

The rural West Bank, it must be remembered, has a preponderance of owner-cultivators and almost an absence of an agricultural proletariat. It is striking, therefore, to find that among heads of households employed in Israel, 70% do not cultivate a piece of land.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, among those presently employed in construction -- who are in the majority -- there seems to be a higher tendency (31.7%) to cultivate a family plot (the only exception being in the case of those currently employed in agriculture, but the size of the sample here is not big enough to warrant comparisons).

Perhaps the most significant correlation in table 7:3 is between work seniority and the tendency to cultivate land. The longer the years the worker spends employed in Israel, the less likely he is to cultivate his plot; and conversely, among those who have spent less than two years employed in Israel we find the highest rate of land cultivation (37.6%). This is the first concrete evidence obtained linking length of wage-labour employment in Israel with increased negligence of the family farm in the West Bank. Thus although we will be demonstrating in the case of Ras el-Tin the continued importance of marginal land for those workers who have been employed for years outside their village, it is important to note that, for the West Bank as a whole, land has a declining role for rural wage-earners. This condition is likely to continue as long as high levels of employment in Israel are available for Palestinian workers, and as long as there is a pull for migrant labour in Jordan and the neighbouring Arab countries.