

and continues to work "illegally." It should be pointed out that hardly any attempts are made by the government to control "illegal" work, either through employers or by curtailing the flow of workers.

Farmers from Ras el-Tin are aware of the resentment against their work in Israel among nationalist circles in the West Bank and abroad, but they view it disdainfully. "Before 1967", says Ahmad, "my elder brothers used to work for a landlord in neighbouring Burham for 30 piastres (about 40 pence) a day, and we had nowhere else to go." All of the workers interviewed had had jobs in the West Bank, mostly in building sites in Ramallah and East Jerusalem, but they prefer to work in Israel.

Preference for work in Israel as opposed to the West Bank is dictated by factors other than the availability and diversity of jobs in the Jewish sector. West Bank businessmen and building contractors often complain about the difficulties confronting them in recruiting workers, even when they offer the same salaries as Israelis (thus saving their workers the added costs of transportation). At the heart of this preference are the conditions of work. Jewish contractors work mainly for big construction firms and they have to maintain a steady and reliable supply of labour. Payment for jobs takes place promptly and according to the conditions stipulated in the written contract. Against this, most Arab construction sites are small-scale family concerns; agreements are made orally, and payment for finished assignments are often delayed.

"With Arab contractors", says Husam, "I have to remind them four or five times to pay me, and by the time they do, I lose a good part of my money because of inflation. The Jewish (boss) cannot afford to cheat you since he (usually) has four or five sites to finish, and he wants to get his work done."