

for example, the monthly salary per employee post reached up to 1,354 IL., compared with the general average wage in Israel (1,542 IL.). Further, it is the highest among branches in which Arab labor is competitive; that is, higher than that in agriculture (970 IL.), food processing (1,001 IL.), textiles (1,149 IL.), and personal services (963 IL.).<sup>32</sup> In this sense, Arab labor is also likely to be more attracted to employment in this economic branch when unable to move further upward.

Furthermore, the relatively higher wages in this branch results indirectly in reinforcing the purchase power of this labor force, a prerequisite for the development of consumerism and the necessary expansion of the Israeli local market into Arab frontiers.

Second, unlike construction industry in the United States, in which the labor force are capable of organizing powerful trade unions, hence the greater bargaining power in terms of economic demand and social benefits, in Israel the contrary is true. Indicators of labor unrest even before 1973 during the very period of rapid economic growth show the construction labor force to be the most passive and disciplined. Probably the structure of the construction industry, except for Solel Boheh (Histadrut-owned company), fragmented into small projects, does not allow a sense of unity among the workers.

Third, and more important, is the fact that this physically rough and dangerous industry has the highest percentage of injuries. The employment of Palestinian-Arabs, especially non-citizens whose labor power is imported from the occupied territories and the reproduction cost of which falls outside Israel-proper, means tremendous savings in social