

living index, and of the condition of the home index. Nine of these were either merchants or farm operators. These nine families either belonged to the top-ranking church or to none at all. The 23 persons 12 years old or over in this group held a total of 53 memberships, including all reported memberships in the Lions Club and all but one in the Boosters. Another group of eight farmer and white-collar families having good incomes and living conditions (i. e., above median in both categories) can be separated. This group has some members in churches other than that with highest social standing, 1 of its group is a Booster, and among them hold 15 club memberships. The remaining seven families in the farmer-white-collar group do not participate in the older congregation, and among them hold only two club memberships. On the basis of what we know about social status in the community, we may therefore say that this last group has a status commensurate with the laborers.

These facts indicate that the upper class in Arvin comprises between 10 and 15 percent of the total resident population. Their ranks are not significantly augmented from among the labor group. Selecting those among the laborers who are in the upper half (not quartile) of income, level-of-living index, and index of home conditions, we find a group of 11 families. Only one of these belongs to the upper-class church while there are only nine club memberships among them. One skilled laborer in the group might qualify, since he participates in social activities rather frequently.

After eliminating the occupational group which meets the general criteria of upper class, there remain 115 families in the sample, representing 87 percent of the population. Of this group, only 21 hold memberships in local organizations, while 71 families belong to some local church. In all, about 75 families participate in some local activity, though these ties are frequently tenuous and often only with a handful of other persons with equally tenuous ties. If we eliminated those who only participated in the newer religious sects with but slight ties to the whole community, the number would be reduced from 75 to 50, or from two-thirds to less than half of the total population in this status group. Those who participate in organized social events also more frequently participate in group recreation than those who belong only to the church or to no organization at all. Twenty-seven families reported no membership in any community organization and no form of social participation other than movies or picnics (which are usually individual family affairs). This is a fifth of the total population and a fourth of the lower group.

The independent class of Arvin includes between 10 and 15 percent of the families, and is made up of farm operators and merchants, though such occupation status does not insure membership. They are split evenly between two groups—an elite whose status is established and a middle group whose status is less clear. A few families (about 4 in the sample) participate more fully in the society of Bakersfield than they do in local events.

The elite are universally in the highest income brackets and have material possessions and housing conditions which place them at the top of these categories as well. It is comprised mostly of farmers with a few from the merchant-professional category. As a group they hold nearly as many club memberships as all the remainder of the population combined. They frequently participate in the social