

in 1934-35 his wage dropped to 80-130 mils, or by 300-500 per cent. This was also true for laborers in the soap industry where wages dropped from 250-500 mils per day in 1930 to no more than 120 mils for day and night shifts in 1935-36. It is important to mention here that wages here do not take into account the high inflation rate which was also characteristic of the Palestinian economy during this period.

(17) In fact, most affected by Palestine's economic conditions during this period was precisely the class of urban proletarians traditionally ignored by most authors. As the further discussion reveals, the numerous members of this class experienced living conditions which proved to be harsher than those faced by the rural proletarians. The thousands of wage labourers who flooded to the cities were, like their rural counterparts, relegated to the most menial, unskilled, low paying jobs. In economic terms, the only difference between the urban and rural proletarians was that in times of unemployment or underemployment -which were not infrequent in Palestine- the urban proletariat could not turn to the land, the house or the village for social or economic support.

To appreciate the living conditions under which the indigenous Palestinian urban proletariat existed, the results of a survey of 1000 working class families in Jaffa will be analysed. This survey was conducted by the Arab Workers' Society and presented in 1937 to the Royal Commission. Otherwise known as the Peel Commission, this commission was sent to Palestine in late 1936 to "investigate the reasons of the Palestinian revolt".

The major finding of this survey was that the overwhelming majority of the workers were paid extremely low wages. These wages were low in absolute terms, that is in relation to the costs of living in Jaffa.