

production that nonetheless never reached the 1924-1927 levels. In 1932 and 1933, wheat production further decreased to 51,000 and 44,000 metric tons, respectively. As for major summer crops, average production for 1924-1927 amounted to 124,000 metric tons. In 1928, production went down to 84,000 tons, increased somewhat the next four years, and then decreased to 75,000 tons in 1933.

Table 3.2 shows that starting with 1928 and through 1934, which is the last year of the application of the “commutation of tithe” ordinance, the annual wholesale price for wheat never reached the average price of 1924-1927. The years 1930 and 1931 were especially disastrous when wheat prices dropped to £P 7.44 per ton and £P 6.80 per ton, respectively. Prices did not reach comparable or higher levels than 1924-1927 until 1941 and 1942 when prices were fixed and subsidized by the government as part of its war measures.⁵

However, the real impact of the fall in prices on the peasant was greater than Table 3.2 suggests, since these figures were town prices, which are much greater than village prices (i.e., the prices at which the peasants sold their produce). It has been estimated that the peasant had to sell not one-tenth (which reflected the higher prices of the commuted tithe as used in the Johnson-Crosbie Report) but at least one fifth of the yield (which reflects the lower prices in subsequent years) in order to pay the tithe.⁶ This meant that in years of bad

⁵*Abstract, 1944/45*, 110, 112.

⁶United Kingdom, *Palestine: Report on Immigration, Land Settlement and Development by Sir John Hope-Simpson* (London: HMSO Publications, 1930), 69, 72 (hereafter Hope-Simpson Report); Government of Palestine, *Report of a*