

noted, were those "prospective immigrants who were best qualified to assist the establishment of the Jewish national home". That is, those who will "adhere to boycotting outside labour and what currently exists in Zionist colonies [namely, Arab labourers]..". (48)

The principle of Jewish Labour was used by the Histadrut as a device to promote an exclusivist, and, if possible, purely Jewish economy over an overwhelmingly Arab social structure. However, the objective conditions under which the Palestinian economy evolved during British rule, made the implementation of this device quite difficult. In the process, this policy discriminated not only against the indigenous Palestinian workers but also against other sections within the Jewish working class.

Faced with the abundance of cheap Arab labour, the Zionist authorities tried to implement the principle of Jewish labour by importing Jewish labourers who could compete with the indigenous workers. By the early 20th century, a delegation from Hapoe'l Ha-Tzai'r (Zionist socialist) party was sent to Yemen to bring Jewish workers to Palestine. By the early 1920s over 20,000 Yemenite Jews were brought to Palestine to work in agriculture (Kimmerling, 1983:34). But this relatively small force of labourers had very little effect. More Arab proletariat were created in the process of land expropriation and more unemployed were seeking jobs.

During the 1920s and 30s, when attention was focused on the immigration of European Jews, the Zionist authorities in Palestine resorted to different tactics. In an attempt to expand the scope of the Jewish labour, the Histadrut turned their general principle of utilizing Jewish labour into a binding policy which forced all Jewish employers to recruit their labourers from within its Labour Schedules.