1924 the U.S. Congress created a special police force as an arm of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, entitled the United States Immigration Service Border Patrol. This body was charged with enforcing the federal immigration laws, especially in terms of preventing illegal alien entry or contraband into the United States (illegal entry of undocumented Chinese farm labor through Mexico was the specific issue which prompted the creation of the Border Patrol). It however, quickly became a tool of Agribusiness--strictly enforcing the law only when it was in the political and economic interest of the ruling class. See U.S. Seventy-First Congress, "Immigration Border Patrol," Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, House, Washington, D.C., 1930.

38. The ironic note is that the small farmers of Parlier would have benefitted greatly by supporting and forming alliances with the farmworkers--for they themselves were increasingly coming under the domination of conglomerate Agribusiness interests. Dolores Huerta, vice-president of the United Farmworkers Union makes this point as she states:

> It is unfortunate that small growers who are not unionized are so blinded with bigotry against unionization, because we have many problems in common--the lack of bargaining power and political power.

But as is so often the case with racial oppression and racism, emotion obscured rational judgement and pushed the Parlier Growers farther and farther into their reactionary position.

39. If not always by "official" policy, certainly it was the "unofficial" modus operandi--see the reports housed at the Agricultural Library, University of California, Davis, as well as the grower trade bulletins and journals, e.g. Pacific Rural Press.

40. The attitude that the police apparatus throughout the Valley had for Mexican people is best summed up by a quote from a Kern County undersheriff:

> We protect our farmer here...They keep us going. They put us here and they could put us out again, so we serve them. But the Mexicans are trash. They have no standard of living. We herd them like pigs. (As quoted in McWilliams: 1949:111).

The Federal Writers' Project reports seem to suggest that the first systematic use of state police in California was in farm labor disputes. Further research on the relationship between the development of state police and agribusiness should prove to be very revealing.

41. Several long-time Chicano residents of Parlier recall incidents where the police and local growers got together to harass campesiños. One Chicano reflected on how he had to pay the judge to get his brother out of jail for being drunk, while he had seen white growers who had too much to drink driven home by the same police (interview 12/18/73).

42. The constant reference in the literature to Chinese, Filipino, Mexican, etc. as "cheap" labor is evidence of an inferior wage scale for racial labor groups, see Taylor, 1934; California, Department of Industrial Relations, 1930; and Brigg, 1973.

43. Recent studies of Santa Barbara (Camarillo, 1975), Los Angeles (Griswold Del Castillo, 1975), El Paso (Garcia, 1975) and South Texas (Mantejano, 1977) all provide empirical evidence that a wage differential or "dual wage system" existed between Chicano/Mexicano workers and Anglo workers--Anglos receiving a higher wage for the same work. Paul Taylor in his early work also indicates the existence of a "dual wage" in the California fields (1936). For a theoretical discussion of this point see Mario Barrera, Class Segmentation and Internal Colonialism, (forthcoming) Mario Garcia, in his recent study of Chicanos in the El Paso labor market, refers to the subordination of Chicanos not only in labor but in all aspects of social life as racial dualism. "Such a duality based on the supposed racial and cultural 'underdevelopment' of the Mexicans," he argues, "served to maintain the economic advantages as well as the social privileges which the Anglo-American population derived from a large pool of surplus Mexican labor: (1975:198). From our above discussion it is clear that racial dualism existed in Parlier. The stratification of Chicanos and other racial minorities into a subordinate position

in the California agricultural labor market is hardly surprising, however, given the fact that the United States has historically used racial domination to subordinate racial minorities. Harold Baron states: "Along with the modern nation and state, racism is a major social formation which grew symbiotically with the ascent of capitalist system." Tomás Almaguer further agrues, using Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system perspective, that racial and class oppression are part of the structure and organization of the world capitalist system (1977; also see Wallerstein, 1976).

44. One author of the history of agriculture labor, for example in discussing white labor reaction to the Mexicano, notes:

> ...the American labor movement elected to discriminate against the Mexican in an effort to protect living and working conditions and thereby created a breach in solidarity of labor which has continued to the present time. The strategy of American labor was, first, to exclude the Mexican if possible; and failing this to subordinate him by forcing him to undesirable jobs and by creating an ethnic wage differential for the same jobs (McWilliams, 1971:149).

This raises the whole question of who benefits from racism. Recent studies have shown that white workers are also negatively affected by racial discrimination and racial oppression, for example, wages are lowered for all workers, prevents unified collective bargaining, etc. (Szymanski, 1976; Reich, 1971). In light of this evidence, the reactions and attitudes (or lack of them) of the white labor movement are not isolated phenomena, but systematic manifestations of a social order based on class as well as racial privileges which included gains in both the strictly economic sense as well as in the general or social sense. As we have argued before, the economic and the social are intimately tied in a dialectical fashion. Other studies have argued that white workers benefit from white racism and economic discrimination against Chicanos and other racial minorities (Blauner, 1972; Baron, 1971; and Prager, 1972).

45. For examples of recent scholars who have attempted to reconstruct agricultural labor history from the critical perspective of labor, see: Yuji Ichioka, "Early Issei Socialist and the Japanese Community" in Amerasia (1971); Ronald Lopez, "The El Monte Berry Strike of 1933," in Aztlan (Spring 1970); and Juan Gómez-Quiñones, "The First Steps: Chicano Labor Conflict and Organizing, 1900-1920" in Aztlan (Spring 1970); and Aztlán (Special Issue on Labor History and the Chicano), Vol. 6, no. 2 (Summer 1975).

46. In my analysis of the contributions to California agriculture made by racial groups, I have omitted several groups that played an important role in this development. For example, the Filipino, the Hindu, the Native American, and Black; all were significant in this development, but none of these groups has been a significant population in the labor force of Parlier. Also, the white lower class farm laborer--the so-called "fruit tramp"--has gone unrecorded in my study.

47. For a detailed analysis of this series of events, see Ira Cross, A History of the Labor Movement in California (1935:19-88); Heizer and Almquist, The Other Californians (1971:164-178); and Lucille Eaves, A History of California Labor Legislation (1910:Ch. 3).

48. Lucile Evans gives an excellent analysis of the inter-relationship between the "anti-coolie" agitation and the legal order when she states:

> This origin of anti-Chinese legislation is shown in the relationship which the different groups of laws bear to each other. The regulation made in the miner's meetings are repeated in the state laws and even in the Federal statutes; the demands of the labor unions are reflected by the state legislature; while the futile attempts at state exclusion furnish the models for federal laws regulating immigration (1910:77).

49. Even the anti-capital, socialist-oriented Workingmen's Party was thoroughly anti-coolie. This issue, in fact, was one of their mobilizing points. This was part of the false consciousness that developed among the working class in their heightened struggle with capital. Instead of uniting with the Chinese workers to organize for workers rights, many radical workers' organizations accepted the white supremist racial ideology that the Chinese were taking the white working class jobs. This caused these organizations to transfer their own frustrations from class exploitation to the Chinese (see Cross, 1935:183; Eaves, 1910:111).

50. From a macroscopic perspective the treatment of Chinese had the following importance: 1) techniques of exclusion were tested and institutionalized; 2) the national political strength of California was demonstrated vis making the "Chinese Question" a national question and foreign policy priority; 3) Chinese Question heightened the contradiction of U.S. capitalist international relations, i.e. the government wanted open trade with China but not Chinese immigration; and 4) the ruling elite used Chinese labor as a diversion for capital-labor conflicts.

51. For a more detailed discussion of the Japanese in California agriculture, see K.K. Kawakami, The Real Japanese Question (1921); Shichiro Matsui, Economic Aspect of the Japanese

Situation in California (1919); Japanese Agricultural Association, Japanese Farmers in California (1913); Kaizo Naka, Social and Economic Conditions Among Japanese Farmers in California (1913); H.A. Millis, The Japanese Problem in the United States (1915); and Fred Yoder, "The Japanese Rural Community" (1936).

52. Interview with a Japanese American small farmer family in Parlier on August 8, 1974. The Parlier Progress indicates that Japanese farmworkers came to Parlier as early as 1889, but left because of Anglo hostility. They did not resettle until after the turn of the century (4/12/1914).

53. Many of the Japanese who migrated to the mainland were, according to labor economist Ira Cross, "members of the poorest...classes, and more than one-half were agriculturist (1935:363)."

54. In 1882 only 55 Japanese resided in California, and by 1910 more than 72,000 lived in California. Interview with old-time Parlier grower, 8/20/73. Also, in his work on the Japanese in the United States for the Commission on Relations with Japan, Professor Millis of the Economics Department of the University of Kansas provided some concrete empirical data that demonstrates that the Japanese farm laborers (through labor bosses) did underbid other farm laborers (1915:111-124).

55. The Japanese Agriculture Association explains this period as:

> ...a history of laborious years with no profits, hardships endured, losses suffered and life lived under all sorts of adverse conditions. Water was scarce and bad, undrained marshes produced clouds of malaria mosquitos, there was no such thing as sanitation, the winds swept unrestrained...Three thousand Japanese lost their lives in the earlier days of development of Fresno County. (1913:25)

56. One very significant strike that occurred in California during this period that served as both an inspiration and lesson for the overall farmworker struggle was the sugar beet strike in Oxnard, California in 1903. The Oxnard strike occurred during a time when heavy trade union organizing was going on in the urban centers of California (trade unionism, of course, had its actual roots in the periods between 1860-1869). This urban unrest spread to the fields, but ironically, was directed more at anti-Oriental agitation than attempts to unite all workers. Despite the racist attitude of white trade unionists, the strike itself was important for two reasons: 1) the formation of the Japanese-Mexican Labor Association showed the strength of racial solidarity, and 2) it clarified the solidarity and tactics of the enemy (a collusion of local businessmen, growers, sheriff department, and state police) in attempting to break the strike.

57. Ichioka goes on to state that the aims of the Fresno Labor League were: 1) to prevent the lowering of wages and to secure the highest possible wages, 2) to vigorously attack unfair competition of corrupt contractors, and 3) to unify members to take concerted action to elevate the status of workers and gain the confidence of grape growers (1971:39).

58. In an interview with a long time labor organizer of the Fresno area (8/8/75), I was told that the I.W.W. chose the Fresno area for their organizing effort because "it was a strategic hub of migrant labor stream."

59. The Wobblies concentrated on organizing farmworkers and carrying out strikes, not only for the better immediate conditions, but to promote class consciousness and worker solidarity for a revolutionary transformation to Socialism. They saw the socialist movement as a piecemeal reformism failing to meet the needs of the most oppressed, and moving further away from a Socialist alternative. Organizing under the slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all," the Wobblies were one of the new white working class union to uphold the racial minorities' rights to self-determination while stressing racial solidarity and unity.

60. There were strikes in Parlier in both 1914 and 1916 during the grape picking season reportedly incited by the I.W.W. (Parlier Progress, 7/6/1917). Evidently the sentiment of the Parlier growers seemed to be much more hostile toward the I.W.W. organizers than it did against the Japanese Labor League. An editorial in the Parlier Progress called the I.W.W. "past civilization," stating "we have always supposed from their actions, the I.W.W. means 'I Won't Work' (1911:v.1, no.5)." Another editorial stated:

> The general concensus of opinion is that a rock pile, woodpile, or a chain gang would solve the question and do it quickly, and at the same time pay the country for its trouble with this pestiferous gang of "sunbaskers" (Parlier Progress, 1/12/1911).

61. The use of criminal syndicalism law to jail radical organizers was an important tool used by the State. Vague in meaning, it leaves quite a lot of room for interpretation by local law enforcement officials and judges. The law, like most conspiracy-type laws, was used solely to protect the ruling class (i.e. agribusiness) from radical challenges to its domination. The law was a contradiction to both the general principles of common law and democracy, in that it persecuted individuals (groups) for advocating social justice.

62. Japanese American labor historian Yuji Ichioka in a sense argues that the Japanese contractor even served as a labor leader. He states:

> Hence, whenever Japanese contractors resorted to short strikes before the harvest season, refused to scab against other Japanese, regulated the supply of labor to seek higher wages, defines territorial rights, and even boycotted certain growers, they were functioning as quasi-labor leaders (1972:36).

63. Agricultural economist Adam Poli adds:

> Landowners, particularly those who leased to eligible Japanese on a share basis, found renting to Japanese profitable. This was due to the Japanese tenants' skill and diligence in farming operations which resulted in higher yields, with consequent greater financial return to the landlords. Leasing also simplified the labor problem, because the Japanese tenant's previous experience as "bosses" gave them an advantage in obtaining the large working forces needed during peak labor seasons (1944:17).

64. Also as rural sociologist Fred Yoder has pointed out the Japanese farmworkers brought with them a cooperative society through the organizational experience of the Imperial Agriculture Society. This Society sponsored and supported local agriculture technicians to provide contracts between farmers and technicians, to arrange discussions and lectures on agricultural subjects, and to provide cooperative buying, selling and utilization societies (1936:423-424).

65. The Japanese Agriculture Association (1913:29) also noted that "according to bankers, a Japanese farmer will pay off his mortgages more quickly than anyone else."

66. According to economist Kaizo Naka, by 1912, 3,000 Japanese were in Fresno county, and they operated over 18,000 acres (1918:70).

67. It must be emphasized that from the beginning of Japanese immigration to California the Japanese immigrants were used as "pawns" in the international struggle between Japan and the United States for control of the Pacific Rim (i.e. the trade route of China ports, Latin America, Australia and parts of Asia). Dr. Robert E. Park, a leading race theorist of the time, called the Pacific Coast "our racial frontier." And the leading anti-Japanese agitators led by William Randolph Hearst, Senators McClatchy and Phelan, and Governor Johnson, called the Japanese situation in California a "grand conspiracy by the Mikado (Japanese Emperor) to colonize and eventually control the Pacific Coast...and the only remedy being immediate and absolute exclusion (McClatchy, 1920:25)." The ironic and contradictory position of the United States was that although it wanted exclusion of the Japanese, at the same time it wanted to maintain an open door policy with Asia (and the Japanese ports).

68. This period saw the rise of the Asiatic Exclusion League dedicated to the eradication of the Asian in California. They had great influence on the development of public consciousness in the "Japanese Question," and many argued that the present day stereotypes of the Japanese (i.e. cunning, shifty, sneaky, etc.) had their roots during this period (see Almquist and Heizer, 1971:178-195). In the elections of 1908 and 1912 both the Democrats and Republicans and even the Socialist parties ran on anti-Asiatic platforms. For a flavor of California sentiment towards Japanese, see the various articles in a special issue of Survey (May 1926) on the "Pacific Frontier" included are articles on Japanese art and culture, Japanese American farmers in California, case studies of the communities of Livingston and Florin, and several articles on race relations. Also compare the propaganda of the Japanese Agricultural Association with that of the Asian Exclusion League (e.g. Japanese Farmers in California (1918); Our Racial Problem (1920).

69. From interviews of older Anglo residents of Parlier, I discovered very positive Anglo sentiment to the Japanese people. Such comments as: "They are wonderful people," "they are clean and hard working," "they are good neighbors," "they are no trouble" were common responses. Clearly some of these same people were involved in the Anti-Asian movement of the time, but I feel their views today are distorted by the current conditions and political climate of the area. For example, many Anglo and Japanese American growers are united against the United Farmworkers Union. Likewise, some Japanese Americans initially sided with the Anglo political leaders during the Chicano political revolt of 1972.

70. Another editorial in the Japanese Exclusion League (1/5/1914) called for a "vociferous campaign through newspaper propaganda against the Japanese people in California." It goes on, however, to state that the League would be "noble" if it were based on "genuine principles" such as "an attempt to keep California from being colonized by anything but the American race" or to "protect the interests of American from gradual land control by an alien race (emphasis added)."

71. The most energetic supporters of the Executive Ordere were the California Growers-Shippers Association that were once again beginning to feel the economic threat of the second-generation Nesei Japanese American farmers. So again, an act that was pushed into practice by racial hysteria and fear had material roots for certain economic interests, i.e. Anglo-controlled agribusiness.

72. Interview with Japanese American resident of Parlier, 8/20/74.

73. Interview wity ex-city clerk, 8/24/74, in Parlier.

74. Discussions with 10 Japanese American families confirm this phenomenon.

75. Interview with Japanese American high school counselor, 8/16/74.

76. For example, one Japanese American farmer whose three sons and daughter have left the farm stated that he has recently had several offers to sell to corporate interests (interview, 8/21/74).

77. Interview with operators of Parlier Farm Service, Inc., 8/17/74. They also pointed out most of the old Japanese farmworkers roam between Lodi and Parlier and occasionally pick up a job in Washington or Oregon when they feel like traveling. They also indicated these men have vivid memories of their past which would provide a rich sociological study.

78. One of the most interesting and perplexing sociological phenomena with respect to Parlier's Japanese American population, and one worth further study is the Nisei Farmers League (NFL). It was organized by the Japanese farmers of the Fresno area, and is currently headed by a Parlier Japanese American grower (although the League is also comprised of small/medium Anglo growers). The League is organized to directly challenge and keep the United Farmworkers' Union organizers and members from the fields. It is an interesting historical reflection that the NFL has become an oppressor of the UFW (largely Chicano and Filipino) when the leading forces of the NFL, the Japanese-Americans, occupied the very same position (exploited labor) they they are now fighting. The NFL has set up counter-picket lines, encouraged scabs to cross union picket lines, and supp-orted the physical expulsion of workers from the very fields they themselves were forced out of prior to World War II!

79. For a more detailed discussion of Mexicano/Chicano agriculture labor in California, see Ernesto Galarza, Merchants of Labor (1964); Sam Kushner, The Long Road to Delano (1975); Paul Taylor, Mexican Labor in the United States (1932); Federal Writers' Project, Organization Efforts of Mexican Agriculture Workers (1939a); Carlos Cortes (ed.), Mexican Labor in the United States (1974). For two primary sources that capture the descriptive and analytical interpretation of both the Mexican workers and the growers, see The Paul Taylor Collection at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley and The Ernesto Galarza Collection at the Stanford Library, Stanford University.

80. See Victor Clark, "Mexicans in the United States" (1908); John Martinez, "Mexican Emigration to the United States, 1910-1930" (1957); Manuel Gamio, The Mexican Immigrant (1969); and Paul Taylor, Mexican Labor in the United States (1932).

81. Interviews with various families in Parlier, summer 1973.

82. Statistical data on Mexican immigration is highly inaccurate. This is due partly to the general inaccuracy in census data as a whole but more specifically to the migratory nature of the population and the large number of undocumented workers. Most of the reports are, therefore, conservative estimates (see Martinez, 1947; Taylor, 1932).

83. According to agricultural economist Varden Fuller the general economic argument of the growers demanding access to Mexican labor went as follows:

1) Employers were not able to obtain any other labor. The statement of this argument varied over a wide range. In some instances the extreme position was taken that there was an absolute scarcity of unskilled labor of all classes and races. The more moderate and more usual statement, however, was that white labor refused to perform the unpleasant or "menial" tasks of agriculture which required working in uncomfortable positions in uninviting climate or other working conditions. White people were being educated to seek "white collar jobs" and managerial work and were thus no longer available for employment in the more elementary functions of agriculture.

2) If Mexicans were not available to perform these "menial tasks," agricultural production would stagnate and thus depress the level of economic welfare of all other industries in California. The terms of the statement of this argument also varied over a wide range of variations. In its extreme form, it was asserted that absolute stagnation and ruination of all agriculture was a prospect if Mexican immigration were greatly restricted. In its most mild manner, it was stated that cutting off of additions to the Mexican labor supply would mean higher production costs and that the consumer would be forced to pay higher prices for food farm products.

3) Mexicans were ideal farm laborers who constituted a very important economic asset to the community. The Mexican was a "homer" who shunted back and forth across the border as his services were required. Thus he did not become an immigrant and did not give rise to social and racial problems...the Mexicans constituted a desirable addition to the population, for they were a class of people who always would be content with performing the menial tasks, thus leaving other people free to engage in a higher order of enterprise (1940:19863).

84. Interview with Parlier grower, August 1974.

85. The propagandist calling the Mexican lazy, ignorant, docile, unwholesome, low grade, criminal, etc. spared no adjectives in describing their undesirability. Roy Garis, Professor of Economics at Vanderbilt College, stated:

> It made little sense...to exclude more desirable European immigrants, while admitting thousands of unskilled, illiterate, and lazy Mexicans who pose serious problems of racial assimilations, filled American penal institutions and burdened the welfare system (as quoted in Mohl, 1973:134).

86. La Colonia, because it is unincorporated, had no official voice in the political affairs of Parlier. Beside being politically powerless, they were isolated socially, culturally, and economically from the non-Chicano population of Parlier.

87. In 1921 Parlier incorporated to obtain the benefits of county services. Many ranchers moved into the central city to open businesses or work in the packing houses. Throughout the 20's, 30's, and 40's Chicanos slowly began to populate the community on a more permanent basis (interview with Anglo ex-mayor 8/20/74 an old time Chicano resident).

88. A few Chicanos became small ranch managers (today there are only two Spanish surnames listed as owners of property in Parlier--Tax Assessors Report, 1974) or entrepreneurs opening small stores, Mexican restaurants, beauty parlors, bars, gas stations, tortillerias, etc. As some of the Chicanos in La Colonia became "upwardly mobile," they purchased the better housing in Parlier proper. By the 1960's, the previously all-white businesses and neighborhoods were integrated (at least physically) and, although still politically powerless and economically oppressed, Chicanos constitue the majority population of both Parlier and La Colonia.

89. The Mexicano labor contractor was often aided in this recruitment by coyotes (labor smugglers). Today coyotes have an organized and profitable business smuggling undocumented workers across the border to the fields and various industries which exploit their labor and blame them for the current high unemployment rates.

90. This factor may be another key contrast between the Japanese and Mexicano labor contractor. By the time the Mexicano farmworker and labor contractor came into prominence the growers had developed more sophisticated techniques to use the contractor as a control agent against labor. Also, the increased competition among contractors and the proximity of the border most likely gave the growers greater leverage in controlling the contractors and insuring that they serve the grower's interests.

91. Many of the restrictionists united in the "American Coalition" under the slogan "To Keep America American." Their views varied. Some feared radicalism; others feared "racial suicide" or mixture with "inferior races;" others feared the destruction of the nation through loss of homogeneity (see Taylor, 1930:footnotes 1 & 2).

92. Interview with Parlier grower 8/7/1975.

93. Again some authors of the time used racist arguments to explain that Mexicans were unable to organize unions. A leading sociologist of the Chicago School of Sociology, Emory Bogardus, for example, stated:

> Easily satisfied, the Mexican did not organize troublesome labor unions, and it was held that he was not educated to the level of unionism (1927:477).

Chicano historian Juan Gomez-Quiñones, on the other hand, points out in his work that the Mexicano coming to the California fields, in fact, came with a high degree of political consciousness and expertise in labor organizing (1973:23).

94. Recognizing the exploitation of Mexican and Chicano workers throughout the state, a Federation of Mexican Societies was organized in Los Angeles in 1927. The Federation adopted a resolution calling upon the mutual and benefit societies to "lend their financial and moral support to organizing unions of Mexican labor (Federal Writers' Project, 1939a:8)." And in 1928 the Confederation de Uniones Obreras Mexicanas (modeled after the Regional Confederation of Labor in Mexico) was formed with the ideological commitment to the "betterment of conditions of the exploited classes, and at least its complete freedom from capitalist tyranny (1939a:10). Their program called for class unity and a "single union of all labor of the world."

    This communist-influenced ideology and organization found its way to the field by way of the formation of La Union de Trabajadores del Valle Imperial, with strikes occurring among canteloupe pickers in 1928, 1929, and 1930. These strikes drew both statewide working class support, as well as direct police intervention and violence and repression from the growers and the state.

95. Interview with long-time Chicano resident of Parlier. Overall, the struggles of the early 1930's demonstrated several important things: 1) the extent of influence that Agribusiness had over the state apparatus; 2) the speed and heavy handedness the state would use as a response to any direct challenge to capital interests; 3) the limitations of labor organizing solely along racial or national lines; and 4) the lack of a clear and coherent ideology and leadership needed to successfully guide the farmworker struggle against these formidable obstacles.

96. The local elite did not attract outside industry like the surrounding towns (e.g. Sanger had fertilizer, chemicals and farm machinery companies; Reedley, lumber, piping, and farm tools, etc.). As a result, the only current industry in Parlier is Calspun Mills which employs 150 workers mostly women, youth and undocumented workers. (Interview Calspun employee 8/27/74).

97. Ernesto Galarza points out the irony that Agribusiness denies its conglomerate nature by its very own code. The California Agriculture Code, Chapter 4, Section 1190 states:

> It is here recognized that agriculture is characterized by individual production in contrast to the group or factory system that characterizes other forms of individual production (1950:8).

98. Considering the historical record of bad faith, Mexico was hesitant to enter any agreements with the U.S. Also fresh in Mexico's memory was the deportation of over 50,000 Mexicano workers from the United States which added a heavy burden to Mexico's already burdened economy. The United States, however, promised to carry the burden of transportation costs, pay the prevailing wage, uphold Mexican workers civil rights, and to provide decent living conditions. Mexico agreed. Each of these guarangees were subsequently violated, and the Bracero Program itself managed to survive as an institution (despite guarantees of termination with the end of the war) until 1964 (Galarza, 1964).

99. Interview with Chicano community organizer in Parlier July 28, 1973.

100. A special committee of the Governor of California best summed up the version of the Bracero Program when it stated:

> Mexican workers...should constitute a flexible group which can be readily moved from operation to operation and from place to place where local help falls short of the number needed to save the crops. These workers should be in a sense, a "shock troop"..... (Galarza, 1966:55).

101. The myth of braceros as subservient and submissive workers was not an accurate, factual description of them. As Galarza states: "The conversation in the camps, the work stoppages in the fields, the desertions, the violations which were obvious even to casual observers, the private legal actions...all were symptoms of a distress which was not officially recorded (1964: 141)." This is further evidenced by the fact that in 1947 one of the largest agricultural strikes in California history took place against the DiGiorgio Fruit Corporation of Kern County. This strike created the impetus for the formation of the National Agricultural Workers Union (multi-racial and ideologically committed to non-violence), which in turn led to the formation of the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) headed by Ernesto Galarza. This was the predecessor to the Cesar Chavez led UFW.

102. The racist ideology that second or third generation Chicanos were "smart and lazy" appeared in the literature as early as 1908 (see Clark, 1908:499).

103. Interview with a Parlier grower, 8/20/75.

104. Interview with Parlier grower July 16, 1973.

105. This is not always the case. Some undocumented workers found shelter with friends or relatives living in Parlier and La Colonia or the private migrant labor camps which do not always question the legal status of their residents. A number of interviews from different sources indicated, however, that the harboring of "illegals" by growers was common practice.

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