

They're Tearin' The Labor Camps Down

Merle Haggard

I guess it's no secret eh that I did a few years in San Quentin
And on my release I noticed that a lot of different things had
come to pass
While I was out of circulation
Like the girls dresses were shorter and the freeways were wider
And the ole steam engines were gone forever
But the one thing I noticed most of all down through the San Jo
achin valley
Was the disappearance of so many labor camps
Where once I'd lived from time to time myself
I noticed that that one there at Houston California was gone
And the ole crown's camp that lie between Formosa and Bakersfie
ld
Was just a barren spot with a few cottonwood trees
And surrounded by an olive orchard
Tho a few still remain like the ole blackburn's camp out on wee
patch highway
It was an evident fact that someone was tryin' to do away with
them all
And I couldn't help but wonder what's gonna happen to the farm
workers
And the fruit pickers who move from town to town
The man with the big family who can't afford the ole high stand
ard of livin'
And was these thoughts and my mem'ries that inspired me to writ
e this song

I came back to this ole town cause my home was here
And to try to find some things I'd left behind
Tho' I've only been away for just a few short years
But I'd forgot about the pace of modern times

I saw changes all around me and some were good
But I hardly recognized my side of town
They tore down the swingin' casing from the cottowood
And that tree was all that marked familar ground

Oh they're tearin' the labor camps down
And I feel a little sentimental shame
Where's a hungry man gonna live at in this town
Oh they're tearin' the labor camps down

The Hilltop family market had been moved somewhere
And the name was changed to fit the newer homes
The folks that I remember were no longer there
And the cabin that my daddy built was gone

Oh they're tearin' the labor camps down...

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