

Mr. A. Granott, an Israeli land expert, placed "the total area of land in Jewish possession at the end of June 1947 at 1,850,000 dunums; of this 181,100 dunums had been obtained through concessions from the Palestine Government . . ." ¹³ Since land granted by Government under concession or lease appeared in the 'Village Statistics' under the column of 'Public,' the net area actually owned by Jews drops to 1,668,900 dunums.

The three estimates given in respect of different dates are very close to each other, and whether we accept one figure or the other, the fact remains that Jewish land holdings in Palestine did not exceed 6 per cent of the total land area on the date of the termination of the Mandate in May 1948.

One point on Jewish land holdings which, however, keeps cropping up whenever the Palestine problem is discussed is worth explaining: Zionist propaganda claims that the lands of Palestine had been purchased from the people of Palestine. This claim has been accepted even in some Arab quarters; and critics accuse the Palestinian Arabs of failing to protect themselves against the Zionist invasion which brought about the present crisis in the Middle East.

The comments and figures stated below, while inconclusive, should refute any such accusations. Mr. Granott exonerates the Palestinian farmer by providing evidence that the majority of land acquisitions by the Jews had been made from absentee land-owners.

Commenting on "the distribution of the land from the point of view of its ownership before it passed into the hands of the Jews," Granott states: "The Jews acquired their land principally from large and medium Arab land-owners; the area which was bought from small proprietors was not extensive." He went on to say that "although there are no figures covering the whole of the land acquisition, there are more or less precise data on the majority of the lands which in the various periods passed into the hands of the Jews. The figures," he said, "relate to acquisitions which were made by the big companies and associations — P.I.C.A., the Palestine Land Development Company, and the Jewish National Fund." He then listed Jewish acquisitions up to the year 1936 and pointed out that the figures embrace "only about half (55.4 per cent) of all the areas which were acquired by Jews." ¹⁴

According to Mr. Granott's tabulation, acquisition of land by the three Jewish companies by the end of 1936 stood as follows:

	<i>Dunums</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Acquired from large absentee landowners	358,974	52.6
Acquired from large resident landowners	167,802	24.6
Acquired from Government, Churches and foreign companies	91,001	13.4
Acquired from fellaheen (farmers)	64,201	9.4
	<u>681,978</u>	

(13) Granott, A., *The Land System in Palestine* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1952), p. 278.

(14) *Ibid.*, pp. 275-277.