

berate and systematic policy to keep the indigenous labor force vulnerable, thus maintained as a flexibility variable used when and as the economy needs. Examples of how the Arab labor force is made to display flexibility to the system are many.

Some of these we have mentioned earlier when discussing the economic meaning of Arab labor being essentially commuter labor in Jewish work places. This refers not only to the partial transfer of reproduction cost into the Arab traditional village, but also in making these commuter workers appear in and disappear from the labor force and market as seems appropriate to the health of the economy, measured by the extent to which the needs and interests of the ruling class are satisfied. Figures in Table J-2 evidence this point, not only in that the decline in the demand for labor during recession is sharper in the case of Arabs than in the case of Jews, but also in the very obstruction of Arab participation in the labor force, hence its decline by 8 percent. This decline in the size of the Arab labor force during the pre-1967 economic crisis cannot be viewed in terms of shortage; rather, it must be interpreted as a function of a coercive dismembering of Arab workers from the labor force when their presence started threatening the demand for Jewish labor, a dismemberment through discouragement in the job-seeking process, inevitably forcing them into reabsorption in traditional semi-subsistence agriculture, from which they were originally released to meet a seemingly temporary demand for Arab labor during the first construction boom. This, in turn, results in the masking of the relative unemployment effects of