

The dominant theme of those studies has been to demonstrate the growth of a new rural-based proletariat as a result of Israel's economic annexation of the West Bank and Gaza; or its opposite, a process of declassment (Hilal, 1975; Zureik, 1976, 1979; Graham-Brown, 1979; Samara, 1979). Unlike earlier studies dealing with the formation of a rural proletariat in mandatory Palestine (Carmi and Rosenfeld, 1974; Taqqu, 1980) or in the Galilee under Israeli rule (Cohen, 1965) those present works focus primarily on the colonial aspect of this class relationship. Moreover, the controversy of the policy implication of employing Arabs within the Israeli economy consider its effects on Israeli social structure as well (Hilal, 1975:255-258; Farjoun, 1975; Bregman, 1976; Van Arkadie, 1977). Farjoun, for example, sees the Palestinian labour force as performing two important functions for the Israeli economy today:

1. As a non-organized sector of the work force it grants the Israeli economy a significant range of flexibility during periods of crises, allowing it to lay off surplus labour during recessions, and to recruit workers at will -- during economic booms -- without being hampered by trade union restrictions.
2. The Arab labour force contributed to the strengthening of the Jewish private bourgeoisie in its conflict with the Histadrut-controlled industries and with the state bureaucracy, without the latter being able to mobilize the Jewish work force against the effects of unorganized Arab labour since their own industries (i.e. the public sector's) will be affected as well (Farjoun, 1979:3).