

sections of the working classes were facing extreme levels of exploitation. Unemployment was high, underemployment was widespread and the economic conditions were in general very poor.

Yet, the poorest paid among the workers, it was shown, were the indigenous Palestinians. These workers, rural and urban proletariat, semi-peasants and fully expropriated peasants alike were all placed under worse conditions than their Jewish counterparts. This finding, in fact, suggests that there is more to the exploitation of the indigenous Palestinian working class than the mere factor of the internal village structure as various authors suggest.

As the following shows, racial discrimination served as an effective means of further depreciating the value of Arab labour power. Both the colonial state and the Zionist authorities practiced racial discrimination against the indigenous Palestinian working population.

Racial Discrimination in the Labour Force

The discrimination against the indigenous Palestinian workers on national or racial grounds was systematic throughout the economy. Arab workers were faced with an open policy of racial discrimination practiced against them not only by the Zionist authorities but also by the colonial state.

The common belief that government departments of public works, notably its War and Police departments during the second World War, provided relief to the masses of indigenous workers (Kimmerling, 1983; Taqqu, 1980) is only partially true. Neither in general, nor in this particular example, was the government, to say the least, concerned with Arab employment.