

The Arab Worker under the Palestine Mandate (1937)

GEORGE MANSOUR

*Palestinian trade unionist George Mansour (b. 1905 – d. 1963) initially worked as a baker, then as school teacher in Nazareth before his family moved to Jaffa in 1927, where he worked first in trade and then in manufacturing. As Secretary of the Arab Workers Society, a labour organisation founded in 1934, he was a central figure in the 1936 General Strike, helping to write and distribute communiques and leaflets, and organise rallies, marches and pickets. After his arrest in late 1936, and after the assassination of AWS's leader Michel Mitri by British forces in December 1936, Mansour testified before the Royal Commission in January 1937 about the grievances of Arab labourers in Palestine. Frustrated by the Peel Commission Report, he published *The Arab Worker under the Palestine Mandate*. Based largely on his evidence to the Commission, this booklet was designed to appeal to British public opinion and 'to give the English reader some idea of why Arab labour is at one with the rest of the Arab population in its opposition to Zionist immigration'. After his testimony and due to his strong relationships to trade unionists in Britain, he was appointed to the Palestine Office in London, where he remained until the Second World War. Returning to Palestine, he was unable to revive his labour work as a result of continued harassment and repeated arrests. He left for Baghdad, where he worked as a teacher and organised popular committees in solidarity with Palestine. After the war, and the Nakba, he spent time in Egypt working on labour organising, journalism, and education, as well as working with the Arab Higher Committee (AHC). He then moved with the AHC to Beirut in 1959, spending the last years of his life doing trade union work.*

This text provides a lucid account of the wider socio-economic implications Zionist colonisation and Jewish immigration to Palestine had on the indigenous society in general, and on the labour market in particular. As an articulate representative of the budding Arab Labour Federation and Arab labour movement, Mansour was the antithesis of Zionist propaganda. This propaganda insisted on the underdevelopment of Arab labour consciousness and portrayed the Arab working class as a whole as a tool of their feudal Arab masters. It asserted that there was little ground on which to organise jointly with Jewish labour. However, as the text illuminates, the Histadrut's strategic decision against joint organisation and its 'conquest of labour' strategy was necessitated by Arab labour's increasing linkage of economic and political demands and its realisation that the Zionist labour movement's political goals marginalised and displaced Palestinians both as workers and as natives of the land. Another target of Mansour's testimony are British claims regarding the positive impact the development of a Jewish national

home in Palestine had in areas such as the provision of health, economic development, in particular on the agricultural sector, and urbanisation. Dismissing such claims as founded on Zionist propaganda, the evidence given by Mansour exposes British support for Zionism. The following excerpts from The Arab Worker under the Palestine Mandate were prepared by this issue's editors.

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Compiled by George Mansour, formerly Secretary of the Arab Labour Federation (Jaffa), from material submitted by the Arab Labour Organisations.

Introduction

The following passage occurred in the Debate on Palestine, held in the House of Commons on July 21st, 1937.

Earl Winterton: A cardinal feature of the arguments of the right honourable and gallant gentleman (Colonel Wedgwood) and some other members opposite is a belief that the opposition on part of the Arabs is confined to a few effendis and a few landlords [...]. It is obvious that the Commission do not hold that view, and it is obvious to anyone who visits Palestine that it is not so. Let me say frankly that I think there is the same mood among the Arab people of Palestine as there was among the Southern Irish some years ago, exactly the same.

Colonel Wedgwood: The Commission did not take any evidence from the fellahin. They hardly went about the country at all.

Earl Winterton: The Royal Commission certainly took evidence. There was evidence given by Mr. Mansour on behalf of Arab labour.

Mr. Stephen: He represents nobody but himself.

Earl Winterton: It is not true to say that the Gentleman in question represented nobody but himself. He represents the only organised Arab labour in the country. His evidence was to the effect that Arab labour could not accept the present position and were at one with the people of other classes in objecting to Jewish immigration as it stands at present.

The following pages have been written in order to give the English reader some idea of *why* Arab labour is at one with the rest of the Arab population in its opposition to Zionist immigration, and why it resents the well-known attitude of Col. Wedgwood and Mr. Stephen. At the same time, we hope to call attention to the inadequacy of the Royal Commission's treatment of the relationship of Jewish and Arab labour in Palestine. While recognising that the fundamental issue is political, we believe that economic factors played a tremendously important part in the disturbances of 1936 [the general strike had lasted from April to October 1936] and that this aspect has been totally ignored by the Royal Commission. [...]

Arab labour organisations

The Arab world has not passed through an industrial revolution similar to that of the West. No labour movement comparable to those of Europe exists in the Near East. The workers have never entirely lost contact to their natural leaders and have preserved the devotion to outstanding personalities, rather than to parties, which is characteristic of the older world.

Of the various beginnings towards an organisation of labour in Palestine, the most developed are the Arab Labour Federation in Jaffa, of which Mr. Mansour was Secretary and the late Mr. Michel Mitri President, and the Palestine Arab Workers Society in Haifa. The former has a membership of about 7,000. Its headquarters are in Jaffa. It holds public meetings which are attended by as many as 2,000 people. It endeavours to assist the workers and the fellahin in their relations with the Government and with employers. The organisation is rudimentary, but both societies possess branches throughout the country. [...]

Efforts directed towards bettering the lot of the Arab worker in Palestine encounter all the difficulties which exist in other countries as well as other special to Palestine. The latter proceed from the fact that the Government is charged with the task of 'placing the country under such political, administrative, and economic conditions as will ensure the establishment of the Jewish National Home'. In this task it is 'assisted' by the Jewish Agency, a powerful international

organisation, disposing of great financial resources and tremendous power of propaganda in almost every country of the world. The Agency has the privilege, which it constantly uses, of direct approach to the highest officials in the land. If any of its demands are not granted, questions are at once raised in the British Parliament and Press, and in half of the newspapers of the world.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the Administration has little time or energy left over for considering the interests of the 'other sections of the population'. The latter do indeed make their grievances known through the proper official channels, but there the matter generally ends. Nor did the Arab Higher Committee have any legal standing or means of bridging pressure to bear by an adverse vote in a legislative council or otherwise.

The Government has no time whatsoever to spare for Arab labour questions, and nothing specific has been done to better the workers' lot. International agreements concerning hours of labour and conditions are simply ignored as far as Arab labour is concerned. Those people who interest themselves in the workers' lot are regarded as a nuisance; if they become at all influential, they become suspect as possible nationalist agitators, or, alternatively, as potential communists. There are also agents, Arabs and Arab-speaking Jews, who are paid by the Jewish labour organisations to keep a watch on the Arab unions and to prevent Arab workers from joining them. [...]

How the National Home affects Arab Workers

To illustrate the effect of the [Jewish] National Home on Arab labour conditions, we would like to call attention to the case of Haifa Harbour. Until towards the end of 1936, the labour employed by the Harbour authorities was almost entirely Arab, though a good deal of Jewish labour was employed by private agents. The Jewish Agency made frequent efforts to persuade the authorities to employ Jewish labour directly. This the Government refused, not for the sake of the Arabs, but because Jewish labour would be more expensive. The Government, indeed, did not favour Palestinian Arab labour in the port, but utilised Hauranis from Syria, because they were cheaper

still, accepting a wage of 100 mills per day or even (according to Mr. Epstein's evidence before the Royal Commission) 70 for 10 hours work. The Agency, however, finally persuaded the Administration to introduce Jewish labour on a system of payment in bulk. The Jewish labourers were supplied with labour saving devices by the Agency, or by the Jewish labour organisations, who met the capital expense. They are thus able to do more work with less labour and so in fact receive higher wages for less work. The result is obvious. Arab workmen are displaced and their place is taken by Jews. As the Government, which controls the national funds of the Arabs, does not provide them with labour saving devices, they remain working in primitive conditions, while the Jewish immigrants who have supplanted them receive equipment and training which enables them to improve their financial and technical position [...]

Arab Progress

On page 129 of the Report of the Royal Commission, seven points are mentioned on which the Royal Commission bases its statement that whatever advance there had been in the social services provided for the Arabs of Palestine, it was largely due to the establishment of the [Jewish] National Home [only six points are actually mentioned in the text]. Before considering these points, one by one, we must call attention to the fact that the Commissioners state that they came to these conclusions 'after hearing the evidence submitted to us, both orally and in writing, by the Jewish representative on this question'. We feel that before expressing an opinion on their own on this subject, the Commissioners should have questioned Arab witnesses in *detail* about this matter and, if possible, have consulted independent economic experts as well. Conclusions based on the evidence of one side only are not likely to command general agreement.

1. *'The large import of Jewish capital has had a general fructifying effect on the economic life of whole country'*

This statement appears to us to lack relevance. What needs to be considered is the effect of this import of capital on [the] Arab economy. If the effect of the Jewish capital had been to transform the

country into an entirely Jewish economic unit, and there had been no Arab industry left in the country at all, it would still be possible to speak of 'a fructifying effect on the economic life of the whole country'; but this is not the issue. We are concerned here with the effect on the economy of the Arab inhabitants of the country.

2. *'The expansion of Arab industry and citriculture has been largely financed by the capital thus obtained'*

The word 'thus' in this sentence is very imprecise. Capital may be obtained in many ways, but hardly from 'a general fructifying effect'. Jewish capital has passed to Arab hands primarily through the sale of land. The greater part of this money has gone to absentee Syrian landlords and therefore has not been available to Palestinian agriculturists and industrialists. These sales of land have moreover created such conditions in Palestine that the populace, despairing of gaining redress by legitimate means, have resorted to terrorism and the evil thereby created has gone far to cancel out any beneficent effects resulting from the increased capital at the disposal of the Palestinian Arabs. With regard to Arab industry, the Commission gives no statistics to illustrate its alleged expansion [...]

With regard to the citriculture, the question, to our mind, is not whether the necessary capital was *actually* derived through the sale of land or other goods to Jews, but whether there *would* have been capital available for the industry, had there been no [Jewish] National Home. The Jaffa orange was already cultivated in the country and esteemed before the War, the groves being then, as now, half in Jewish and half in Arab possession. The industry was flourishing and to some extent could finance its own further developments. It is fairly certain that even if there had been no [Jewish] National Home, a good deal of Jewish capital would have been invested in the industry [...]. The industry might have indeed developed more slowly, but this would have had the advantage of preventing the present crisis of over-production which is entirely due to the Zionists' desire to develop everything unnaturally quickly, in order to facilitate Jewish immigration. If there had been no [Jewish] National Home, Arab labour would never have been driven out of the groves and, from the Arab national point of view, it would have been far more

advantageous for them that that the capital invested should not be so overwhelmingly Jewish.

3. '*Jewish example has done much to improve Arab cultivation, especially of citrus*'

Some of the present crop is due to Jewish production, and we cannot, then, avoid the conclusion that Arab production in this sphere is much less than it was. Now these are crops that were raised in areas which in many cases have become centres of Jewish colonisation. It is evident, then, that any improvement in cultivation has not been sufficient to compensate for the loss of land sold to Jews. It, of course, follows that the land, when in Arab hands, yielded considerable crops and was not, as Zionists claim, all marshes and land.

In certain branches of agriculture, there has undoubtedly been Arab development. This, however, in so far as it is not simply due to Arab initiative, is due to the Department of Agriculture and to the example of the German Christian Colonists and the Monastic Orders, who live and work among the people *without dispossessing them*. There is, for example, a flourishing banana industry at Jericho, remote from Jewish settlement. With regard to fruit trees other than citrus and bananas, a Jewish writer in the *Palestine Review* [14/08/1936] points out, on the strength of Government data, that the Arabs have, in recent years, very greatly increased their area of olives, figs and vines; while the Jews, in a disastrous rush to make quid profits by planting citrus, have *decreased* theirs. Now the areas in which Arabs carry on this cultivation are precisely those which are furthest from Jewish influence and least affected by Jewish land sales. [...]

It is safe to say that, given anything like equal opportunity, the Arab peasant is superior to the Jewish colonist as an agriculturist. At the time when the Mandate was established, some half million Arab peasants managed to live on the land, in spite of all kinds of difficulties. It is very doubtful on the other hand whether even a dozen Jewish colonies would survive if they were deprived of financial, medical and technical assistance provided from funds subscribed abroad.

4. *'Owing to Jewish development and enterprise the employment of Arab Labour has increased in urban areas, particularly in the ports'*

The port of Tel-Aviv employs no Arab labour whatsoever. Its founder's evident intention is that it should develop into a port like Haifa and eventually supplant Jaffa altogether. Jaffa certainly at first developed in part owing to Jewish activity, as well as owing to the growth of the citrus industry. But, as in every other sphere, this benefit only lasted until the Zionists found an opportunity to take over the activity themselves. The project of the Tel-Aviv port had been urged on the Government by the Jews for years; and the strike of 1936 was only the immediate, not the ultimate cause, of its inauguration. Indeed the small benefit which the Jews derived from it *during the strike* would not have justified its expense, had they not hoped to profit from it in the future. The Administration in fact sanctioned it, not as a temporary relief measure, but as a punitive action against Jaffa. Sooner or later, the Government would in any case have yielded to Zionist pressure. Towards the end of the strike, the Administration made a half-hearted attempt to establish a *joint port*; but when the Jewish Agency made it clear that there 'could be no question' of such a solution, it at once abandoned the project. [...]

5. *'Institutions, founded with Jewish funds primarily to serve the [Jewish] National Home have also served the Arab population. Hadassah, for example, treats Arab patients, notably at the tuberculosis hospital at Safad, and the Radiology Institute at Jerusalem admits Arab country folk to clinics of its Rural Sick Benefit Fund, and does much infant welfare work for Arab mothers'*

As regards this, it is sufficient to [...] quote from Dr. Canaan's 'Conflict in the Land of Peace' [Taufik Cannan, *Conflict in the Land of Peace*, Jerusalem, Syrian Orphanage Press, 1936], page 84:

The improved health of the peasants, thus the Zionists argue, is the result of their direct and indirect medical and sanitary help and of the improved economic condition of the country. It is true that the Jews have provided extensive medical services

but only an insignificant proportion thereof has affected Arabs. We do not deny the authoritative aid of some specialists [...].

The Zionists boast, as [political director of the Jewish Agency] Mr. Shertok has done lately, that they have built the hospitals. He forgets to mention the great many hospitals run by Christian Institutions and scattered all over the country and such institutions as Dr. Dajani's Arab hospital in Jaffa. These are much more numerous than the Jewish hospitals and continue to do a great service to Jews; while the small amount of medical help given by Jewish hospitals to non-Jews may be clearly seen from the following:

In the Government dispensaries and clinics in Jerusalem, Hebron, Jaffa, Ramleh, Haifa, Acre, Beisan, Safad and Tiberias 76,985 patients were treated in 1934; 8,172 or 10.63% were Jews. In the same year 55,877 new patients were treated in Jewish dispensaries and clinics in Jerusalem. Of this number 1,654 were non-Jews. Even if we take the number 1,654 to represent nobody but Arabs, only 3.25% of the total number treated in the Jewish dispensaries were Arabs. In the same year 77,328 new patients were treated in non-Jewish clinics and dispensaries in Jerusalem. 21,906 i.e. 28.3% of the whole attendance were Jews. If we deduct these numbers treated in the Christian English Hospital (the Eng. Mission Hospital) we still have a total of 61,355 out-patients of whom 6,727 i.e. 10.85% were Jews.

Let us compare the proportions in the dispensaries and clinics in Haifa. The proportion of non-Jews who have been treated in Jewish dispensaries and clinics is 12% while that of the Jews treated in non-Jewish institutions is 17.3% [...].

More revealing is the proportion in the Haifa Hospital where *34.46% of all patients who entered non-Jewish hospitals were Jews, and only 0.7% of all admissions to Jewish hospitals were Arabs.*

These statistics show clearly that the Jews have received infinitely more medical help from non-Jewish institutions than non-Jews have received from Jewish institutions.

6. *'The general beneficent effect of Jewish immigration on Arab welfare is illustrated by the fact that the increase in the Arab population is most marked in the urban areas affected by Jewish development. A comparison of the Census returns in 1922 and 1931 shows that, six years ago, the increase per cent in Haifa was 86, in Jaffa 62, in Jerusalem 37, while in purely Arab towns such as Nablus and Hebron it was only 7, and at Gaza there was a decrease of 2%'*

This argument is really extraordinary. We would ask the Commission to state in which cities of Palestine they would have expected the Arab population to increase most rapidly, *if there had been no* [Jewish] *National Home*. Surely it would have been in Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem and the centre of the citrus trade; in Haifa, the second port and terminus of the pipeline, and in Jerusalem, the capital?

The fact that these three cities have developed disproportionately to other Arab cities is also partly because of the landless workers that inevitably drift to the big towns and partly on account of the neglect of the Arab interests on part of the Government. [...]

In point of fact, the most conspicuous example of an 'urban area affected by Jewish development' is Tel Aviv. Here there are no Arabs at all. Of the vast sums which the Jews have brought to Palestine, something has of course passed into Arab hands by the sale of land, for the rent of houses, for various services rendered and for the purchase of fruit, vegetables and other commodities. This money is momentarily 'fructifying', but the permanency of this depends on its being profitably invested in industry and agriculture. It seems to us highly improbable that the Arab people of Palestine have acquired any advantages compensating for the loss of a great part of their most fertile land and for the fact that the chief preoccupation of the Government of their country is the establishment in it of a National Home for an alien people whose agricultural and industrial development is constantly favoured at the expense of their own. [...]

Attitude of the Histadrut towards Arab Labour

The most influential party in the Jewish Agency in Palestine is the General Federation of Jewish Labour [the Histadrut] which comprises

practically all the Jewish Labour Organisations. Within the party the most important unit is the so-called Mapai, Mifleget Poale Erets Israel, the 'Party of the Labourers of the Land of Israel'. Mr. Ben Gurion, President of the Zionist Executive, belongs to this Party, so do Mr. Shertok, political director of the Agency, and the powerful Mr. Berl Katznelson, director of the 'Davar' newspaper. The Mapai is a very powerful and highly organised institution which carries on a great deal of constructive social work for the benefit of Jewish Labour.

According to the Memoranda prepared for the use of the Royal Commission by the Administration, 'the party supports a Zionist programme for the widest possible immigration of the Jewish masses to Palestine [...] One of the aims of the Party is the so-called *conquest of labour*, namely the penetration of Jewish Labour into all spheres of work, industry, trade, the public services and most of all into agricultural work'.

Socialist in theory, Mapai holds the orthodox Socialist view concerning 'imperialism', which it regards as something inherently evil. It might therefore have been expected to be an ally of the Arab workers in their struggle against British 'imperialism'. This is however not so, because its Zionism, on all occasions, takes precedence over its socialism.

Now Zionism in Palestine could not exist for a single day without the assistance of British 'imperialism'. While Zionism therefore opposes 'imperialism' in all other countries, it is its ally in Palestine.

According to its ideals, Mapai should do everything possible to assist the 'natives' to raise their standards of living and enable them to hold their own against the intruding colonists. In the case of Palestine there is this difficulty. If the 'natives' reached the European standard of civilisation, there would be no conceivable justification for a Mandate. If the peasantry were prosperous and content, they would never sell their land to the foreigner. If there was a flourishing local industry, there would be no justification for introducing competing industries from outside. If there was an independent autonomous Government, there would be no possibility of setting up a rival Zionist or semi-Zionist Government. The attitude of the Mapai towards Arab labour, then, is that of any other colonising immigrants

towards the native inhabitants, very much intensified by the fact that Zionists regard the indigenous inhabitants as inconvenient interlopers in a land that ought to be entirely Jewish. [...]

Officially the attitude of the Mapai is expressed as follows:

As part of its programme, the Labour party is also striving to co-operate with Arab labour *in non-Jewish undertakings*. The scope of such co-operation in present circumstances is, however, limited. (Government Memoranda for the use of the Royal Commission, page 114).

The Histadrut's fundamental aim is 'the conquest of labour', that is, to introduce as many Jews of its own type into Palestine as quickly as possible and to push these into every sort of work. The Histadrut accepts no responsibility for the Arabs in this respect. No matter how many Arab workers are unemployed, they have no right to take any job which a possible immigrant might occupy. No Arab has the right to work in Jewish undertakings. If Arabs can be displaced in other work too, say, in Haifa or Jaffa ports, that is good. If a port can be established in Tel Aviv and Jaffa ports are ruined, that is good. If some Jews still employ Arab labour in their orange orchards, either because Arab labour is cheaper and better for this purpose, then the fact can be used as evidence of the employment provided by Zionism for Arabs. But if Arab labour can be pushed out by 'picketing' and 'pressure', that is much better.

If the Histadrut had been sincere in its protestations of good will, if it had been willing to do something to improve the lot of the Arab worker in return for 'penetrating into all spheres of labour' and turning the country into a Jewish fatherland, it might have done something as follows. It might have employed one quarter Arab labour with its own labour and have taught the Arabs its own skilled processes and have paid the Arab the same wage for the same work. In that case, the Arab would not have felt quite the same bitterness that he feels now. The Histadrut never did anything of the sort. It never employed a single Arab if it could help it; when it was forced to do so, it paid them half the wages that it paid to its own men; and whenever it could oust Arab from any sphere of work, it did so.

The Conquest of Labour

An example will make clear the methods employed in the 'Conquest of Labour'. As is well known, the Communist Party in Palestine is opposed to Zionism, on the ground that it is an imperialist movement. At one time, this Party issued a newspaper, called 'Ha Or' ['Light']. This published an Arabic supplement in order to expose Zionist aims to the Arab workers. Thanks to this paper, the following illuminating document, circulated by the Labour Council of Tel Aviv to all the workers in the building trade, was made known to the Arab Public [*Ha Or*, 7, 23/11/1934]:

Dear Comrade,

As the result of the shortage of Jewish workers, Arab workers have increased in many industries. And in certain secondary trades the increase has become a striking feature and Jewish labour has been expelled and the industries have thus been Arabised.

This is also the situation in two branches of the building trade. These are the zifzif [gravel] and stone trades. In these two trades hundreds of workers are employed and tens of thousands of pounds are paid monthly to Beduins and Hauranis of every sort.

It is quite obviously imperative to consider this important matter. Not only is our situation vitally affected by the low wages, but our other industries are threatened with being affected by cheap labour, industries which provide a living for thousands of our Jewish workers' families.

The Labour Council of Tel-Aviv has started a big campaign against this danger. The Council is negotiating with the owners of Jewish stone quarries to effect the introduction of Jewish labour into this important trade, and has reached a satisfactory agreement in [the] Majdal Yaba quarries. This agreement guarantees to supply Tel-Aviv with Jewish stone. But this demands the immediate consideration of the workers, because without their assistance and help the attempt will

encounter serious obstacles. Therefore we have decided to call on those concerned, contractors, masons, labourers and drivers to demand from them from now on to use the Jewish product only. It is the duty of workers to see that these orders are carried out in their sphere of work. It is only through the determination of those concerned that this trade can be brought under the control and into the hands of the Jews. [...]

Most important of all are the workers in the building trade itself. It is in their power to abstain themselves, and to prevent others, from using stones produced by Arabs. It is their duty not to allow the unloading of stones unless they are certain that it is Jewish. Further, a special controller's seal is to be seen on the invoice brought by the driver. The absence of the seal indicates that the stone is of Arab provenance. Moreover, special inspectors will pass through the town for the said purpose and all comrades are requested to assist them in their task.

We feel certain that we shall receive your assistance. You must absolutely refuse to work with stone of Arab provenance. The refusal to unload such stone at the place of work will not only be an important step towards making this industry Jewish, but will also prevent cheap labour from creeping into the other Jewish industries.

With the compliments of your comrades,
The Executive Committee.

A few words of explanation are necessary to make clear the point at the time that this document was issued. The great influx of capital and immigration which began in 1933 created a boom in the buildings trade, which drew Jewish workers out of all the lower-paid trades and occupations. There was thus a so-called 'shortage' of Jewish workers in agriculture, the police, the railways, the post office and so on. This is the 'shortage' which is referred to in this document. It was obviously an artificial phenomenon, which would cease the moment the building boom came to an end. In point of fact, when a crisis was precipitated by the Abyssinian War in the autumn of 1935, the position was at once reversed. Jewish workers

made great efforts to get back into the lower-paid jobs and the Agency was faced with a serious unemployment problem.

In the meanwhile, however, this position was utilised by the Agency as a pretext for demanding an enormous labour schedule. This is the explanation of the apparent inconsistency of a document which speaks in the same breath of a *shortage of Jewish labour* and of the *necessity of introducing Jewish workers into a number of new trades*. The real object was to make use of the opportunity of the tremendous immigration to introduce Jewish labour into new occupations, while retaining as far as possible all the posts held already.

The greater part of the stone used at Tel-Aviv at this period was brought from the quarry at Majdal Yaba [Migdal Zedek]. This was Arab property leased to Jews on long leases soon after the War. As no question had arisen at that time of displacing Arab labour, no stipulations on the subject were put in the lease. In 1934, the quarries employed about 30 villagers and some 400 Palestinian workers from other villages, not Hauranis or Beduins as is pretended in this document. The preliminary step of the Jewish labour agents was to send instructions to the managers of the quarry to accumulate large heaps of stones. When this had been done, they were to dismiss the Arab workers, on the ground that there was evidently no demand for stone at present. The plan was thus to persuade the workers to return to their villages. Once they were safely out of the way, Jewish workers would be introduced and the Arabs faced with an accomplished fact. The Arab Labourers' Federation of Jaffa, however, got wind of what was happening and sent word to the workers to not leave the village. The Jews waited for days, and then sent a party of 150 Jewish workers. The Arab workers refused to allow them to start working. After repeated attempts, lasting for 17 days, the managers of the quarries consented to reengage the Arab workers. The attempt had for the moment been defeated. At the end of the disturbances of 1936, however, the Jews came to demand work, and there were disputes. The police were called in and, under the command of a Jewish police officer, arrested 97 Arab workers. Another sphere of work had been successfully 'conquered' for Jewish labour, and another 400 Arab workers had been deprived of their livelihood. [...]

In general, the year 1934 was distinguished by a tremendous extension of 'picketing'. This was designed to prepare the way for the mass immigration of the succeeding years. The Jews had by now bought a great part of the most fertile land in the country, and the Histadrut was concerned in expelling Arab labour from all those areas in which the Jews had an interest.

Wherever Arabs were working for Jewish contractors or employers, in Hadar Ha Carmel, in Rehavia, in Kfar Saba, in Bait Vegan and elsewhere, or where Arabs were selling material of Arab provenance, as stone in Tel-Aviv, the Histadrut sent its pickets to persuade the Arabs to leave, and if necessary to drive them away by force. If the picketers were arrested by the police for attacking Arabs, they were at once described in the Jewish press as martyrs and heroes of the Zionist cause. This campaign of press incitation continued, week after week, entirely unchecked by the Government. [...]

By such means, which often included violence and other illegalities, were created the 'vacancies' for Hebrew workers, to fill which the Government obligingly granted the Labour Schedules, which made 1935 the record year for immigration and, incidentally, prepared the way for the disorder of 1936 and the accompanying economic crisis.

In all the publications and propaganda which the Histadrut issues, it states that it is opposed to cheap labour and that it sincerely desires to raise the standard of the Arab workers, by introducing higher wages and shorter hours, etc. This is not the truth. The Histadrut aims at driving Arab workers away, or, when that is not possible, at keeping them in their present condition. They are thus able to point out to the Jewish workers, and particularly to the newcomers, the contrast between their position and that of the Arabs, and the great advantages to be gained from belonging to the Histadrut. At the same time, it enables them to convince the Jewish workers that if they really and sincerely cooperated with Arab workers, it would mean their descending to the wretched standard of living of the Arab worker, who has not enough to eat or even a roof to shelter his head. [...]