

settlements in April of 1979 (Claiborne, 1979). Israeli officials claimed the drying of the spring was due to natural drought, yet the nearby settlements in the Fasayel Valley were thriving. Similar cases were reported in Jiftlik and Makhrouq (Zananiri, 1980).

The decreased water resources at the disposal of Arab farmers has been a primary motivation for the switch to more water conserving technology: from the primitive system of furrow irrigation to sprinklers and drip irrigation. Paradoxically, the new irrigation technology has been responsible for both increased productivity in agriculture and a radical reorganization in labour use. But since the installation of these capital-intensive techniques required a substantial investment in capital, their introduction also meant an alteration in the traditional relationship between small peasants, tenants, landlords and commission agents. This transformation is the subject of the case study in Chapter 11.

Responses to Landlessness: West Valley and East Valley

The centrality of the Jordan Valley in Palestinian agriculture lies in its providing a vast area suitable for the reconstitution of landless refugee peasants under conditions of intensive irrigated farming. Clearly, dry farming in the West Bank Highlands could have neither absorbed these refugees as peasants nor generated a surplus for their subsistence. It could only accommodate them as seasonal wage workers and sharetenants to compensate for the loss of migrant (male) household members under condition of wage labour attraction both internally and abroad.

This situation is reversed in the Jordan Valley, where full time farming prevails. Sharab's survey found that 54 percent of all tenants in the East Jordan Valley were Palestinian refugees (Sharab, 1975:23). Our estimate for the Western Valley is about 80 percent of all full-time