

absentee and resident and 27 percent from *fellaheen*, or small landholders.⁸⁶

Besides the lack of control of the state by the European settlers, and the predominantly small landholding nature of land, other factors limited the capacity of settlers to acquire more land. An analysis of these factors goes beyond the scope of this study, but stated briefly they are: First, the ability by the Zionist movement to raise donated funds in Europe and the United States (their main source) fluctuated according to the general economic conditions there; second, a sizable proportion of the available funds had to go for the provision of housing, industrial investments, and to meet other needs of the settlers; and third, when funds were available, there was the counteracting force of the political and nationalist resistance to the sale of land, especially when the motives of the Zionist movement became clear to the Palestinian Arabs.

The immediate impact of the European settler acquisition of land on the indigenous people was twofold. First, at a time of increasing population, debt, and heavy taxation, limiting these acquisitions to exclusive Jewish use could only intensify the pressure on the land for the Arab peasant and increase the tax and debt burden. This is more so given the lack of resources needed for more intensive agriculture. Second, there was the eviction of thousands of cultivators from these lands. Exact numbers of evicted peasants are not available. Estimates are incomplete over time and space and vary according to the definitions used to specify the rights and nature of the relationship the peasant in question had with the

⁸⁶Ibid., 278.