

The scattered information has been usefully gathered for the period 1930 to 1935.<sup>1</sup> It was estimated that the average total number of wage labor for this period was about 50,000. Of this, 30,000 were in agriculture and the remainder in railways, harbors, industry, and construction and quarrying.<sup>2</sup> However, as Taquu notes, these figures “exclude the thousands of peasants who worked seasonally in various forms of agricultural employment, or in public works in the countryside.”

The second major source of data was the estimates of wage labor during WWII when there was an increase in demand because of the expansion in all sectors of the economy but most importantly the increased demand by the government as part of its overall war efforts. Taquu compares estimates by the government’s statistician, the Labor Department, and the *Histadrut* (General Federation of Jewish Workers). She concludes that there were about 125,000 Arab wage laborers in the early to mid-1940s. However, the government employed at least half of these wage laborers in mostly war-related jobs. In other words, the latter were to be eventually terminated, and were not a result of a normal growth in the economy.

Some brief comments should be mentioned about Arab wage labor in European settler establishments. One estimate puts the total number of Arab wage labor in European concerns at about 12,000 by the end of 1935. This represented

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<sup>1</sup>Rachelle Taquu, “Peasants Into Workmen,” 262-7.

<sup>2</sup>For construction and quarrying, Taquu lists the figure of 8,900 for 1931 only, but I used it for 1931-1935 also given the growth in construction during this time period.