

including vegetables, fig trees, olive trees and some citrus. Thus, in a letter by Dr. Rupin, the head of the colonization branch of the Zionist Organization and the head of the Palestine Land Development Company (L.D.C) it is written:

Such purchases are scarce and very valuable. It is impossible to find similar purchases at any time... The purchases in Emek Yisrael [The Marj], are very dear to us. They give us, in one stroke, [bivat Ahat] a large unit of more than 100,000d. with the possibility of developing a large settlement in this fertile and important valley.(8)

In another letter to Julius Simon, the head of the Zionist Organization, the main branch in London, Dr. Rupin said:

There [in the Marj] we have the opportunity to buy one of the most productive and best situated complex in Palestine.. (9)

Natural sources of water in the Marj were plentiful. The Marj had two major natural wells; Ein Jaloud and Rihanieh in addition to other small wells. In one village alone, that is, Nuris , there were 7 grain mills which served Nuris and the surrounding villages and large grazing areas which stretched around the Marj.

The interest in the land purchase, as the documents show was primarily economic. It was aimed at putting together the land stretching over 20 villages into one large unit to be owned and worked solely by Jewish settlers. On this matter, Dr. Rupin observed:

For our colonization we cannot buy smaller unlinked pieces of land from the Fallaheen..We have to buy large linked pieces of land from the big land owners." (10)

In another letter by Hankin, the Palestinian Jewish merchant and the major investor in the L.D.C., the intention to turn the Marj into a big capitalist investment was made clear. In this letter it was said that when all the Marj villages are bought, the land will be converted