

the Executive Office for the Affairs of the Occupied Territories - both affiliated to the government of Jordan. The duty of both offices is restricted to issuing permits for West Bank products destined for Jordan's markets. They are assisted for this purpose by a team of seven official residents in all West Bank districts who issue to exporters certificates testifying to the Arab origin of goods intended for export to Jordan.

Undoubtedly, the present marketing set-up leaves much to be desired, even at the level of regulating exports to Jordan. A major step in the right direction would be the establishment of the Agricultural Marketing Bureau (AMB) as an apex institution entrusted with problems of agricultural marketing in the occupied territories. The AMB would be established by a decision taken by the Joint Palestinian-Jordanian Committee and would be placed under its jurisdiction in a way similar to that of Palestine Agricultural Credit Corporation.

The AMB would assume and consolidate all duties relative to the flow of West Bank agricultural goods into Jordan. This would include supervizing resident inspectors in the occupied territories, issuing permits, and running entry inspection terminals on the Jordan side of the bridges. The suggested change in permit issuing mechanisms will hopefully help expedite the flow of Palestinian goods into Jordan and attend to several loop-holes in the present system.

In addition to its regulatory functions, the AMB would try to expand the export potential of Palestinian produce. This would involve launching an aggressive campaign aimed at exploring new markets and expanding old ones. The AMB should use for this

purpose all sorts of modern promotional techniques, especially short films taken on Palestinian soil. In addition to advertizing the superior quality of produce, promotional campaigns might even emphasize the political connotation of the so far unexploited slogan of "Buy Palestinian to help Palestinians stay at home"!

The PLO can certainly exercise some influence in negotiating for better terms of trade with friendly partners, especially as most of them are making little progress in meeting their food shortages. It might be appropriate to annex commercial attaches to some of the PLO's offices in the Middle East.

The researcher cannot give a detailed statement on the administrative and financial consequences implied by the suggested structural reshuffle and the establishment of the Agricultural Marketing Bureau. Such an assignment should be delegated to an exploratory team of experts designated by the Joint Committee itself.

Although the AMB is viewed as an important addition to Palestinian's pre-independence infrastructures, Jordan would still be able to safeguard its interests through its effective partnership in the Joint Committee. Accordingly, it would be unlikely to veto the proposed structural change in marketing arrangements.

5.2 Exercising tighter control on wholesale markets

The largest proportion of farm products going into agricultural trade are handled through wholesale markets of fruit and vegetables in neighbouring towns, such as Tulkarm, Qalqilia,