

Nevertheless, the additional income brought to the household by other family members could not alleviate the bad living conditions of the majority of the workers. The overwhelming majority of the workers, estimated at 95 per cent were indebted either to the employer or to other shop-keepers.

In conclusion, the survey added ,98 per cent of all the workers had a standard of living far below the subsistence level. Of the workers surveyed 93 per cent were illiterate and 14 per cent could barely manage to sign their names.(18)

The survey which focused on Arab workers' living conditions did not provide data on Jewish wages for the same year (1936) nor did it specify the nature of jobs occupied. Yet, based on data presented earlier (Table 1) it is possible to obtain a sense of the wage differentials between the indigenous Palestinian and Jewish working classes. According to Table 1, an average Jewish worker (occupying jobs ranging from the least paid unskilled to the highest paid skilled ones) in 1936 received an average wage of labour 452 mils per day. Providing that the worker was successfully employed for the whole month, say 25 days, the monthly income for a Jewish laborer would be 11,300 mils. Compared to figures provided in the survey, this average was close to the income bracket of 12,000 mils which represented the income of 15 workers only or 1.5 per cent of the labor force surveyed.

Even when compared to the lowest wages paid to the male Jewish worker (unskilled laborer, Table 1) whose monthly wages were estimated at 7,500 mils, one finds that over 69 per cent of the Arab workers surveyed received far less than the least paid Jewish worker during the same year.

Jaffa, which was Palestine's main commercial and financial centre