

the indigenous Palestinian population were totally dependent on wage labour as the only source of income. He estimated the Arab families dependent on wage labour in the late 1920 at 21 thousand compared to 7 thousand Jewish workers (Sussman, 1974:36-37).

Johnson-Crosbi's investigation, however, was only concerned with the rural proletariat, the landless agricultural wage labourers. These figures did not include the urban proletariat which were composed of the industrial labourers in construction, in the harbour and other non-agricultural occupations. According to a 1931 survey, industrial wage labourers were estimated at 5,318 Arab families compared to 5,611 Jewish families. An earlier survey conducted in 1928 put the total number of wage labourers at 13,000 wage workers, of which 7,000 were believed to be Jews and the rest Arabs (Sussman, 1974:37).

Contrary to the belief that most Palestinian workers were agricultural migrant labourers, a survey conducted by Arab labour organizations in 1930 concluded that non-agricultural wage labourers were the main component of this labour force. The First Arab Labour Congress held in 1930 estimated the total Palestinian labour force at 70,000, of which, 50,000 Arabs and 20,000 Jews. The Arab labour force was distributed as follows: 15,000 or 30 per cent employed in agriculture; 15,000 or 30 per cent in construction and other public works; 7,000 or 14 per cent worked in manufacturing, such as tobacco, soap..etc.,; 3,000 in railways; 2,000 in the harbour and 8,000 worked as drivers, carriers, etc.,. (5) Furthermore, with the development of the competitive market various sectors within the rural population became proletarianized.

Besides the direct agricultural producers proper, small family-based industries which could not compete in the developing market were