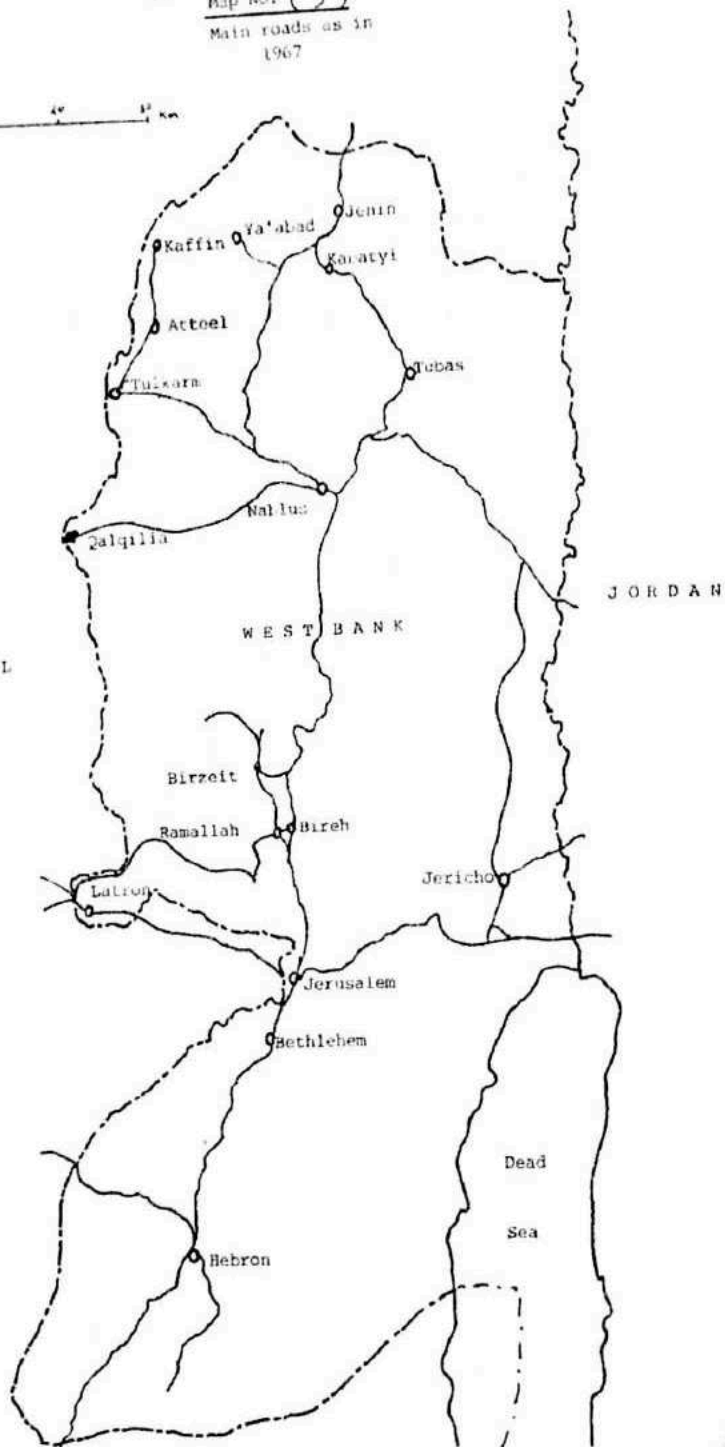




ISRAEL



cool attitude towards all efforts to develop the road system in rural areas presumably for fear of expediting urban expansion or more vigorous land uses.

Transportation by air has also been severely curtailed since occupation. Jerusalem Airport was "confiscated" and passengers had to go through Ben Gurion or Amman airports. Nevertheless, air cargo has never been an important vehicle for West Bank farm produce.

Being land-locked, the West Bank has no direct access to a sea port. Prior to occupation businessmen and farmers had to rely heavily on the ports of Aqaba and Beirut, both around 400 kilometres away. Although Haifa (in Israel) is much nearer, it is not used extensively in agricultural trade because the bulk of exports are destined for shipment by trucks to Jordan and the Gulf states. At the present, therefore, the lack of port facilities is not an important handicap for agricultural development.

Telecommunications pose important problems for West Bank businessmen and farmers. The telephone service is still primitive and extremely time wasting in most regions, especially in northern districts. Telex services outside Jerusalem are not available due to restrictions imposed by the Military Administration. Lack of direct communication channels with Jordan and Arab countries cause serious difficulties to exporters. Improvements in telecommunications are very slow due to severe constraints imposed by both Israel and Arab countries for a variety of political reasons.