KATHRYN OLMSTED

Bleeding Edge: New Deal Farm Labor Mediation in California and the Conservative Reaction

On October 18, 1933, George Creel alighted from his airplane and stepped onto the dusty tarmac in California's San Joaquin Valley on a mission from the president. Two weeks earlier, when some eighteen thousand cotton pickers left the fields in the largest labor strike in U.S. agricultural history, the growers had responded with violence, inciting vigilantes to attack strike meetings and murder three picketers. Creel, the National Recovery Administration chief for the West Coast, was determined to force the employers to the bargaining table and mediate the dispute before the valley's cotton crop went to seed, along with the New Deal's hopes for national recovery.

After visiting the strike camps, meeting with the leaders in jail, and threatening and cajoling the growers, Creel accomplished his task. In the end, the growers agreed to raise the workers' wages by 25 percent, the pickers harvested the cotton crop, and Creel resolved the crisis.[1]

Six months later, in March 1934, General Pelham Glassford traveled to a different valley in California on a similar mission: to end an agricultural labor dispute and force the growers of Imperial County, in the far southeastern corner of the state, to stop sponsoring vigilante terror against striking workers. Like Creel, Glassford plunged into the crisis, interviewing dozens of workers, growers, and Communist union leaders, as well as visiting farms, conducting hearings, and gathering facts for his bosses in Washington. Also like Creel, Glassford did not hesitate to advocate for the workers. In the end, he issued a public report accusing the growers of welcoming communist agitation

THE JOURNAL OF POLICY HISTORY, Vol. 26, No. 1, 2014.

doi:10.1017/S0898030613000377

because it gave them an excuse to encourage vigilante attacks. He denounced local officials as "crooks" and "tools" who served the interests of the richest growers.[2]

And then, after concluding that the growers did not pay a living wage, after investigating the violence and determining that the growers were at fault, after accusing local government officials of depriving workers of their civil rights, General Glassford simply left. He excoriated the growers, proclaimed himself unafraid of the many death threats he received, and retreated to his horse farm in Arizona. Imperial remained in the hands of the same people, free to continue their previous policies, with no one watching. And the New Dealers in Washington let him leave—indeed, *urged* him to leave—without making any substantive changes.

The difference between these outcomes raises some important questions about the extent and consequences of employer opposition to New Deal labor policy. Historians have argued that these two strikes are examples of the New Deal's essential conservatism and its lack of concern for farmworkers. According to this view, the Roosevelt administration officials' intervention in the strikes ultimately worsened the laborers' plight because it helped the employers to destroy the communist-led union.[3] This New Deal indifference to agricultural workers was not surprising, scholars say, considering that most farm workers could not vote and thus had no representation in Washington.[4]

But this standard narrative understates the revolutionary impact of the New Deal on agricultural labor—and, more important, it obscures the sources of anti–New Deal agitation in the West. In the 1930s, the federal government shifted from endorsing and even assisting employer violence against unions to endorsing or even assisting union organization efforts. To the dismay of industrialists, Roosevelt administration officials intervened in labor disputes all over the country. And in California, they intervened not only in industrial strikes but also in agricultural ones.

The timid, halting efforts of the Roosevelt administration to stop employer violence in the fields provoked virulent opposition from western growers—opposition that weakened the New Deal from the start. Employers hostile to New Deal labor policies used the fear of communism to manufacture grassroots opposition not only to the real reds, but to the Washington officials who "petted and pampered and fed the reds and their charges," as one San Joaquin Valley newspaper said.[5]

This story of grower resistance to the New Deal challenges scholarly interpretations of modern conservatism.[6] In these strikes, we can see the Western, elite-directed origins of the New Right two decades before extensive suburbanization. By refusing to support grower-sponsored violence against agricultural union organization, Roosevelt's officials helped to fuel the anger of Western businessmen who would organize to red-bait liberals and attempt to destroy the New Deal.

FACTORIES IN THE FIELD

In the 1930s, California had a pattern of landholding that was quite different from the rest of the nation. On average, California's farms were larger, more expensive, more specialized, more highly capitalized, and more productive than farms in other states. Only 2.2 percent of the nation's farms were in California, yet the state was home to more than 36 percent of America's large-scale farms, or those with a gross income of more than $30,000 in 1929.[7] In general, California ranches were not owned by family farmers, but by Bank of America and Standard Oil and the Southern Pacific Railroad; their produce was harvested by machines and by armies of nonwhite, immigrant laborers. California author Carey McWilliams coined a phrase to describe agriculture in his state: factories in the field.

Because the growers were conscious that their workers were foreign, and because they saw them as very different from themselves, they felt justified in paying them abysmal wages. "What a Mexican should be paid is just enough to live on, with maybe a dollar or two to spend. That's all he deserves," one southwestern grower told economist Paul Taylor.[8]

As the Depression worsened, however, many Anglos were willing to take these jobs because they had no other choice. Throughout the Great Plains and Southwest, plummeting crop prices and a series of environmental disasters brought misery to farmers. Hundreds of thousands of tenant farmers in Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas began to drift to California in hopes of finding work in the western fields. As early as 1930, nearly 60 percent of California agricultural workers were white.[9]

The growers took advantage of the labor surplus by cutting the workers' pay. From 1930 to 1931, workers' wages dropped from $3.45 per day on average to $2.78 ($1.91 per day if they needed board, or a residence in a tent or shack provided by the grower). In 1932, the average wage plunged to $2.14 a day and then reached its nadir in 1933 at $1.91 ($1.40 with board) for a twelve-hour day. These were averages, based on the amount of the cotton or fruit or vegetables

that the workers could harvest in a day; women and children earned less.[10] Most farm laborers worked less than 60 percent of the time and earned only $300 to $400 a year.

As the farmers continued to slash wages through the early years of the Depression, many workers grew increasingly militant, and some struggled to form unions. While the American Federation of Labor was reluctant to try to organize the rootless and impoverished workers, the Communist-led Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union (CAWIU) paid a small group of young labor organizers to move up and down the agricultural valleys in search of strikes to lead and organize. The CAWIU organizers had to be intensely dedicated, for their lives were in constant danger. Throughout the state, vigilantes kidnapped strike leaders, beat them with ax handles and clubs, and threatened them with lynching.[11]

Franklin Roosevelt promised to end these conflicts by leading Americans to economic recovery. When the New Deal began in 1933, many large California growers welcomed Roosevelt's plans, especially the Agricultural Adjustment Act and its policy of paying growers to reduce their crop production. One Republican activist and wealthy pear grower, Philip Bancroft of Walnut Creek, wrote Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace in 1933 to express his "enthusiastic appreciation of the splendid work that you and the entire Administration have been doing in behalf of our industry."[12] The state's growers successfully lobbied Washington to extend governmentally enforced marketing agreements to crops that were not initially covered by AAA reduction programs, such as fruits, vegetables, and nuts.[13] The growers also welcomed other elements of the New Deal, including the loans of the Farm Credit Administration and the infrastructure programs that benefited agriculture. The Public Works Administration, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and the Bureau of Reclamation built dams and irrigation systems for California growers, including massive new canals through Imperial Valley and the Sacramento Valley.

However, while the large growers were pleased by the New Deal's agricultural subsidies and infrastructure programs, they worried about the effects of its labor policies, especially the ones that gave more power to unions. Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act, which guaranteed the right to organize and bargain collectively, emboldened workers around the country to begin forming unions. Inspired by the NIRA, more than 800,000 Americans joined unions in 1933 alone, while the number of workers on strike jumped from 324,000 in 1932 to 1,170,000 in 1933.[14]

But did the new labor protections apply to farm worker unions? Most New Deal officials from the start did not consider farm workers to be covered

by any federal labor policies. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins later remembered that she did not think that the problems of agricultural workers should be part of her brief as Labor Secretary. "You read the act creating the Department of Labor and you thought of minerals, mines, factories, warehouses, ships, truck drivers," she said, "but you didn't think of farmers."[15] However, the NIRA's language was broad enough to include all workers, on farms and in factories. Fearful of the possible consequences of the law, farmers successfully lobbied administrators to explicitly exclude agricultural workers by executive fiat.[16] The New Dealers agreed to exclude farm workers from the NRA for the same reason that they later excluded them from the Social Security Act and the National Labor Relations Act: powerful southern Democrats strongly opposed the protection of labor rights on the nation's farms.

In summer and early fall of 1933, though, workers on the West Coast did not understand that Washington officials had decided to deny the benefits of the NRA to agricultural laborers. Many California workers *believed* that the National Recovery Act protected them and that President Roosevelt wanted them to join a union.[17] As one labor department official in California wrote to another: "THEY ARE UNION MAD, AND HAVE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNMENT UPHOLDS THEM IN THEIR STAND."[18] Like industrial workers, farm workers decided it was time to fight for their rights.

The strikes of 1933 began spontaneously and spread across California as crops ripened in the fields. Berry pickers in Los Angeles County demanded higher wages, then pea pickers in the Santa Clara Valley. Throughout the summer, the strikes followed the crops. Harvesters of sugar beets, apricots, pears, peaches, cherries, grapes, and lettuce refused to work as the crops ripened and then spoiled in the fields. In all, thirty-seven strikes involving almost 50,000 workers delayed or destroyed the harvests of two-thirds of California's fruits, vegetables, and cotton.[19]

As the strikes escalated, so did attacks on the strikers. Local law enforcement officials refused to stop vigilante violence, and often arrested the strikers for trespassing, vagrancy, disturbing the peace, or, more seriously, criminal syndicalism, which meant belonging to an organization that advocated a change in industrial ownership. Some officials in the California state government, headed by Republican governor James Rolph, expressed alarm about the vigilante violence, but the governor refused to intervene in what he said were local disputes.

The largest and potentially most economically devastating strike occurred in the state's cotton belt. In the San Joaquin Valley, growers offered to pay workers 60 cents for every hundred pounds of cotton they picked; the

workers wanted $1. When the employers refused to meet their demands, almost 20,000 pickers on farms stretching for one hundred miles abandoned the fields.

THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COTTON STRIKE

Like the farm strikers throughout the state, the workers in the San Joaquin Valley wanted better pay and working conditions. "The people got together because they wanted to get more wages, a little more, to be able to feed their kids," one worker, Roberto Castro, told historian Devra Weber years later.[20] Pauline Dominguez joined the strike because she hated to pull her seven-year-old son and his older siblings out of school to work in the fields. But with the wages the growers were offering, she had no choice but to make the children work: "If they did not they would starve," she explained at a government hearing after the strike.[21]

The pickers' dark skin made it easier for the growers to justify paying them less. Although Dust Bowl migrants were flowing into California and changing the racial balance of the farm labor force, about 75 percent of cotton pickers in the San Joaquin were Mexican nationals and Mexican Americans, many of whom had been radicalized during the Mexican Revolution.[22] One undersheriff explained the position of local law enforcement this way: "We protect our farmers here in Kern County," he said. "They put us in here and they can put us out again, so we serve them. But the Mexicans are trash."[23]

In response to the strike, the growers organized vigilante groups to assault strikers and their leaders. The most violent incident occurred on October 10, 1933, when about 350 farm workers gathered in the small town of Pixley to listen to Pat Chambers. The young CAWIU organizer, who was still recovering from a broken jaw he suffered in a vigilante attack in a previous strike, stood on a truck bed, urging the workers to remain nonviolent, but to protect themselves if they were assaulted.[24] As Chambers spoke, a caravan of cars and trucks filled with forty growers roared into town and pulled up behind them. The men spilled out of the cars, brandishing pistols, rifles, and shotguns. The vigilantes emptied their weapons into the fleeing crowd, killing two workers and wounding eight. Mobs killed another striker in a separate incident that same day.[25]

The Pixley massacre, which was covered by newspapers throughout California, outraged public opinion. Religious groups and newspaper editorial boards demanded government intervention. Since local and state governments seemed unwilling or unable to protect the civil rights of the strikers,

the workers and their supporters began appealing to a higher authority: the New Deal administration and its determined, high-energy representative in California, the master propagandist George Creel.

The son of a poor southern farming family, Creel had made a name for himself as a muckraking journalist in the Progressive Era, working to close red-light districts, imprison cops on the take, and rescue young children from dangerous factories. In 1917, he turned from targeting corrupt politicians and greedy capitalists to exposing slackers and dissenters when he became chief of the Committee on Public Information, the federal government's massive effort to sell World War I to the American people.

In the summer of 1933, Creel was appointed to the western regional NRA district board. Because his duties were not clearly defined, Creel elected to give himself broad powers. Deciding to impose clarity where there was none, Creel announced that he was head of the NRA for the coast, and "the sole source of authority."[26]

When President Roosevelt created the National Labor Board in August and empowered it to mediate strikes, it seemed that Creel had lost his authority to intervene in labor disputes. But he quickly convinced the administration to appoint him head of the western National Labor Board as well as the western chief of the NRA, thus making him the New Deal's most powerful representative in California. Soon he established himself as the czar for resolving labor disputes up and down the Pacific coast.[27]

Creel wanted to help avert and resolve strikes because they impeded economic recovery. A firm believer in the virtues of a well-regulated capitalist economy, Creel was appalled by the "tramp agitators" who ran the CAWIU.[28] However, he became equally disgusted with the growers, who, with their vicious tactics, were ruining the chances for quick recovery in California and thus the nation. He resolved to take federal action.

Creel flew to the San Joaquin Valley and proclaimed his intention to meet with all the interested parties and forge a settlement. He talked with a group of large growers in Tulare and assured them that the federal government would protect their interests. But, to the growers' astonishment, he also parleyed with the communist union leaders, including Pat Chambers, who was in jail on criminal syndicalism charges. Creel announced that he found Chambers to be "a reasonable person of excellent understanding and without ridiculous prejudice" who seemed "only too willing to cooperate with us and to settle the strike."[29]

The former member of the wartime Censorship Board said he was outraged that local officials were not respecting the First Amendment rights of

the strikers. "I tell you the constitutional rights of every man in that strike have got to be protected," Creel insisted, "and the Federal Government is ready to do it."[30] Creel had always been confident in his ability to tell right from wrong, and he had been equally sure that a powerful federal government should regulate or punish the wrongdoers. Still, it was ironic that a government propagandist—a man who had shown little consideration for the civil rights of dissenters and whose committee had helped to inflame the kind of prejudices that inspired vigilante activity—now emerged as the champion of the constitutional rights of the oppressed.

Creel had a simple message for the growers: if they did not tell their thugs to stop beating and shooting strikers, they would lose their loans from the federal government. Moreover, he would send food to the strikers. New Deal policy at the time allowed relief only if the strike was "justified," and Creel declared that this was the case in the valley. For the first time in history, the federal government proposed to feed people who were refusing to work.[31]

The growers were incredulous that their government—the government they supported with their tax money—was using "bountiful" federal funds to reward "able-bodied idlers" for refusing to work.[32] But cowed by the twin threats of food for strikers and the end of their own subsidies, the growers agreed to allow the governor—under pressure from Creel—to appoint a three-man fact-finding commission to investigate the strike and recommend a solution. The governor's commission conducted two days of hearings before reporting a verdict: the growers should pay the strikers more and stop abusing them. "Without question," their report said, "the civil rights of strikers have been violated." The commissioners recommended a wage that was closer to the growers' offer than to the workers' demand—75 cents per hundred pounds, as opposed to the growers' 60 cents and the workers' $1.[33] Creel threatened both sides with the loss of government benefits—food for the strikers, loans for the growers—if they did not accept the compromise. Within two days, the growers, and then the union, agreed.

Growers and local law enforcement officials blamed Creel in particular and the New Deal in general for what they saw as a bad outcome: the wage raise. "Everything was going fine until Creel came down here and told them they could raise all the hell they wanted to," Sheriff Robert Hill of Tulare County said.[34] Kings County Sheriff Van Buckner said FDR's emissary "might as well have told the Mexicans to go out and commit murder."[35]

Yet though the growers were angry because they had to pay an estimated $450,000 extra in wages (or about $1 a day per worker) because of the settlement, New Deal policies still helped their bottom line. The 1933 California

cotton harvest brought in $12.4 million, an increase of 145 percent over the previous year's $5 million.[36] Moreover, the strike, and the violence, had ended.

Pleased with their success, the New Dealers would now try to use the same tactics in a far different environment. In the meantime, though, the growers would learn how to respond to the twin threats of radical unions and liberal mediators.

THE IMPERIAL VALLEY STRIKE OF 1934

Sunk below sea level, bounded by sandy dunes and brush-covered mountains to the east and west and the Mexican border to the south, Imperial Valley had been isolated and mostly uninhabited until 1901, when developers dug a canal and shunted the muddy waters of the Colorado into the desert basin. Almost overnight, the desolate land of tumbleweed was reclaimed as a nursery for melons and vegetables and blue-green alfalfa.

In the 1920s, the growers welcomed the federal government's Bureau of Reclamation to help them maintain and expand the water projects that were the valley's lifeblood. As historian Donald Worster has explained, though, the landowners remained resentful that they had given up local control in return for federal protection and continued government involvement in their affairs. "At first," Worster says, "they hoped the Reclamation Service would enter their territory to dig their aqueduct for them, would subsidize its repayment, then would fade away, leaving them alone with their river."[37] But the government demanded that the Imperial growers submit to centralized management in return for federally subsidized water. It was precisely because the growers were so dependent on the federal government that they protested so vehemently against it.

It required capital to buy irrigated land, and most valley farmer-capitalists had lots of it. A government report concluded that "the entire farming area is controlled by a relatively small number of growers," including the Southern Pacific Railroad and the Times-Mirror Corporation (owner of the *Los Angeles Times*).[38] Because fruits and vegetables are perishable, Imperial agribusiness was highly speculative, with the grower-shippers often gambling on the future price of lettuce and tomatoes and honeydew.

The proximity of the border ensured cheap labor for Imperial farmers, but it also heightened their sense of anxiety. The local whites tried to separate themselves from Mexicans, with separate immigrant colonies and "Whites Only" signs in the downtown businesses. Growers often described the workers as childish foreigners who needed a firm hand and little pay

(a local judge was known for saying "$1 a day is enough for a Mexican").[39] The porous border admitted not only Mexican nationals but also criminals and smugglers. The uncertainty of the economy; the harshness of the environment; the closeness of the border, with its bootleggers and drug dealers and dark-skinned peoples: all of these elements contributed to the bloodshed to come. "Violence," wrote Carey McWilliams in 1934, "is what one somehow expects from the place."[40]

Few people outside of Imperial knew about the violence, for the national media had little interest in the events of the California desert. Unlike the San Joaquin strikes, which were covered by several large newspapers, only one urban paper ran regular stories about labor disputes in Imperial. Unfortunately for the strikers, it was Harry Chandler's *Los Angeles Times*, whose parent corporation owned hundreds of thousands of acres in Imperial Valley and neighboring Mexico.[41] The labor activists knew they could not hope for sympathetic coverage. "The most horrendous things could go on, and did go on," CAWIU organizer Dorothy Ray Healey later wrote, "and all you could expect was that perhaps months later the news would leak out to the people who read the *Nation* and kept up with such things."[42]

Thanks in part to the relative isolation of the valley, the Imperial pea and lettuce strikes, which took place in January and February 1934, were even more violent than the cotton strike. Local officials and vigilantes broke up strike meetings with tear gas and billy clubs; they also arrested dozens of strikers on trumped-up charges. Lawyers who tried to defend them were terrorized into leaving the valley. When ACLU lawyer Abraham Lincoln Wirin went to Brawley to give a speech titled "The Constitution, the NRA, and the Right to Strike in Imperial County," he was kidnapped by a group of armed men, including a uniformed officer of the California Highway Patrol. They shoved him into a car, beat him repeatedly, and then drove him to a deserted area, miles from the nearest town, where they wrecked his car and threatened to lynch him.[43] The organizers and their supporters lived in constant fear that they would be killed. "If you checked into a hotel in Brawley, no matter what name you used," Pat Chambers remembered later, "You were sticking your neck in a noose."[44]

The violence intimidated not just the workers but also their potential middle-class allies. In the San Joaquin Valley, the strikers had received critical support from independent farmers, who gave them supplies and allowed them to camp on their land. In Imperial, though, grower-backed vigilantes threatened independent growers and businessmen who showed any sympathy for strikers.[45]

The large growers and their supporters also intimidated federal government officials who tried to find out what was happening in the valley. When the National Labor Board office in Los Angeles sent investigators to Imperial, the El Centro police chief "detained" the federal representatives and brought them in for questioning. He told them to leave—or else. "We don't want conciliation," he warned. "We know how to handle these people and where we find trouble makers we will drive them out if we have to 'sap' them."[46] This was not an empty threat, as the attack on the ACLU's lawyers had shown; so the investigators left quickly.

But the federal government did not allow the growers to stop its investigation. After the vigilantes chased the Los Angeles labor board men from the valley, the head of the National Labor Board, Senator Robert Wagner, appointed an official, three-person committee to study the disputes and recommend solutions. The growers were outraged when this government group issued a stinging indictment of the "primitive, even savage" conditions in the labor camps and the brutal suppression of civil liberties in Imperial valley. "Freedom to assemble and to speak our thoughts and convictions must not be interfered with," the report concluded, "especially by those who, as peace officers, are sworn to uphold the law."[47] In a remarkable reversal of past policy, the commissioners suggested that the government should send federal marshals to the valley—but not to break the strike, as had been common in previous administrations. Instead, they recommended that the marshals should protect the workers' constitutional rights to speech and assembly. Even more controversially, they urged the Department of Labor to encourage unionization of the workers (though under a publicly sponsored union, not the CAWIU). Finally, the report recommended the appointment of a federal mediator. The Labor Department was somewhat taken aback by the investigators' candor and did not immediately react to the report.[48]

The growers responded to the withering federal criticism of their labor practices in two ways: with force and guile. First, in blatant defiance of the report, they sent in the sheriff to condemn, burn, and destroy the makeshift tent city where two thousand strikers lived. In a scene reminiscent of the burning of the Bonus Army camp in the nation's capital eighteen months earlier, state and local police doused the tents and shacks with gasoline and then set them afire.

The growers did not just rely on force alone, however. If they had, they would not have been so successful in the long term. Instead, they launched a massive propaganda campaign to mobilize citizen groups and spread the word that the American family farm was besieged by violent revolutionaries and treacherous bureaucrats.

The public relations offensive emerged from the growers' dawning realization that vigilante violence could sometimes backfire and elicit sympathy for the injured workers. "God knows we would like to put them all in the hospital, particularly the leaders," explained the Los Angeles chief of police, James E. Davis, at a convention of his fellow law enforcement officers in 1933, "but we can't get away with it any more; there is too much sentiment in their behalf."[49]

The solution, then, was to turn public sentiment against the strikers by painting them as outside agitators. The statewide coordinator of this effort was the Associated Farmers, which began in late 1933, shortly after the cotton strike. The biggest corporations in California funded the group, including canneries, railroads, banks, insurance companies, and oil companies, but it had no grassroots members for the first two years.[50] At the start, instead of creating local chapters, the Associated Farmers worked to mobilize existing civic groups to spread its message of the twin dangers of Communism and Rooseveltism—and to persuade Californians to reverse the president's pro-worker policies (or, more precisely, as Nelson Pichardo has noted, his *perceived* pro-worker policies).[51]

The Associated Farmers spread their message through patriotic and veterans societies, such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Disabled American Veterans; fraternal and civic groups, including the Elks, Kiwanis, Eagles, Lions, Daughters of the American Revolution, and Native Sons of the Golden West; business groups like local chambers of commerce, the industrial associations of coastal cities, and the California Merchant and Manufacturers Association; and women's groups, including the League of Women Voters, Women of the Pacific, the Neutral Thousands, and the Parent-Teacher Association. The large growers also set up local anticommunist groups, such as the Imperial Valley Anti-Communist Association, which claimed six thousand members by the end of March.[52] The Associated Farmers urged these citizen organizations to form "Americanism" committees and to send delegates to anticommunist training schools. These schools, funded by the growers, painted their opponents as outside agitators, foreign in ideology as well as national origin, who threatened the very foundations of American society.[53] Father Charles Leahy of the Diocese of Los Angeles in San Diego ensured that the Associated Farmers' literature was used in textbooks and teaching in all Catholic schools and colleges in Southern California. The organization sent anti-union propaganda to private and public schools throughout the state.[54] The Associated Farmers' publicists worked particularly closely with evangelical pastors in Los Angeles, Riverside, and Imperial counties.

In this effort, the growers wanted to ensure that their hand remained hidden, out of fear that the ordinary citizens who were the targets of the publicity campaign would discount the message if they knew who was funding it. As Arthur Arnoll, secretary and general manager of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, explained in a private memo, the employers' role "should be kept a deep, dark secret. This is the only way you can win the fight."[55]

This grower-funded propaganda equated New Deal support for striking workers with support for Communism itself. As the *Brawley News* explained, the Roosevelt administration "made a grave error in flirting too much with fanatic radicals and appointing men on boards who have known sympathies with Communists and affiliated organizations."[56] The growers' supporters believed that the federal government was honeycombed with traitors whose main goal was to help the communist organizers—and therefore to help Russia. As the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "There are Red spots all along the official line."[57]

As they developed and refined their public relations offensive, the growers increased their vigilante violence. In one of the worst attacks, ACLU lawyer Grover Johnson, who had just filed a writ of habeas corpus for Pat Chambers and a comrade, was brutally beaten by a mob as he left the courthouse in El Centro, Imperial's county seat. He took refuge in the jail, where he could hear a lynch mob outside. In the end, a local judge calmed and dispersed the mob, and Johnson escaped.[58] But the beating on the courthouse steps prompted the New Dealers in Washington to attempt to intervene once again.

Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, the former Commissioner of Labor for the state of New York under Governor Franklin Roosevelt and an expert labor mediator, read about the violence in Imperial Valley with increasing alarm. She was appalled by the workers' living conditions, the employers' brutality, and the state government's inability to keep order.[59] She was not particularly sympathetic to the workers: she regarded the Californians on all sides of the dispute as unruly children, and she wished they would "settle down." So she decided to follow one recommendation of the National Labor Board committee and send in a mediator, or really an authority figure—a sort of "old Aunt Susan," she said later, a disciplinarian who "knows where she's going and what she intends to have"—to solve the problems. And since the growers were not children but powerful, grown men, she did not send a maiden aunt but rather a very manly army general.[60]

General Pelham Glassford stood three inches over six feet, and his military bearing made him seem even taller. Lean, dynamic, and handsome,

he was known to his many friends as "Hap" or "Happy" Glassford, because he was always smiling. To his supporters, he projected confidence and amiability; to more skeptical observers, he seemed self-satisfied. But everyone agreed that the army's youngest brigadier general in the Great War was fearless. In France in 1918, at Chateau-Thierry and the Marne, he rode his big blue motorcycle into no man's land to scout enemy positions and inspire his artillerymen; in 1932, in a new career as superintendent of the Washington, D.C., police, he kept order among the fifteen thousand Great War veterans who encamped near the nation's capital to demand immediate payment of their military service bonus. In handling the Bonus Army, he gave the country "a remarkable demonstration of mob management without benefit of tear gas, riot club or machine gun," in the opinion of *Time* magazine.[61] After the Hoover administration called in the army to remove the marchers, burning down their tents, Glassford denounced the use of force, resigned in a dispute with his superiors, and emerged as a national hero.[62] Neither foreign war nor domestic protest seemed to sully the reputation or darken the mood of Happy Glassford.

The growers' groups immediately protested the appointment. There was no need for a conciliator, the employers explained, because there were no real strikes, just some "disturbances" fomented by outside agitators who were exploiting some ignorant foreigners. "I feel quite sure," said Alvin Jack, the president of the growers and shippers protective association, "that Mr. Glassford will find nothing to conciliate when he gets here April 5 for there are no strikes and have been none."[63]

Yet the New Dealers were unyielding in their refusal to allow the growers to render the strike invisible. As Secretary Perkins said, "[I]t had all the aspects of a strike. It was called a strike. The police called it a strike." And if it was a strike, then the federal government had a duty to investigate whether the strikers' rights were being violated. "It seemed up to us to handle it," she concluded.[64]

Perkins charged the general with ensuring that workers harvested the spring melon crop on time—a relatively easy task, since grower-backed vigilantes had already scared the pickers back into the fields—and, more significantly, to enact long-term reforms that would prevent the strikes, violence, and vigilantism from happening again. In the New Dealers' minds, this did not mean redistributing wealth in Imperial. Glassford and Perkins had a condescending view of the Mexicans, who they believed were childlike, happy people who did not require and would not appreciate American wages and working conditions. "These Mexicans don't know any other way to live,"

Glassford told the Labor Secretary. "They've got a lot of children, a lot of dogs, a lot of chickens. They're just going to live like that anyhow, live like nomads."[65] All they needed was governmental protection from the growers' worst abuses.

Glassford began by trying to reassure the growers that the federal government was on their side by denouncing the CAWIU leaders as "vile agitators," "un-Americans," and "skunks." "Their only objective," he wrote in a bulletin circulated to all workers in the valley, "is to create dissension, destroy private property and foment a strike."[66] But privately, he also expressed disgust with the "obstinate and arrogant" growers, who persisted with their "stolid resistance against concessions or reform."[67]

Yet, Glassford believed, it was "absolutely essential" for the growers to believe that he was "entirely under their control."[68] As he told a leftist magazine on May 15, "The Growers and Shippers control the banks, the press, the police, the American Legion—everything. I can't aggravate them too much. I can't afford to, that's all, and if I am to accomplish anything, I've got to lean over a little on their side."[69]

Though the growers and their supporters appreciated Glassford's anti-CAWIU tirades, they still challenged his authority to tell them what to do or, indeed, to do anything at all. The Associated Farmers publicly questioned his jurisdiction, given that the NRA "has officially declared that agricultural labor is not subject to code regulation of any kind." The farmers urged Governor James Rolph to protect "California's statehood rights" against what they called an extraordinary and illegal assertion of federal power.[70]

Glassford worried about the extent of his legal power in Imperial. He diffidently wired Washington that "it would be helpful if scope and limitations of my authority as conciliator could be clarified."[71] The Labor Department's chief lawyer responded by citing a statute empowering the Secretary of Labor to appoint a mediator in disputes whenever she determined that "the interests of industrial peace" required federal intervention. However, the lawyer cautioned that this power did not give the general "actual police authority"; Glassford could merely "adjust grievances" when the parties in a dispute required "some impartial intervention in a friendly fashion."[72]

Privately, Glassford wrote the Labor Department that he had become thoroughly disillusioned with the chances for any grower support for reforms, despite his "very strenuous efforts to correct conditions through persuasion."[73] At best, he hoped that the growers' recalcitrance would provoke the workers to strike again; then the New Dealers could legitimately blame the growers for the strike; "AND," he wrote in all caps for emphasis, "THE DEPARTMENT

OF LABOR WILL HAVE AMPLE JUSTIFICATION FOR AGAIN STEPPING INTO THE IMPERIAL VALLEY DIFFICULTIES."[74]

The general was clearly itching for a chance to expose the growers as the thugs he had come to believe they were. Later, his secretary confided to an ACLU attorney that the general wanted to criticize the employers long before he let on: "I knew all along how he WANTED to open up and let loose," she wrote, "and yet for a time it looked very much as though no opportunity to do so would present itself."[75]

The opportunity finally presented itself in early June 1934, in the form of another bloody attack on a lawyer. After representing some strikers in a local court, ACLU attorney Ernest Besig was beaten as he waited for a train in a small Imperial town.[76] Outraged at what he called the "cowardly and despicable" assault, Glassford took the attorney to a doctor and then smuggled him out of the valley.[77]

The attack liberated Glassford. With fresh evidence of the growers' brutality and defiance of the law, the general issued a series of statements denouncing them, each press release more uncompromising than the last. On June 13, he declared that the valley "is governed and controlled by a small group which, in advertising a war against Communism, is sponsoring terrorism, intimidation, and injustice."[78] The next day, he told the newspapers that the charges against strikers were "trumped up," that the growers never intended to improve the conditions of the workers, and that, in fact, the employers, with their opposition to "law, order, sanity, and reform," had put themselves in the position of "being the most dangerous 'reds' ever to come to Imperial Valley."[79]

Glassford expanded upon his findings in a formal report to the Imperial County board of supervisors at the end of the month. In blunt language, he condemned the valley's rulers as tyrants who manufactured a red scare to keep their profits high while their workers lived in "poverty and squalor":

> After more than two months of observation and investigation in Imperial Valley, it is my conviction that a group of growers have exploited a communist hysteria for advancement of their own interests: that they have welcomed labor agitation which they could brand as "red" as a means of sustaining supremacy by mob rule, thereby preserving what is so essential to their profit, cheap labor; that they have succeeded in drawing into their conspiracy certain county officials who have become the principal tools of their machine.

Glassford recommended a state-supervised grand-jury investigation of the "apparently organized campaign of terrorism and intimidation" in the valley.[80] (He did not, notably, recommend a *federal* investigation of the crimes committed by county officials, and for this the Labor Department was grateful.)[81] He suggested that the federal government should try to regulate the wages and working conditions of vegetable pickers, and hoped it would eventually establish a public union for the workers.

The large growers and their supporters were furious at the general's "strange volte-face."[82] The enraged editorial board of the *Los Angeles Times* declared that Glassford's report and the New Deal's labor policies showed Roosevelt to be more of a communist-coddler than Joseph Stalin, because "in fact Communists in Russia are under the iron heel of Stalin and disturbers are sent before a firing squad."[83] Some growers made it clear they wished for firing squads or lynching parties in California. Like Creel, Glassford received threats on his life.

The ACLU was thrilled that Glassford was finally taking a stand against lawlessness in the valley. Abraham Wirin, the ACLU lawyer who had been assaulted in January, wired the Labor Department: "Please please back up Glassford now that he shows signs of moving in the right direction."[84]

In the end, though, the rest of the Roosevelt administration refused to support the general. In a marked difference from their attitude in the cotton strike, the other New Deal agencies declined to snatch away federal carrots to stop the growers from wielding their sticks. As the general finished his report, the Public Works Administration pledged $27 million for an eighty-mile-long canal—the longest irrigation canal in the world—to bring water to Imperial growers.[85] The next month, as the Colorado basin suffered from a drought, the federal government trucked in tens of thousands of gallons of water to the landowners who had just been denounced by its special investigator.[86] To the ACLU, it was patently ridiculous that the federal government would dispense aid to the lawless rulers of the valley. Clinton Taft, the ACLU's national secretary, recommended that Washington should stop sending water and building canals until the local officials respected the constitution.[87] The growers and their allies were furious, with the *Imperial Valley Press* proclaiming the ACLU's statement to be the product of a "diseased mentality." "Fortunately," the paper's editor concluded, "there is a responsible government in Washington, not swayed by the wild and depraved rantings of fanatics with sawdust where their brains should be."[88]

In the minds of Imperial officials, the "responsible government" in Washington included the Agriculture Department, which provided subsidies

and drought relief despite ACLU protests, and the PWA, which soon began work on the new canal. It did not include the labor investigators who supported striking farmworkers or the relief administrators who fed them.

The growers presented themselves as sturdy individualists who just wanted to be left alone by the government. "Now I don't want you to think that we farmers are complaining of our lot or looking for sympathy," Philip Bancroft said. "We are simply looking for a square deal—rather than for too much New Deal."[89] "Too much" New Deal was any New Deal that helped the unions; any amount of New Deal that helped the growers, though, was just right. The growers wanted a federal government that would dig their dams and canals, send them their subsidized water, and then leave them in peace to wallop the Reds and the Pinks. This was Captain Renault conservatism: just as Claude Rains's character in *Casablanca* was "shocked! shocked!" to discover that gambling took place in Rick's Café as he pocketed his winnings, the growers professed astonishment at their discovery that the government intervened in the marketplace while they celebrated government decisions to build them artificial rivers.

CONCLUSION: AN ANTI–NEW DEAL COALITION

His life threatened, his report published, his mission accomplished, General Glassford decided he would return to his horse farm in Arizona—"just as soon," he told the Labor Department, "as this withdrawal can be made without the accusation of fear."[90] In a private letter to Ernest Besig, the lawyer whose attack had prompted his blast against the growers, Glassford was more candid. "Can't stand it here much longer," he wrote. "I do not want to return to Imperial Valley unless it is absolutely necessary."[91] Overall, though, the general was pleased with his investigation. "This has been one of the most interesting experiences of my life—a veritable education—and I am very grateful for the opportunity to be of service," he wrote the Labor Department. "I trust that my efforts here will bring credit to the Administration."[92]

Secretary Perkins agreed that Glassford's efforts reflected well on the administration. He did a "perfect job," she believed, and when he left the valley, "[e]verything was working beautifully."[93] Twenty years later, she remembered the episode with nostalgia and pride, describing how the no-nonsense general forced the unruly children to behave and required the bosses to pay a minimum wage and provide clean drinking water to the workers.

The secretary's memory was faulty. In fact, Glassford did not succeed in getting the growers to pay a minimum wage or improve living or working

conditions for the pickers. His suggested reforms—government regulations, a government-sponsored union—did not take place. There was no political or economic transformation of Imperial County; indeed, three decades later, power and money in the valley were even more unequally distributed than during the Great Depression.[94] The New Dealers had gestured toward helping the workers in Imperial, but once they saw how little they could accomplish, and how much those accomplishments would cost them, they quit. In the end, the general took a much more critical and emphatic stance against the growers than had George Creel in the San Joaquin, but he accomplished even less.

In part, the general's mission failed because Imperial Valley was more remote than the San Joaquin Valley. The county's isolation meant that the growers could get away with more violence than they could in more accessible regions. The anti–New Dealers discovered that in environments where there was no national media presence, where there were few reporters and observers from the cities, they could be as inflexible, and as brutal, as they liked.

More important, though, the Imperial Valley mediation failed because the growers used the months between the two strikes to devise more sophisticated strategies for opposing the New Dealers' limited mediation attempts. Frustrated and angry after the cotton strike, the wealthiest agricultural and industrial interests in the western United States decided that the federal government was no longer their ally in smashing unionism among the working class. Beginning in the late fall of 1933, they resolved to find middle-class allies in their crusade to attack first the Communist-directed unions, and then New Deal labor policies. In response to the attempted federal mediation, the growers began to invigorate, educate, and fund the grassroots civic groups that would form the core of the opposition to New Deal liberalism. Their horror of government-aided unionization catalyzed and energized their movement—and helped them prepare for the future.

The growers' rhetoric and tactics anticipated those of the postwar New Right. Two of the most important leaders of modern conservatism—Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan—rose to power with donations and advice from some of the anti–New Deal California growers from the 1930s. Nixon and Reagan enjoyed support from the largest agribusiness interests in California and from the growers' savviest strategists and advisers.[95] Philip Bancroft organized California farmers for Nixon's successful run for a U.S. Senate seat in 1950 and advised his later campaigns.[96] Growers or grower lobbyists like Bill Camp, Fred Sherrill, and Richard Combs were all important figures in the 1930s antilabor drive and in Republican politics later.[97] These growers

and their candidates helped to mobilize civic groups to attack the moderately pro-labor policies of Democratic administrations as fundamentally anti-American.

The California conservatives started to organize a political force that would use resentment of government elites, false populism, and anticommunism to destroy an administration that despised the Communists. It was not the "suburban warriors" of the 1950s, but the anti–New Deal individuals and corporations of the 1930s who were the real founding fathers of modern conservatism.

University of California, Davis

NOTES

1. On the cotton strike, see Cletus Daniel, *Bitter Harvest: A History of California Farmworkers, 1870–1941* (Ithaca, 1981), 167–221; Devra Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold: California Farm Workers, Cotton, and the New Deal* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1994), 79–111; Paul Taylor and Clark Kerr, "A Documentary History of the Cotton Strike," in Taylor, *On the Ground in the Thirties* (Salt Lake City, 1983), 17–158; Carey McWilliams, *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migratory Farm Labor in California* (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City, 1978), 219–24; Stuart Jamieson, *Labor Unionism in American Agriculture* (Washington, D.C., 1945), 100–105; Irving Bernstein, *The Turbulent Years: A History of the American Worker, 1933–1941* (Boston, 1971), 153–60; Kevin Starr, *Endangered Dreams: The Great Depression in California* (New York, 1996), 74–80; Linda C. Majka and Theo J. Majka, *Farm Workers, Agribusiness, and the State* (Philadelphia, 1982), 74–88; Rodolfo F. Acuña, *Corridors of Migration: The Odyssey of Mexican Laborers, 1600–1933* (Tucson, 2007), 215–85; and Gilbert González, *Mexican Consuls and Labor Organizing: Imperial Politics in the American Southwest* (Austin, 1999), 122–58.

2. Quotes from Glassford report, reprinted in *Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor,* U.S. Senate, 76th Cong., 3d sess. (Washington, D.C., 1940) (hereafter Lafollette hearings), part 55, 20148–49; and "Gen. Glassford changes mind and declares he will stay in Imperial Valley," *Los Angeles Times*, 15 June 1934; "Judge hurls denial at Glassford after sensational Imperial Valley clash," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 June 1934. On Imperial Valley, see Daniel, *Bitter Harvest*, 222–57; McWilliams, *Factories in the Fields*, 224–26; Jamieson, *Labor Unionism in American Agriculture,* 107–10; Bernstein, *Turbulent Years*, 160–68; Starr, *Endangered Dreams*, 157–60; Gilbert González, "Company Unions, the Mexican Consulate, and the Imperial Valley Agricultural Strikes, 1928–1934," *Western Historical Quarterly* 27, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 53–73, and González, *Mexican Consuls and Labor Organizing: Imperial Politics in the American Southwest* (Austin, 1999), 159–96.

3. See Daniel, *Bitter Harvest*, 167–77, 204–21, 255–57; Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 106–11; González, *Mexican Consuls and Labor Organizing*, 193; and Acuña, *Corridors of Migration*, 242–43.

4. Kenneth Finegold and Theda Skocpol, *State and Party in America's New Deal* (Madison, 1995), 140–44.

5. "Chronicle reporter has another pipe dream," *Visalia Times-Delta*, 27 October 1933.

6. Some of the major works on postwar conservatism in the American west include Lisa McGirr, *Suburban Warriors: The Origins of the New American Right* (Princeton, 2001); Rick Perlstein, *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus* (New York, 2001); and *Nixonland* (New York, 2008); Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York, 2010); and Matthew Dallek, *The Right Moment: Ronald Reagan's First Victory and the Decisive Turning Point in American Politics* (New York, 2000). See also Darren Dochuk, "Revival on the Right: Making Sense of the Conservative Moment in American History," *History Compass: An Online Journal* 4 (July 2006): 975–99, and Kim Phillips-Fein, "Conservatism: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 98, no. 3 (December 2011): 723–43.

7. Lafollette hearings, part 54, 19884.

8. Taylor, *On the Ground in the Thirties*, 14.

9. "Racial composition of farm labor supply, California, 1930," in Lafollette hearings, part 54, 19859.

10. Lafollette hearings, part 54, 19890.

11. Orrick Johns, *The Time of Our Lives* (New York, 1973), 329–33.

12. Letter to Henry Wallace, 11 November 1933, box 1, Philip Bancroft papers, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.

13. "AAA Program Aids Farmer," *Imperial Valley Press*, 1 March 1934; Edwin G. Nourse, *Marketing Agreements under the AAA* (Washington, D.C., 1935), 15.

14. *Historical Statistics of the United States*, millennial edition on line, series Ba4954–4964, 2–354; Austin P. Morris, "Agricultural Labor and National Labor Legislation," *California Law Review* 54, no. 5 (December 1966): 1947n38.

15. *The Reminiscences of Frances Perkins*, Oral History Research Office (New York, 1976), book 4, 422 (hereafter *Reminiscences of Frances Perkins*). See also Robert Woodbury, *Introduction: Limits of Coverage of Labor in Industries Closely Allied to Agriculture under Codes of Fair Competition under NIRA* (Washington, D.C., 1936).

16. See Morris, "Agricultural Labor," 1947–51.

17. National Labor Board report, Lafollette hearings, part 54, 20048.

18. Letter from W. N. Cunningham, Department of Labor, U.S. employment service, to Mr. J. H. Fallin, assistant director, U.S. employment service, farm labor division, 19 July 1933, box 80, George Clements papers, Special Collections, Charles E. Young Library, UCLA.

19. Jamieson, *Labor Unionism in American Agriculture*, 87.

20. Quoted in Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 89. See also Acuña, *Corridors of Migration*, 240–41.

21. Lafollette hearings, part 54, 19932.

22. See Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 88; Acuña, *Corridors of Migration*, 238; and "A Scene from the Cotton Strike," *Western Worker*, 30 October 1933.

23. Interview with Tom Carter, folder 48, carton 14, Paul S. Taylor papers, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.

24. Broken jaw: Dorothy Healey, *Dorothy Healey Remembers: A Life in the American Communist Party* (New York, 1990), 44.

25. See Weber, *Dark Sweat, White Gold*, 101; Daniel, *Bitter Harvest*, 196; and Acuña, *Corridors of Migration*, 245–48.

26. George Creel, *Rebel at Large: Recollections of Fifty Crowded Years* (New York, 1947), 275.

27. See Creel to Frisselle, 7 November 1933, Records of National Labor Board, Record Group 25, box 1, case 3, National Archives, College Park, Maryland, and "Non-union workers ordered to cotton fields," *Los Angeles Times*, 28 October 1933.

28. Creel to Frisselle, 7 November 1933.

29. "Plague fear stiffs Creel to end strike," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 October 1933.

30. Ibid.

31. Jamieson, *Labor Unionism*, 104.

32. Porter M. Chaffee, "A History of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union" (Oakland, Calif.: Federal Writers Project, year unknown), 2:39, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley; Taylor, *On the Ground in the Thirties*, 95–96.

33. Letter, E. J. Hanna, Ira B. Cross, Tully Knoles, to George Creel and James Rolph, 23 October 1933, Records of National Labor Relations Board, Record Group 25, box 1, case 3, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

34. Interview with Hill, folder 48, carton 14, Taylor papers.

35. Interview with Buckner, folder 48, carton 14, Taylor papers.

36. Taylor and Kerr, *On the Ground in the Thirties*, 112; Chaffee, "A History of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union," 2:60.

37. Donald Worster, *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West* (New York, 1985), 208.

38. National Labor Board Report, Lafollette hearings, part 54, 20051; Exhibit 8903, Lafollette hearings, part 55, 20288–89.

39. Lafollette hearings, part 54, 20039.

40. McWilliams, "The Farmers Get Tough," *American Mercury*, October 1934, 241.

41. On the absence of media attention to the strike, see *Reminiscences of Frances Perkins*, book 4, 419; on grower control of the local media, see Glassford to Wyzanski, 28 April 1934, folder 2, box 26, Pelham Glassford papers, Special Collections, Charles E. Young Library, UCLA.

42. Healey, *Dorothy Healey Remembers*, 45.

43. "Valley quiet today after hectic night during which Brawley stages abduction," *Imperial Valley Press*, 24 January 1934. See also Chaffee, "A History of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union," 2:10.

44. Pat Chambers oral history, interviews on the organization of the CAWIU, audiotape, Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley.

45. National Labor Board report, Lafollette hearings, part 54, 20050; anonymous letter to Glassford, 16 June 1934, folder P–91, carton 34, Federal Writers Project collection, Bancroft Library; "Glassford's charges of deliberate 'red scare' in Imperial bring hot reply," *Los Angeles Times*, 27 June 1934.

46. Quoted in MacCulloch report, Lafollette hearings, part 54, 20039. See also MacCulloch to National Labor Board, 25 January 1934, Records of the National Labor Relations Board, Record Group 25, Region 15, file 15-37, box 3, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

47. National Labor Board report, Lafollette hearings, part 54, 20049.

48. Charles Wyzanski to Pelham Glassford, 27 March 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers; Simon Lubin to Campbell MacCulloch, 13 April 1934, Records of the National Labor Relations Board, Record Group 25, Region 15, file 15–37, box 3, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

49. "Activities of various peace officer groups, citizen groups, and disaster emergency plans, in California, 1933–1938," typewritten manuscript, no date, 24, folder 58, carton 14, Taylor papers.

50. Clarke A. Chambers, *California Farm Organizations: A Historical Study of the Grange, the Farm Bureau, and the Associated Farmers, 1929–1941* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1952), 41.

51. Nelson A. Pichardo, "The Power Elite and Elite-Driven Countermovements: The Associated Farmers of California during the 1930s," *Sociological Forum* 10, no. 1 (March 1995): 40.

52. "Anti-radical group plans big meeting," *Imperial Valley Press*, 20 March 1934.

53. "Activities of various peace officer groups, citizen groups, and disaster emergency plans, in California, 1933–1938," 11. See also folder labeled "Redbaiting" in Carey McWilliams papers, box 18, Special Collections, Charles E. Young Library, UCLA; and "Communists condemned by speakers at mass meeting," *Imperial Valley Press*, 24 March 1934.

54. Letter from Guernsey Frazer to Parker Frisselle, 20 November 1934, in LaFollette hearings, 20256–57.

55. Memo from Arnoll to Clements, no date, "Milk strike," in unnamed folder, box 64, Clements papers.

56. "Too much flirting with radicals," *Brawley News*, 23 May 1934.

57. "Pea strike collapses," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 February 1934.

58. Johnson testimony in LaFollette hearings, part 55, 20158–62. See also Johnson to Glassford, 22 June 1934, folder P–91, carton 34, Federal Writers Project collection, Bancroft Library.

59. *Reminiscences of Frances Perkins*, book 4, 422.

60. Ibid., 405–6.

61. "Heroes: Break Up?" *Time*, 18 July 1932.

62. See Donald J. Lisio, *The President and Protest: Hoover, Conspiracy, and the Bonus Riot* (Columbia, Mo., 1974), chap. 12; and Paul Dickson and Thomas B. Allen, *The Bonus Army: An American Epic* (New York, 2006).

63. "Brig.-Gen. Glassford named federal conciliator as Imperial Valley demurs," *Los Angeles Times*, 28 March 1934. See also the grower-backed Phillips report, reprinted in the LaFollette hearings, part 55, 20053–63.

64. *Reminiscences of Frances Perkins*, book 4, 432.

65. Ibid., 418.

66. Bulletin, "To all Mexican workers in Imperial Valley," 30 April 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers; Richard Bransten, "Glassford in the Imperial Valley," *New Masses*, 15 May 1934.

67. Glassford to Wyzanski, 28 April 1934, and Glassford to Wyzanski, 31 May 1934, both in folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

68. Glassford to Wyzanski, 28 April 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

69. Richard Bransten, "Glassford in the Imperial Valley," *New Masses*, 15 May 1934.

70. "Federal labor moves fought," *Los Angeles Times*, 6 May 1934.

71. Telegram, Glassford to Secretary of Labor, 14 April 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

72. Wyzanski to Glassford, 16 April 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

73. Glassford to Wyzanski, 20 June 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

74. Glassford to Wyzanski, 31 May 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

75. Letter, Lucille Painter to "Uncle Ernie," 12 July 1934, folder P–91, carton 34, Federal Writers Project Collection, Bancroft Library.

76. Chaffee, "History of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union," 2:22–23; "Assault on attorney Ernest Besig of Los Angeles, Calif., Imperial Valley, June 8th, 1934," in folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

77. Chaffee, "History of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Industrial Union," 2:22–23; Glassford to Wyzanski, 13 June 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

78. "General Glassford charges intimidation by official," *Imperial Valley Press*, 14 June 1934.

79. "Gen. Glassford changes mind and declares he will stay in Imperial Valley," *Los Angeles Times*, 15 June 1934.

80. "Recommends investigation by grand jury of alleged attacks on Wirin-Johnson," *Imperial Valley Press,* 26 June 1934.

81. Wyzanski to Glassford, 12 June 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

82. "The strike crumbling," *Los Angeles Times*, 19 July 1934.

83. "The Red Menace," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 June 1934.

84. Telegram, Wirin to Wyzanski, 14 June 1934, folder P-85, carton 34, Federal Writers Project Collection.

85. "Government lets canal contract," *Imperial Valley Press*, 23 June 1934.

86. "Additional water supply arrives in Valley," *Imperial Valley Press*, 12 July 1934.

87. *Open Forum*, 7 July 1934, folder P-91, carton 34, Federal Writers Project Collection, Bancroft Library.

88. "Heald condemns statement made by Taft," *Imperial Valley Press*, 3 July 1934.

89. Address by Philip S. Bancroft, "The Farmer and the Communists," to the Commonwealth Club of California, 26 April 1935, in folder P-1, carton 32, Federal Writers Project Collection.

90. Glassford to Wyzanski, 14 June 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

91. Glassford to Besig, 20 June 1934, folder P-91, carton 34, Federal Writers Project Collection.

92. Glassford to Wyzanski, 14 June 1934, folder 2, box 26, Glassford papers.

93. *Reminiscences of Frances Perkins*, book 4, 411, 418.

94. Kevin Starr, *Material Dreams: Southern California Through the 1920s* (New York, 1991), 43.

95. As a member of a House Labor subcommittee, Nixon opposed workers trying to organize a union at DiGiorgio Farms near Bakersfield. Robert DiGiorgio became one of his most important financial backers. See "House raps union film on DiGiorgio farm," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 March 1950; and Ernesto Galarza, *Spiders in the House and Workers in the Field* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1970), 42–48. On DiGiorgio's support for Nixon, see Roger Morris, *Richard Milhous Nixon: The Rise of an American Politician* (New York, 1990), 572; and

Greg Mitchell, *Tricky Dick and the Pink Lady: Richard Nixon v. Helen Gahagan Douglas—Sexual Politics and the Red Scare, 1950* (New York, 1998), 97, 124, 246. As governor, Reagan ridiculed Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers and drew support from California agribusiness. See Roger A. Bruns, *Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers Movement* (Santa Barbara, Calif., 2011), 73.

96. Philip Bancroft oral history, 461, Bancroft Library.

97. On Camp, see Rick Wartzman, *Obscene in the Extreme: The Burning and Banning of John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath* (New York, 2008), 226; on Combs, see Seth Rosenfeld, *Subversives: The FBI's War on Student Radicals, and Reagan's Rise to Power* (New York, 2012), 40–41, 49, 63, 283; on Sherrill, see Mark Arax and Rick Wartzman, *The King of California: J. G. Boswell and the Making of a Secret American Empire* (New York, 2003), 129.