THOMAS A. KOLSKY

JEWS AGAINST ZIONISM

THE AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR JUDAISM, 1942-1948

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For Amy Daliah

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Preface

The American Council for Judaism was the only American Jewish organization ever formed for the specific purpose of fighting Zionism and opposing the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. In the 1940s, when the Zionists were engaged in a decisive struggle to create a Jewish state, the Council stood as their most formidable opponent within the Jewish community.

Much has been written about the history of American Zionism, with Melvin Urofsky's *American Zionism from Herzl to the Holocaust* and *We Are One!* providing a thorough survey of the movement.[1] But no comprehensive history of the Council and its activities in the 1940s has been written to date. The major works on the growth of American Zionism, including Urofsky's, have given the Council only marginal attention. My essay, "The Opposition to Zionism: The American Council for Judaism Under the Leadership of Rabbi Louis Wolsey and Lessing Rosenwald," in *Philadelphia Jewish Life, 1940-1985*, edited by Murray Friedman, is a brief overview of the formation and the main phases of the history of the organization.[2] Elmer Berger, the central figure in the Council's history, presents a highly candid personal account of the organization in *Memoirs of an Anti-Zionist Jew.*[3] However, besides being too brief, Berger's story, though told frankly, is not free of partisan bias. In short, the story of the American Council for Judaism has remained largely untold.

Throughout my research and writing I have tried to remain impartial. My basic attitude toward the American Council for Judaism has been that its philosophy is as legitimate as that of the Zionists. Both Zionism and Jewish anti-Zionism are products of the powerful historical forces that have shaped the modern Jewish experience.

It gives me great pleasure to acknowledge the help I have received while working on this project. The staffs of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Library in Hyde Park, New York, and the Harry S. Truman Library in Independence, Missouri, offered me

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My daughter, Amy Daliah, paid the highest price for this project. For several years it deprived her of a full-time father, yet, throughout those years her love, loyalty, and patience were the source of highest inspiration to me. Consequently, it is to her that I dedicate this work.

Jews Against Zionism

The American Council for Judaism, 1942–1948

CHAPTER 1

Zionism and Its Reform Jewish Critics in America Before World War II

Zionists and Anti-Zionists

There is a story, probably an apocryphal one, that a few days before the first Zionist congress in 1897, the historian Joseph Klausner asked an American rabbi whether there were any Zionists in the United States. "Yes," replied the rabbi, "there are two. A mad man named Stephen Wise and a mad woman, Henrietta Szold."[1] Although an exaggeration, the story reflects the weakness of early American Zionism. Yet from initial insignificance in the 1890s, the American Zionist movement rose to a position of paramount importance in the 1940s, when, in partnership with Palestinian Zionists, it played a decisive role in the struggle to establish a Jewish state in Palestine.

In 1942, in response to the extraordinary growth of the Zionist movement and the rapid proliferation of its political activities in the United States, a number of Reform rabbis, led by Louis Wolsey, founded the American Council for Judaism (ACJ), the only American Jewish organization ever created to fight Zionism and the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. In the beginning, most of the members of the ACJ were Reform rabbis who were primarily concerned about the increasing intrusion of Zionism into Reform Judaism. When Lessing J. Rosenwald and Rabbi Elmer Berger assumed the leadership of the organization in the spring of 1943, they transformed it into an essentially secular anti-Zionist pressure group, whose membership consisted mostly of middle-and upper-middle-class lay Reform Jews of German descent.

Neither the German origins of the Council's membership nor the Reform foundations of its philosophy are surprising. Conceived but unsuccessful in Germany, Reform Judaism was adopted as the dominant mode of religious expression by German-speaking Jews who migrated to the United States from Central Europe before 1880. A faith based on optimism, rationalism, and progress, heir to the noblest traditions of the European Enlightenment, Reform Judaism experienced spectacular success in America

during the last third of the nineteenth century. The Pittsburgh Platform of 1885, the basic statement of Reform principles until 1935, defined Jews as a purely religious community and explicitly rejected the idea that they constituted a nation. Nineteenth-century Reform Judaism, also known as classical Reform, welcomed enthusiastically the promise of Jewish emancipation in the modern world, minimized the dangers and significance of anti-Semitism, and professed an almost religious love for the United States as a promised land. It considered Judaism a religion with a universal message, unfettered by parochial nationalism. Consequently, many Reform spokesmen castigated Zionism, the Jewish nationalist movement, for propounding the notions that anti-Semitism was incurable and that Jews throughout the world belonged to a Jewish nation. From the time of the first Zionist congress in 1897 until the 1930s, Reform Judaism persistently opposed Zionism and stood as its most formidable adversary in America.

Although organized political Zionism first appeared in the United States in 1898, it made little progress until World War I. During the war, under the leadership of Louis D. Brandeis, American Zionism enjoyed a period of remarkable success. After declining precipitously in the 1920s, it gradually recovered in the 1930s and reached the peak of its influence in the 1940s. The rise in the popularity of the American Zionist movement in the latter period was closely related to fundamental changes in the social structure of the American Jewish community in the twentieth century and to the virulent anti-Semitism of the Hitler era.

In the four decades from the early 1880s to the 1920s, the size and social composition of American Jewry changed radically: It was transformed from an aggregate of 250,000, consisting mostly of German Jews, into a population of four million with an overwhelming East European majority. Predisposed to define themselves in national or ethnic terms, the new Jewish immigrants were much more inclined to join the Zionist movement than the highly integrated German Jews were; although a few of its leaders were German Jews, the preponderant majority of the rank and file of the movement were East European immigrants.

Before long, Reform Judaism itself felt the impact of the mass migration. As upwardly mobile East European Jews joined the Reform branch of Judaism in the 1920s and the 1930s, they introduced into it numerous traditional Jewish attitudes, ideas, and customs that tended to stress Jewish particularism. Such a trend undermined classical Reform and created receptivity toward Zionism among Reform Jews, a tendency also enhanced by the activities of Rabbis Stephen S. Wise, Abba Hillel Silver, and other pro-Zionist rabbis, who were working persistently to build up support for

Zionism within the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), the professional association of the American Reform rabbinate, a longtime bastion of Reform anti-Zionism.

Also in the 1930s, the deteriorating international situation contributed immeasurably to Zionist progress. The coming to power of Nazism in Germany, the unprecedented intensification and expansion of anti-Semitism both in Europe and in America, as well as the general assault on liberalism—all dramatically weakened the theoretical foundations of Reform anti-Zionism. World events appeared to vindicate the Zionists' pessimistic assumptions about anti-Semitism.

Between 1917 and 1939, the world Zionist movement was closely allied with Great Britain. This alliance began when the British pledged themselves, in the Balfour Declaration of 1917, to support the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The Zionists expected the national home to evolve eventually into a Jewish state. Within less than two decades under the British mandate, Zionist settlers created a viable national—exclusively Jewish—community in Palestine. In May 1939, when growing Arab resistance to Zionism and a deteriorating international situation led the British to impose severe limits on Jewish immigration into Palestine and to assert unequivocally their unwillingness to collaborate in creating a Jewish state, the Zionists were stunned. Disillusioned with Great Britain and realizing that the Anglo–Zionist alliance was dead, the world Zionist movement, in a drastic policy shift, decided to turn to the United States and seek the backing of its Jews, general public, and government for Zionist political objectives.

In the early 1940s, when the World Zionist Organization (WZO) and the American Zionist movement launched their propaganda campaign aimed at converting American Jews to their cause, many American Jewish anti-Zionists became alarmed. In February 1942 the CCAR, the one-time pillar of Reform anti-Zionism, violated its 1935 internal agreement—intended to prevent conflict within a rabbinate divided on Zionism—to maintain neutrality on the issue of Zionism by passing a resolution that favored creation of a "Jewish army" in Palestine. In response, Rabbi Wolsey and a group of defiant anti-Zionist rabbis, loyal to classical Reform and opposed to Jewish nationalism, decided to fight back. Their protest against the rapid advances of Zionism in the United States and its encroachment upon Reform Judaism resulted in the formation of the American Council for Judaism.

The Council's ideology was deeply influenced by the philosophy of classical Reform. Optimistic about the future of Jews in the Diaspora—in the

United States and throughout the world—it regarded the anti-Semitic atrocities committed during World War II as a temporary aberration and firmly believed that a free and democratic society would provide the best guarantee for the well-being of Jews wherever they lived. Rejecting Jewish nationalism and emphasizing the purely religious nature of Judaism, the ACJ condemned all forms of Jewish separatism and denied the right of any group to speak for all Jews. It strongly supported the political emancipation and social integration of Jews in the countries they inhabited, denounced Zionist talk about Jewish homelessness, and opposed granting Jews special privileges. As a solution for the conflict between Jews and Arabs, the ACJ recommended a democratic state in Palestine wherein Arabs and Jews would share in the government and have equal rights and responsibilities. It rejected the creation of an exclusively Jewish state as undemocratic and as a retreat from the universal vision of Judaism.

From 1943 until 1948 the Council conducted a fierce public campaign against Zionism. It accused Zionists of promoting a philosophy of despair, sharing with anti-Semites many false notions about Jews and Judaism, undermining the status and security of Jewish communities throughout the world, seeking to ghettoize Jews by segregating them from their compatriots and turning them into aliens, and advocating an unjust solution for the problem of Palestine.

While rebuking Zionists for exploiting the Holocaust to generate sympathy for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, the ACJ supported the right of Jews to immigrate without restrictions to any country they wished, including Palestine, but objected to the formation of a Jewish state. In 1946 the ACJ accepted all the recommendations of the Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry (AACI), which called for granting permission for immediate entry into Palestine to one hundred thousand Jews and for the eventual transformation of the country into a democratic state—neither Arab nor Jewish—wherein Jews and Arabs would live together as free and equal citizens. In fact, from 1946 until 1948, the ACJ considered these recommendations as the best solution for the Palestine problem.

Advocacy for expanding immigration opportunities for Jews remained a cardinal tenet of the ACJ's ideology. In an effort to offer Jews an alternative to the Zionist program, Lessing Rosenwald worked tirelessly for the liberalization of American immigration policy. He played a major role in organizing and financing the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons (CCDP), the most important American pressure group working to relax American immigration restrictions in the late 1940s. Although the CCDP failed to have any impact on American immigration legislation prior to the

establishment of Israel, Rosenwald's persistent efforts on its behalf demonstrate that, contrary to Zionist claims, he was not indifferent to the needs of fellow Jews.

In the struggle against the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, the ACJ found a powerful ally in the American foreign-policy community, the main adversary of the Zionists within the U.S. government. Between 1943 and 1948, the ACJ cooperated closely with the State Department. Based on common opposition to Zionist political objectives, this partnership was reinforced by the friendship of leading ACJ members with several prominent State Department officials, including Sumner Welles, Dean Acheson, Loy Henderson, and Kermit Roosevelt.

Lessing Rosenwald and Elmer Berger were undoubtedly the Council's most important leaders. They shaped its character and policies. Rosenwald served as the organization's statesman; Berger, as its commanding general. Despite Rosenwald's placid disposition and Berger's compulsive zeal, the two not only deeply respected each other but also worked well together.

The Council lost the contest to the Zionists in the 1940s. It failed to prevent the creation of the State of Israel and to persuade American Jewry to choose anti-Zionism over Zionism. The most important reason for the Council's failure was the Holocaust and its successful use by the Zionists for their political ends.

The ACJ was formed almost exactly at the time when reports about the mass extermination of Jews in Europe were confirmed. This did not bode well for the anti-Zionists. Once the story of the Holocaust became fully known in 1945, any serious chances for the success of anti-Zionism were doomed. Shaken and distressed by the enormity of the Nazi atrocities and desperately wishing to help their stricken coreligionists who still survived, American Jews became receptive to the message of the Zionists, who rapidly converted American Jewry into a powerful pressure group on behalf of their cause. Restrained and rational in its approach, the ACJ was no match for the Zionists, whose highly emotional appeals captured the hearts of most American Jews. Even worse, the Council's dispassionate style appeared to confirm—albeit unjustly—Zionist allegations of the insensitivity and indifference of the anti-Zionists to the fate of suffering Jews.

Thus, the Council lost its struggle against Zionism. The inauspicious timing and circumstances of its formation rendered its defeat virtually inevitable. Unable to provide a viable alternative to Zionism, the anti-Zionist organization was relegated to becoming a lonely voice of opposition, a mere protest group. In the end, after it had lost the battle over the

Jewish state, the most the Council could claim was that it had established a record of dissent—perhaps prophetic dissent—whose predictions still haunt the Zionist enterprise.

The Emergence of Zionism and the Foundation of the Jewish National Home in Palestine

Political Zionism, the movement for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, emerged in Europe late in the nineteenth century, more than a hundred years after the beginning of the political emancipation of European Jewry. Although rooted in age-old religious traditions, reflected in Jewish prayers, festivals, messianic ideas, and mythical memories of the ancestral homeland in Palestine, Zionism was a secular movement. It represented one Jewish reaction—a nationalist one—to the relative failure of emancipation in Eastern Europe; to the decline of liberalism, the mainspring of Jewish freedom and progress in modern times; and to the rise of racial anti-Semitism in the 1870s and 1880s.[2]

Before the French Revolution most European Jews lived in physical and intellectual isolation from their Christian neighbors. Europeans considered them non-Europeans. Jews throughout Europe regarded themselves and were regarded by others as a separate nation. In Western Europe they resided in segregated streets or parts of towns—the *Judengassen* or ghettoes. In Poland, with the largest Jewish population in Europe, there were few ghettoes; instead, its Jews lived in entire towns and hamlets that were predominantly Jewish, even more isolated from non-Jews than their coreligionists in the West. Recognized by governmental and ecclesiastical authorities as a corporate body, European Jews were granted internal communal autonomy, which in both parts of Europe was administered autocratically. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, Jewish life in Europe began to undergo noticeable change. In the East living conditions were worsening. In the West, on the other hand, there were many signs of impending improvement.[3]

The European Enlightenment, the liberating intellectual movement of the eighteenth century, founded on rationalism, humanism, and faith in human progress, had a powerful impact on the Jews. It prepared Europe intellectually for the end of Jewish segregation and stimulated the growth of the Haskalah, or a Jewish Enlightenment. The spiritual father and most influential of the *maskilim* ("enlighteners"), German-born philosopher Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), a totally faithful Jew, strongly advocated Jewish linguistic and cultural integration into European society.

The Enlightenment and the Haskalah contributed to increasing contact between Jews and Christians in Europe, a significant development in modern Jewish history. One early consequence of this liberating spirit was the conversion to Christianity of some of the enlightened Jews, including several members of Mendelssohn's immediate family. Other, mostly German-speaking, *maskilim* chose a path more promising for the future of Judaism by turning to the adaptation of Judaism to Western standards, thus becoming pioneers of Reform Judaism and of modern Jewish scholarship—the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. The spirit of the Enlightenment also affected Russia, where the *maskilim*, more deeply steeped in Jewish culture, opted for Hebrew as their modernizing medium. As a consequence of that choice, they stimulated the growth of Hebrew literature and thereby contributed to the Jewish national revival in the nineteenth century. But above all, by introducing Jews to European culture and fostering their modernization, the Haskalah laid an important foundation for Jewish emancipation.[4]

In 1790 and 1791, during its revolution, France became the first European country to grant Jews equal civic rights. Thereafter, Jewish emancipation spread to the rest of Western and Central Europe, where it was mostly completed by the 1870s. Once emancipated, Jews abandoned their ghetto isolation. Moreover, by becoming citizens of their countries, they ceased to be recognized as members of a separate Jewish corporate entity. Indeed, in return for emancipation, they were expected to integrate themselves into the social fabric of the countries that conferred citizenship rights on them. When Napoleon convened the Jewish Assembly of Notables and the Sanhedrin in 1806 and 1807 to ascertain the precise relationship between France and its Jewish citizens, French Jews pledged their exclusive allegiance to France and solemnly declared that they no longer thought of themselves as "a nation within a nation," but as Frenchmen of the Jewish faith. Jews in Western and Central Europe as well as in the United States—where they had enjoyed equal rights, guaranteed by the Constitution, since 1789—responded to their improved social and political status much like the French Jews: They ceased to consider themselves a separate nation or ethnic group and identified themselves as a purely religious community.[5]

While Jews in the West were being emancipated, those in Eastern Europe were less fortunate. Almost a million East European Jews, who found themselves under Russian rule in the aftermath of the Polish partitions of 1772, 1793, and 1795, were incarcerated in the Jewish Pale of Settlement, a territorial ghetto, within the areas Russia annexed from Poland. The Russian rulers imposed on the Jews all the disadvantages of ghetto corporate existence, without any of its concomitant rights and privileges. The

vast majority of Russian Jews, numbering approximately three million by the middle of the nineteenth century, continued to live in isolation from their Christian neighbors, with whom they maintained only superficial contact. The reforms introduced by Tsar Alexander II in the 1850s and 1860s evoked considerable hope among them, especially within the small circle of the *maskilim*. But the renewed political reaction in the 1870s dampened their premature enthusiasm. The eruption of anti-Jewish mob violence (pogroms) and the promulgation of discriminatory laws against the Jews by the Russian government after the assassination of Alexander II in 1881 dealt a devastating blow to Jews who expected reforms to improve Jewish life in Russia.[6]

The success of emancipation in the West and its relative failure in Eastern Europe had a dramatic impact on nineteenth-century Jewish life. The emancipated Jews of Western Europe and the United States, absorbing Western languages and culture, entered the mainstream of Western civilization and integrated themselves into their respective countries. The situation was quite different in Eastern Europe, where Jews, most of whom were living in Russia, were not emancipated. On the whole, they lived in isolation from the surrounding society. Remaining a highly cohesive social, cultural, and religious group, they continued to regard themselves as a distinct and identifiable national entity. Thus, by the 1870s, under the influence of dissimilar historical experiences, Jews in the East and the West, once so much alike, had evolved into fundamentally different kinds of communities. Until 1881, despite their divergent paths, both Jewries seemed optimistic about their future.

This optimism was shaken by the sudden rise of modern anti-Semitism in the 1870s and 1880s. Although nurtured by the same sources as the age-old antipathy toward Jews—religious prejudice, medieval demonology, and xenophobia—the new anti-Semitism was a political ideology based on a mélange of modern racist, irrational, and antiliberal ideas coming into vogue in the late nineteenth century. In the voluminous anti-Semitic literature of the period Jews were blamed for a multitude of economic, social, and political ills. Nevertheless, one of the most ominous aspects of modern anti-Semitism was its racial basis, for it insinuated that Jews were inherently unassimilable foreigners whose undesirable traits had been racially predetermined.[7]

Although anti-Semitism was a Europewide phenomenon, its particular manifestations differed from one country to another. It was most virulent in Eastern Europe—in Russia and Rumania. The widespread anti-Semitism in Russia, by the 1880s the home of more than five million Jews, two-thirds of

world Jewry, was crude, violent, and sanctioned by high government officials, although not by the tsar. In 1881, following the assassination of Alexander II, unusually bloody anti-Jewish pogroms erupted throughout Russia; moreover, as of May 1882, the Russian government promulgated laws severely restricting Jewish economic and educational life. These shocking developments elicited several dramatic responses from the Russian Jews. Many, believing that Russia could be changed or reformed, turned to radical political activities; others, more pessimistic about Russia, sought relief for their plight through emigration to other countries. A small minority discovered Jewish nationalism. Thus, the Russian anti-Semitic pressures of the early 1880s resulted in the mass migration of Russian Jews to the United States and the emergence of Zionism in Russia.[8]

Unlike that in Russia, anti-Semitism in Central and Western European countries was neither violent nor encouraged by the governments. Nevertheless, it was a disquieting phenomenon, for in Germany, Austria–Hungary, and France, numerous anti-Semitic groups and political parties appeared. Although organized anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria was little more than a nuisance, it did prepare the ground for the savage governmental anti-Semitism of the 1930s.[9]

But the surfacing of vehement anti-Semitism in France during the Dreyfus Affair—the trial for treason and conviction of the Jewish Captain Alfred Dreyfus and efforts to exonerate him—shocked many Jews who were surprised by such manifestations of hatred toward them in the enlightened land of the French Revolution, the first European state to emancipate its Jews. Some Jews, distressed by the persistence of the antipathy toward them, were driven to seek remedy for anti-Semitism in Jewish nationalism.[10]

Regardless of its complex origins, the pervasiveness of European anti-Semitism provided the major stimulus for the emergence of the Jewish national movement in the 1880s and 1890s. The Russian pogroms and anti-Jewish legislation in 1881 and 1882 led to the first important stirrings of Jewish nationalism: the publication in 1882 of Leo Pinsker's tract *Auto-Emancipation* and the growth throughout the 1880s of the Hovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion), a movement for the promotion of immigration to Palestine. Pinsker diagnosed anti-Semitism as a disease that could be cured only by the national regeneration of Jews in their own land. The Hovevei Zion were largely responsible for the first *aliyah* (immigration wave), which brought some twenty-five thousand Jews to Palestine between 1882 and 1903. The Hovevei Zion became the most ardent followers of Theodor Herzl, the founder of political Zionism, when he launched the movement.

Ninety percent of the delegates to the first Zionist congress were actually members of the various Hovevei Zion societies.[11]

The Jewish national movement made a giant leap forward with the appearance of Theodor Herzl (1860–1904). Having discovered the pervasiveness of anti-Semitism and deeply shocked by the Dreyfus Affair, Herzl, a thoroughly Westernized Jew with weak links to Judaism, became a Jewish nationalist. In his pamphlet entitled *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State), published in 1896, Herzl proclaimed that the persistence of anti-Semitism and the refusal of Jews to surrender their identity created a problem that could be solved only by radical means. The crux of the matter was that anti-Semitism represented neither a social nor a religious issue, but a national question. Jews, he insisted, are "a people (*volk*)—one people," bound together by common affliction: the harassment by their anti-Semitic foes, who would not leave them alone. Thus, the Jewish problem could be solved only through the creation of a Jewish state in some agreed upon area.[12]

Between 1896 and his death in 1904, Herzl devoted all of his energy to transforming a vague Jewish national mood into political Zionism—an authentic political movement. In August 1897, in Basle, Switzerland, he convened the first Zionist congress. Attended by about two hundred delegates, mainly members of Hovevei Zion societies, the congress launched the Zionist movement by defining its fundamental goals and creating an organizational structure to implement them. The platform it adopted, called the Basle Program, declared that the aim of Zionism was "to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law." At Basle, Herzl also founded the highest institution of the Zionist movement—the World Zionist Organization (WZO). The supreme organ of the WZO was the biennial congress, which elected the president, the executive, and the general council of the organization. The president served as the "head and chief representative" of the WZO; the Zionist executive arm, headed by a chairman, implemented the resolutions of the congress and conducted the everyday business of the organization; the general council decided the general policy of the WZO during the intercongress period.[13]

In 1897 Palestine was a province of the Ottoman Empire. Herzl spent the last seven years of his life engaged in tireless diplomatic efforts to achieve his main objective: a charter from the Turks that would allow Jews to settle legally in Palestine in massive numbers. By the time of his death on 3 July 1904, however, his extensive diplomatic activities had failed to produce such a charter or, in fact, any international guarantees for the Zionist project.[14]

Between 1904 and 1914 the Zionist movement experienced growing factionalism. Serious disputes arose between "political" and "practical" Zionists. The former, sharing Herzl's view, sought to pursue Zionist aims almost exclusively through diplomacy; the latter, generally East Europeans, did not believe political activities alone were sufficient—they stressed the need for settlement and cultural activities in Palestine. Between 1908 and 1914 the proponents of the "practical" approach gained ascendancy in the WZO.[15]

In 1908 the WZO began to shift toward "practical" Zionism by establishing its Palestine Office in Jaffa under the management of Arthur Ruppin. The Palestine Office acquired land for agricultural settlement, encouraged economic development, and provided general direction for the Zionist activities in Palestine. Nevertheless, it was the second *aliyah*, a new immigration wave from Eastern Europe between 1904 and 1914, consisting of thirty-five thousand newcomers, that truly enhanced the practical approach to Zionism. Most of the young men and women of the second *aliyah*, many in their teens, were highly idealistic radical Socialists who had grown up in a traditional Jewish environment and knew some Hebrew. Although close to a half of the new immigrants left Palestine before World War I, those who chose to remain were a unique breed. Committed to Zionism as well as to socialism, they rejected the *galut* (the Jewish exile) and set out to create a new society based on social justice. They considered themselves *halutzim* (pioneers), a vanguard, dedicated to Jewish national revival through self-sacrifice, agricultural work, and the resurrection of Hebrew culture. Emphasizing Jewish labor, defense, and education, the second *aliyah* set the tone and direction for the ideological, organizational, and institutional development of the Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine). From its ranks emerged not only the Yishuv political elite after World War I but also the most influential leaders of the Zionist movement in general. Prominent Zionist leaders such as David Ben-Gurion, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, Berl Katznelson, and Moshe Sharett were all second *aliyah* men.[16]

By 1914 the Zionist movement had experienced no diplomatic success: "Political" Zionism was no closer to achieving its aims than it had been in 1904. The major achievements of Zionism were the practical developments in Palestine: the growth of the Jewish population to 85,000, the increase in the number of settlements to forty-three, the rapid revival of the Hebrew language. Second *aliyah* pioneers were undoubtedly remarkable trailblazers. They had come to Palestine, in the words of an old pioneer song, "*livnot u-lehibanot bah*"—to build and be rebuilt in it. Nevertheless, the Yishuv remained small, vulnerable, and highly dependent on external assistance.

On the whole, with 127,000 members in the WZO in 1914, the Zionist movement had become a respectable—though not a powerful—force in Jewish life.[17]

World War I dramatically changed Zionist fortunes. An eccentric and rather obscure movement in 1914, Zionism rose to international importance during the war: It obtained the international charter it had sought for twenty years and formed an alliance with a great power—Great Britain. The man primarily responsible for securing the support of Great Britain for Zionism was Chaim Weizmann (1874–1952), an advocate of "synthetic" Zionism—the pursuit of Zionist goals through "political" as well as "practical" means. On 2 November 1917, after long negotiations with Weizmann, the British government announced its decision to support the creation of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine through the issuance of the Balfour Declaration, which stated:

> His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and it will use its best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.[18]

The Balfour Declaration was a momentous achievement for the Zionists. By creating an alliance between Zionism and Great Britain and shifting the international Zionist center to London, it transformed the Zionist movement into an important force in international politics. Weizmann's part in securing the document propelled him into the leadership of the movement. It led to his election in 1920 to the presidency of the WZO, a position he held, except for the years 1931 to 1935, until 1946.

After the British occupation of Palestine in 1918, the WZO supported the British claim for a Palestine mandate, a trust arrangement to administer the country on behalf of the League of Nations. In April 1920 the Palestine mandate was awarded to Great Britain. Its constitution, exceptionally favorable to the Zionists, incorporated the Balfour Declaration and acknowledged explicitly "the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine." The document also provided for a Jewish agency to function as a public body responsible for "advising and co-operating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish national home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine." The WZO, recognized temporarily

as such an agency, was charged with the responsibility of securing, in consultation with the British government, "the co-operation of all Jews who are willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish national home." Great Britain, on its part, promised to facilitate Jewish immigration to Palestine and to designate Hebrew, along with Arabic and English, as one of the official languages of the country.[19]

In the 1920s, alongside the British administration in Palestine, there also emerged an intricate system of Jewish quasi government: It consisted of local Yishuv institutions, with the Vaad Leumi (National Council) as their governing arm, and an international body, the Jewish Agency. According to the mandate constitution, the responsibility for securing the participation of world Jewry in the development of the national home in Palestine was assigned to a Jewish agency. In 1922 the six members of the WZO executive in London, who a year earlier had been assigned to Palestine under the name of "the Palestine Zionist executive," became, in effect, the Jewish Agency. A much more important institution than the Vaad Leumi, the Jewish Agency was responsible for Jewish settlement, immigration, defense, and for conducting an active foreign policy vis-à-vis the mandatory government and the League of Nations, with the ultimate objective—implied but not declared publicly—of promoting the creation of a Jewish state.[20]

Throughout the 1920s, seeking to attract the financial support of wealthy non-Zionists for the work in Palestine as well as to enhance the prestige of Zionism, Weizmann worked hard to persuade prominent non-Zionists to join the Jewish Agency on purely moral and humanitarian grounds. In 1929, after six years of negotiations, he and Louis Marshall, president of the prestigious American Jewish Committee, agreed to create an enlarged Jewish Agency, with non-Zionists and Zionists equally represented in its governance; according to the agreement, the president of the WZO would also preside over the new institution. But shortly after the creation of the enlarged Jewish Agency, Marshall died. Subsequently, the principle of parity failed to remain in effect. The Agency executive was placed in Jerusalem, where non-Zionists rapidly lost their influence, with Zionists clearly outnumbering non-Zionists on the executive in 1935. By 1939 the Agency was completely dominated by Zionists.[21]

In the 1920s and 1930s, under British rule, Zionist efforts turned the fledgling Yishuv into a veritable Zionist stronghold. Three immigration waves, the third (1919–1924), fourth (1924–1929), and fifth (1930–1939) *aliyot,* increased the Jewish population in Palestine from 65,000 in 1919 to about 450,000 in 1939, from approximately 10 to 30 percent of the total

inhabitants of the country. Between 1920 and 1939, the Yishuv transformed itself into a separate national community, consciously segregated from the Arab majority in Palestine. It created a whole complex of autonomous Jewish cultural, educational, social, economic, and political institutions founded with the ultimate aim of establishing a Jewish state. The Vaad Leumi; the Jewish educational system under the mandate, with Hebrew as the language of instruction; the Technion and the Hebrew University, the most prestigious Jewish educational institutions in Palestine; the Histadrut (General Federation of Labor), the powerful labor union; the Haganah (Defense), the underground military force of the Yishuv—were all, in effect, Jewish national institutions. By the 1930s, Zionists were also divided along ideological lines into leftist, centrist, religious, and rightist political parties, with branches in Palestine and in the WZO. Thus, at the end of the 1930s the Yishuv had become a virtual state within a state in Palestine.[22]

Significantly, during the 1920s, despite the foundation of some of the most important institutions of the Yishuv, Zionism as a movement seemed to lose momentum. Immigration to Palestine slowed down. After a decade under British rule, the Jewish population in Palestine had increased by only 80,000, reaching 160,000 in 1930.[23]

But the world crisis of the 1930s revitalized Zionism. The unprecedented intensification of anti-Semitism in Europe appeared to vindicate classical Zionist warnings about the pervasiveness and incurability of anti-Semitism. The Nazi rise to power in Germany revived interest in Zionism and stimulated immigration to Palestine. Within three years, between 1933 and 1935, the Yishuv population doubled. Ironically, the Nazis, who were systematically destroying the Jewish community in Germany, contributed significantly to the strengthening and growth of the Yishuv. Besides driving twenty thousand educated and highly skilled German Jews to Palestine, the Nazis also stimulated the development of the Yishuv economy by concluding an agreement with the Jewish Agency that allowed the transfer of a portion of German Jewish capital out of Germany through the purchase of German goods. The arrangement made possible the infusion of close to $100 million into the economy of the Yishuv and thus helped render the Zionist enterprise in Palestine in the late 1930s stronger than ever before.[24]

The growth of the Yishuv alarmed the Palestinian Arabs. Their antagonism toward Zionism, discernible even before World War I, deepened between 1917 and 1939. Indeed, the success of Zionism itself stimulated the awakening of a Palestinian Arab national movement. Palestinian Arabs

vehemently objected to Jewish immigration because they feared that the Jews intended to change the Arab character of Palestine, become a majority in it, and transform it into a Jewish state. Their unyielding hostility to the growth of the Yishuv led to major intercommunal violence in Palestine in 1920, 1921, and 1929. It culminated in an Arab rebellion that lasted from 1936 to 1939.[25]

For two decades Great Britain attempted to administer as effectively as possible a country increasingly torn apart by two irreconcilable national movements. Several royal commissions appointed to investigate the strife failed to find a solution acceptable to both sides. Consequently, fearful of growing Italian and German threats to the Middle East and frustrated by the failure of a London conference with Jews and Arabs early in 1939, the British decided to impose their own plan for Palestine, which they made public in the White Paper of 17 May 1939.[26]

The 1939 White Paper represented a dramatic shift in British policy toward the Zionists. The British justified the new approach to the problem of Palestine on the grounds that the ambiguity of the expression "a national home for the Jewish people" in the mandate was a fundamental cause of hostility between Arabs and Jews and that the division of Palestine into viable Arab and Jewish states was unfeasible. According to the new policy, Great Britain would relinquish the mandate and within ten years establish an independent Palestinian state in which Arabs and Jews were to share power. During the transitional period, prior to the formation of the new state, the British were to continue to govern the country. Jewish immigration into Palestine was to be limited to 75,000 persons over the five-year period following 1 April 1939; thereafter, it would depend on Arab consent.[27]

The issuance of the 1939 White Paper constituted a severe blow to Zionists. They denounced it as a blatant breach of the mandate, as an outright abandonment of the Jewish national home, and as an act of timid appeasement of Arab terrorism. The publication of the 1939 White Paper ended the Anglo–Zionist partnership that had enabled Zionism to found a Jewish national home in Palestine and transform the Yishuv into an impressive Jewish national center. After May 1939 the Zionist movement could no longer count on the British for assistance in realizing its political goals. However, the world conflict, the plight of European Jews under Nazi domination, the need for British protection of the Yishuv, and their own sense of weakness and isolation limited the ability of the Zionists to resist the White Paper and forced them to maintain an uneasy alliance with Great Britain.[28]

After the outbreak of World War II Weizmann and Ben-Gurion explored new avenues for strengthening the Zionist movement. They

realized that Zionism might improve its position immeasurably by mobilizing two untapped sources of independent Jewish power: a Jewish fighting force and a sympathetic American Jewry. Ben-Gurion, particularly, believed that, once mobilized and controlled, these sources of Jewish power could be transformed into potent weapons in the postwar Zionist struggle for a Jewish state. Therefore, soon after the beginning of the hostilities in Europe, the Jewish Agency attempted to persuade the British to allow the Yishuv to form a Jewish army, under a Jewish flag, that would fight in the war on the side of Great Britain. The British, however, were reluctant to allow the creation of a specifically Jewish fighting force. Consequently, the Zionists, while continuing to discuss the idea with the British, launched a vigorous publicity campaign in the United States to generate support for the creation of a Jewish army and to convert American Jews to the Zionist political program.[29]

The sudden and unexpected intensification of Zionist activities and the rapid progress of Zionism in the United States between 1940 and 1942 alarmed American Reform Jews who opposed Jewish nationalism. The fierce reaction of some of them ultimately led to the formation of the only American Jewish organization committed to fighting Zionism—the American Council for Judaism.

The American Council for Judaism did not invent Jewish anti-Zionism. Opposition among Jews to Zionism had existed since its inception as a political movement in 1897. An overwhelming majority of Orthodox Jews, unwilling to accept the restoration of a Jewish state in Palestine by means other than divine intervention, considered Zionism a false messianic movement. Most Jewish liberals and Socialists, having accepted the faith of the Enlightenment, with its emphasis on optimism, reason, and progress, rejected Zionism as a reactionary philosophy. The majority of acculturated Jews in Western and Central Europe, regarding themselves as merely members of a religious community, opposed Zionism until the traumatic events of the 1930s and 1940s shattered their optimistic faith and induced them to compromise with the Zionists. Nevertheless, despite enormous increases in its membership during the two world wars, Zionism remained a minority movement among Jews.[30]

Less vocal than their adversaries, Jewish anti-Zionists rarely matched the zeal, persistence, or organization of the Zionists. Quiescent during most of the years of Zionist growth, they did, however, respond openly and aggressively to the Zionist movement at three critical junctures of its history, at times when Zionism seemed to be making unusual progress: in 1897, 1917, and the 1940s.

The first vehement outburst by anti-Zionists occurred in 1897 at the time of the first Zionist congress. When news reached the German community in May 1897 that the Zionists were planning to hold their congress in Munich, German rabbis representing all shades of opinion, whom Herzl contemptuously dubbed *Protestrabbiner,* objected angrily and forced the Zionists to shift their gathering to Basle, Switzerland. In public protests in the Jewish *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* on 11 June 1897 and in a number of German newspapers, including the *Berliner Tageblatt,* on 6 July 1897, the rabbis denounced Zionism as fanaticism, contrary to the teachings of the Jewish scriptures, and affirmed their undivided loyalty to Germany.[31]

In 1917 the negotiations between the British cabinet and the Zionists over the Balfour Declaration stirred up a sharp reaction against the Zionist movement among British Jews. Prominent Jewish communal leaders, such as Lucien Wolf, Claude Montefiore, and Laurie Magnus, denounced Zionism as an ally of anti-Semitism, warning that it undermined the security of Jews throughout the world. In a letter to the London *Times* on 14 May 1917, the prestigious Conjoint Foreign Committee, the recognized representative body of British Jews in matters affecting Jews abroad, declared that the emancipated Jews of England considered themselves a religious community without any separate national aspirations. In fact, the foremost anti-Zionist within the British government during the deliberations over the Balfour Declaration was Sir Edwin Montagu, a Jewish member of the cabinet, who equated support for Zionism with anti-Semitism and characterized Zionism as "a mischievous creed." This anti-Zionist agitation and especially Montagu's influence undoubtedly contributed to diluting the final version of the Balfour Declaration: the change of the central phrase from "Palestine as the National Home," which the Zionists had suggested, to "in Palestine as a National Home"; and the inclusion of a safeguard clause providing for the protection of the civil and religious rights of the "non-Jewish communities in Palestine" as well as "the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."[32]

Another consequence of the controversy over the Balfour Declaration was the formation in 1917 of the League of British Jews, an Anglo–Jewish anti-Zionist association. Although favoring the settlement in Palestine of Jews who wanted to live there, it was committed to upholding the status of British subjects professing the Jewish religion and to resisting the allegation that Jews constitute a separate political nationality. Headed by Lionel de Rothschild, with a small membership recruited mostly from the highly acculturated upper social strata of British Jewry, the League went out of existence in 1929.[33]

In the 1940s, the most critical period in its history, the Zionist movement shifted the main focus of its political activities to the United States. This provoked a fierce American Jewish anti-Zionist reaction—a reaction that is not surprising in view of the long tradition of Jewish anti-Zionism in the United States. Its most persistent proponent was Reform Judaism, which rejected the concept of Jewish nationhood. The formation and activities of a Jewish anti-Zionist organization in the 1940s represented the last stand of some American Reform Jews against the retreat of their branch of Judaism from its traditional anti-Zionist position. It was also the final and most bitter Jewish attack on Zionism before the creation of a Jewish state.

German Jews, Reform Judaism, and Opposition to Jewish Nationalism in America

American Jewish history began in 1654 with the arrival in Dutch New Amsterdam of twenty-three Sephardic (Iberian) Jewish refugees from Recife, Brazil. Jewish immigration to America was initially slow. As late as 1825 there were not more than 6,000 Jews in the United States, most of them living in Eastern seaboard cities, such as New York, Newport, Charleston, Savannah, Philadelphia, and Richmond. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, American Jewry was small, English-speaking, and highly Americanized.[34]

In the 1830s a sizable wave of German-speaking Jewish immigrants, who came mainly from Bavarian towns and villages, German Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary, began to arrive in the United States. By 1840 their number in America had risen to 15,000, by 1850 to 50,000; in 1860 it reached about 150,000. In 1880, at the end of this large migration, 250,000 Jews lived in the United States. Thus, within less than sixty years, the size of American Jewry increased fortyfold and more. Moreover, unlike earlier Jewish immigrants, who had settled on the Eastern seashore, German Jews spread throughout the country. Even before the Civil War, Jews were living in 1,200 settlements, mostly beyond the Appalachians. The first important Jewish center in the West was Cincinnati.[35]

The German Jews, many of whom had already integrated themselves culturally into German society under the impact of the Haskalah, were barely distinguishable from other German immigrants. A part of a larger mass migration from Central Europe, they considered themselves more German than Jewish. They were proud of their German heritage, remained culturally and intellectually tied to Germany, and retained their German

nationalism even after becoming American citizens. Some of them even returned to Germany to select wives for themselves. Many sent their children to study in Germany. In America, they maintained close ties with German non-Jews. In the Middle West, particularly, Jews were highly active in German communal affairs. Indeed, many German cultural institutions, such as theaters, glee clubs, and gymnastic and literary societies, often depended on them for support. Jews used the German language in their own religious, social, and communal institutions until the late nineteenth century. Significantly, their prior exposure to non-Jewish culture and their ability to mingle easily with non-Jews enabled them to integrate without much difficulty into American life.[36]

The story of the German Jews in America is a saga of success. The undeveloped communications, transportation, and distribution systems in the United States before the Civil War presented German Jews with unusual opportunities to become distributors of goods. Despite the hazards of the occupation, many of them turned to peddling. Crisscrossing America, they sold thread, lace, ribbons, knives, bonnets, jewelry, and various other items. The ambitious among them eventually expanded their itinerant businesses into large stores. Some of the best-known department stores founded by Jews, those associated with the names Straus, Lazarus, Bloomingdale, Gimbel, Filene, Wertheim, Bamberger, Hecht, and Sachs among them, evolved from peddling.[37]

German Jews contributed substantially to the economic growth of the United States. In an age of great industrial expansion, they stimulated progress in the areas of textile production, clothing, banking, finance, and the development of department stores and mail-order businesses. By the 1880s more than half the Jewish firms were involved in clothing and related fields. These trades provided the source of capital accumulation for the most important Jewish banking institutions. The Seligmans, for instance, one of the wealthiest and most influential American Jewish banking families after the Civil War, arrived in America in the late 1830s and early 1840s. Beginning as peddlers in the South, they opened dry-goods stores in Alabama. Moving to New York, they expanded into the import business and opened clothing stores in various locations, including California. They began their banking activities in the 1850s but remained in the dry-goods business until 1867. During the Civil War the Seligmans supplied uniforms for the Union Army and helped to sell Union bonds in foreign markets.[38]

Although the achievements of the German Jews as a whole have been exaggerated, there is no denying that many of them did enjoy remarkable success. The accomplishments of German Jews in America were the result

of the fortunate combination of their extensive business experience and the opportunities provided by the relatively open American economy at the time most of them arrived in the country. These immigrants from Germany, enthusiastic about their newly found freedom and prosperity in the United States, adopted Reform Judaism as the major form of their religious expression.[39]

Reform Judaism originated in Germany, where it emerged as one of the Jewish responses to the twin challenges of the Enlightenment and emancipation. Reform Judaism began as an attempt to render synagogue service more attractive through modernization. After being guided initially by laymen, the Reform movement came under the leadership of liberal German rabbis who had been influenced by the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Using the methods of the *Wissenschaft*, these rabbis constructed the philosophical foundations of modern liberal Judaism—Reform Judaism.[40]

The most articulate spokesman for the German Reform movement was the distinguished rabbi and scholar Abraham Geiger (1810–1874). According to him, Judaism developed through an evolutionary process that had begun with God's revelation to the Hebrew prophets. That revelation was progressive; new truth became available to every generation. The underlying and unchangeable essence of Judaism was its morality: The core of Judaism, in other words, was ethical monotheism. Rituals, customs, and ceremonies, on the other hand, though important, had evolved throughout history and were, therefore, subject to modification and change. The Jewish people, maintained Geiger, were a religious community destined to carry on the mission to serve as "a light to the nations," to bear witness to God and his moral law. The dispersion of the Jews was not a punishment for their sins, but a part of God's plan whereby they were to disseminate the universal message of ethical monotheism throughout the world. Consequently, Jews were to surrender their ethnic and nationalistic identity. To stress the point, Geiger deleted all prayers about the return to Zion in a Reform prayer book that he edited in 1854.[41]

Geiger was one of the major leaders at conferences held in Brunswick (1844), Frankfurt (1845), and Breslau (1846) by liberal rabbis who sought to provide a solid foundation for German Reform Judaism. But enthusiasm for Reform in Germany declined after the abortive Central European revolutions of 1848, and many potential reformers left for the United States. No rabbinical conferences were convened in Germany between 1846 and 1869. By 1871 Jews in Germany were granted full citizenship, and many of them were no longer concerned about religious matters. Those who

remained observant Jews turned to various forms of religious orthodoxy. Reform Judaism in Germany reached a dead end.[42]

The struggle for Reform in America was infinitely more successful than in Germany. In contrast to Germany, there was neither a rigid Jewish communal structure nor a tradition of rabbinic leadership in the United States. In contrast to German Jewry, American Jews were free from intervention by the government in their religious affairs.[43]

Important differences between the essential features and the backgrounds of German and American Reform explain its success in the United States. In Germany, Reform was often regarded as a precondition to Jewish acceptance into general society. In the United States, on the other hand, where emancipation was unconditional, one's social status improved with economic advancement. In Germany, Reform came before acculturation and integration. In America, acculturation and integration preceded Reform. Reform in Germany, stimulated by the repressiveness of both the traditional Jewish community and the German government, tended to be radical. American Reform grew gradually, without a strict ideology or a fixed program. By the time Reform platforms and statements were formulated, nonideological Reform had gone far in the process of the Americanization of the synagogue. The doctrinal pronouncements of Reform in the United States were justifications for what American Jews already practiced and believed—not radical teachings.[44]

The development of American Reform Judaism and the Americanization of the German Jewish immigrants proceeded simultaneously. By the 1870s both Reform Judaism and the German Jews felt at home in America. The American Jewish community became as homogeneous and acculturated as it had been in the 1820s. Reform Judaism was the religion of the majority of American Jews, most of whom were immigrants or descendants of immigrants from Germany.[45]

In the 1870s and 1880s Isaac Mayer Wise (1819–1900) consolidated the institutional framework of American Reform. He founded the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the intercongregational body of Reform, in 1873; Hebrew Union College, a theological college for the training of Reform rabbis, in 1875; and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the professional organization of Reform rabbis, in 1889.[46]

The ideology of American Reform was formulated in 1885 at a special conference, attended by nineteen rabbis, in the city of Pittsburgh. The Reform program adopted by the rabbis, known thereafter as the Pittsburgh Platform, was not a call for action or a religious manifesto. It was a summary of changes that had already been introduced into Reform. Stated in eight

paragraphs, the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885 became the standard, although not the official, ideology of American Reform Judaism. It essentially accepted in strong terms the major ideas of German Reform. The Reform program rejected Jewish nationalism. Its fifth paragraph declared explicitly: "We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community."[47]

The Pittsburgh Platform, the classical expression of American Reform Judaism, represented the fundamental beliefs of most American Jews at the time of its formulation. Late in the nineteenth century, American Jews no longer considered themselves a nation or a nationality. Comfortable in the United States, they felt integrated into America and defined themselves as a religious community. The theology of Reform Judaism accurately reflected their thinking. They believed that Judaism was a religion with a universal message. Their faith was founded on optimism, on minimizing the importance of anti-Semitism, and on an almost religious love of America as the promised land. Confident about their future in the United States, they objected to efforts to revive Jewish nationalism. Consequently, the massive East European immigration and the emergence of political Zionism disturbed the peace of the integrated German Jews who felt comfortable in America.[48]

East European Jews and the Growth of American Zionism

Pogroms and anti-Jewish legislation in Russia in the 1880s, following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II, triggered a wave of massive immigration to the United States. About two million Jews from Eastern Europe arrived in America between 1881 and 1914. At the outbreak of World War I the Jewish population in the United States numbered three million. When the influx of East European Jews ended in 1925, after Congress passed the National Origins Act of 1924, severely restricting immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe, more than four million Jews resided in America. The East European newcomers differed from their German coreligionists. An overwhelming majority of them were Orthodox Jews who had lived in Jewish enclaves in Eastern Europe and who considered themselves an ethnic group. Unlike the German Jews, who dispersed themselves throughout the country and lived in widely scattered communities, the new immigrants tended to concentrate in large cities, mostly in the Northeast. Their arrival dramatically altered the social composition of American Jewry. By 1925 five-sixths of American Jews were of East European origin.[49]

Antagonism between the established, well-to-do German Jews and the new, working-class East European immigrants was unavoidable. To the East Europeans, the German Jews, whom they called *Yahudim,* were not authentic Jews; their Reform Judaism was a sham. They seemed to lack a feeling of closeness to fellow Jews. The native German Jews, on the other hand, frightened by the "Russian invasion," tended to regard the new immigrants as primitive, "medieval," clannish, Asiatic, unrefined, and radical. German Jews even coined the word *kikes* for the East Europeans. In fact, German and East European Jews tended to refrain from mixing socially. American Jewry had become clearly bifurcated. Two separate Jewish communities, a "German" and a "Russian," each suspicious of the other, came into existence in the United States.[50]

With time, however, the two communities drew somewhat closer to each other. The *Yahudim* did much to help the East Europeans. During World War I and the 1920s, in times of rampant intolerance, patriotic fervor, and xenophobia, German Jews defended the rights of the newcomers.[51]

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, as American Jewry began to acquire importance as one of the largest Jewish centers in the world, American Jews became intimately involved in the defense of Jewish interests. In 1906, in response to the Kishinev pogroms of 1903, prominent American Jews of German descent, led by the banker Jacob H. Schiff, the diplomat Oscar S. Straus, the lawyer Louis Marshall, the scholar Cyrus Adler, and the jurist Mayer Sulzberger, organized the American Jewish Committee (AJC), the first American Jewish national organization for the defense of Jewish civil and religious rights in the United States and abroad. In 1914, shortly after the outbreak of World War I, the same group founded the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) to provide for the relief of Jews overseas. Leadership of both the AJC and the JDC remained in the hands of a small elite of wealthy German Jews, acting out of a sense of noblesse oblige as well as political realism. Although sincerely committed to helping Jews in distress, the leaders of the AJC and the JDC were also conservative men who wanted to forestall the formation of Jewish mass organizations that would enhance the power of the East Europeans and might be controlled by radicals.[52]

Between 1920 and 1940 the East European Jews underwent radical social change: They were transformed from a working-class to a middle-class community. During these decades, as the recent immigrants became gradually acculturated, the German and East European Jews merged into a new nationwide American Jewish community. In the 1920s upwardly mobile East Europeans began to join Reform temples in increasing numbers. By the

1930s the East Europeans comprised about half of the membership in Reform temples. Many of them also entered the Reform rabbinate. These changes, in turn, created pressure within Reform to modify its extreme anti-nationalist and antitraditionalist positions. Reform, in effect, became more Judaized; the East Europeans who joined it tended to regard Judaism as more than a religion. Hitler's rise to power in Germany and the Nazi assault on Jews in the 1930s contributed still further to the growth of Jewish solidarity in America. The approval by the Reform rabbinate of the Columbus Platform of 1937, which dramatically departed from the Reform principles of 1885, represented, among other things, recognition of the tremendous influence of the East European Jews on American Jewish life. Significantly, it was also these East Europeans who provided the main support for the Zionist movement in the United States.[53]

Several American Jews and non-Jews, including Mordecai M. Noah, Rabbi Isaac Leeser, Warder Cresson (Michael Boaz Israel), William Blackstone, and Emma Lazarus, conceived the idea of Jewish settlement in Palestine even before the appearance of Herzl. But it was left for immigrants from Eastern Europe, arriving in the United States in the 1880s and 1890s, to introduce the idea of *Hibbat Zion*—the love of Zion—to America. By the early 1890s, societies promoting the ideas of the Hovevei Zion came into existence in the growing Jewish communities of New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Milwaukee, Boston, Philadelphia, and Cleveland. Yet at the time of the first Zionist congress in 1897, only the Hovevei Zion from Baltimore sent a delegate, Dr. Shepsal Schaffer, to Basle. Three other Americans—Rosa Sonnenschein, Davis Tritsch, and Adam Rosenberg—went to the congress as private observers.[54]

Reports from Basle stimulated some Zionist activity in almost every American city with a large Jewish population. Between December 1897 and the summer of 1898 numerous Zionist societies were founded in the East and the Midwest. At the first annual conference of American Zionists, convened in New York on 4 and 5 July 1898, the various Zionist groups decided to form the Federation of American Zionists (FAZ). They elected Richard Gottheil, professor of Semitic languages at Columbia University and son of Rabbi Gustav Gottheil of Temple Emanu-El in New York, to the presidency of the FAZ. Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, at the age of twenty-three, became the first secretary of the organization. In 1901 the FAZ began to publish its official journal, the *Maccabean*.[55]

Although most of the members of the organization were East Europeans, the leaders of the FAZ from its inception came from the German–Jewish community, including the Reform rabbinate. Indeed, in

view of the vehement opposition to Zionism in their social group, it is surprising that the leadership of American Zionism from 1898 until 1914 consisted mostly of German Jews. They were, however, a distinct minority. Many of these leaders were attracted to Zionism as a result of their encounters with East European Jews. They were impressed by the new immigrants' personal pride, attachment to Jewish traditions, and extensive knowledge of Judaism. Moreover, some believed that Zionism could be a force for revitalizing American Judaism, which, under the influence of Reform, had begun to look much like a Protestant denomination.[56]

In the decade before World War I, under the editorship of Louis Lipsky and Jacob de Haas, the *Maccabean* attacked Reform Judaism, accusing it of assimilationism and betrayal of the very essence of Judaism. It also complained that German Jews who opposed Zionism had too much power over American Jewish life. Above all, the journal defended the patriotism of American Zionists against their critics.[57]

In the meantime, without making spectacular progress, American Zionism gradually expanded. By 1914 several Zionist groups cropped up in the United States: The religious Mizrachi faction was formed in 1903; the Labor (Poalei Zion) party, in 1905; and Hadassah, the women's Zionist organization, founded by Henrietta Szold, in 1912. The FAZ and Hadassah were led by an elite of Jews of German descent. Both the leaders and the rank and file of the Poalei Zion and the Mizrachi were almost all East Europeans.[58]

American Zionism made dramatic gains during World War I. A turning point was the election of Louis D. Brandeis to the chairmanship of the Provisional Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs on 30 August 1914. A lawyer of national prominence, Brandeis attracted other outstanding personalities, including Felix Frankfurter, Julian Mack, Louis Kirstein, and Nathan Straus, into the movement. Through his efforts American Zionism gained more members, improved its financial condition, and became disciplined. A Central European Reform Jew, Brandeis managed to bridge the gap between German and East European Jews. But above all, he legitimized Zionism.[59]

Brandeis made Zionism respectable by clearly asserting its compatibility with Americanism. He insisted that Zionism was not a scheme to remove all Jews to Palestine, but a movement to give Jews freedom. Zionism, maintained Brandeis, sought to establish in Palestine a legally secure home for those Jews who chose to go there. Nor was Zionism inconsistent with patriotism. "Every American Jew who aids advancing the Jewish settlement in Palestine, though he feels that neither he nor his descendants will ever live

there," argued Brandeis, "will likewise be a better man and a better American for doing so." Not only was there no conflict between loyalty to America and loyalty to Jewry, he insisted, but "loyalty to America demands that each American Jew become a Zionist."[60]

With the issuance of the Balfour Declaration in 1917, the Zionist movement in America grew stronger. In 1918 the FAZ reorganized itself into the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), which elected Judge Julian Mack its president. Although Brandeis, appointed in 1916 an associate justice of the United States Supreme Court, withdrew from his formal leadership position in the Zionist movement, he, nevertheless, continued to guide it through his associates. The Brandeis–Mack group dominated American Zionism from 1914 to 1921 and also in the 1930s. This leadership solved many of the organizational problems of American Zionism and provided the movement with a sense of direction. By the end of World War I, with membership in the movement reaching almost two hundred thousand, American Zionism felt confident.[61]

From 1914 to 1920, in its struggle over the formation of an American Jewish Congress, the Zionist movement in the United States made its first important, though unsuccessful, bid to become a dominant force in American Jewish affairs. By calling for a democratically elected congress—one in which the entire American Jewish community would be represented—to discuss the defense of Jewish rights throughout the world, the Zionists sought to challenge the powerful position of the German Jewish elite with its control over American Jewish life.

Louis Marshall, Jacob Schiff, and Cyrus Adler, the leaders of the American Jewish Committee (AJC), who preferred quiet, behind-the-scenes politics and suspected that the American Jewish Congress would be a façade for Jewish nationalism, attempted to prevent its formation. After long negotiations, Brandeis and Marshall reached a compromise: The AJC agreed to join the Congress and accept its discipline; in return, the Zionists agreed to an ad hoc—not a permanent—Congress, in which discussions were to be limited to postwar Jewish problems, including Palestine, and to Jewish minority rights in Europe. After meeting in December 1918, the Congress sent a delegation to the Paris Peace Conference with the limited task of securing minority rights for European Jews. The handling of the problems related to Palestine was left to the WZO. The cooperative efforts between the Zionists and the AJC ended on 30 May 1920, when the Congress adjourned *sine die*. Thus, despite the Zionist flexing of muscles, the AJC was by no means weakened. The Zionist bid for power proved premature.[62]

By 1920, just as the Zionists had reached the peak of their influence in the United States, they became bitterly divided over the principles and direction of American Zionism. Brandeis and his group of Americanized Zionists believed that with the Balfour Declaration and the foundation of the national home in Palestine the political stage of Zionism ended. They insisted, therefore, that all Zionist efforts should be directed to practical work—to developing well-managed commercial and industrial enterprises in Palestine. Weizmann, the leadership of the WZO, and East European members of the ZOA, who considered Zionism much more than a philanthropic activity, wanted to continue Zionist political, cultural, and educational work. In 1921, when the ZOA annual convention refused to give his administration a vote of confidence, Brandeis and his lieutenants resigned. A pro-Weizmann faction, headed by Louis Lipsky, took over control of the ZOA and remained in power until 1930. Brandeis's departure and Lipsky's lack of prestige seriously weakened the organization. By 1929 its membership declined to 18,000.[63]

Ironically, the ZOA eventually adopted most of the ideas proposed by Brandeis and his followers. Throughout the 1920s it concentrated much of its energy on raising funds. But the American Zionist movement stagnated. Lipsky and Weizmann appeared weak. In the 1920s the East European immigrants were, for the most part, preoccupied with their adaptation to American life and their concerns about rising anti-Semitism in the United States. Thus, it was from a position of weakness that Weizmann turned to the American non-Zionists with the proposal to create an enlarged Jewish Agency. By bringing the non-Zionists into the Jewish Agency in 1929, he, in effect, enacted Brandeis's program. Weizmann also ceased to talk publicly about political Zionism, which led the non-Zionists to believe that a Jewish state was no longer the Zionist goal.[64]

The depression in the early 1930s seriously affected American Jews, among whom unemployment was high. American Jewish welfare agencies devoted themselves almost entirely to helping Jews in the United States. As a result, interest in Zionism diminished. Contributions for Palestine declined sharply.[65]

By the mid-1930s, however, the rise to power of Nazism in Germany and the alarming growth of anti-Semitism in the United States stimulated the revival of the American Zionist movement. Anger over the issuance of the 1939 British White Paper generated new support for Zionism among American Jews, which was reflected in the rapid increase in the memberships of the ZOA, Hadassah, Mizrachi, and Poalei Zion—the major factions of American Zionism.[66]

In the 1930s American Zionism also began to benefit from the pro-Zionist sympathies it had cultivated over the years in several Jewish religious and secular organizations. By not identifying themselves with any particular Jewish orientation, the Zionists were able to gain influence within all three branches of Judaism. The Orthodox Mizrachi organization became well established in the United States by 1914; the Orthodox *shul* (synagogue) became an important center for Zionist activities quite early. Many Orthodox Jews, to be sure, objected to Zionism on religious grounds, but Orthodox anti-Zionism in America was much weaker than in Europe. The anti-Zionist Agudat Israel movement did not represent the mainstream of American Orthodoxy.[67]

Conservative Judaism, committed to the revival of Hebrew and the survival of Jews as a distinct group, became an important stronghold of Zionism. The Zionists found a true ally in the Jewish Theological Seminary, the training school for Conservative rabbis. The Conservative Rabbinical Assembly of America became a powerful base for Zionism. In 1938 the ZOA allowed the Assembly to select three delegates to its national convention. The Conservative Rabbi Solomon Goldman became the president of the ZOA in 1939.[68]

Reform Judaism, the most persistent opponent of Zionism in the United States until the 1930s, was also penetrated by the Zionists. Stephen S. Wise, a Reform rabbi and one of the most prominent Zionist leaders in the 1920s, played a major role in reorienting Reform rabbis toward Zionism by founding, in 1922, the Jewish Institute of Religion (JIR), a school for the training of Reform rabbis. Under Wise's direction, the JIR produced a number of Zionist Reform rabbis, who were to help him bring about a rapprochement between Zionism and Reform Judaism in the 1930s.[69]

In 1922 Rabbi Wise also reconvened the American Jewish Congress and transformed it into a permanent body. The new organization, which did not have the support of the American Jewish Committee, was formed to protect Jewish rights throughout the world. Fusing broad defense activities with Zionism and led by the leaders of the Zionist movement in the United States, the Congress provided hard-core support for American Zionism.[70]

As in Europe, Zionism in the United States faced some opposition from Orthodox, Socialist, and liberal Jews. But the longest, fiercest, and most persistent resistance to it in America came from Reform Jews.[71]

The Rise and Decline of Reform Opposition to Zionism

In Reform Judaism the Zionist movement encountered its most formidable opposition in the United States from the 1890s until the 1930s. The earliest American adversaries of Zionism, Reform Jews were also the last to make peace with it. The only American Jewish organization ever formed to fight against Zionism was founded by Reform rabbis.

Reform Jews had rejected Jewish nationalism long before the appearance of Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* in 1896. As early as 1841, at the dedication ceremony of Temple Beth Elohim in Charleston, South Carolina, Rabbi Gustav Posnanski declared that "this country is our Palestine, this city our Jerusalem, this house of God our Temple." In the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885 Reform Jews explicitly rejected the national definition of Judaism. In 1896 they repudiated Herzl's scheme for a Jewish state.[72]

Reform organizations attacked political Zionism from its inception. Upon learning about the plans for the first Zionist congress, the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), meeting at its annual convention in Montreal in July 1897, declared its total disapproval of any attempts to establish a Jewish state. It reaffirmed that the object of Judaism was "not political or national, but spiritual." A year later, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC) approved a resolution, formulated by Rabbis David Philipson and Joseph Krauskopf as well as Simon Wolf, which rejected political Zionism and announced that the mission of Judaism was not to establish a state, but "to spread the truths of religion and humanity throughout the world."[73]

Isaac Mayer Wise, the architect of the Reform movement, depicted the Basle congress as a gathering of impractical dreamers. Theodor Herzl, in his opinion, was an egotist who played the role of a messiah. According to Wise, Zionism was merely a reaction to the persecution of Jews; he was certain that the progress of political emancipation would demonstrate its utter folly. An optimist and a rationalist, Wise believed in the universal mission of the Jews: to disseminate the message of ethical monotheism and human brotherhood among the nations. Thus, he dismissed the Zionist movement, which he called "Ziomania," as a mere aberration.[74]

At the turn of the century, Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch, one of the authors of the Pittsburgh Platform, who believed the main mission of emancipated Jews was to promote social justice, argued that the glitter of nationalism was leading some Jews astray. An adamant liberal, he considered Jewish nationalism just as misguided as anti-Semitism. In Hirsch's opinion, American

Jews had no need for Zionism, for it was a completely negative phenomenon, representing the despair and disillusionment of those who had lost hope in the visions of humanity.[75]

Until World War I, the Reform rabbinate continually criticized Zionism as a nuisance, a fantastic scheme, and a deviation from the noble mission God had assigned to Jews. Reform rabbis repeatedly linked their denunciations of what they characterized as the reactionary and self-ghettoizing nature of Zionism with expressions of faith in America and in progress. At Hebrew Union College, under the presidency of Kaufmann Kohler, principal author of the Pittsburgh Platform, official anti-Zionism reigned supreme. Between 1903 and 1907, well-known academics, such as Caspar Levitas, Max Margolis, Henry Malter, and Max Schloesinger, were dismissed from their teaching positions at the college for harboring Zionist sympathies. Year after year, at its annual conventions, the CCAR protested that the only tie uniting Jews was religion, and they repudiated any attempt to create the impression that Jews were an *imperium in imperio*—a state within a state.[76]

Protests against Zionism peaked during World War I. Anti-Zionist Reform Jews, disturbed by the intensification of Zionist wartime activities, escalated their attacks. At the annual convention of the CCAR in 1917, many raised their voices against Zionism and the idea of convening an American Jewish Congress. The rabbis passed a resolution expressing their disfavor with all "unreligious or anti-religious interpretation of Judaism and of Israel's mission in the world." They also voted not to join the proposed American Jewish Congress.[77]

The issuance of the Balfour Declaration convinced some anti-Zionist rabbis of the necessity to take strong measures to fight Zionism. Rabbi Louis Grossman, the president of the CCAR, reacted to the British document by reaffirming the standard Reform viewpoint and by reiterating Reform's opposition to the "idea that Palestine should be considered *the homeland* of the Jews," because Jews in the United States were an integral part of the American nation.[78]

During the summer of 1918, a group of rabbis led by David Philipson, seeking to emulate the anti-Zionist League of British Jews, wanted to convene a conference of prominent lay and religious leaders to discuss means by which to combat Zionism. They contacted the leaders of the AJC, including its president, Louis Marshall, and asked for their support. The AJC leadership, though opposed to Jewish nationalism, was reluctant to engage in a public dispute with Zionists. In fact, in April 1918, by its conditional endorsement of the Balfour Declaration, the AJC had shifted its

organizational policy from anti-Zionism to non-Zionism. According to this new approach to Zionism, it still opposed Jewish nationalism but lent its support to rehabilitating Palestine as a Jewish religious and cultural center. Thus, Marshall not only refused to cooperate with Philipson but also tried to dissuade him from the anti-Zionist venture. The lack of enthusiasm for the proposed conference quickly led to the demise of Philipson's resistance movement.[79]

Nevertheless, intense anti-Zionist agitation did not subside until 1922. The high points of active Jewish opposition to Zionism were the anti-Zionist petition Congressman Julius Kahn (R-Calif.) presented to President Woodrow Wilson for submission to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and Rabbi David Philipson's testimony at the congressional hearings on the nonbinding Lodge–Fish Resolution on Palestine in 1922.

On 4 March 1919, Julius Kahn, the German-born Jewish congressman from San Francisco, delivered to President Wilson "A Statement to the Peace Conference" endorsed by 299 Jews. Prepared by Max Senior, Rabbi Henry Berkowitz, and Morris Jastrow, the document denounced the Zionists for attempting to segregate Jews and to reverse the historical trend toward emancipation. It objected to the creation of a distinctly Jewish state in Palestine because such a political entity would be contrary "to the principles of democracy." The statement requested that Palestine be made into an independent, free, and democratic state that would not recognize any distinctions of creed, race, or ethnic descent among its citizens. Denying the existence of ethnic ties among Jews, the signers of the petition asserted their wish not to see Palestine "either now or at any time in the future" become a Jewish state.[80]

On 20 April 1922, Rabbi Philipson testified before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States House of Representatives against the Lodge–Fish Resolution, which gave American approval to "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." The Zionists and their sympathizers campaigned vigorously for the resolution. In character with his lifelong struggle against Zionism, Philipson presented a strong anti-Zionist argument. After reviewing the history of Reform's opposition to the Zionist movement and analyzing the resolution itself, Philipson emphatically rejected the characterization of Palestine "as the national home of the Jewish people." "No land," he insisted, "can be spoken of as the national home of the Jewish people, as Jews are nationals of many lands." He criticized the constant political agitation of the Zionists as unfortunate because it created the impression in the minds of non-Jews that Jews were aliens. Above all, Philipson wanted everyone to understand that "Zionists

do not speak for all Jews." Thus, despite the eventual passage of the resolution, anti-Zionists did not give up without a fight.[81]

From 1917 until 1922, some anti-Zionist Jews rebuked Zionism in books and in the press. In their polemical literature, the critics described Zionism as a foreign, un-American, racist, and separatist phenomenon. They also frequently accused the Zionist movement of fearing American freedom and stimulating anti-Semitism. Such open attacks by Reform Jews against Zionism expressed strong philosophical disagreement, to be sure, but they also reflected the growing anxiety of the acculturated German Reform Jews over the loss of their predominance in American Jewish life, a position they had held since the 1870s.[82]

Throughout the 1920s, following the example of the AJC, many acculturated German Jews and even the CCAR gradually moved from their traditional anti-Zionism to a position of non-Zionism, that is, opposition to Jewish nationalism but also willingness to support a Jewish cultural and religious center in Palestine. Several circumstances account for the shift. The apparent weakness of Zionism in the 1920s made it less threatening to its former foes. Moreover, the enactment by the United States of restrictive immigration laws in 1921 and 1924, turned Palestine into one of the few areas of refuge open to Jews. Consequently, many Reform rabbis who habitually condemned "nationalistic Zionism" began to favor some cooperation with the Zionists in the physical rehabilitation of Palestine. Likewise, increasingly in the late 1920s, the impact of Stephen Wise's JIR was beginning to be felt in the CCAR. The number of political Zionists in the CCAR was growing. Young pro-Zionist rabbis, such as James G. Heller, Barnett Brickner, and Abba Hillel Silver, began to challenge the old leadership of the Reform rabbinate. Moreover, when the Jewish Agency was expanded in 1929, anti-Zionist Rabbi Samuel Schulman joined the Agency council as a non-Zionist member. Thus, by 1930 anti-Zionists and Zionists had begun to learn to cooperate.[83]

The position of anti-Zionism was weakened in the 1930s. Several developments in American Jewish life brought this about. The Reform rabbinate, congregations, and ideology changed dramatically during the decade. In Europe and in the United States, anti-Semitism rose to an unprecedented level. The emergence of Nazism as well as the general assault on rationalism and liberalism, upon which Jewish emancipation and Reform Judaism were founded, appeared to vindicate Zionist perspectives on the pervasiveness of anti-Semitism and the precariousness of Jewish existence. It seriously undermined the optimistic faith of the anti-Zionists.

In the 1930s the Reform rabbinate and congregations, once composed predominantly of German Jews, rapidly acquired a substantial number of East European members. By the end of the decade, half the membership of many of the Reform congregations in large Jewish population centers consisted of East Europeans. Moreover, most of the rabbis leading the congregations were also East Europeans.[84]

In that decade dramatic changes were introduced into the training of Reform rabbis at Hebrew Union College and into Reform religious education in general. The presence of a growing majority of East European students at Hebrew Union College undoubtedly contributed to a pronounced shift in the attitude of the institution toward Judaism. The college began to devote more attention to rituals and ceremonies. In rabbinical training it reduced the emphasis on oratory and prophetic Judaism and concentrated more on Jewish values and scholarship. The college gradually proceeded to revise the curriculum by upgrading the instruction in the Hebrew language and putting new emphasis on the study of Jewish traditions. Mordecai Kaplan's Reconstructionist ideology, in which the idea of Jewish peoplehood played a central role, acquired a growing following at the college. Similarly, an increasing number of rabbinical students came to believe that Zionism provided a key to Jewish survival and the reinvigoration of the Diaspora. Some elements of traditional Judaism and a substantial dose of Zionism were also introduced into the Reform religious-education system through the efforts of the Zionist Rabbi Emanuel Gamoran, director of the CCAR's religious-education program.[85]

During the 1930s Reform rabbis were moving more rapidly toward accommodation with Zionism than were the lay leaders of the Reform movement. Thus, for example, the controversy over the inclusion and retention of the *Hatikvah*, the Zionist anthem, in the *Union Hymnal* in 1930 and 1931 was less bitter than might have been expected. A decade or two earlier the move would have provoked a major battle in the CCAR. From 1932 on, Zionists in the Reform rabbinate concentrated their efforts on trying to persuade those who opposed Zionism that a synthesis of Reform and Zionism was possible and desirable. At the 1932 annual convention of the CCAR, Barnett R. Brickner called for such a union for the sake of both Reform Judaism and Zionism, arguing that Zionism needed the dynamism of the Reform movement, which, in turn, needed the whole household of Israel, that is, the Jewish masses, for its congregation.[86]

By the mid-1930s, with Rabbis Stephen Wise and Abba Hillel Silver busily building up support for Zionism within the CCAR, there was growing agitation in the CCAR for the partial revision of the Pittsburgh Platform. In

1934 Rabbi Abraham Feldman suggested the need for the union of the religious and ethnic elements in Judaism. Moreover, some rabbis, pointing to the social programs of the labor movement in Palestine as living expressions of prophetic Judaism, were even proclaiming that Zionism represented the true mission of Israel. Two hundred and forty-one rabbis pledged support for the Histadrut in 1935.[87]

At the 1935 CCAR annual convention, Abba Hillel Silver launched a major assault on paragraph five of the Pittsburgh Platform. His Zionist colleagues Felix Levy, James G. Heller, and Barnett Brickner introduced a resolution stating that the CCAR "as a body harbors at present no opposition to Zionism." It was defeated, but after a stormy session the rabbis accepted a resolution declaring that "the Central Conference of American Rabbis takes no official stand on the subject of Zionism." The same resolution also proclaimed that the rabbis intended to cooperate "in the upbuilding of Palestine." Thus, as of 1935, the CCAR became officially neutral on Zionism.[88]

In 1936 Felix Levy, a Zionist, was elected president of the CCAR. He was only the second Zionist ever elected to the presidency of the organization since its foundation in 1889. With a Zionist president, a growing Zionist membership, and official neutrality on Zionism, the CCAR was retreating from anti-Zionism. The old champions of classical Reform Judaism were now either retired or dead. The most prominent of the living anti-Zionists, the septuagenarian Rabbis Samuel Schulman and David Philipson, seemed too old to lead the opposition to Zionism.[89]

The confrontation between the Zionists and the anti-Zionists reached a major turning point in 1937, when the CCAR replaced the Pittsburgh Platform of 1885 with the new "Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism," better known as the Columbus Platform. The new platform reflected the changing realities in the Jewish world and in the Reform movement. Its section on "Israel" proclaimed that "Judaism is the soul of which Israel is the body." Concerning the rehabilitation of Palestine, it asserted: "We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its upbuilding as a Jewish Homeland by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life."[90]

Significantly, the Columbus Platform was passed by only one vote. The Reform movement was still deeply divided on the Zionist issue. Although in retreat, the anti-Zionists had not yet surrendered. The Jewish army controversy in 1942, the emergence of the American Council for Judaism in 1942 and 1943, and the dramatic reassertion of classical Reform principles by Congregation Beth Israel in Houston, Texas, in 1943 proved that the

resistance to Zionism had not been broken yet. Nevertheless, by the early 1940s the anti-Zionists had become a small minority. The formation of the American Council for Judaism would be their last stand against the rising tide of Zionism.[91]

In the late 1930s unreconstructed anti-Zionists still rejected the idea of a Jewish state. Nor did they approve of the World Jewish Congress, which had been organized by Stephen Wise in 1936, fearing it might stimulate the further growth of anti-Semitism. But the worsening situation in Europe worked to the advantage of the Zionists. Thus, for example, early in 1939, in direct response to the serious deterioration in the condition of European Jews, the non-Zionist Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) took the unprecedented step of merging its fund-raising activities with the Zionist United Palestine Appeal (UPA) and thereby forming the United Jewish Appeal (UJA). Ultimately, therefore, the growing menace of Nazism strengthened Jewish solidarity, weakened anti-Zionist resistance, and contributed immeasurably to Zionist success.[92]

CHAPTER 2

The Rebellion of the Dissident Reform Rabbis

The Growth of Zionist Militancy in the United States

The extraordinary intensification of Zionist activities in the United States after the outbreak of the war in Europe in 1939 provoked an American Jewish anti-Zionist reaction. Its most serious manifestation was the emergence in 1942 of a Reform rabbinical resistance movement against Zionism, in reaction to passage by the CCAR of a resolution favoring creation of a Jewish army in Palestine. The rebellious rabbis were not wild-eyed radicals, but respectable defenders of American classical Reform Judaism.

Although, at its peak, no more than thirty-six rabbis participated actively in the dissident movement, these few formed two main schools of thought: One wanted to uphold Reform Judaism by concentrating on revitalizing it; the other, by openly fighting Zionism. Moreover, all these men were plagued by fears of splitting the CCAR, polarizing their congregations, and appearing insensitive to the great peril confronting European Jewry. Indecisive, they argued endlessly among themselves. Only Rabbi Louis Wolsey's strong leadership prevented the early demise of the rebellion. After more than eight months of endless wavering and delays, the dissidents finally decided to form an organization to promote their views.

The growth of Zionist militancy in the United States was closely related to events in Europe. As Nazism cast its shadow across Europe in the late 1930s, the condition of European Jewry steadily deteriorated. Between 1933 and 1938 the Nazis concentrated on evicting the Jews from Germany. From 1938 to 1941 they were interested in ridding themselves of Jews in the areas that had come under their control, but apparently they had no plans for mass murder. Their decision to commit mass killings, culminating in the death of about a million people by December 1941, was made sometime in March of that year.[1]

By the late 1930s most areas of refuge for Jews were closed. In the United States, despite expressions of sympathy for the victims of Nazi

persecution, most people opposed liberalizing immigration. The policy of setting up bureaucratic "paper walls" against the entry of immigrants reflected the prevalent mood in America. Unemployment, nativistic nationalism, and anti-Semitism contributed to widespread support for policies restricting immigration. Even American Jews, apparently fearing anti-Semitism, did little to question the existing immigration policy between 1938 and 1942. Indeed, most of them seemed to consider immigration to Palestine the best solution for the Jewish refugee problem. An international conference on refugees, held at Évian-les-Bains, France, in July 1938, did nothing to alleviate the plight of European Jews. A year later, the British White Paper closed Palestine to Jewish immigration. Thus, although the Nazis were willing to expel their Jews, nobody wanted to receive them.[2]

After the disappointing Évian conference and the implementation of the British White Paper policy, Jewish refugees without special skills or close relatives abroad could move only to one area—the International Settlement in Shanghai. But even there the Japanese had imposed severe restrictions by August 1939. The fate of European Jews was finally sealed when World War II erupted in September 1939. By the end of 1941, after the German invasion of Russia, the vast majority were trapped under Nazi rule, confronting the most horrible catastrophe in Jewish history.[3]

In August 1939, on the eve of the war, the twenty-first Zionist congress authorized the creation in the United States of an Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs (ECZA), consisting of the leaders of the ZOA and representatives of Hadassah, Labor Zionists, and Mizrachi. The ECZA was formed for two purposes: to provide the Zionist movement with a governing mechanism in a neutral country that could assume command of the WZO if the Zionist leadership in London and Jerusalem were to be incapacitated by war, and to become an instrument for generating sympathy for Zionism. The WZO wanted to assure continuity for its work during the war. Moreover, since the Zionists expected the United States to assume an important role in the peace settlement at the end of the war, they began to prepare for the impending campaign to secure American support for their cause. For almost a year and a half the ECZA lay dormant. Only when Emanuel Neumann took command of its Department of Public Relations and Political Action, in January 1941, did the ECZA begin to function effectively.[4]

The impact of the Jewish catastrophe in Europe shifted the center of gravity of the Zionist movement to the United States. Suddenly, with the destruction of European Jewry, American Jews emerged as the world's most important Jewish community, but without adequate preparation to assume such a role.[5]

At the outbreak of the war there was little unity among the American Zionists. Between 1917 and 1942, they had shifted their interpretation of the goals of Zionism several times. During the Balfour Declaration era, a "national home" meant a state; in the 1920s it was interpreted as a spiritual or cultural center; in the 1930s the stress was on a haven for refugees. Zionists defined their objectives ambiguously in the 1920s and 1930s for tactical reasons. Desiring to cooperate with non-Zionists who opposed Jewish nationalism, they refrained from openly announcing that their ultimate objective was to secure a Jewish state in Palestine. But the British White Paper, the war, and the plight of European Jewry led to the reassessment of Zionist goals, resulting in greater militancy.[6]

After initial diffidence, confusion, and lack of cohesion throughout 1940, American Zionism grew bolder in 1941. At a fund-raising National Conference for Palestine late in January 1941, Ben-Gurion spoke about the need for a "Jewish army" that would fight with the British against Hitler. At the same conference, Abba Hillel Silver went further by declaring that "a Jewish commonwealth" in Palestine was the ultimate Zionist aim and by urging Jews to agitate on behalf of that goal. Silver was the first American Zionist leader who openly expressed the Zionist demand for a Jewish state in Palestine. By so doing, he emerged as America's most militant Zionist.[7]

Until Pearl Harbor, American Zionists, fearing anti-Semitism and isolationism, were generally silent about their war aims. But once the United States entered the war, they felt free to act, to begin mobilizing both Jewish and non-Jewish public opinion to support their cause.[8]

Indicative of the transition to a more active Zionism was Chaim Weizmann's article in the January 1942 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, in which he claimed that after the war a large number of Jews would be forced to emigrate from Europe and therefore a radical solution would be needed for the Jewish problem. In his opinion, only free immigration to Palestine and eventually the establishment of a Jewish state there could provide such a solution. Also signaling the new Zionist militancy early in 1942 were calls by the UJA and the ZOA for the creation of a Jewish army.[9]

A turning point in the annals of American Zionism was the extraordinary conference of American Zionists held under the auspices of the ECZA at the Hotel Biltmore in New York between 9 and 11 May 1942. All the American Zionist organizations participated in the meeting. Zionists from seventeen countries, including Weizmann, Ben-Gurion, and Nahum Goldmann, also attended the gathering. At the Biltmore conference, which had almost the status of a full-fledged Zionist congress, the earlier caution was abandoned. The conference approved a declaration openly

stating Zionist aims: free Jewish immigration to Palestine and the establishment therein of a "Jewish commonwealth." The Biltmore Program, a victory for the militants, provided American Zionists with a common "maximum objective" on which almost all of them were able to agree. Having closed ranks, they could now proceed to rally the rest of American Jewry to the Zionist cause.[10]

Having unified their movement in the United States, the Zionists turned to securing the support of non-Zionists, with the American Jewish Committee a major target of their courtship. Initial unofficial contacts between Weizmann and Sol M. Stroock, president of the AJC, made early in 1941, were interrupted by Stroock's sudden death. Further informal meetings were held between Zionist leaders and Maurice Wertheim, the new AJC president, and Morris Waldman, executive secretary of the AJC, in the winter of 1941–1942.[11]

The AJC was deeply divided on the Zionist issue. Many of its prominent members were fierce anti-Zionists, who warned its leaders against even trying to reach an agreement with the Zionists. Nevertheless, after some progress in the talks with the Zionists, Wertheim and Waldman brought the AJC's executive committee into these transactions. A special committee, chaired by Louis Kirstein, was appointed to monitor the still-unofficial negotiations. Early in June 1942 the Zionists and Wertheim reached an agreement on common action "for the fulfillment of the original purposes of the Balfour Declaration." The AJC agreed to unrestricted Jewish immigration to Palestine and recognized the necessity for a Jewish commonwealth. In exchange, the Zionists affirmed that the Jewish state would not affect Jewish rights outside of Palestine, renouncing thereby Diaspora nationalism, that is, Jewish separate nationality outside of Palestine. The Kirstein committee, meeting at Wertheim's home in Cos Cob, Connecticut, on 7 June 1942, approved the proposed agreement, which became known as the "Cos Cob formula," by a vote of eight to three.[12]

Since there were three dissidents—Henry Ittleson, Morris Wolf, and Joseph Proskauer—at the Cos Cob meeting, Kirstein, Wertheim, and Waldman decided to defer bringing their recommendation to the AJC executive committee until attempts had been made to persuade the opponents of the agreement to change their minds. Before this could be done, however, Morris Waldman accidentally met James N. Rosenberg, a prominent AJC and JDC member, and showed him the Cos Cob formula. Although promising to treat the information confidentially, Rosenberg wrote a forty-five-page brief attacking Wertheim and Waldman. He bitterly criticized the kind of democracy contemplated for Palestine, arguing that

in a Jewish commonwealth non-Jews would not be given rights equal to those of the Jews. The demand that Jews be granted exclusive power to set up the "autonomous commonwealth" in Palestine was, in Rosenberg's opinion, undemocratic, since it would cancel the rights of non-Jews. He totally rejected the Cos Cob formula. The growing opposition to the agreement with the Zionists, intensified by Rosenberg's agitation, convinced Wertheim not to seek unity on Palestine at the expense of dividing the AJC.[13]

At this juncture Judge Joseph P. Proskauer emerged as one of the AJC's most outspoken anti-Zionists. In a letter to Waldman on 29 April 1942, while the AJC was negotiating with the Zionists, he denounced Zionism as damaging to American Jews and called for vocal opposition to Jewish nationalism, predicting that "if the American Jewish Committee doesn't make itself the mouthpiece of this public position, some other organization will have to." A month later, Proskauer congratulated Elmer Berger, a rising anti-Zionist star, on his first pamphlet, *Why I Am a Non-Zionist,* declaring that it was a fine statement of a viewpoint with which he thoroughly sympathized. Proskauer believed that trying to find a program of unified action between non-Zionists and Zionists would be a tragic blunder.[14]

In the meantime, the Zionists were moving forward. Although unsuccessful in reaching an agreement with the AJC, they were revitalized by the Biltmore conference. Five months later, after approval by the Zionist leadership in Jerusalem, the Biltmore Program became the official policy of the WZO. United and determined, with their objectives clearly defined, the Zionists channeled their efforts to a relentless drive to capture the support of American Jews and non-Jews for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

The progress and growing agitation of American Zionism provoked a strong reaction from anti-Zionists. One of the earliest and strongest responses to the expanding Zionist activities was Rabbi Morris Lazaron's attempt in 1940 to prevent an American tour by Weizmann. His fierce opposition to the visit, involving both public protest and private pressure on the AJC, brought him into collision with his own brother-in-law—Abba Hillel Silver. The reactions of Lazaron, Rosenberg, and Proskauer were symptomatic of the growing concern of American Jewish anti-Zionists over the rising militancy of the Zionist movement.[15]

The Jewish Army Resolution Stirs a Rebellion

At the 1942 annual CCAR convention in Cincinnati, the conflict between Zionists and anti-Zionists finally erupted into the open. Although silent on the Zionist issue since 1937, the CCAR in 1941 elected Rabbi James G. Heller its president. Heller, a staunch Zionist, who had proclaimed upon assuming office that Reform was no longer anti-Zionist, presided over the 1942 gathering. Thus, the organization that until the 1930s had been the bastion of anti-Zionism was now led by a Zionist.[16]

On the afternoon of Friday, 27 February 1942, the last day of the convention, when most of the 236 rabbis who had attended it were no longer present, 33 Zionist rabbis introduced a resolution favoring the creation in Palestine of a Jewish army "which will fight under its own banner on the side of the democracies, under allied command." For the opponents of Zionism this represented a flagrant violation of the 1935 CCAR neutrality agreement on Zionism. After a heated debate and an unsuccessful effort by Rabbi Solomon B. Freehof to table the resolution and expunge the discussion from the minutes, the resolution was adopted by a vote of 64 to 38. Outmaneuvered, the opponents of Zionism were furious.[17]

The critics of the resolution attacked it on several grounds. Many felt it was divisive and could create the impression that American Jews were a separate nationality. Some argued against associating the CCAR with militarism. San Francisco's Irving Reichert openly declared that the welfare of American Jews was more important than the nationalistic aspirations of Palestinian Jews.[18]

Although defeated on the issue of the Jewish army, the opponents of Zionism, now beginning to coalesce into a dissident group within the Reform rabbinate, refused to surrender. While still recuperating from their setback in Cincinnati, they were urged to act by Captain Lewis L. Strauss, president of the prestigious Temple Emanu-El in New York and member of the AJC. Strauss persuaded his rabbi, Samuel H. Goldenson, a former CCAR president, to send a telegram, endorsed by more than sixty rabbis, to the British cabinet to inform it that Jews were sharply divided on the Jewish army issue.[19]

The Zionists reacted swiftly and angrily. While immediately producing an endorsement by 350 rabbis of an appeal for a Jewish fighting force, their press attacked the dissident rabbis, comparing them to the rabbis who had protested against Herzl in 1897. In private, Zionist rabbis worried that the

dissidents' statement might damage the CCAR. They also insisted that the army resolution, approved by a majority vote, was binding on all CCAR members, a claim Goldenson and Lazaron rejected.[20]

In the meantime, unofficially, through contacts with Rabbi Lazaron, the State Department was encouraging the dissidents. William Yale, its chief planner for Palestine, advised Lazaron in the midst of the Jewish army controversy in March 1942: "A thoroughly aroused American Jewry can best check the unbridled activities of the political Zionists."[21]

Morris S. Lazaron, the dissidents' link with the State Department, was undoubtedly one of the best-known American anti-Zionists. Born in Savannah, Georgia, in 1888 and senior rabbi at Baltimore Hebrew Congregation since 1915, Lazaron was married to Pauline Horkheimer, the sister of Abba Hillel Silver's wife. In his thirties and early forties, influenced by Jewish distress during World War I and by Stephen S. Wise as well as a visit to Palestine, Lazaron was a Zionist. Until the early 1930s, convinced of the peaceful and spiritual nature of Zionism, Lazaron was captivated by the romantic vision of the movement. But his enthusiasm for Zionism waned at the very time that its general appeal was rising. In the 1930s he detected a lack of candor in Zionist activities. He felt Zionists were exploiting the Jewish tragedy in Europe for narrow political purposes. Moreover, after visiting Nazi Germany and seeing the effects of its nationalism, Lazaron became convinced that nationalism, a force leading the world to destruction, could not serve as an instrument for Jewish salvation. Reaffirming the position of classical Reform Judaism, Lazaron also concluded that establishment of a Jewish state would weaken the political status of Jews and destroy the spiritual dimension of Judaism. Above all, for Lazaron, the mixture of religion and state spelled disaster.[22]

Lazaron was a good friend of Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles, whom he kept informed about developments within the American Jewish community. In March 1942 he turned to the undersecretary for guidance on the problem of the Jewish army. Welles, in strict confidence, explained to Lazaron that both the British and American general staffs opposed the formation of a specifically Jewish army in the Middle East. The friendship between Welles and Lazaron was mutually beneficial. Lazaron kept Welles informed about the thinking and activities in the anti-Zionist camp, a service for which the undersecretary was grateful. On the other hand, Lazaron's easy access to Welles increased his own stature among the anti-Zionists.[23]

Significantly, at this juncture Welles was playing an intriguing role. He maintained close contact with both Zionists and anti-Zionists. The Zionists

even came to think of him as one of a very few high-ranking State Department officials sympathetic to them. Welles, for reasons of policy and expediency, felt it was necessary to prevent Jewish groups within the United States from either opposing the British war effort or adding to the obstacles Britain was already facing in the Near East. For this reason, he kept "in close touch with Dr. Wise and his associates with the hope that misunderstandings between the Zionist movement in this country and the British Government can be at least minimized, if not altogether avoided."[24]

Rabbi Wolsey Takes Command

In the midst of the controversy over Goldenson's telegram, Louis Wolsey, senior rabbi at Congregation Rodeph Shalom in Philadelphia, assumed the leadership of the dissidents. Born in Midland, Michigan, in 1877, Rabbi Wolsey came to Philadelphia in 1925, after serving at Congregation B'nai Israel in Little Rock, Arkansas, and at the Euclid Avenue Temple in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1925 Wolsey was elected president of the CCAR; a year later, he participated in the founding of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. Opinionated, intimidating, and a powerful orator with a deep, resonant voice, Wolsey, nicknamed "Cardinal," was a dominating figure in his congregation. A lifelong champion of Reform Judaism and a fierce foe of Zionism, Wolsey was eager to proceed beyond Goldenson's protest. Moreover, in 1941 a terrible tragedy struck him: His wife and son killed themselves in an apparent suicide pact. The need to divert his mind from this painful loss undoubtedly fueled his compulsive immersion in the anti-Zionist crusade.[25]

Between 1940 and 1942, ostensibly to advance liberal Jewish opinion, but actually to counteract Zionist influence within the Reform movement, Wolsey attempted to establish in Philadelphia a Reform magazine to be called the *Jewish Advance*. In that project he closely collaborated with another Philadelphian, William H. Fineshriber, senior rabbi at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel. Both he and Fineshriber were to be editors-in-chief. Fineshriber, born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1878, came to Philadelphia in 1924 after occupying pulpits in Davenport, Iowa, and Memphis, Tennessee. Urbane, mild-mannered, and a captivating speaker, Fineshriber was a less ambitious, less passionate, and a much more moderate person than Wolsey. He was, however, a man of high principles. While in Memphis, he opposed the Ku Klux Klan, lectured on evolution, and supported women's suffrage. After coming to Philadelphia, he continued to champion liberal causes. Although the magazine venture had to be

abandoned because of insufficient interest, all the work on the magazine was not in vain. It taught Wolsey and Fineshriber to cooperate on matters beyond congregational issues. Moreover, in planning the editoral board and soliciting articles for the projected magazine, Wolsey and Fineshriber contacted many anti-Zionist rabbis who later would become the founding fathers of the American Council for Judaism.[26]

On 18 March 1942, Wolsey and Fineshriber met with Rabbis Eugene Sack, David Wice, Abraham Shusterman, and Samuel Sandmel in Wolsey's study at Rodeph Shalom to discuss the consequences of the Jewish army resolution. The rabbis agreed that there was a need to revitalize Reform Judaism, to oppose Jewish nationalism, and to publicize their point of view. Moreover, they decided to call for a conference in Atlantic City to discuss the situation within the Reform movement. Elated by the meeting, Wolsey felt it was the beginning of the end of "the appeasement policy of a quarter century," that is, the progressive concessions Reform Judaism had been making to Zionism since the issuance of the Balfour Declaration.[27]

As soon as they learned about the ideas raised at the Philadelphia meeting, other dissidents began to counsel caution and to express reservations about the proposed Atlantic City conference. Goldenson, for one, preferred to fight Zionists through the medium of a literary magazine. But Wolsey, angry at Stephen Wise's increasing attacks on the endorsers of Goldenson's telegram and convinced that most American Jews opposed the Jewish army resolution, wanted "direct and drastic" action.[28]

After initial doubts, fearing misinterpretation and misunderstanding that might play into the hands of Stephen Wise and the Zionists, a number of the dissident rabbis met in Philadelphia on 30 March and 6 April to formulate plans for the meeting in Atlantic City. Despite continuing hesitation and fear about schism in the CCAR, most vocally expressed by Rabbis Goldenson and Jonah Wise, son of Isaac M. Wise, the rabbis decided to hold the conference. In a spirit of concession to moderates, with Wolsey's and Fineshriber's endorsement, the dissidents even accepted the text that Wise and Goldenson had prepared for the invitation to the gathering.[29]

It is significant that the phrasing of the invitation was left to the moderate Rabbis Wise and Goldenson, neither of whom was enthusiastic about the conference. But Wise and Goldenson were prominent and influential men within the Reform rabbinate and the American Jewish community: Their support was essential for enhancing the importance of the impending gathering. Wolsey and Fineshriber repeatedly made concessions to them to retain their support.

Invitations to come to Atlantic City "for a meeting of non-Zionist Reform Rabbis to discuss the problems that confront Judaism and Jews in the world emergency" were sent out on 15 April. The text, expressing concern about a retreat from viewpoints essential for the welfare of Jews both in the United States and throughout the world, asserted that the increasing emphasis on the racial and nationalistic aspects of Judaism was "to have an adverse effect upon Jews, politically, socially, and spiritually, no matter where they live."[30]

Anti-Zionist rabbis were excited about the conference. Rabbi David Philipson, the only survivor of both the first graduating class of Hebrew Union College (1883) and the group that formulated the Pittsburgh Platform in 1885, saw it as another opportunity to revive classical Reform Judaism. Particularly elated was Rabbi Elmer Berger in Flint, Michigan. Informed by Wolsey about the conference a day after the decision had been made, Berger entered into feverish correspondence with the old rabbi. He wanted matters to move quickly. Having formed an anti-Zionist group in Flint, he was convinced that a program of anti-Zionism on a national scale would "move like wildfire."[31]

With the invitations sent out, Wolsey braced himself for battle. He hoped that 135 rabbis would attend the meeting and thus shake up the Zionists. In his private communications, Wolsey bitterly attacked the opposition. The Zionists, he confided to Philipson, had overreached themselves and "completely Nazified their movement," making it totalitarian in the name of specious unity. Compromise with Zionists was impossible because they had made up their minds "to rule world Jewry" and "plan to take everything from us, including our religion."[32]

The decision to go to Atlantic City, which sent a tremor through the Reform movement and revitalized anti-Zionists, also created tensions within Wolsey's camp. An early warning came from Rabbi David Wice (later Wolsey's successor at Rodeph Shalom), who was disturbed by the negative title of the conference paper assigned to David Philipson. Julian Morgenstern, president of Hebrew Union College, feared the meeting might create a schism within the CCAR.[33]

Throughout all these activities Rabbi Wolsey maintained contact with prominent laymen. Informing Lewis L. Strauss of the recent activities of the dissident rabbis, Wolsey emphasized that lay–rabbinical cooperation and "propaganda for the education of our people in the religious definition of the Jew" were of uppermost importance to them. The feeling among the rabbis, according to Wolsey, was that if they could publish tracts for general circulation and some kind of magazine they "might be able to orient Jewish life away from politics and nationalism and direct it toward religious culture."

They were certain, concluded Wolsey, that if they could engage in that sort of educational effort it would "change the entire face of Jewish life in America." While keeping anti-Zionist laymen informed about their goals and activities, Wolsey and his associates were reassuring fellow rabbis of the strictly religious nature of their work.[34]

Wolsey's activities deeply disturbed Zionist rabbis, who, although unsure about the proper tactics, sought to squash the anti-Zionist rebellion. Whereas Abba Hillel Silver counseled against taking the dissidents seriously, Stephen S. Wise was eager to fight. Wise's impulse was to administer a crushing blow to "Cardinal" Wolsey and his "Bishops." The organizers of the Atlantic City conference, he believed, deserved "moral decapitation."[35]

Rabbi James G. Heller was more tactful. Fearing the possibility of schism in the CCAR under his administration, he wanted a peaceful solution. In a 30 April 1942 letter addressed to the entire CCAR membership, Heller appealed for the cancellation of the dissidents' conference. He not only warned about the potentially divisive consequences of such a meeting but also reminded the rabbis that the Zionist issue was only partially relevant to Reform Judaism.[36]

Heller's letter called for an answer from Wolsey and his associates. Despite differences among the dissidents, with Jonah Wise counseling moderation and Elmer Berger and David Philipson opposing compromise, Rabbi Lazaron prepared a group response.[37]

In reply to Heller, the dissidents denied they intended to cause a schism. They explained their meeting was called because of the events surrounding the Jewish army resolution at the Cincinnati convention and because Heller claimed the resolution, voted on by a small number of CCAR members, committed the whole membership. Since they believed that the nationalist tendencies current in Jewish life were deleterious both to the best interests of Jews in America and abroad and to the united war effort, they felt they had "no other recourse than to organize" in opposition and to do so *within the* CCAR. "We cannot believe you would take the position," they argued, "that like-minded members of the Conference should not meet together to discuss issues they believe to be of supreme importance, and to agree on some policy to promote them."[38]

Despite increasing tensions between the opposing camps, with help from the amiable Rabbi Solomon Freehof, vice president of the CCAR, James Heller managed to arrange an informal meeting between Goldenson, Wolsey, Freehof, and himself. Heller, convinced of the gravity of the situation, was determined to prevent the controversy from deteriorating and causing irreparable harm to the CCAR. He hoped to achieve his objective

plomacy as well as by mobilizing support among mem-[39]

nson, Wolsey, Freehof, and Heller met in Pittsburgh on
first, it appeared that an agreement was reached. Heller
impressed ... y as seeking an amicable settlement of the differences with the CCAR and as being genuinely convinced that the Atlantic City conference, regardless of the intentions of the dissidents, would be construed and treated by others as an act of secession.[40]

According to Wolsey, Heller proposed that if the Atlantic City conference were to be called off he would be willing to convene a special meeting of the CCAR at which he would recommend four measures: expunging the army resolution from the minutes and record of the CCAR; reviving the 1935 neutrality agreement on Zionism and making it a permanent policy of the CCAR; passing a bylaw that would put this action into immediate effect as an unchangeable rule of the CCAR; and committing the CCAR, as in the past, to an economic and cultural—not political or nationalistic—reconstruction of Palestine. Wolsey and Goldenson, although warning it was impossible to predict the outcome of the special session of the CCAR, recommended cancellation of the Atlantic City meeting "for the sake of peace, on the condition that the Conference take the action suggested by its president." Wolsey's group, by a vote of seventeen to two, accepted what it believed to be Heller's offer.[41]

But the spirit of conciliation quickly gave way to confusion and discord. Just as the dissidents accepted Heller's offer as reported by Wolsey, Heller sent Wolsey a telegram denying he had ever offered to expunge the army resolution from the record.[42]

Even before it could be ascertained what had actually been agreed upon in Pittsburgh, militants on both sides voiced their disapproval of any peace efforts. Stephen Wise and Elmer Berger, representing the hard-line Zionist and anti-Zionist views, urged their respective negotiators to reject compromise. Wise promised to fight any concessions to anti-Zionists. Berger, one of only two who had voted against the deal with Heller, insisting that a bloc of organized opposition to Zionism was needed not only for the CCAR but for all American Jews, urged his colleagues to press on with the fight.[43]

For several days Wolsey's group vacillated. Then, on 20 May, after much wavering and many frantic consultations, realizing that the army resolution would not be annulled, the dissidents decided to resume their preparations for the Atlantic City conference. This was a great victory for Elmer Berger, the foremost opponent of Heller's peace offensive.[44]

During the final week before the Atlantic City conference, despite surface unity, opinions within the dissident group were still divided. In fact, the frequent expressions of doubt by Jonah Wise and Samuel Goldenson troubled Wolsey. Moreover, Zionist pressures continued. Heller, rebuffed by the insurgents, openly appealed to the entire CCAR membership not to attend the proposed meeting; then, privately, he asked Wolsey to refrain from issuing any public statements in Atlantic City, warning him of a growing mood of "reprisal" among the Zionists.[45]

Heller, to be sure, was concerned about more than schism within the CCAR. He feared the potentially damaging effect of an open conflict among Reform rabbis over Zionism at the very time when Zionists were trying to unify American Jewry behind their program. Thus, while negotiating with Wolsey, Heller actively encouraged efforts to neutralize the anti-Zionists by urging rabbis of all branches of Judaism to endorse a petition denouncing the anti-Zionist rabbis and affirming that Zionism represented the best traditions of Judaism. Publication of rabbinical endorsements became one of the earliest techniques Zionists employed in their counter-attack against anti-Zionists. Through these endorsements, they sought to demonstrate the popularity of Zionism with the Jewish religious community and refute anti-Zionist claims of the incompatibility of Zionism and Judaism.[46]

The Atlantic City Conference and Its Aftermath

On 1 June 1942, thirty-six rabbis came to Atlantic City for a two-day conference. Six former presidents of the CCAR attended the meeting: David Philipson, William Rosenau, Leo M. Franklin, Edward N. Calisch, Louis Wolsey, and Samuel H. Goldenson. Also present were Julian Morgenstern, president of Hebrew Union College; Jonah Wise; Isaac Landman, editor of the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*; and Wolsey's confidants, Morris S. Lazaron and William H. Fineshriber.[47]

Differences of opinion among the rabbis surfaced almost immediately. The first dispute centered on the nature of the meeting. After some argument, it was decided that the conference should be closed to the public. With preliminary matters settled, the meeting began. Wolsey set the tone for the deliberations: The main issue to be confronted was nationalism versus religion—whether Jews should retreat to a nationalistic ghetto or follow the universal message of the Jewish prophets.[48]

In his keynote address, David Philipson forcefully declared that Reform Judaism and Zionism were incompatible. "Reform Judaism is spiritual," he insisted, "Zionism is political. The outlook of Reform Judaism is the world, the outlook of Zionism is a corner of Western Asia." After characterizing the army resolution as a breach of CCAR neutrality, Philipson asserted that the purpose of the meeting was not to split the CCAR, but "to maintain the right of freedom of opinion."[49]

In his stirring speech on Jewish postwar problems, Rabbi Lazaron described the terrible plight of Jews in Germany and Poland, recalling his own six-month sojourn in Nazi Germany and the tears he shed over the "immeasurable sorrow of Polish Jewry." But despite his commiseration with the victims of nazism, Lazaron rejected Zionism. Feelings for Palestine, he believed, were largely based on a mixture of traditional sentiments and despair. Although sympathetic to the idea of Palestine as a refuge and cognizant of the sense of community among Jews, Lazaron solemnly rejected "an international, secular Jewish nationalism which would organize Jews throughout the world behind an international political pressure program to set up a Jewish state in Palestine." Lazaron, however, warned the rabbis against being jockeyed into the position of appearing to be simply against Palestine, which would be reprehensible. He called for opposition to a Jewish state coupled with support for relief and resettlement work in Palestine and elsewhere.[50]

The spirited discussion that followed Lazaron's talk highlighted differences of opinion among the rabbis assembled in Atlantic City. Pessimistic about the fate of European Jews and envisioning serious difficulties for them after the war, Jonah Wise also doubted there would by sympathy for the immigration of dispossessed Jews to the United States; consequently, he argued that Palestine would have to be a part of the solution. Fineshriber disagreed. Insisting that Zionists were not interested in Palestine as a home for refugee Jews but "in Palestine as a political state," he warned against seduction by cries of unity and appealed for the reaffirmation of the classical interpretation of Reform Judaism.[51]

The star attraction of the evening session was thirty-four-year-old Elmer Berger from Flint, Michigan, whom Wolsey introduced as his disciple. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1908, Berger attended Wolsey's Euclid Avenue Temple there. Wolsey influenced Berger to enter the rabbinate. After graduating from Hebrew Union College in 1932 and serving as rabbi at Temple Beth Jacob in Pontiac, Michigan, from 1932 to 1936, Berger accepted the pulpit at Temple Beth El in Flint. In both congregations, he resisted pressures for more traditional Jewish observance. Although

opposed to Zionism through his upbringing, Berger did not begin his anti-Zionist activities until he came to Flint and discovered the neglect of local Jewish needs and institutions while huge sums of money were being poured into Zionist ventures. This discovery, as well as the increasing Zionist agitation in the United States, disturbed him deeply. As his criticism of Zionism grew more vocal, Berger attracted some young members of his congregation who asked him to organize a discussion group on Jewish problems. From that group emerged the Flint Non-Zionist Committee, probably the first organized anti-Zionist group in the United States and the initial model for Berger's future anti-Zionist crusade.[52]

Berger's paper, "The Flint Plan," was an account of his own "practical" experiment in anti-Zionism in Michigan, "an informed rebellion against the corrosive forces of Jewish nationalism." The Flint anti-Zionist group, Berger said, did not seek the conflict. It was only after studying Zionism that Berger's followers discovered a real conflict between the philosophies of Reform Judaism and Zionism. That realization led them to demand action. After telling the story of Flint, Berger explained the need for organized opposition to Zionism, asserting that there were many anti-Zionist Jews who desperately needed leadership. They were the "forgotten Israel." Since Zionists were organized, those who opposed them must also be organized. Berger believed in education and organization as the best means for fighting Zionists. If they were made aware of the true nature of Jewish nationalism and were led effectively, Berger argued, American Jews would rise against Zionism. Summoning his fellow rabbis to organize the laity as soon as possible, Berger warned that failing to do so would be disastrous. "If we continue on as we have," he concluded, "we shall fail in our responsibilities as leaders, not alone to Reform but to the whole historic past of our people and to the future of Israel as well."[53]

Berger's address was a turning point in his career, launching his meteoric rise to the leadership of American anti-Zionism. It marked the beginning of a relentless, lifelong crusade against Zionism.

After Berger's presentation, the rabbis approved Fineshriber's recommendation that a committee be created to explore the possibility of interesting prominent laymen throughout the country in forming a lay–rabbinical organization for the purpose of advancing the dissidents' cause. Wolsey immediately appointed Fineshriber, Goldenson, Berger, and Hyman Schachtel to this committee.[54]

On 2 June, when the rabbis turned to formulating a statement of principles, the latent divisions resurfaced. After Rabbi Rosenau presented a statement prepared by the rabbis from Baltimore, two opposing groups emerged:

one militant, the other moderate. The Baltimore statement, expressing the militant stand, was also supported by Berger, Wolsey, and Philipson. Rabbis Morgenstern, Wice, Goldenson, and Jonah Wise best represented the moderate view.

Once again, Goldenson, counseling caution, thought a statement of principles required more time for consideration and endorsement by rabbis outside the circle of those attending the conference. He was also disturbed by a shocking news article about the mass murder of Jews in various parts of Europe that he had read in the morning press. "It makes me more careful now than I would have been if I hadn't seen that article," he told his colleagues. The proposed statement was too belligerent for him. He asked for a more mature statement, a calmer document in which the rabbis would say fewer things but say them more positively and for which they would be able to secure wider support.[55]

The militants were annoyed. Wolsey complained that "for forty-five years we have been pacifying and appeasing and keeping our mouths shut," doing what Goldenson suggested. Berger criticized the attitude of the moderates, who talked a great deal about lofty principles but were reluctant to implement them.[56]

The leadership of the dissidents wanted desperately to prevent unnecessary divisions. To preserve unity, Lazaron and Fineshriber, who favored immediate action, agreed to yield to the moderates. Consequently, the rabbis accepted Morgenstern's suggestion to send the draft of the proposed statement to every member of the group for comments, all of which were to be synthesized into a final document. They also agreed to tell the press that, although they had prepared a statement, it would not be published until it received final approval from the larger number of like-minded rabbis who were unable to attend the conference.[57]

In essence, the draft statement prepared in Atlantic City expressed concern about the growing involvement of many in "Jewish nationalistic endeavors" and "the reduction to secondary importance of the religious basis of Jewish life." It declared "unwavering faith in the democratic way of life" and rejected as dangerous "any belief that Palestine alone can be the panacea for all Jewish ills."[58]

By the middle of June, the final version of the statement of principles, prepared by Goldenson, was ready, and Rabbi Lazaron had accepted the chairmanship of the lay–rabbinical committee assigned the task of recruiting lay support for the rabbis. Also by then, Wolsey, Fineshriber, Lazaron, and Berger were thinking seriously about forming a national organization. Nevertheless, with the dissidents still unable to agree on how to proceed

with the advertisement of their statement, its publication was delayed for ten weeks.[59]

Militants like Wolsey and Berger, to be sure, were itching to fight. But once again, the moderates, led by Goldenson and Wise, called for caution and delay because of concern about recent developments in the Middle East. The situation was particularly menacing in North Africa, where the Germans were advancing toward Egypt and thereby posing an imminent threat to the security of the Jews in Palestine. Under such circumstances, many in Wolsey's group were reluctant to become embroiled in public controversy. Goldenson and Wise even threatened to withdraw their names from any paid advertisement. There was, however, general support for quiet work on promoting the rabbis' program and for securing more signatures for the statement.[60]

Despite their caution, the dissidents could not escape Zionist ire. *New Palestine* described the Atlantic City meeting as "a pitiful spectacle" of anti-Zionist rabbis who engaged in "verbal pyrotechnics" and mouthed "slogans of a bygone day." Their movement was destined to fail because it was based on negation. Seeking to escape the consequences of their Jewishness by "making Judaism play a minimal part in their personal lives," the anti-Zionists were jittery Jews seeking to appease anti-Semites. In the general Jewish press, reaction ranged from the straightforward reporting in the *Indianapolis Jewish Post* to a highly critical editorial in the *Jewish Review and Observer*, "Sixty Against the Army," which concluded with the intriguing observation that the rabbis did not understand "the Jewish–Arab question" thoroughly.[61]

The anti-Zionist *Christian Century*, however, concluded that the Atlantic City conference indicated divisions in American Judaism over political Zionism. This liberal Protestant weekly noted the prominence of many of the participants. "With such differences of opinion within Jewish ranks," it declared, "we cannot but marvel at the assurance with which Gentile groups tell the British and American governments what ought to be done in Palestine and in regard to Zionism."[62]

From late June until August 1942, Wolsey's group seemed to be losing momentum. It even experienced its first formal defection. On 29 June, Rabbi David Wice, claiming he had been perturbed by the shift in the position of the dissidents from an emphasis on religion to a concentration on political matters, left Wolsey's group. Because of Rabbi Morgenstern's refusal to exert pressure on its faculty, very little support came from Hebrew Union College. Irritated by Wise's and Goldenson's objection to advertising the group's statement and annoyed by the slow progress of his

movement, Wolsey was increasingly distressed by the lack of confidence of his group.[63]

In the second week of August 1942, the dissidents at last published their long-awaited statement, a compromise document formulated mostly by Goldenson, the man who had resisted its publication for two months. Ninety-six rabbis endorsed it. Titled "Statement of Principles by Non-Zionist Rabbis," it stressed that the Atlantic City meeting was a response to "growing secularism"—a euphemism for Zionism—in American Jewish life. Declaring an unwavering commitment to American democracy, which was founded on principles first envisioned by the Hebrew prophets, the manifesto asked that the right of Jews to live securely everywhere be fully recognized, clearly expressed, and "inextricably woven" into the postwar peace program. The statement recognized the importance of Palestine "to the Jewish soul" and expressed support for the Jews in Palestine in their economic, cultural, and spiritual—but not nationalistic—endeavors. It rejected political Zionism, calling instead for devotion to Reform Judaism, with its emphasis on "the eternal prophetic principles of life and thought, principles through which alone Judaism and the Jew can hope to endure and bear witness to the universal God."[64]

On the whole, the statement encountered a hostile reception from the Jewish press. An exception, the *Detroit Jewish Chronicle,* considered it "a clear statement" that would help to clear up the misunderstanding about the non-Zionist rabbis. More representative of the general Jewish reaction was the *Pittsburgh Jewish Criterion.* It referred to the Reform rabbis who signed the statement as "retired, superannuated or not holding pulpits" and characterized the foremost anti-Zionists in the United States as "men who are never seen by these same rabbis except, occasionally, at high holiday services or, more usually, when sonorous eulogies are sounded at funerals." Indeed, the favorite mode of attack on anti-Zionists was to portray them as both a distinct minority and minimal Jews.[65]

New Palestine, the official organ of the ZOA, accusing the rabbis of "giving aid to the enemy" and injuring the Jewish people, best typified Zionist response. One editorial went further. It described the anti-Zionists as "congenitally, emotionally and mentally impotent insofar as the solution of the Jewish problem is concerned" and agreed with Herzl's portrayal of them as "the withered branches of the Jewish tree of life."[66]

To counter the dissidents' statement, Zionist rabbis, through the initiative of Rabbi Philip Bernstein and sixteen others, including James Heller, mobilized the Jewish religious community and published a manifesto of their own: *Zionism: An Affirmation of Judaism.* Subtitled "A Reply by 757

Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Rabbis of America to a Statement Issued by Ninety Members of the Reform Rabbinate Charging that Zionism Is Incompatible with the Teachings of Judaism," it refuted all the arguments of their opponents, asserting that "anti-Zionism, not Zionism, is the departure from the Jewish religion." This statement was also approved by students at five leading seminaries, including Hebrew Union College, where it was endorsed by a vote of forty-two to nine.[67]

Throughout September and October, Wolsey, Fineshriber, and Lazaron worked tirelessly to generate lay support and to develop a program for their movement. They continually appealed to prominent anti-Zionists for moral and financial support. But their progress was slow because many who privately encouraged them hesitated to go public. For example, Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of the *New York Times*, refused to assist Lazaron's committee financially or become officially associated with it because he feared it might "complicate" his life and compromise the *Times*. In October 1942 Wolsey and his associates had a meager two hundred dollars in their treasury.[68]

Nevertheless, there was movement forward. In September 1942 the first pledges of financial backing were coming from Aaron Straus, Lazaron's strongest and most loyal supporter in Baltimore, as well as from Berger's friends in Flint and Pontiac for $5,000 and $1,600 respectively. At this time the dissidents were also beginning to discuss founding a magazine devoted to their ideals.[69]

By October 1942, miserable in Flint and eager to leave the "ghetto" of Michigan, Berger was beginning to look for a new rabbinical position and even contemplated going into the chaplaincy. But, above all, he wanted to wage war on Zionism. Berger confided to Wolsey his willingness to stake everything he had on the fight with the Zionists, claiming that he could not have peace "as long as Reform rabbis are predominantly Zionists rather than religious men."[70]

By the third week of October, having discovered growing interest in their movement in San Francisco, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Dallas, Wolsey, Fineshriber, and Lazaron took a fateful step. They decided to transform their loose dissident rebellion into a formal organization. To discuss such action, Wolsey summoned his group for a meeting at Rodeph Shalom on 2 November 1942, which, ironically, was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the issuance of the Balfour Declaration.[71]

CHAPTER 3

The Formation of the American Council for Judaism

The Dissidents Form an Organization

Thirteen rabbis assembled at Wolsey's Temple Rodeph Shalom in Philadelphia on 2 November 1942 to explore plans for creating a formal organization. Rabbi Goldenson came accompanied by Sidney Wallach, a public-relations expert and former employee of the AJC, who brought along a proposal for immediate action. Describing their movement as the last stand against the rapid progress of Zionism, Wallach warned the rabbis of the dire consequences of its failure. Since Zionists were organized, the opposition also had to organize. Wallach recommended a public-relations program for fighting Zionism that called for a campaign to educate the Jewish community about the predominantly political nature of Zionism and offered to direct the group's public-relations work for an annual fee of $7,200 to $7,500.[1]

When they began to deliberate, the rabbis, in a now-familiar pattern, quickly split into two factions, one stressing a pro-Reform position, the other emphasizing anti-Zionism. But after a long discussion, the group agreed to raise $25,000 within a month; to engage Wallach, on a contingent basis, to prepare a program; and to appoint a special committee under Lazaron's chairmanship to formulate the objectives of the proposed organization as well as to decide on a name for it.[2]

Reactions to the meeting within the larger circle of the dissidents were mixed. Some were quite happy. Lazaron, for example, satisfied with developments, came to think of Wolsey's group as a "band of prophets." But serious reservations arose about engaging Wallach. Insisting on pure methods of operation, Rabbi Ephraim Frisch objected to the very notion of forming permanent ties with a public-relations man. He preferred a rabbi to serve as the group's executive secretary and even suggested Elmer Berger for such a position. A majority of the rabbis soon reached similiar conclusions. The Wallach controversy, however, revealed the difficulties the dissidents were

experiencing in deciding whether their primary objective was to affirm Reform Judaism or to fight Zionism. Much of the opposition to Wallach reflected the uneasiness of those who were concerned because the group was drifting toward a preoccupation with anti-Zionism. Baltimore's Rabbi Abraham Shusterman was so shocked by the Wallach proposal that he spoke seriously about dissociating himself from the group.[3]

Berger, eager to leave Flint, was thrilled to learn about the new opportunity beckoning him. "I should love the job," he informed Wolsey, "it would really be the answer to a prayer." Of course he agreed with Frisch and Wolsey about the need for the movement's work to be done by religious leaders without "stooping to the pressured, commercial approach of the Zionists." Berger assured Wolsey that if a job offer were made "there won't be a fast enough train headed out of this Ghetto [Flint]."[4]

Wolsey wanted to move forward. But, realizing that the rabbinical group had not yet reached a consensus about its contemplated course of action, he felt compelled to call for further consultations to be held on 23 November 1942. He believed that no progress could be made until there was "a complete meeting of minds." Before the scheduled meeting, two developments emboldened Wolsey and his associates. On 5 November, in Baltimore, Arthur Hays Sulzberger openly assailed the idea of a Jewish army. Then, on 16 November, in New York, Rabbis Goldenson and Jonah Wise conferred with several influential Jewish lay leaders, including Alan M. Stroock, son of the late AJC president; William Rosenwald, president of the National Refugee Service and chairman of the UJA; Paul Baerwald, former chairman of the JDC; Arthur Hays Sulzberger; and Edward M. M. Warburg, chairman of the JDC. According to Wise, these men "heartily commended the rabbinical group for its initiative and good sense."[5]

Wolsey and his followers gathered in Philadelphia on 23 November 1942 for what proved to be an upbeat meeting. The reports from the anti-Zionist camp were encouraging. Rabbi Fineshriber reported on his recent conversation with Morris Wolf, a member of Wolsey's congregation, who had revealed to him that the AJC would be meeting to elect a president on 6 December. According to Wolf, if the anti-Zionist element in the AJC were to gain control, it would supply Wolsey's group with funds; if it failed, it might secede from the AJC and turn over its funds to the rabbis. In either case, Wolf was certain that the $25,000 needed by the rabbis would become available. Coming on top of the encouraging news from Baltimore and New York, Wolf's reassurances greatly lifted the rabbis' morale. Wolf's news confirmed their perception of strong opposition to Zionism among prominent

laymen, including some of the leading members of the AJC, and convinced them that financial support for their movement was forthcoming.[6]

After considerable discussion, the rabbis unanimously appointed Elmer Berger to the position of executive director of their group "at a salary commensurate with the position," contingent upon the raising of the necessary funds. Wolsey, who telephoned Berger to inform him of the appointment, received an enthusiastic acceptance. Elated, Berger assured Wolsey, "I know that we can save American Judaism if we proceed with determination and courage from here on in." The rabbis concluded their session with two further decisions: They approved Lazaron's suggested name for the organization, the Council for American Judaism, and they agreed to meet again on 7 December, a day after the election of the new American Jewish Committee president, to announce officially the formation of their organization.[7]

Late that night, tired but contented, Wolsey prepared a detailed account of the day's historic meeting for Berger. He reported on the great confidence the rabbis had in Berger and mentioned they had in mind a salary of no less than $6,000 for the new job of executive director. Berger was ecstatic, describing himself as feeling like a man awakening from a bad dream who "was still suffering from shock." The salary was satisfactory, he told Wolsey, but he would have accepted less because of his conviction "of the worthwhileness of the job."[8]

But startling world events immediately complicated the anti-Zionists' enterprise. On 24 November 1942, one day after the formation of the anti-Zionist organization, the State Department confirmed rumors about the mass extermination of European Jews by the Nazis and authorized Stephen S. Wise, who had known about the killings since August, to announce the news publicly. This did not bode well for the newly formed organization. Not only did the news of the atrocities undermine the liberal assumptions of Reform anti-Zionists, but it also rendered them vulnerable to Zionist charges of lack of sensitivity to suffering Jews. As a result, many anti-Zionists, once eager to fight, became hesitant, if not outright fearful, about openly confronting Zionism.[9]

The dissidents knew of Wise's revelations. In fact, on 27 November, Lazaron alerted Wolsey to the reports about Hitler's plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe, specifically asking him to postpone the meeting the rabbis had scheduled for 7 December because the day was marked by most American Jewish organizations as a day of mourning. He feared that the announcement on such an occasion of the creation of an anti-Zionist organization would be both misunderstood and provocative. "We must be awfully

careful about these things," he warned Wolsey, "and not give those whom we oppose any ground to attack us." Wolsey did not budge. He stuck to the 7 December date and told Lazaron to be less sensitive to Zionist criticism. "Rommel is making his way to Egypt, or Rommel is getting into Palestine, or a holocaust is taking place in Poland," he complained, "there is always a reason why we shouldn't do anything."[10]

News from Europe as well as Wolsey's attitude undoubtedly contributed to a major defection from the dissident circle. On 1 December 1942 Baltimore's Rabbi Abraham Shaw informed Wolsey he was leaving the group, claiming it had departed from the initial purpose of the Atlantic City meeting and had moved "much more in the direction of anti-Zionism than of pro-Reform," a tendency with which he had no sympathy; he suggested that the cause of Reform ought to be pursued within Reform institutions. Shaw's action was a portent of future departures. In fact, his argument for quitting would become an almost standard justification for rabbinical withdrawal from the anti-Zionist movement.[11]

On 7 December 1942, Wolsey's group, consisting of twenty-six rabbis, assembled at the New Yorker Hotel in Manhattan for a day-long session to map out plans for their new organization. Since many of them had second thoughts about the Council for American Judaism as the name for their organization, the rabbis decided to look for a substitute. After examining numerous options, they agreed on the American Council for Judaism (ACJ). The final choice reflected their eagerness to stress the American character as well as the pro-Judaism stance of the organization.[12]

With the issue of the name settled, the rabbis turned their attention to the situation in the American Jewish Committee. Goldenson reported that the proceedings of the executive committee of the AJC at its 5–6 December 1942 meeting were still secret and would not be made public until the organization's general meeting in January 1943; therefore, the rabbis could not expect to receive any support from sympathetic AJC members before then.[13]

At that point, Rabbi Wolsey introduced Elmer Berger, the newly elected executive director of the organization, telling the group Berger's position in Flint might be jeopardized by a public announcement of his selection. But Berger, defiant as ever, dismissed the risks to himself and urged the immediate publicizing of the formation of the organization. The rabbis applauded him and immediately ratified his election.[14]

At about 4:00 P.M. Louis Wolsey stopped the proceedings of the rabbinical session in order to open the meeting to several interested lay persons, including Dr. Paul Baerwald and James N. Rosenberg, both

prominent members of the AJC and JDC; Elizabeth V. L. Stern, a professor of English from New York; and Samuel Edelman, a public-relations consultant from Philadelphia. Introduced to the larger group by Wolsey, Berger called for lay participation and immediate action. Baerwald spoke of the need to develop greater support for the organization. Rosenberg urged care in formulating any organizational statement. Professor Stern, on the other hand, thought the group should make public statements and "keep hammering" its point of view.[15]

Thus, an organization opposed to Zionism was born. By 11 December 1942 the story of the formation of the American Council for Judaism was beginning to spread throughout the country. Wolsey's statements asserting that the American Council for Judaism, which opposed "a Jewish state, a Jewish flag, or a Jewish army," represented the "views of the vast majority of Jews in the United States" and that his group planned to make the Council "the largest institution in American Judaism" appeared in many important newspapers.[16]

Although irritated by the leaking of the confidential minutes of the 2 and 23 November meetings to the Jewish press, which resulted in such headlines as "Rich American Assimilationists Are in Back of the Reform Rabbis in Their Treason Against Zionism," Wolsey was generally pleased with the turn of events. "Our movement has certainly created a sensation," Wolsey wrote to Philipson, "people are very much stirred by the American Council for Judaism." He even felt that the American and British governments were interested in the Council.[17]

Despite his enthusiasm, Wolsey was not eager to continue to serve as the acting chairman of the group. "I really want to get out of the office," he confessed to Lazaron, "the ambitions of youth have cooled down very greatly, and I prefer to live a life of peace." He urged Lazaron to find a lay leader for the job.[18]

Initial responses to ACJ recruitment efforts were discouraging. The confirmation in November 1942 of reports about the mass murder of European Jews sent a chill through the American Jewish community and made it difficult to spread the anti-Zionist gospel. Contrary to the early expectations of its founders, there was no rush to join the anti-Zionist organization. William Rosenwald and Judge Proskauer, for example, even declined Lazaron's invitation to join the lay–rabbinical committee. Paul Baerwald advised Wolsey to be cautious in matters of publicity, in view of the "present state of tension."[19]

Regardless of the obstacles, Elmer Berger stood firm. "I have the job," he told Lazaron, "and I am going to leave no stone unturned in doing it."

Aware of the risks his new job entailed, Berger realized that the Council's failure would also result in the end of his rabbinical career.[20]

Wolsey's Provisional Chairmanship

The Jewish press and Zionists responded to the creation of the Council with unrestrained indignation. The *Newark Jewish Chronicle* immediately predicted the Council was doomed to fail. The *Minneapolis Jewish Chronicle* described the Council as a "band of opinionated, stubborn, willful men," manipulated and financed by rich American Jews who "would like to rid themselves of their Jewishness if they could."[21]

Zionists also immediately struck back at the Council. The first victim of their fury was Rabbi Hyman Judah Schachtel. Behind-the-scenes machinations by Stephen S. Wise and Zionist rabbis prevented Schachtel's election to the presidency of the New York Board of Jewish Ministers. During this episode, New York's Rabbi Theodore Lewis urged ousting anti-Zionist "traitors" from all important positions, declaring it a sacred duty to purge Jewish leadership of "quislings."[22]

Stephen Wise not only fought the Council in private but also condemned it in public. In a *New Palestine* article, he dismissed the anti-Zionists as a symptom of a Jewish sickness, a condition created by centuries of Jewish homelessness. Characterizing their interpretation of Judaism as being without foundation in Jewish Scriptures, tradition, or history, he rebuked them for seeking to turn the clock back—to preserve the Jew as an eternal wanderer among the nations and to reverse the magnificent hope "of a Zion reborn." Wise predicted they would fail because they were "flying in the face of all the facts and all the hopes and strivings of the Jewish people."[23]

Throughout December 1942 and January 1943, issues of *New Palestine, Congress Weekly, Jewish Frontier,* and the *Reconstructionist* voiced contempt for the Council. *New Palestine* resorted to particularly abusive and inflammatory language. In describing the Council, it used expressions such as "a stab in the back," "they sharpened the dagger," "conspiracy," "saboteurs of Zionism," "treachery," "treason," and "internal enemies of the Jewish people."[24]

The attacks proved effective. Wolsey's group was small, and some of his followers could not withstand Zionist pressures. As early as 1 December 1942, Rabbi Beryl D. Cohon of Brighton, Massachusetts, conceded that despite his complete agreement with Wolsey, he could not take an active part in the movement because of his vulnerable position. He felt too weak to

defy the Zionists and their Reform sympathizers in his community. "Social prestige, money, and popular bias are very definitely set against me here," he confided to Wolsey.[25]

Late in December 1942 Rabbi James Heller made one final attempt to reach an accord with the dissidents. Through Lazaron, he arranged a meeting between ACJ and CCAR leaders. Heller's peacemaking effort troubled Berger. Fearing a compromise with Zionists that might lead to the Council's liquidation, Berger counseled against concessions. Wolsey quickly reassured him that the ACJ would go forward.[26]

On 5 January 1943, representatives of the ACJ and the CCAR gathered in Rabbi Lazaron's study in Baltimore. The meeting was cordial, and all participants were encouraged to speak freely and frankly. Appealing for immediate peace, Rabbi Heller proposed a three-point agreement: that the Council be dissolved, that the CCAR pass a bylaw of neutrality regarding Zionism, and that conversations be initiated between Zionists and non-Zionists in order to find a common ground in regard to Palestine and to discover methods of cooperation.[27]

One day after the Baltimore talks, Rabbis Heller and Wolsey agreed on a truce in the propaganda battle between the Zionists and the ACJ "until the matters of the Baltimore meeting have been decided one way or another." But neither Wolsey nor Fineshriber was satisfied with the discussions. Wolsey, to be sure, had agreed to the conference to allow the rabbis on the other side to present their views, but he was at no time "in any mood for liquidation." Although distressed over the loss of a number of followers and aware that the Council's immediate problem was to keep the group from falling apart, Wolsey refused to surrender.[28]

Immediately after the meeting, a few rabbis urged acceptance of Heller's offer. But Wolsey's inner circle rejected the Council's liquidation. "If the Council goes out of existence," asserted Lazaron, "we are reduced to a group of scattered individuals. We must bear in mind very clearly that we represent a definite point of view and have the right to express it not only as individuals but as an organized group."[29]

Significantly, as Heller was attempting to manage the problem of the ACJ, he was also deeply involved in helping with preparations for creating an American Jewish Assembly, a political body through which Zionists expected to unify American Jewry behind their program. In fact, because he feared the harm that public controversy among Jews might do to the Zionists, Heller believed his policy of seeking peace with the Council was good not only for the CCAR but also for "the interests of Zionism."[30]

On 18 January 1943, under Wolsey's chairmanship, twenty Council rabbis met at Jonah Wise's Central Synagogue in New York for a thorough discussion of Heller's offer. In a lively session, they deliberated for the entire day and most of the evening. A few wanted to accept the proposal. Jonah Wise urged the ACJ to remain a consultative group until its objectives became clear. The gathering ended with the rabbis agreeing not to liquidate and to submit that decision to the entire ACJ membership for ratification. They set the deadline for the final vote for 4 February.[31]

The next two weeks, with the decision about the future of the Council still pending, were filled with tension. Pressures on Wolsey mounted. The specter of defection was ever present. Indeed, even before the 4 February deadline, both Jonah Wise and Julian Morgenstern left the Council. Wise, recommending acceptance of Heller's offer, urged the disbanding of the Council. Morgenstern justified his defection as the consequence of his realization that "nationalism is as integral an element in historic Judaism as is universalism."[32]

Heller, while awaiting the final reply from the ACJ, continued to warn Wolsey of dire consequences if the new organization did not disband. He informed Wolsey of the preparations under way for an American Jewish Assembly (eventually convened as the American Jewish Conference), which would deal with postwar Jewish problems and probably send a united Jewish delegation to the peace conference. The divisive effect of the Council, Heller insisted, might jeopardize this and other efforts at fostering Jewish unity.[33]

During the uneasy truce between the Council and the Zionists, an incident in Cincinnati revealed the magnitude of their rift. Zionists were outraged when on 25 January, at the annual congregational dinner at the Rockdale Temple, Rabbi Lazaron attacked Zionism as a violation of democracy and the Atlantic Charter. Stephen Wise regarded this attack as a breach of the truce. Eager to fight the Council, Wise now concluded that the CCAR was less important than Zionism. "Down with the Conference and up with Zionism and its defenders!" became his battle cry. Considering Lazaron's Cincinnati speech one of the most treasonable acts ever committed by a Jew and calling Lazaron a "wretched, degenerate little scrub," Wise promised to hit him as he had "never hit anyone before."[34]

On 4 February 1943 Wolsey informed Heller that the ACJ, by voting not to liquidate itself, rejected his Baltimore proposal. Wolsey, however, did not expect this decision to interfere with the harmony of the CCAR. All the rabbinical ACJ members, he assured Heller, intended to remain in the CCAR. None of them contemplated withdrawal or schism.[35]

Heller notified members of the CCAR of the outcome of his negotiations with the Council. Claiming to be hurt by "this whole thing," Heller declared he had done all in his power to make peace before it was too late, but the attempt failed. "The die has been cast and we shall have to deal with all this firmly and justly."[36]

With the rejection of Heller's peace offer and the end of the temporary truce, the Zionists resumed their attacks on the ACJ. The 19 February 1943 issue of *New Palestine* contained scathing criticism of the Council. An editorial ridiculed the "mouthings" of Judaism as a universal religion and the notion of *galut* (exile) as a blessing by rabbis with "well starched shirts and neatly creased trousers," who were living in comfort and safety; the anti-Zionist rabbis, it predicted, "will be marked down in history, for the scrutiny of posterity, to the undying shame of their descendants." In a statement issued on 21 February, the ZOA accused the Council of being willing to condemn homeless Jews in Europe and elsewhere to "lives of continued misery and woe." The Conservative Rabbinical Assembly of America, reaffirming its own steadfast loyalty to Zionism, bitterly denounced the Council. It urged rabbis to enroll their congregants into Zionist organizations and to encourage their congregations to pass resolutions repudiating the ACJ.[37]

By early March, hopelessly deadlocked, the Council and Heller wrote to the entire CCAR membership to justify their respective positions. In its 1 March 1943 letter, the ACJ rejected the call for its dissolution as unreasonable and repudiated what it called the "totalitarian tactics of the Zionists." It considered Heller's opposition to its policy, which stood for a purely religious definition of Judaism and a nonpolitical program for Palestine, as both "arbitrary and unjustified." Professing to have as much sympathy with "our brethren" as the Zionists did, the ACJ asserted that programs of practical help for Jews in Palestine and throughout the world did not need "nationalist emphasis."[38]

Defending his position and professing distaste for the evolving controversy, Rabbi Heller voiced his resentment at being portrayed as "Mephistophelean" in his dealing with the Jewish army resolution. He insisted there was nothing sacred about the 1935 neutrality resolution and accused the ACJ of exaggerating that as well as other issues, including the publication of his circular in *New Palestine*.[39]

In the meantime, Wolsey and his close associates were struggling to keep the Council alive. They needed lay support for their enterprise. For months, they had waited patiently for the outcome of the leadership struggle within the American Jewish Committee, expecting to receive moral and

financial support from the organization once the matter of its presidency had been settled.

By the beginning of February 1943, developments in the AJC looked promising. It had elected anti-Zionist Judge Proskauer to its presidency and adopted a "Statement of Views" that was essentially non-Zionist. Providing guidelines for the AJC, this statement, which had been approved by Sumner Welles in a confidential meeting with Proskauer, supported an international trusteeship for Palestine under the United Nations, asserted that Palestine alone could not be expected to "furnish the solution of the problem of post-war Jewish rehabilitation," and recognized that there was "wide divergence of opinions" about the permanent political structure in Palestine.[40]

Thus, with high hopes, a Council delegation, consisting of Rabbis Wolsey, Goldenson, Lazaron, Fineshriber, and Schachtel, met with Judge Proskauer on 6 February. But the meeting was a total disappointment. Unofficially, Judge Proskauer admitted he sympathized with the views of the ACJ, encouraged the rabbis to continue their important work, and advised them to find a layman to head their organization. As president of the AJC, however, he made it clear that neither he nor his organization could be expected to subsidize the Council. He intended to commit himself to the scrupulous observance of the AJC platform and thus would not become involved in an open fight with the Zionists.[41]

With the AJC out of the picture, the Council was forced to look for support elsewhere. After several frustrating weeks, during which Wolsey and Berger endured continual Zionist attacks from without and pressure for restraint from within, a glimmer of hope appeared in Philadelphia as Rabbis Wolsey and Fineshriber together with Morris Wolf and Jerome Louchheim were exploring with the philanthropist Lessing Rosenwald the possibility of his assuming the presidency of the Council.[42]

Wolsey, Louchheim, and Wolf had a long interview with Edith and Lessing Rosenwald on 1 April 1943. Wolsey told Rosenwald that his acceptance of the leadership of the ACJ "would change the whole history of American Judaism." Wolf maintained that the Zionist failure to secure Palestine, as was probable, would leave the Jews of the world without hope; however, under Rosenwald's leadership, the Council would be able to provide them with an alternative. After listening attentively, Rosenwald promised to think about the matter seriously.[43]

Three days later, another delegation, consisting of Rabbis Berger, Lazaron, and Irving Reichert, came to Rosenwald and asked him to accept the presidency of the Council. He agreed on the condition that the State

Department would not object to such an organization. Realizing that attacks from Zionists would be forthcoming, Rosenwald consulted members of his family. After careful deliberations, they agreed to support Rosenwald's acceptance of the presidency of the Council.[44]

Rabbi Morris Lazaron, who kept Sumner Welles informed about the activities of the Council, arranged an appointment with the undersecretary of state for himself and Rosenwald for 9 April. The State Department, concerned with growing Zionist pressures on Congress and the White House as well as the strains this was causing in American relations with Great Britain and the Arabs, considered the ACJ a useful countervailing element in the Jewish community. Welles's reaction was favorable. "Mr. Welles told me," reminisced Rosenwald, "that the formation of an organization like the Council was not only something to which the government would not object, but that it was vitally necessary and it would be a distinct service which could be considered a high responsibility."[45]

Ten days later, Rosenwald finally decided to accept the presidency of the Council. The news reached Wolsey on Passover eve. He was overjoyed. "It made the festival," he wrote in his congratulatory message to Rosenwald, "the most exciting spiritual experience I have had in a long, long time." By joining the Council and accepting its leadership, Rosenwald provided the organization with a respected, wealthy patron, something it desperately needed if it was to survive.[46]

The eldest son of Julius Rosenwald, Lessing J. Rosenwald was born in Chicago in 1891. After attending Cornell University for two years, he entered Sears, Roebuck and Company as a shipping clerk. Although the son of the company president, he was left to rise in the ranks on the basis of his ability. In 1920 he managed the first plant that Sears opened in Philadelphia. In 1932 he succeeded his father to the chairmanship of the board of the corporation, a position he held until 1939, when he retired at the age of forty-eight. In 1940 Rosenwald briefly joined the America First Committee, which was chaired by General Robert E. Wood, his successor at Sears, but he resigned when he discovered anti-Semites among its members. From August 1941 to January 1943, he directed the Conservation Division of the War Production Board in Washington. A prominent philanthropist, Rosenwald was also a well-known art collector. In 1943, in a magnanimous gesture, he presented his prints to the National Gallery of Art and a collection of illustrated books to the Library of Congress.[47]

A member of Rabbi Fineshriber's Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, Rosenwald, who was generally impatient with organized religion, deeply respected both Fineshriber and Lazaron. Rejecting completely the

idea that Jews are a race, a people, or a nationality, Rosenwald considered them merely a religious community; therefore, he believed that Jews in the United States should be differentiated from other Americans only in their religious affiliation. He was a strong-willed, but modest, man. Although never claiming to be an intellectual, the tenacious Rosenwald devoted much time and effort to learning all he could about his art collections. He brought the same kind of energy, perseverance, and dedication to his work with the Council.[48]

The Beginning of the Rosenwald Era

The transfer of leadership occurred on 29 April, with Wolsey relinquishing his provisional chairmanship of the Council and Rosenwald assuming its presidency. During a day-long meeting in Philadelphia, Rosenwald, Morris Wolf, Jerome Louchheim, and D. Hays Solis-Cohen, as well as a number of rabbis, including Wolsey, Fineshriber, Goldenson, Lazaron, Schachtel, and Berger, began to set the agenda for the organization. The group officially elected Rosenwald president, chose Wolsey as one of the rabbinical vice presidents, selected Solis-Cohen, Wolf's law partner, as treasurer, and formally named Berger executive director of the Council at an annual salary of six thousand dollars. They also agreed to set up headquarters in Philadelphia.[49]

From the beginning, Rosenwald urged the establishment of strong leadership, insisting that to be effective the ACJ would have to be directed by one person vested with the responsibility for its policies. But he also considered it imperative to strengthen the organization through a real partnership between the laity and rabbis. In this spirit, he appointed Rabbis Fineshriber and Schachtel to help him draft a new organizational statement of principles.[50]

But Rosenwald also advocated caution. Before allowing the ACJ to go public, he wanted it to complete its organizational structure, to formulate its principles, and to acquire a respectable membership. While all that was being done, he wanted no public statements, no controversy. Council activities were to be conducted with as little publicity as possible. Moreover, Rosenwald, with the backing of Wolf and Solis-Cohen, asked that the ACJ refrain from becoming involved in acts of recrimination and "needless conflicts with existing organizations in American Jewry."[51]

The anti-Zionists now had an organization, a prominent head, and some money. Indeed, Rosenwald, Aaron Straus, Louchheim, and Wolf contributed immediately to defray Berger's salary as well as the initial office

and clerical expenses. Wolsey, whose daring and stubborn leadership had made the birth of the Council possible, at last felt satisfied. Not only was he gratified by Rosenwald's acceptance of the leadership of the Council, he was also impressed by the keen interest of the new president in his position.[52]

Between May and August 1943, now actively in control of the Council, Rosenwald and Berger devoted much of their time and energy to preparing the organization's headquarters in Philadelphia, to formulating a statement of principles, to writing an article for *Life* magazine, and to recruiting members. Significantly, while the ACJ was preoccupied with setting up its organizational structure, the Zionists were busily engaged in making their final preparations for the American Jewish Conference.[53]

By early June, Rabbi Wolsey, as impatient as ever, was becoming increasingly concerned both about the forthcoming annual convention of the CCAR and the excessive silence and passivity of the ACJ. Convinced that Zionists were "already packing" the CCAR convention, he expected the meeting to be bitter and was eager to fight back. He feared that the ACJ was losing its battle by default through inactivity. Wolsey also disagreed with Rosenwald's policy of avoiding publicity and deeply resented his instructions to "keep silent." In fact, so frustrated did Wolsey feel that he contemplated resigning from ACJ's vice presidency. Only timely intervention by Fineshriber prevented that.[54]

A lengthy and complicated affair, the exhaustive deliberations and bargaining over the formulation of the Council's statement of principles reflected conflicts of personalities and ideas among those engaged in that task. Whereas Wolsey's circle, including Berger, Schachtel, Lazaron, Fineshriber, and Frisch, represented rabbinical viewpoints in the preparation of the document, Rosenwald, Louchheim, Wolf, Solis-Cohen, and Arthur Hays Sulzberger spoke for the laity. According to Berger, there was something like a tug-of-war between the laity and the rabbis: "The former were interested mainly in the social and political ramifications of Zionism, as they saw them. The latter were rather constant in their efforts to emphasize the theological and 'religious.' "[55]

Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of the *New York Times*, proved to be the most unpredictable of all the lay members. It was he who, despite Goldenson's vehement objections, introduced the phrase "Americans of Jewish faith" into the Council statement. Sulzberger became involved as a result of Lazaron's prodding. The Council heeded his advice because his membership and possible acceptance of an ACJ vice presidency would have strengthened the organization significantly. Late in May 1943 Sulzberger

indicated to Rosenwald he "should like to stand up and be counted along with you." Nevertheless, after persuading the Council to introduce a number of changes into its statement and creating the impression he might accept the vice presidency, he became more cautious. On 7 June he asked Rosenwald to defer the publication of the statement and told him that he would not be willing to join the organization until it acquired a large membership throughout the United States.[56]

Although Sulzberger did not manage to stand up and be counted with the Council, the rabbis and other laymen who formulated the statement did. However, one problem remained regarding the document: the matter of the timing of its publication. Despite the reservations of some and a stern warning from Sulzberger, who feared it would create excessive bitterness, the Council leadership refused to be intimidated and decided to publish it at the opening of the American Jewish Conference. Before the ACJ finally approved the statement as its platform on 7 July 1943, Lazaron had sent a copy to Sumner Welles. "There is nothing in it with respect to the foreign relations of this country which would be in the slightest degree embarassing," replied Welles.[57]

The completed statement, which was finally published at the end of August 1943, became the platform of the Council for the entire period of its struggle against the creation of a Jewish state. A compromise, it emphasized three basic ideas. First, it stressed that Jews are a religious group, not a race or a nationality. Second, it rejected the idea of an exclusively Jewish state in Palestine or anywhere; instead, it advocated creating a democratic government in Palestine, wherein all the inhabitants of the land were to be justly represented and to enjoy equal rights. Third, it expressed hope for the earliest feasible repatriation and normalization of the lives of Jews uprooted by the Axis powers.[58]

The official Council "Digest of Principles" eloquently summarizes the organization's statement:

We Believe That:

1. The basis of unity among Jews is religion.
2. Jews consider themselves nationals of those countries in which they live and those lands their homelands.
3. The present tragic plight of our fellow Jews can be remedied only through ultimate victory for and a beneficent program of reconstruction and rehabilitation, for men of all faiths, undertaken by the United Nations.

4. The United Nations should attempt to provide the earliest feasible repatriation or resettlement under the best possible conditions of all uprooted victims of Axis aggression.
5. Numerous localities must be found throughout the world where resettlement can be effected under favorable auspices. Palestine, due to its splendid accomplishments, should continue to be ONE of the places where resettlement should be fostered.
6. Any hopeful future for Jews in Palestine depends upon the ultimate establishment of a democratic government there, in which Jews, Moslems and Christians shall be justly represented.

We Oppose:

7. The effort to establish a Jewish National State in Palestine or elsewhere, and its corollary, a Jewish Army, as a project that has been and will be deleterious to the welfare of Jews in Palestine and throughout the world.
8. All philosophies that stress the racialism, the nationalism and homelessness of the Jews as injurious to their interests.[59]

Compared with the rabbinical statement of August 1942, the new manifesto clearly indicated a shift of focus: from an essentially religious to a primarily political opposition to Zionism. From the very beginning of the movement that resulted in the creation of the Council, there was a tension between those who wanted to revive Reform Judaism and those who wanted to fight Zionism. The new platform represented a victory for the latter. Thus, although founded on and still adhering to the fundamental tenets of Reform Judaism, the Council was now predominantly committed to fighting Zionism and opposing the creation of a Jewish state.

Thus, the ACJ not only rejected the idea that Jews were a nationality but also declared itself in favor of founding a democratic state in Palestine. Stressing the necessity for normalizing Jewish existence in whatever countries Jews lived, the Council unequivocally rejected the establishment of an exclusively Jewish state in Palestine. Above all, it insisted that the destiny of Jews was inextricably bound with the fortunes of liberal civilization and the growth of democracy.

The statement, discussed and formulated within the Council's inner circle, posed no problem until its publication at the end of August. In the meantime, however, Rosenwald, intent on working quietly on molding the Council into an effective organization, tried to avoid unnecessary

controversy. But it proved impossible. In June 1943 Rosenwald's article in *Life* as well as a major debate on Zionism at the annual convention of the CCAR thrust the ACJ into the limelight.

The first important public presentation of the position of the ACJ during the transitional period of self-restraint was the appearance of Rosenwald's article "Reply to Zionism" in the 28 June issue of *Life*. It was essentially a trial balloon, an attempt to evaluate informally the appeal of the philosophy of the ACJ before the organization made public its official statement.

In his article, based heavily on ideas contained in the Council's statement, Rosenwald explained the opposition of many American Jews to Zionism. Jewish anti-Zionists, he argued, felt Zionism was founded on racist theories and nationalistic philosophies similar to those that were causing much of the suffering then going on in the world, that is, Nazism and fascism. Although the anti-Zionists favored making repatriation of uprooted Jews one of the major objectives of the peace settlement, they opposed the creation of a Jewish state. If such a state were to be established in Palestine, it would endanger Jews outside of Palestine, for the actions and decisions of such a state in world politics would constantly embarrass Jewish citizens of other nations. In times of crisis, it would enable bigots to raise "the question of dual allegiance." As for Palestine, Rosenwald hoped it would eventually acquire a democratic government in which all the inhabitants, regardless of their religion, would be justly represented.[60]

Zionists immediately denounced the article. At the instigation of the ZOA, many letters of protest were sent to *Life*. Rabbi Heller personally protested to Henry Luce, publisher of *Life*, characterizing Rosenwald as the spokesman for only a small minority of Jews in America. *New Palestine* found the tone of Rosenwald's article particularly disturbing. It warned that, regardless of all the Zionist arguments, the anti-Zionists were not going to disappear; and that so long as there existed the print medium, "there will be found renegade Jews who will attack their own people."[61]

The storm over the *Life* article coincided with the emotionally charged annual convention of the CCAR, held in New York between 22 and 27 June. Unable to prevent the scheduled debate on Zionism and concerned about potentially harmful publicity in the press, the Zionists insisted on conducting the debate in an "executive session." Zionist rabbis wanted to create an impression of unity among Jews, which a public dispute over Zionism would have spoiled. Despite this caution, in his opening speech to the convention, Heller assailed the Council for menacing the unity of the CCAR and endangering other Reform institutions.[62]

The debate on Zionism occurred in the afternoon and evening executive sessions of 24 June. It began with a presentation of papers on the question "Are Zionism and Reform Judaism incompatible?" Fineshriber and Schachtel presented the affirmative position; Felix A. Levy and David Polish, the negative. According to Levy and Polish, Judaism was more than pure religion, and Zionism was certainly not antireligious. Fineshriber and Schachtel presented the classical Reform position. With their respective positions frozen, neither side convinced the other.[63]

A lively discussion followed the presentation of the papers, but no record of it was kept. According to Wolsey, it was "a scene of indescribable sordidness and bad manners and intolerance." At one point, Stephen Wise allegedly threatened to turn the rabbinical body into a "Zionist Conference of Rabbis" if the CCAR did not censure the ACJ. Wolsey, who referred to Zionists as "fascists" and dismissed as hypocritical their promise of "equality" in Palestine, concluded that "Wise has revealed by his tyranny over the non-conformist what the Zionists would do to the Arabs."[64]

On 25 June the CCAR convention passed two resolutions that undoubtedly signified a major blow to the Council. Accepted by a voice vote, the first resolution declared that there was "no essential incompatibility between Reform Judaism and Zionism." The second resolution, approved by a vote of 137 to 45, with 96 abstentions, urged the rabbinical members of the Council to "terminate" the organization.[65]

Since Wolsey, in deference to Rosenwald's request, remained generally silent throughout all these proceedings, it fell upon Goldenson to defend the Council. Goldenson, although conceding the right of the CCAR to express its belief about the compatibility of Zionism and Reform Judaism, considered the demand for the disbanding of the ACJ as a basic denial of the kind of freedom "upon which rest all our democratic institutions." He also rejected Zionist accusations of "treason" made against the Council, arguing that treason was a political concept that implied violation of allegiance to a state or government. Goldenson refused to accept the claim of the nationalists to speak for world Jewry, with its concomitant right "to mete out punishment to those whom they consider disloyal."[66]

The Council's "grievous defeat" at the CCAR convention, accompanied by the election of Abba Hillel Silver to the vice presidency of the rabbinical organization, was a major triumph for the Zionists. The ZOA urged the ACJ's rabbis to heed the advice of the majority of their Reform colleagues and dissolve the group. Although admitting every rabbi was individually entitled to his own opinion, the ZOA declared that an organization for the specific purpose of fighting Zionism was nothing less than blasphemy.

Thus, Zionists now regarded anti-Zionism not only as treason but also as blasphemy.[67]

Wolsey and some of the other older rabbis were dismayed by the 1943 CCAR convention. They felt defeated. "Now we are second-class members of the CCAR," Wolsey lamented, "we are a degraded group." Leo Franklin, hurt less by the vote on the ACJ than "by the exhibition of a broken morale on the part of so many of the younger men of the conference," deeply resented Wise's threats.[68]

Throughout the summer of 1943, Rosenwald and Berger worked tirelessly to build up wider support for the Council. Despite the ACJ's official approval of its platform on 7 July, Rosenwald still insisted on maintaining a low public profile. He was reluctant to make any claims or to undertake any public obligations before the Council had sufficient support in various parts of the country.[69]

To generate support for the organization, Berger contacted rabbis who had been active advocates of the Council. Indeed, the most important Council centers emerged in cities where its strong sympathizers served as congregational rabbis. The efforts of the rabbis were matched by Rosenwald, Wolf, Solis-Cohen, Louchheim, and others who recruited their fellow laypersons throughout the country.[70]

Berger spent the last week in July and the first two weeks in August 1943 touring potential Council centers. He visited Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland, Seattle, Dallas, San Antonio, Houston, New Orleans, and Baton Rouge. Except in Los Angeles, he found the situation to his satisfaction. Berger was particularly impressed with San Francisco, where he met twenty-five of the leading Jews of the city, including Dr. Monroe Deutsch, Grover Magnin, and Judge Marcus C. Sloss. Rabbi Irving Reichert, spiritual leader of San Francisco's Emanu-El, had supported the Council from the very beginning. This group, impressed by the still-unpublished Council statement and Rosenwald's recent *Life* article, was "ready to work in a big way." Berger predicted San Francisco would be "a tower of strength." After a week on the West Coast, he grew even more enthusiastic. With the proper guidance, he gleefully assured Rosenwald, the West would become a powerful Council center.[71]

In the South and the Southwest, Berger discovered another area of strong support. Like the West, the South held great promise for the ACJ. Since many rabbis and lay people seemed to sympathize with the Council, Berger expected entire congregations to join the organization. "The South," he reported to Rosenwald, "will be a stronghold for us."[72]

Berger did not exaggerate. Ardent Council partisans led some of the most prestigious congregations in the South. Edward N. Calisch in Richmond, David Marx in Atlanta, David Lefkowitz in Dallas, Henry Cohen in Galveston, Henry Barnston in Houston, and Julian Feibelman in New Orleans were strong ACJ sympathizers. Moreover, some of the oldest and most respected families in those communities closely identified with the Council's philosophy.[73]

Inspired by his successful trip, Berger was eager to publicize the views of the Council immediately, even before the opening of the American Jewish Conference. Rosenwald, however, hesitated. He was reluctant to do too much prior to receiving professional advice. The problem was resolved on 17 August, when, after spending an entire day together in deliberations, Rosenwald and Berger decided to engage as public-relations consultant the very man the rabbinical founding fathers of the Council had once rejected—Sidney Wallach.[74]

Contrary to Sulzberger's advice and despite the hestitation of some members, the Council released its statement on 30 August 1943, the second day of the American Jewish Conference. With this open challenge to the Zionists, the Council began the public phase of its work.

The American Jewish Conference had been in preparation for eight months. For Zionists it was, in effect, the instrument through which they intended to mobilize American Jewish support for the Biltmore Program. At a preliminary meeting in Pittsburgh on 23–24 January 1943, the Zionists convinced other Jewish organizations that to become an effective political force Jews would have to present a united front, which could be done only through a representative body, an American Jewish Assembly. The American Jewish Committee, which did not attend the January meeting and objected to the whole idea of a representative Jewish body, agreed to join the proposed organization after persuading the Zionists to change its name to the American Jewish Conference and to allow each participating individual and organization not to be bound by the vote of the conference. Always wary of Zionist schemes, the AJC was reluctant to be bound by the decisions of a body that Zionists were likely to control. Its fears were justified. In elections held during the summer, Zionists captured the vast majority of the 501 conference delegates; the AJC won only three. Thus, Zionists now dominated the most representative Jewish body ever assembled in the United States.[75]

The first session of the American Jewish Conference opened on 29 August 1943. Despite warnings from the State Department against discussing "extreme" Zionist demands during the war, Zionism did become the

major issue at the conference. However, to overcome AJC objections and to preserve Jewish unity, Nahum Goldmann and Stephen Wise agreed to postpone temporarily their demand for Jewish statehood, in exchange for AJC endorsement of unlimited immigration to Palestine. When Emanuel Neumann learned that some Zionist leaders intended to defer a Palestine resolution until a later date, he alerted Abba Hillel Silver to the scheme and implored him to address the conference.[76]

On the evening of 30 August 1943, in a speech ranking as one of the highlights of his career, Silver aroused the conference and forced the issue of the Palestine resolution. Silver rejected compromise. Describing Jewish "national homelessness" as the principal source of Jewish "millennial tragedy," he insisted on a national home for Jews as the only real remedy. Silver rejected any deviation from outright political demands for Palestine. He called for a bold declaration in favor of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine. "If we surrender our national and historic claims to Palestine and rely solely on the refugee philanthropic appeal," Silver warned, "we shall lose our case as well as do violence to the historic hopes of our people."[77]

Silver captured the hearts of his audience. After he had read to the conference the "Declaration on Palestine," which incorporated the Biltmore Program, a tremendous outburst of emotionalism erupted among the delegates, who rose to sing the Zionist anthem—the *Hatikvah*. On 1 September 1943, by a vote of 478 to 4, with 19 abstentions, the American Jewish Conference adopted the statement on Palestine and thereby affirmed the Zionist Biltmore Program. The vote was a major victory for the Zionists, who could now claim that the vast majority of organized Jewish groups endorsed their objectives.[78]

The Council's release of its statement on the second day of the American Jewish Conference, the very day Silver delivered his historic speech, outraged Zionists. On 31 August, at the fifth plenary session of the Conference, time was devoted to a discussion of the ACJ's statement, which had appeared in the *New York Times* that morning. James Heller denounced the statement as an act of "treachery to the cause of Israel." According to Rabbi Robert Gordis, the Council was neither American nor pro-Judaism.[79]

Following the discussion, the conference unanimously endorsed a statement denouncing the Council's action as "unsportsmanlike and reprehensibly impertinent" and calculated not only to confuse the American public but also to disrupt the American Jewish community. The delegates repudiated the attempt "to sabotage the collective Jewish will to achieve a united program."[80]

Thus, the first Jewish organization created for the purpose of opposing the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine began its struggle at precisely the moment that the Zionists succeeded in winning over to their cause the vast majority of Jewish organizations. When the convention of the ZOA hailed the American Jewish Conference's call for the reconstitution of Palestine as the Jewish Commonwealth, it also bitterly attacked the Council, accusing it of having no program except that of "unreasoning hostility to a great ideal—a hostility that stems from selfish fear and a willful disregard of the plight of the masses of the Jewish people."[81]

A few days after the adjournment of the first session of the American Jewish Conference, the Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs (ECZA) was reorganized into the American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC). It worked closely with the Interim Committee of the American Jewish Conference, the body charged with implementing the conference's decisions, to advance Zionist objectives. Committed to the main goal of securing American support for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, the AZEC, which was cochaired by Abba Hillel Silver and Stephen Wise, became one of the most formidable pressure groups in American history.[82]

The American Jewish Conference deeply disturbed the leaders of the American Jewish Committee, who felt betrayed by the adoption of the Palestine Resolution. Consequently, on 24 October, by a vote of fifty-two to thirteen, the AJC withdrew from membership in the conference. Their action infuriated the Zionists. Several prominent Zionist members of the AJC, including Tamar de Sola Pool, president of Hadassah, Judge Louis E. Levinthal, president of the ZOA, and Morris Rothenberg, a former ZOA president, resigned in protest. But Berger was thrilled. "What the Committee did was wonderful," he wrote to Rosenwald, but he immediately added that it was not enough, unless the AJC intended "to actively work to break the power that the Zionists hold over American Jewry." Berger hoped for cooperation between the ACJ and the AJC.[83]

Berger's hope never materialized. On the day the AJC withdrew from the conference, it also began to revise its bylaws. The new bylaws, providing for the formation of local chapters and encouraging the growth of its membership, were adopted in January 1944. Opening the AJC to a wider membership, including Zionists and anti-Zionists as well as non-Zionists, an approach strongly advocated by John Slawson, the AJC's newly appointed Russian-born executive vice president, meant that the AJC, despite its unpleasant experience at the American Jewish Conference, could never again be expected to lead the opposition to Zionism.[84]

Thus, in the fall of 1943, when the ACJ began its active offensive against the Jewish state, it stood alone, facing a determined Zionist movement, which had just captured the support of organized American Jewry. From the inception of its anti-Zionist campaign, the Council faced a formidable opponent and overwhelming odds.

By late 1943 three major Jewish positions regarding Zionism had crystallized in the United States, each represented by an organization and a definite platform. First, the Zionist movement, led by the AZEC, under the cochairmanship of Stephen Wise and Abba Hillel Silver, was committed to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Second, the non-Zionists, represented by the AJC, under the presidency of Judge Proskauer, supported a UN trusteeship over Palestine and maintained neutrality on the issue of Jewish statehood. Third, the anti-Zionists, organized into the ACJ and led by Rosenwald and Berger, unequivocally opposed establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

Council Leaders, Members, and Centers, 1942–1948

The anti-Zionism of the American Council for Judaism represented an American Jewish tradition older than Zionism. Most of the leaders and of the rank and file of the ACJ were highly acculturated Reform Jews, who rejected Jewish nationalism and defined themselves as a purely religious group. They opposed Zionism not only as self-segregation tantamount to a return to the ghetto but also as fundamentally contrary to democratic principles. The continuity of American Jewish anti-Zionism was reflected in the membership in the ACJ of more than twenty of the original signers of the petition Julius Kahn had presented to President Wilson in 1919. In fact, fourteen rabbis who had signed the petition also joined the ACJ; among them were some of its staunchest supporters: William Rosenau, David Philipson, William Fineshriber, Samuel H. Goldenson, David Lefkowitz, Henry Cohen, and Henry Barnston. Two lay endorsers of the petition, Ralph W. Mack and Milton S. Binswanger, became ACJ vice presidents.[85]

The Council also succeeded in recruiting a number of nationally prominent Jewish laypersons. These Council members, whose *pro forma* endorsement contributed to the organization's prestige and respectability, included Judge Marcus C. Sloss, a former associate justice of the California Supreme Court; Florence P. Kahn, wife of Julius Kahn and a former congresswoman; Sidney Ehrman, a San Francisco philanthropist; Monroe E. Deutsch, provost

of the University of California; Lucius N. Littauer, a glove manufacturer and former congressman; Herbert and Stanley Marcus, of the Neiman–Marcus Company in Dallas; Alfred M. Cohen, former president of the B'nai B'rith; Grover A. Magnin, president of I. Magnin & Co.; Daniel Koshland and Walter A. Haas, chief executives of Levi Strauss & Co. in San Francisco; James D. Zellerbach, president of the Crown Zellerbach Corporation; Rear Admiral Lewis L. Strauss; Sidney J. Weinberg, a financier and senior partner in Goldman, Sachs & Co. in New York; and Judge Jerome N. Frank, a renowned jurist. However, with a few exceptions, they were silent supporters, who generally guarded their privacy and shunned publicity. Disturbed by the Holocaust and aware of the intensity of emotions the Zionist issue had stirred within the Jewish community, most of them were reluctant to fight the Zionists openly.[86]

Although founded by Reform rabbis, the ACJ ceased to be a rabbinical organization as soon as Rosenwald took over its leadership. Many of the rabbis, ambivalent about the ACJ during Wolsey's leadership, began to abandon it shortly after it came under lay control. By 1948 only a small number of rabbis still belonged to the ACJ.

Thirty-three of the approximately fifty rabbis still members of the Council in the fall of 1943 signed its 30 August 1943 statement. Twenty-four rabbis were placed in leadership positions and on the ACJ board of directors for the year 1943–1944. Elmer Berger held the position of executive director; Louis Binstock, Irving Reichert, and Louis Wolsey were chosen vice presidents; and twenty-one rabbis were placed on the board of directors.[87]

Although rabbinical membership in the Council dwindled through deaths and resignations, more than twenty rabbis still belonged to the Council in May 1948. Those who continued their membership beyond 1948 were the most loyal of the ACJ's partisans, but whatever influence they had once exercised in the Jewish community was rapidly waning. Of the twenty-two rabbis in the ACJ at the end of 1948, only six, Sol Landman, Walter Peiser, Solomon Starrels, David Lefkowitz, Jr., Victor Reichert, and Allan Tarshish, actually led congregations. Most had retired from their pulpits. However, among the older rabbis who did not leave the ACJ after the establishment of the State of Israel were eight original signers of Julius Kahn's 1919 petition, a fact that demonstrates the persistence of the anti-Zionist tradition among a small group of Reform rabbis. Moreover, all of the ACJ rabbis who occupied active positions after 1948, except for Sol Landman, served congregations in the Midwest or the South—areas where Zionism encountered its strongest and longest resistance.

Of course, most of the original rabbinical members had left the Council before 1948. Their departure may be attributed to a number of reasons. Accounts of the mass murder of European Jews demoralized many of the Council's founders. Once aware of the full dimension of the European catastrophe, most of the erstwhile anti-Zionists found it emotionally difficult to fight Zionism. One by one, they succumbed to Zionist pressures and withdrew from the ACJ.[88]

Moreover, many rabbis resented the transformation of the ACJ from a pro-Reform group into an organization devoted primarily to fighting Zionism. This change of emphasis in the Council's policy led to numerous early resignations. Rabbis Shusterman and Frisch, for example, pointed to the ACJ's deviation from its original objectives as the main justification for their decision to withdraw. They as well as others were more interested in strengthening Reform Judaism than in fighting Zionism.[89]

Most of the Council rabbis feared the divisive effect of anti-Zionism on the CCAR and on their congregations. They were particularly alarmed by the anti-Zionist explosion in Houston, Texas, in the fall of 1943, a development that coincided with the Council's initial public confrontation with Zionism.

On 23 November 1943, Congregation Beth Israel in Houston, one of the oldest and wealthiest Reform temples in the South, in defiance of the national leadership of the Reform movement, approved a new religious manifesto, the "Basic Principles of Congregation Beth Israel," a reaffirmation of the tenets of the Pittsburgh Platform. It also adopted a new congregational policy that required endorsement of the "Basic Principles" by all full members. Those who chose not to endorse them could become "associate members," entitled to all the privileges and obligations of Beth Israel except for the right to vote or hold congregational offices. By these means, the majority of the members of Beth Israel intended to protest against the drift of the Reform movement toward Zionism and to prevent pro-Zionist East Europeans from gaining dominance in the temple. A faction of 142 angry members, unwilling to accept either the "Basic Principles" or the new membership policy, withdrew from Beth Israel and formed a new congregation. Fear of similar divisions within their own congregations persuaded a number of rabbis who had once sympathized with the ACJ to leave the organization.[90]

Then there was unease about the very character of the organization. Some rabbis believed the ACJ's fight against Zionism was too negative, doing more harm than good. They felt that the Council failed to provide a viable positive alternative to Zionism.[91]

When the State of Israel came into existence in 1948, some rabbis resigned from the Council, believing that it was futile to "argue with history." In 1948 both Rabbis Feibelman and Schachtel, for instance, explained their departure in terms of facing reality. A Jewish state was a historical fact. There was no sense opposing it. Indeed, all the rabbis who left the ACJ after 1948 were overwhelmed by the reality of the existence of the State of Israel.[92]

After 1943 Rabbi Wolsey ceased to occupy an important position in the Council. Rosenwald and Berger rarely either sought or heeded his advice. Both found it easier to work with the congenial Fineshriber and Lazaron than with the erratic, highly temperamental Wolsey. Wolsey resented his loss of influence in the organization he had founded. Although remaining a vice president of the ACJ until 1945, he did not participate in formulating its policy after early 1944. By December 1944 he felt completely ignored by Berger, his former protégé, and frequently complained about the "fascism" of the executive office of the ACJ. Feeling slighted by his former associates, Wolsey criticized them with the kind of bitterness he had once reserved for the Zionists. Indeed, after the middle of 1944, Wolsey became one of the most outspoken internal critics of the ACJ. At the end of 1946 his anger at Rosenwald became so intense that he accused him of transforming the ACJ into a refuge for atheistic Jews who looked upon it as an instrument of assimilation.[93]

Thus, beginning as a rabbinical protest group against the drift of the Reform movement away from its classical form and the unprecedented growth of Zionism in the United States, the Council became a purely anti-Zionist political organization by the middle of 1943. Between 1943 and 1948 most of its rabbinical supporters left; those who did not leave were essentially either token or inactive members. After 1944, of all the rabbis, only Berger, Fineshriber, Lazaron, Reichert, Schachtel, and David Goldberg remained meaningfully active in the Council.

By the summer of 1943, the Council had clearly become a lay organization. At the top of the national leadership of the ACJ stood Lessing J. Rosenwald, Elmer Berger, and Sidney Wallach, a group Rosenwald affectionately called the "Three Musketeers" and Rabbi Wolsey dubbed "the triumvirate." Each had been brought into the ACJ by one of its "founding fathers." Rosenwald was Rabbi Fineshriber's protégé; Wolsey brought in Elmer Berger; and Sidney Wallach came in through Rabbi Goldenson's recommendation. Some of the most important national lay leaders of the ACJ, including Morris Wolf and D. Hays Solis-Cohen, joined out of a friendship

with Rosenwald. Other active ACJ leaders came into the organization through the efforts of founding rabbis.

In the selection of the Council's national and regional vice presidents, considerations of equitable geographical representation were paramount. It was no coincidence that Philadelphia, New York, Cincinnati, San Francisco, Chicago, and Dallas, the cities with the largest number of Council members, were each represented by a vice president. Nor was it surprising that Philadelphians played such an important role in the leadership of the ACJ. After all, Rabbis Wolsey and Fineshriber, the founders of the Council, and Rosenwald, its president, were from Philadelphia. Moreover, a man of strong personal loyalties, Rosenwald relied heavily on the advice of his Philadelphia friends, Wolf and Solis-Cohen.

Although the vast majority of the Council membership was concentrated far away from the East Coast, most of those regularly attending its executive-committee meetings were from Philadelphia and New York. Ironically, in the region in which it was weakest, the ACJ had the most active national leadership. The main reason for this was that leaders from distant parts of the United States found it more difficult to attend meetings in Philadelphia and New York than those living in or near the two cities.

Besides the trio of Rosenwald, Wallach, and Berger, and Rosenwald's inner circle of friends, consisting of Wolf, Solis-Cohen, and Jerome Louchheim (who died in 1945), there were several other activist leaders who demonstrated unusual allegiance to the Council and devoted much time and energy to the organization. These included Rabbis Fineshriber, Lazaron, and Irving Reichert as well as several deeply committed laypersons, such as I. Edward Tonkon, Henry S. Moyer, Henry A. Loeb, George L. Levison, Hattie H. Sloss, Arthur J. Goldsmith, Ralph Wolf, Irving Feist, and Joseph D. Kaufman.

From the spring of 1943 to the end of 1948, the Council grew from a group of sixty-seven rabbis and laymen into an organization of approximately fourteen thousand members and thirty-seven local chapters. Besides its largest centers in San Francisco, Philadelphia, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, and New York, the Council also had important chapters in Houston, Atlanta, Richmond, St. Louis, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, and Baltimore. Except for St. Louis, all these centers were initially associated with the rabbinical founders of the Council.[94]

The vast majority of Council members were middle- and upper-class descendants of West European, mostly German, immigrants. They were predominantly American-born and affiliated with Reform congregations. Many of them belonged to the American Jewish Committee and supported

the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Contrary to claims by their opponents, most of the committed ACJ members were not eager to surrender their Jewish identity. Identifying with the traditions of German Jews and classical Reform Judaism, which defined Judaism purely as a religion, not as a nationality, they felt a certain distance from the more Orthodox Jews. East European ACJ members were generally highly acculturated and economically successful. They shared the social and religious values of the German Jews and maintained extensive contact with non-Jews.[95]

The strongest and most persistent support for the ACJ came from the southern and western regions of the United States, where the Jewish populations were small. Indeed, with the exception of San Francisco and Cincinnati, the percentage of Jews who were members of the Council was inversely proportional to their absolute size and their percentage in the general population. In Little Rock, Arkansas, for example, where the number of Jews in 1948 was 1,140 (0.8 percent of the population), the Council had a membership of 168, or 14.7 percent of the Jewish population. On the other hand, among the Jews of New York, two million strong (more than 25 percent of the population), the Council was able to secure only a thousand members, or 0.05 percent of the city's Jewish residents.[96]

The ACJ had a strong appeal in the South. Numerically small and highly integrated, Southern Jews were hostile to Zionism. Contented with their self-definition as merely a religious group, they rejected Jewish nationalism. America was their Zion; Judaism, only their religion. Moreover, in the 1940s, Southern Reform congregations were dominated by Jews of German descent who were apprehensive about pro-Zionist East European Orthodox Jews gaining control over their temples. In an effort to stem the Zionist tide and prevent the erosion of classical Reform Judaism, several Southern congregations, of which Beth Israel in Houston was the most spectacular example, reaffirmed the principles of the Pittsburgh Platform and attempted to limit the influence of their pro-Zionist East European congregants. Indeed, several congregations deliberately selected anti-Zionist Council rabbis to their pulpits. Schachtel in Houston, in 1943; Malcolm Stern in Norfolk, Virginia, as well as Allan Tarshish in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1947; and Solomon Starrles in Savannah, Georgia, in 1948—were all selected because of their connection with the ACJ.[97]

In the South, the Council not only enjoyed the support of prominent Reform rabbis but also had the sympathy of some of the oldest, wealthiest, and most respected Jewish families. Stressing opposition to Jewish nationalism and affirming the integration of Jews into the mainstream of American

society, the philosophy of the ACJ, in effect, expressed much of their thinking.[98]

But the largest and most impressive chapter of the Council emerged in San Francisco. The success of the ACJ in that city might be attributed to the unique history of its Jews as well as to the extraordinary efforts of Harry Camp and Rabbi Irving Reichert.

In no other city in the United States were the Jews more established, having settled there early and in large numbers. Perhaps 10 percent of the merchants who came to San Francisco at the time of its foundation in the middle of the nineteenth century were German Jews. Arriving later, East European Jews remained a small minority within its Jewish population until the 1950s. Among the city's founders, Jews occupied an important part in its economic, cultural, social, and political life. In fact, as early as 1874 many of them were listed in the Social Register of the city.[99]

San Francisco Jews, mostly German in origin, Reform in their orientation, and well established in their community, had a long history of opposition to Zionism. Rabbi Jacob Voorsanger, spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-El in San Francisco at the beginning of the twentieth century, vehemently opposed Zionism. Thus, it is not surprising that Julius Kahn, a San Franciscan, emerged after World War I as one of the major Jewish critics of Zionism.[100]

San Francisco Jews were alarmed by the intense Zionist activities in the early 1940s. They found the American Jewish Conference in 1943 particularly disturbing. Hattie Sloss, one of San Francisco's most devoted ACJ leaders, was distressed by the use of the Yiddish language, the singing of the *Hatikvah*, and the display of the Zionist flag at the conference. Disgusted, she confessed to Berger that she would rather join the Unitarian church than accept the kind of leadership the conference was offering Jews.[101]

With a Yom Kippur sermon, on 8 October 1943, Rabbi Reichert launched his campaign for the recruitment of a large Council membership in San Francisco. It proved successful. By January 1945 the ACJ had acquired 1,400 members in the city. The San Francisco section became the organization's largest center in the United States.[102]

In Philadelphia, the birthplace of the ACJ, a local chapter was organized by Lionel Friedman, a Philadelphia real-estate broker and former president of Rodeph Shalom, Wolsey's congregation. Following the pattern of the South and San Francisco, the ACJ in Philadelphia attracted mostly Reform Jews of German descent, although there were some notable exceptions. For instance, D. Hays Solis-Cohen, the national treasurer of the Council, was an Orthodox Sephardic Jew; Julius Grodinsky, chairman of

the Philadelphia chapter from 1946 to 1951, was a member of a Conservative congregation and of Lithuanian descent. Solis-Cohen belonged to one of the oldest pre-Revolutionary Jewish families in Philadelphia. Grodinsky, an economics professor at the University of Pennsylvania, was a highly acculturated Jew. But the most dynamic ACJ member in the Philadelphia chapter was Jane Blum, a Fineshriber devotee and Berger's loyal friend. As a result of her tireless work and Stanley Sundheim's persistent recruitment activities, ACJ membership in Philadelphia reached the one-thousand mark by the spring of 1947.[103]

The Philadelphia chapter, through Grodinsky's and Sundheim's efforts, formed an ACJ chapter at the University of Pennsylvania. It was one of only two university chapters ever founded by the organization. The other was established at the University of Texas by I. Edward Tonkon's son, Max. The student membership at the University of Pennsylvania peaked at twenty-six; at the University of Texas, at fourteen. In short, on university campuses the Council failed to attract any meaningful following and thus was no match for the Zionists.[104]

On the whole, the Council failed to attract substantial membership in areas where the majority of the Jewish population was East European in origin. For example, in Philadelphia, even though it was the organization's birthplace and, until 1946, its national headquarters, the ACJ failed to recruit more than a thousand members—less than 0.5 percent of the Jews in the city—out of a Jewish population of 245,000. The situation was infinitely worse in New York, as has been pointed out, with a thousand members out of two million Jews. New York's German Jews, including the "Our Crowd" elite, unlike their counterparts in San Francisco, hesitated to associate with the ACJ. A small minority within the city's Jewish community who jealously guarded their privacy, they were extremely sensitive to Zionist pressures. Very few of them were willing to engage in bitter public disputes with Zionists and East European Jews. Indeed, the German Jewish elite in New York, in the tradition of Marshall and Schiff, preferred to work through the non-Zionist American Jewish Committee, which opposed Zionism but did not fight it openly.[105]

The Council's inability to expand its membership within the general Jewish community was not its only problem. Contrary to exaggerated claims by Zionists, the Council, frequently in the red before the end of its fiscal year, was constantly beset by financial difficulties. Although many of its token as well as active supporters were wealthy, their financial contributions to the organization were surprisingly small. Rosenwald, Aaron Straus, and Jerome Louchheim, until his death in 1945, were the most generous

contributors, but even they provided relatively modest sums. In the fiscal year 1944–1945 each gave only $10,000. Rosenwald refused to become the "angel" of the Council, although it was frequently necessary for him to lend it money. The ACJ's budget was never impressive: It rose from about $75,000 in 1944 to $120,000 in 1945, $140,000 in 1946, $150,000 in 1947, $190,000 in 1948, and $200,000 in 1949.[106]

Between 1943 and 1948 the ACJ fought an uphill battle. With a small membership and inadequate finances, it confronted a revitalized Zionist movement calling for a Jewish state. At a time when the majority of American Jews, traumatized by the Holocaust, flocked to the Zionist camp, the ACJ alone launched an active anti-Zionist campaign. Deserted by most of its former rabbinical supporters, feebly supported even by anti-Zionists, and isolated within the Jewish community, the ACJ entered into a fight it could hardly expect to win.

The Holocaust, which ultimately made the establishment of Israel possible, destroyed any realistic chances for the Council's success. It not only infused a crusading zeal into Zionism but also generated widespread sympathy for the Zionist cause among American Jews and non-Jews. In fact, disclosure of the full extent of the calamity that befell European Jews demoralized and silenced most erstwhile anti-Zionists by discrediting their facile optimism and liberal faith. The anti-Zionists were dealt a crushing blow. In the aftermath of the catastrophe, many who still opposed Zionism in principle were reluctant to fight against fellow Jews. Consequently, while affiliation with various Zionist organizations increased dramatically, the ACJ's growth was arrested. By 1948 there were close to a million members in groups associated with the American Zionist movement, but only fourteen thousand persons belonged to the Council.

By the end of 1945 the ACJ was experiencing numerous difficulties. It failed to make any inroads into the American Jewish community, which under the impact of the Holocaust became sympathetic to Zionism. Moreover, neither the ACJ's cold, unemotional rationalism nor its highly idealistic program was a match for the intensely emotional appeal of Zionism with its promise of a Jewish state in Palestine. Thus, ultimately, it was only the relentless determination of Berger, Rosenwald, and the ACJ's small national leadership that allowed the anti-Zionist struggle to continue as long as it did.

CHAPTER 4

The Council's Wartime Anti-Zionist Campaign

The Opening Battles

By the end of August 1943, both sides were mobilized. The publication of the Council's platform during the American Jewish Conference sparked open political warfare between anti-Zionists and Zionists. With their objectives clearly defined, both sides embarked on campaigns to win support for their respective causes as well as to discredit their opponents. Several acrimonious encounters between protagonists of the opposing sides late in 1943 and early in 1944 reflected the bitterness of the conflict.

Rabbi Reichert's Yom Kippur eve sermon in San Francisco on 8 October 1943, asking his congregation to choose between the ZOA and the ACJ, evoked a harsh Zionist response. On 18 November 1943, in a speech delivered at the San Francisco Jewish Community Center, Rabbi Heller defended the American Jewish Conference, rejected Reichert's arguments against the Zionist movement, and sharply attacked the Council. Heller said it was morally irresponsible for the ACJ to question the Zionists' loyalty to America. "Should there ever be a Commonwealth in Palestine," he asserted, "we should owe it no political allegiance. Zionists want it for those who are now there, and for those who will go there, God willing, after the war." Evoking the memory of Brandeis, he argued that Zionism and loyalty to America were compatible. He warned that the attempt to organize the ACJ in San Francisco was "a tragic error" that would hurt the Jewish community in Palestine.[1]

On 26 November 1943, in Richmond, Virginia, Elmer Berger and Maurice Samuel hotly debated the Zionist issue. Samuel, who in the September issue of the *American Mercury*—in a rejoinder to Rosenwald's June 1943 article in *Life*—had dismissed the Council president's arguments as identical to those of the Jewish anti-Zionists of 1917, presented the standard Zionist arguments. In his reply to Samuel, Berger not only rejected the notions of Jewish nationality and homelessness but also argued that the

Zionist solution was impractical, contributed to the Arab–Jewish conflict, and complicated the problem of finding refuge for European Jews. "I had a wonderful time in Richmond," Berger reported to Rosenwald. Apparently, Samuel was so upset by the encounter that he left the scene without even shaking Berger's hand.[2]

In November 1943 an exchange of letters between Arthur Hays Sulzberger and Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver revealed the depth of the chasm between Zionists and anti-Zionists. In response to Silver's accusation that the *New York Times* lacked objectivity and reflected its publisher's anti-Zionism, Sulzberger attributed his own conversion to anti-Zionism to the ferocity of Zionist attacks. But he explained that despite his participation in the formulation of the ACJ "Statement" and his complete sympathy with its views, he withdrew his support from the Council when the decision had been made to release the document during the American Jewish Conference because he believed that all the attention then should have focused exclusively on the conference. He rejected the charge of *New York Times* bias, explaining that he did not allow his newspaper to become involved in the controversy over the Zionist issue because he realized such entanglement would seriously damage its integrity. Unconvinced by Sulzberger's letter and annoyed by its unauthorized publication, Silver repeated his accusations. "Again and again *The Times,*" insisted Silver, "has transformed itself into a transmission belt for anti-Zionist propaganda. It never misses an opportunity to focus attention on the anti-Zionist viewpoint."[3]

Zionists showed no toleration for the ACJ's membership drive. For example, Berger's recruitment effort at the Euclid Avenue Temple in Cleveland, Wolsey's former congregation, but now headed by the Zionist Barnett Brickner, so incensed Stephen Wise that he complained to the CCAR Arbitration Committee, suggesting to Rabbi Emil Leipziger, its chairman, that "repetition of such a letter-writing campaign ought to bring expulsion of the parties concerned from the Central Conference of American Rabbis."[4]

By the fall of 1943, the Council's public campaign against Zionism and the Jewish state had begun. Berger welcomed it, and in his article "Silence Is Consent," he boldly announced that the conflict between the opposing philosophies dividing American Jewry was fundamental and unavoidable. In October 1943 the ACJ began to publish its official organ, the *Information Bulletin,* with the first issue including the ACJ "Statement" and a list of members. An introductory editorial explained that its purpose was "to convey the views of the Council on problems affecting Jews in the United States and the world over; and in that way to contribute to a full, free public

discussion of those problems." At last, the anti-Zionists possessed a medium for the dissemination of the their viewpoint.[5]

From the very beginning, however, many in the Council were concerned about the organization's negative image and its neglect of the religious aspects of Jewish life. "If, in truth, we mean what we say about our Judaism," advised Professor Elizabeth V. L. Stern at the 13 December 1943 meeting of the executive committee, "then this Council must become what no other organization in Jewish life has become: a society for the propagation of our faith." The only way to win Jews to the ACJ viewpoint, according to Stern, was through "a permanent program of religious development that shall sustain our faith in our spiritual destiny." Stern's statement had very little impact because by the end of 1943 the rabbis had lost their dominant position and the Council had become primarily an anti-Zionist organization.[6]

Toward the end of 1943 Berger, who was emerging as the ACJ's ideological leader and its most consistent critic of Zionism, focused his attention on the Balfour Declaration. After carefully examining the document, he concluded that it was given only to the Zionists, not to all the Jews of the world. It was, therefore, necessary for the Council to clarify the limits of the document. In fact, Berger thought Zionism could be fought best through analysis and exposure. If Jews only understood the true nature of Zionism, they would surely turn away from it.[7]

In "What Does the Balfour Declaration Mean?"—a highly polemical article in which he examined the document and its interpretation by Zionists—Berger set out to expose the speciousness of Zionist claims to Palestine. Characterizing the language of the declaration as ambiguous, he argued that the very concept of a "national home" was a novel one in international affairs. In fact, in 1919 not even the Zionists construed it, at least publicly, to imply endorsement for a Jewish state. Nor did the document contemplate establishing a Jewish state by artificial means such as immigration. Moreover, there was no evidence of either a British or an American commitment to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. If anything, the increasing demands of Zionists to interpret the Balfour Declaration as sanctioning the creation of a "Jewish national state" had long been an irritant in the Middle East, concluded Berger.[8]

While Berger was refuting Zionist claims through his analysis of the Balfour Declaration, he and Sidney Wallach were also preparing a statement on the British White Paper that expressed the ACJ's positive interest in Palestine. It became the basis for a letter to Secretary of State Cordell Hull and for an editorial article in the *Information Bulletin*.[9]

On 13 January 1944, under the signature of Lessing J. Rosenwald, the Council petitioned the State Department "to use its best offices" to persuade the British government not to implement the provisions of the British White Paper of 1939, "which would stop the immigration of Jews into Palestine and restrict their further acquisition of land in that country." Considering the exclusion of Jews as Jews from entering Palestine and the restriction of their right to acquire land a violation of the concept of democratic equality, the Council appealed for the application of the principle that Jews, a religious community, should have, "as of right and not on sufferance, full equality all over the world," including the equal right to migrate wherever the opportunity for immigration presented itself.[10]

An editorial in the *Information Bulletin* of 15 January 1944 also attacked the British White Paper. But it pointed to the confusion between the drive to create a Jewish state and the efforts made to secure the rights of harassed Jews. The abrogation of the White Paper would not solve the fundamental problem of the mistreatment of Jews, the editorial said. Only "world wide recognition of the rights of Jews to full equality" could accomplish that. In other words, liberal societies, not a Jewish state, would provide Jews with the best guarantees for their security. The solution to the particular Jewish problem in Palestine could be found "only when the pretensions of Jewish statehood are abandoned," because it was Zionist demands for a Jewish state that stimulated Arab opposition to Jewish immigration. Thus, although criticizing the British White Paper policy, the ACJ at the same time blamed Zionists for contributing to the difficulties Jews were experiencing in Palestine.[11]

The Council quickly attracted attention. The State Department, curious about the organization, requested copies of the *Information Bulletin* containing Berger's article on the Balfour Declaration. On the other hand, the Zionists, fearing the potentially damaging impact of the Council on their cause, were alarmed. Consequently, early in January 1944, the national executive committee of the ZOA decided to organize a counterattack against the Council. It announced Rabbi James G. Heller's acceptance of the chairmanship of "a national committee charged with the task of marshalling all Zionist forces in the fight on the anti-Zionist group." Both Dr. Israel Goldstein, president of the ZOA, and Rabbi Heller sternly warned against underrating the danger of the Council and insisted on combating it and counteracting its harmful effects. Having secured the support of most American Jewish organizations for their program, the Zionists refused to tolerate open Jewish opposition. Early in 1944 they were still uncertain about the extent of support for the ACJ. Therefore, they were determined

to confront it immediately and decisively, before it could undermine their position.[12]

The Zionists expected that the Committee to Combat the American Council for Judaism, soon renamed the Committee on Unity for Palestine (CUP), would be involved in a fight lasting merely six to eight months. Instead, the confrontation turned out to be much longer. Organized under the chairmanship of Rabbi Felix A. Levy, the CUP engaged Rabbi Arthur J. Lelyveld as executive director and Oscar Leonard as secretary. Rabbi Jerome Unger, initially a CUP field director, replaced Lelyveld in November 1946. By then, the Committee on Unity had two cochairmen, Rabbis Felix A. Levy and David Polish; Nathan Straus III and Rabbi Lelyveld served as vice chairmen. The ZOA appointed 112 local Committees on Unity for the purpose of keeping the activities of the Council under surveillance. By means of numerous circulars, personal letters, hundreds of thousands of pieces of pro-Zionist literature, anti-Council comments by prominent people, and special pamphlets written by Reform rabbis and distributed throughout the centers of Council activity, the CUP fought the Council relentlessly for almost four years.[13]

By the end of January 1944, the battle lines between the Zionists and the Council were clearly drawn. According to the ACJ, two fundamentally opposed and irreconcilable interpretations of Jewish life were in conflict. One was the Zionist–nationalist school of thought; it contended that Jews were essentially a nation and therefore entitled to sovereign territory. The other viewpoint, represented by the Council, defined Jews as a religious community, entitled to the same civic and political rights enjoyed by their fellow nationals.[14]

The Zionists, convinced of the righteousness of their own cause at a time of unparalleled Jewish tragedy, considered the ACJ a dangerous and vicious enemy. In their attacks on the ACJ, the Zionists not only persisted in accusing their opponents of treason and blasphemy but also diagnosed them as suffering from mental illness. According to the Zionists, anti-Zionists were anxious about their status and were insecure, frustrated, and self-hating Jews. They needed good psychiatric treatment.[15]

The Zionists' rhetoric reflected the acerbity of the propaganda war between them and the Council. They considered public anti-Zionism an illegitimate stance for Jews, signifying serious defects in personality and Jewishness. Zionist allegations, however, were largely emotional, unsubstantiated polemical overstatements. The ACJ indeed represented a different Jewish viewpoint, but its members did not deny their Jewishness. Many were active congregants in Reform temples. Several lay Council leaders,

particularly I. Edward Tonkon and Bernard Gradwohl, were seriously committed to the revitalization of classical Reform Judaism. On the whole, most ACJ members felt comfortable about their Jewish religion, but they adamantly objected to its politicization by Zionism.

The Pro-Zionist Congressional Resolutions

With the approach of 31 March 1944, the deadline set by the 1939 British White Paper for the termination of Jewish immigration to Palestine, the Zionist campaign for a Jewish state intensified. On 27 January 1944, responding to the growing pressure, James A. Wright and Ranulf Compton introduced in the House of Representatives two identical resolutions that called on the United States to use its good offices in support of free Jewish immigration to Palestine and the reconstitution of that country as a democratic Jewish commonwealth. Five days later, Robert F. Wagner and Robert A. Taft introduced the same resolution in the Senate.[16] Essentially a restatement of the 1922 congressional resolutions, which advocated establishing in Palestine a national home for the Jewish people, the 1944 resolutions added an explanation: "The ruthless persecution of the Jewish people in Europe has clearly demonstrated the need for a Jewish homeland as a haven for the large numbers who have become homeless as a result of this persecution."[17]

The Council reacted quickly. One day after the resolutions were introduced in the House, Wolsey informed Sol Bloom, chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, of the Council's wish to testify before the committee. Assuring Wolsey that he would be glad to hear him or any other representative of the ACJ, Bloom asked for a list of witnesses.[18]

Whereas the Zionists used historical and humanitarian arguments to build their case for a Jewish commonwealth, the State and War departments objected to the resolutions on the ground that they would hurt the war effort. Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson cautioned Senator Tom Connally, chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, that passage of the resolution, or even a public discussion on it, "would be apt to provoke dangerous repercussions in areas where we have many vital military interests." Specifically, "any conflict between Jews and Arabs would require the retention of troops in the affected areas and thus reduce the total forces that could otherwise be placed in combat against Germany."[19]

With the testimonies of Lessing Rosenwald and Rabbis Louis Wolsey, Morris Lazaron, and William Fineshriber before the House Committee on

Foreign Affairs at the hearings on the Wright–Compton resolutions, between 8 and 16 February 1944, the Council received extensive public exposure. In fact, it was one of the high points of its anti-Zionist campaign. The atmosphere in the hearing room was tense and the sessions were stormy, with the Zionists openly hostile to the anti-Zionists. Among the committee members, a few agreed with the Council's viewpoint. For example, Ohio Representative Frances Bolton was impressed by Rosenwald's and Wolsey's statements and clearly sympathized with the Council; New Jersey Representative Charles A. Eaton considered the Council position "statesmanlike."[20]

In his testimony on 8 February 1944, Lessing Rosenwald described the Council as an organization that stressed the religious character of the Jews, rejecting the racial and nationalistic interpretation of Judaism. He then argued that the text of the resolutions dealt with two very different issues: immigration, a humanitarian question; and a Jewish state, a political matter. Rosenwald supported immigration on humanitarian grounds; he rejected the political demand for a Jewish state as anachronistic and undemocratic. Having defined Jews as an essentially religious community, not a nationality, Rosenwald asked the committee to retain the section of the resolutions, calling for immigration and to modify the part referring to a "Jewish commonwealth" to read: "and there shall be full opportunity for colonization in Palestine, ultimately to be constituted as a free and democratic commonwealth."[21]

Rabbi Louis Wolsey, who testified the following day, expressed complete agreement with the views expounded by Rosenwald. In addition, Wolsey suggested that "the problem of the Jew is linked inextricably with the problem of democratic equality," and that "nothing but equality will do for the enduring safety of the Jew—and the world."[22]

Rabbi Morris Lazaron's turn to present the Council view to the committee came on 16 February 1944. He spoke of his appreciation "of the great work that has been done in Palestine," and of his belief that there was "complete unanimity among Jews that some move must be made that will mitigate the harsh terms of the White Paper." But he warned that the proposed resolutions, made while the war was still in progress, would only exacerbate the tensions in the Middle East and even endanger what had been accomplished in Palestine. The timing was wrong for any "public resolutions, advertisements, and broadsides in the newspaper" regarding Palestine. Palestine could be reconstructed only through the cooperation of all the groups living in it, and passage of the proposed resolutions would destroy any chances for such a common effort.[23]

Rabbi William Fineshriber, maintaining he did not speak for any organization, also appeared before the committee on 16 February. He claimed he had come to the hearings to protest against the section of the resolutions that referred to the "Jewish people" constituting what he called "a so-called Jewish commonwealth." Claiming to be confused about the meaning of a "Jewish commonwealth," he asked:

> Does this mean that all the citizens of the "commonwealth" will become Jews, just as we are Americans by virtue of being citizens of the United States of America? Does it mean that Jews outside that so-called "Jewish commonwealth" shall, thereafter, cease to be Jews just as those not native or citizens of this country are not Americans? Or does it mean some confused mixed pattern, unlike anything else in the world political order, a bewildering intermixture tending to make the Jews an abnormal group, a riddle to the rest of the world?[24]

Fineshriber considered the resolutions a strange experiment at a time when the humane and urgent task was to rescue people and to extend the freedom of opportunity. He firmly denied sympathizing with the attitude of the Arab world, but, like his colleagues, he rejected the section of the resolutions concerning the Jewish commonwealth and enthusiastically endorsed the humanitarian part concerning Jewish immigration to Palestine.[25]

Outraged, the Zionists not only rushed to refute the Council's testimony but also tried to minimize its importance. Israel Goldstein, Abba Hillel Silver, and James Heller, spokesmen for the Zionists, repeatedly issued statements describing the ACJ as a very small, unrepresentative group of Jews.[26]

At the time of the hearings a touching encounter occurred between Rabbis Morris Lazaron and Stephen Wise, former friends whom differences over Zionism had estranged. Lazaron provides a moving description of the meeting in his unpublished autobiography:

> He was standing with the Zionist leaders at the other end of Sol Bloom's office. We looked at each other. He smiled rather uncertainly. I was even then fond of him and though I believed his conduct like his methods were unworthy of the really great qualities of the man, what he had written, [it] did not really matter and the old friendliness welled up in my heart for him. He was definitely growing old and he had been a valiant warrior for many good causes. I returned a smile. We started across the room simultaneously. He held out his hand. I took it. There was

considerable interest in the incident and all present turned to look as he said in his rich deep voice: "Morris when are you coming back to your people?" I could not resist the impulse to respond, consciously pitching my own voice several tones lower, in imitation of his, "Stephen, I never left my people."[27]

President Roosevelt, who agreed with the opposition of the Army chief of staff and the State and War departments to the pro-Zionist congressional resolutions, was also aware of the intensive AZEC letter-writing campaign against the White Paper and of the danger of mishandling a very emotional issue for the Jewish community, particularly in an election year. Consequently, on 9 March 1944 the president allowed Rabbis Wise and Silver to visit the White House, assured them of his deep sympathy for the plight of the Jews, and permitted the two rabbis to release a statement to that effect.[28]

Eight days later the congressional resolutions were tabled. The testimony of General George C. Marshall, the Army chief of staff; the more quiet opposition of Secretary of State Cordell Hull; and particularly the letters from Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, which the president had approved, to Representative Bloom and Senator Connally, the chairmen of the House and Senate committees handling the resolutions—all contributed to their temporary demise.[29]

Roosevelt apparently outwitted the Zionists, who were left with a vague presidential statement but without the congressional resolutions for which they had campaigned so hard. The Zionists were disappointed. The Council, on the other hand, felt vindicated. In its publicity and official announcements, the ACJ maintained that the congressional hearings had clearly shown Jews to be united in their opposition to the British White Paper but divided on the question of the "Jewish commonwealth." Moreover, the case of the congressional resolutions, in the Council's view, also indicated Christian support for Jews was strongest on humanitarian grounds.[30]

Although satisfied with the tabling of the resolutions, Berger, convinced that the Zionist leadership had no intention of being stopped by a temporary setback, called for vigilance. He believed Zionists were using the issue of the abrogation of the White Paper as a wedge to achieve their political goals. According to Berger's analysis, the Zionists, who for twenty-five years had presumed to be speaking for all Jews while going from one success to another, were successful because they had been organized, whereas opposition to Zionism had remained mostly passive, sporadic, apologetic, and disorganized. Consequently, "through default and unorganized opposition a

substantial body of American Jewry has been committed to a program from which they dissented by conviction."[31]

Berger, however, was confident that the emergence of the Council made a major difference. It formed the first organized Jewish movement against Jewish nationalism. But the struggle required concerted action because the Zionists were determined to fight. Berger, therefore, urged the anti-Zionists to use the respite afforded by the tabling of the resolutions to exert a greater effort against the persistent attempts of the Zionists to drive Jews to Jewish nationalism. For the task of fighting Zionism, he believed, the Council offered the necessary leadership.[32]

As could be expected, the Zionists responded angrily to the Council's testimony. Describing Lazaron and Fineshriber as ignorant of the true wishes of the Jewish masses, *New Palestine* explained the thinking of the small number of anti-Zionists as a rationalization of fear and despair. In the opinion of the *Congress Weekly*, the ACJ was guilty of a shameful attempt to convert the living Jewish people into a lifeless imitation of a liberal church. During the summer of 1944, Rabbi David Polish, who subjected the testimony of the anti-Zionists to a psychological examination, concluded that "rarely have so few done so much harm to so many."[33]

Particularly revealing were the different reactions to the Council leaders from Judge Louis E. Levinthal, a Philadelphian and former president of the ZOA, and Stephen Wise, cochairman of the AZEC. The former tried to approach Rosenwald on a personal basis; the latter openly assailed Rabbis Wolsey and Fineshriber in the press.

On 18 March 1944 Judge Levinthal sent Lessing Rosenwald a copy of Walter Clay Lowdermilk's book *Palestine, Land of Promise*, with a handwritten note that said:

> In sending you, with my compliments, Dr. Lowdermilk's book "Palestine, Land of Promise," I am not doing so as "a Greek bearing gifts" but as a Jew to a fellow Jew. I know that you and I disagree on the subject of Zionism, but I am confident that if you visited Palestine and saw for yourself what the Jewish people have, despite all sorts of obstacles, managed to achieve, you would abandon your opposition and become a friend of our cause. Because it is impossible for you to go to Palestine now, I am bringing Palestine to you through the medium of this little book by an objective, scientific, non-Jewish observer.[34]

Unlike Levinthal, Stephen Wise made no attempt to reason with Rabbis Wolsey and Fineshriber. Instead, his scathing personal attack on the two rabbis stirred a bitter controversy that took more than a year to resolve.

"The Philadelphia Rabbinate," Wise's editorial in the March 1944 issue of *Opinion* magazine, called Wolsey and Fineshriber "pygmies" who gravely misrepresented Jewish loyalties and ideals. Describing them as sinister traitors comparable to the Norwegian Quisling, Wise questioned whether there was "no way of ending the shame of Philadelphia" by removing them from their pulpits.[35]

Wise remained persistently hostile to Rabbis Wolsey and Fineshriber and continued to describe them as traitors, sinners, and deserters. Prominent Philadelphians protested against the language of Wise's editorial in reference to his fellow rabbis as well as to Philadelphia, and allegations of breaching rabbinical ethics were brought against him before the CCAR Arbitration Committee. Only after more than a year of behind-the-scenes negotiations, the decision of the Arbitration Committee that Rabbi Wise had "grievously transgressed" Article 4 of Section 1 of the Code of Ethics of the CCAR, and Rabbi James Heller's persuasive efforts, which included a draft of a retraction, did Wise give in. Attributing his attack on Wolsey and Fineshriber to his outrage at their damaging testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Wise expressed regret for having written what might have been construed as an assault on their freedom of speech, a principle of utmost importance to him. But he offered no personal apologies.[36]

It took, however, almost two years to bring the matter of the Palestine resolutions to a close. Efforts to revive them resumed after Secretary of War Stimson informed Senator Robert A. Taft, on 10 October 1944, about improvements in the military situation, suggesting that political rather than military considerations should be the basis for handling the Palestine issue. Again, the executive branch opposed the resolutions. At the same time, Silver and Wise were divided on whether the time was right to push the issue. Whereas Silver pressed for immediate congressional action, Wise assured Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., that if the president wanted a postponement, he and his associates would comply.[37]

In the second week of December 1944, Congress again voted to defer action on the resolutions. This provoked a serious crisis within the leadership of the AZEC; the Wise and Silver factions fought each other ferociously. As a result, Silver briefly left his AZEC leadership position at the end of 1944. His popularity, the strong pressures within the American Zionist movement in his favor, and the increasing radicalization of the Zionists led to Silver's return to power six months later. By the middle of 1945, he had become the dominant figure among American Zionists.[38]

The Council, of course, resumed its opposition to any pro-Zionist resolution. As soon as it learned the issue had been revived, the ACJ proceeded to make its views known. Rosenwald again informed Sol Bloom of the ACJ's unalterable opposition to a "National Jewish Commonwealth" and strongly supported Senator Arthur Vandenberg's efforts to change the language of the original Taft–Wagner resolution.[39]

Significantly, although action on the resolutions was deferred again, changes made them somewhat more palatable to the ACJ. The word "Jewish" was omitted from the original phrase "free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth." The words "and shall take appropriate measures," pertaining to the involvement of the United States in the immigration and commonwealth issues in Palestine, were also removed, which meant the situation in Palestine would remain solely within British jurisdiction. The Council interpreted the revised resolutions as a declaration of goodwill and as a denunciation of discrimination against Jews. It was now convinced of the legislators' readiness to support Jews out of "humanitarian concern" but their equal unwillingness "to take a position on the political involvements of a 'Jewish' political commonwealth or state."[40]

The Palestine resolutions were revived for the third time after the war, in December 1945. Despite White House opposition, the resolutions, phrased in the cautious language proposed in December 1944, passed both houses of Congress. The Council noted the differences between the early 1944 version and that of December 1945. The latest resolutions were not binding. But more important, they called for the establishment of "Palestine as a democratic commonwealth in which all men, regardless of race or creed, shall have equal rights." At last the Council's position seemed vindicated.[41]

The Council Offensive of 1944

The testimony of the Council before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in February gave the organization more national exposure than any other undertaking in 1944. But the testimony was only one of the numerous activities in which the ACJ engaged that year. Despite the impatience of Rabbis Schachtel and Lazaron with Rosenwald's cautious policy, the ACJ doubled its membership and continued to publicize its anti-Zionist views effectively enough to make Zionists very nervous. Rosenwald, Wallach, Berger, Wolsey, and Lazaron traveled around the country to recruit new members and to promote the Council's philosophy.[42]

From August 1943 to the beginning of 1945 the Council distributed 450,000 pieces of literature, the bulk of which consisted of twenty-seven

issues of the *Information Bulletin,* the official organ of the ACJ, published at a rate of 7,500 to 25,000 copies per issue. The pamphlets the ACJ prepared contained mostly analyses of Zionism and compilations of the organization's official statements.[43]

In 1944, stimulated by the Beth Israel controversy in Houston and the Council's growth, Berger began to develop some new ideas about Reform Judaism and American Judaism in general. These became the foundation for the book *The Jewish Dilemma,* which he published a year later. Upon examining the history of Reform Judaism and Jewish aspirations in the emancipation era, Berger concluded that Reform "failed because it did not go far enough, not because it went too far." It did not complete its liberation from medieval shackles. For Berger, a truly American Judaism meant Judaism "free of all corporate existence." To achieve that, American Judaism needed to reorient its thinking. However, it was futile to talk about an American Judaism until the "myth of Jewish nationalistic greatness" had been broken down. An authentically American Judaism should have the courage to transcend the limits set by Reform Judaism in the nineteenth century and reject the notion that there was such a thing as "Jewish people."[44]

In his new vision of American Judaism, Berger considered admitting the possibility of assimilation as a philosophy of Jewish life and the creation of "a Judiasm modern enough to keep Jews in it, in a world in which being a Jew will be a purely voluntary choice." He did not want to be "just a little bit of a [Jewish] nationalist in order to prevent assimilation."[45]

The proposal of such novel ideas for an American Judaism—a Judaism based on a voluntary association of Jews attracted to the lofty ideals of their faith—was, in effect, Berger's rejoinder to those who argued that Zionism would provide an antidote to assimilation, one of the Reform Zionists' favorite defenses of Zionism. But all his speculations about religion remained virtually irrelevant until after 1948. While Berger's anti-Zionism stimulated him to think about the need to promote Judaism free of Jewish nationalism, the ACJ actually did little practical work in the field of religious thought and education until after the establishment of Israel. Thus, for all practical purposes, the ACJ resorted to using religious ideas and principles to legitimize its political program, not to advance Judaism.

Throughout 1944 the ACJ continued to comment frequently on specific political developments concerning Zionism or its implications. It worked to keep "Jewish" issues out of the 1944 election campaigns. As early as May, the Council rejected the concept of "the Jewish vote." Declaring that the votes of "American citizens of Jewish faith" were not for sale, the

Council called for the separation of religion and politics, pledging to do its utmost to keep them apart. In fact, the Council appealed to Jewish leaders not to inject "Jewish issues" into the 1944 campaign.[46]

The Council was also quick to correct statements by government officials implying that Jews were anything other than merely a religious group. For example, in June, while thanking President Roosevelt for his role in establishing "a haven of refuge in this country for one thousand refugees," Rosenwald also called attention to a disturbing, although probably an inadvertent, passage in the president's message to Congress concerning those Jewish refugees. The president had referred to Jews as a race in commenting that "as the hour of the final defeat of the Hitlerite forces draws closer, the fury of their insane desire to wipe out the Jewish race in Europe continues undiminished." Rosenwald corrected the president, explaining that Jews represented not a race, but a religion. At the request of Samuel I. Rosenman, the president's Jewish assistant, who was also Rosenwald's friend as well as a non-Zionist American Jewish Committee member, William D. Hassett, Roosevelt's secretary, immediately replied that "the isolated sentence in the President's message was not intended to be a deliberate statement of racial theory."[47]

The next major issue confronting the ACJ was the 1944 election. Rabbis Wise and Silver, unable to secure passage of the pro-Zionist resolutions in Congress, lobbied to include a Palestine plank in the platforms of the Democratic and Republican parties. The Council, on the other hand, urged both parties to shun references to a "Jewish National Home in Palestine."[48]

Nevertheless, against the advice of Secretary of State Hull, both parties adopted planks favorable to the Zionists. The Zionists played the Republicans against the Democrats. First, they secured a Republican statement calling for "unrestricted immigration into Palestine" and "a free and democratic commonwealth." Not altogether satisfied with the Republican plank, the Zionists obtained an even better one from the Democrats. That platform actually advocated "the opening of Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonization, and such a policy as to result in the establishment there of a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth."[49]

The decision of the two parties and the intrusion of the Zionist issue into partisan politics troubled the Council. Zionist pressure, the Council believed, seriously harmed American Jews, achieving, at best, only "verbal testimonials." The ACJ feared that the continuation of the current Zionist activities would impair the capacity of American Jews to assist those Jews abroad who would have the most need for help after the war.[50]

In criticizing Zionist political activities in 1944, the ACJ singled out the Zionist ideology of separatism. In an *Information Bulletin* editorial, a copy of which was sent to Wallace Murray, director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (NEA) of the Department of State, the ACJ denounced Zionists for being guided almost exclusively by their political program for transforming Palestine into a Jewish state. According to the ACJ, unless resisted, the Zionist movement would lead Jews "further and further along the road to separatist minority status." Exposure of the Zionist menace and effective organization to counter it, the editorial concluded, were the best means for assuring wholesome Jewish life in the United States.[51]

The focus of the Council's activities in September were two messages it sent to U.S. government officials. One was essentially a reaction to newspaper reports concerning a British decision to form a *Jewish* brigade under a *Jewish* flag; the other, a Council proposal for a postwar program for Jews. Both reflected the fundamental concerns of the ACJ.

On 21 September 1944, responding to reports that the British government had decided to create a Jewish brigade under a Jewish flag, Rosenwald sent identical telegrams to Secretaries Cordell Hull, Henry L. Stimson, and James V. Forrestal strongly protesting the notion of a "so-called Jewish brigade under a so-called Jewish flag." According to Rosenwald, the accurate designation for the proposed force and banner should be "Zionist brigade and a Zionist flag." Americans of Jewish faith, Rosenwald insisted, had always served in American armed forces under their national flag—the Stars and Stripes.[52]

Five days later Secretary of State Hull replied that the reported action of the British authorities fell "within the purview of the British rather than the American Government." Nevertheless, he assured Rosenwald that the Department of State noted carefully the views expressed in Rosenwald's message and would "keep those views in mind should the question come up for discussion."[53]

ACJ reaction to reports concerning the British intention to create a Jewish brigade under a Jewish flag is quite understandable since opposition by anti-Zionists to a Jewish army in 1942 was the issue that had triggered the very creation of the organization. When such an army appeared to be on the verge of formation, the ACJ insisted that it be called a "Zionist," not a "Jewish," army. Indeed, drawing a distinction between "Zionism" and "Judaism" and refusing to allow mixing of the two concepts became increasingly an important tactic in the Council's anti-Zionist campaign.

On 25 September 1944, Rosenwald sent Secretary Hull a memorandum about the situation facing Jews abroad in which he presented a number of suggestions for the rehabilitation and future security of all victims of Nazism. He asked that Jews everywhere should enjoy full equality and have the same obligations as their fellow nationals. They should have "equality in the countries in which Jews live and choose to remain; equality to return to those lands from which Jews had been forcibly driven; equality to migrate wherever there is an opportunity for migration."[54]

Rosenwald urged the U.S. government to use its influence to guarantee that in potential immigration centers that were not yet sovereign states two basic principles be applied. First, immigration should be limited only by the economic capacity and political stability of those territories, not by racial or religious qualifications. Second, self-government should be established as soon as the populations demonstrated capacity for self-rule, not by other standards. Since Palestine was such a territory, Rosenwald believed that "adoption of these principles would mean abolition of the British White Paper of 1939 and its unjust discrimination against Jews."[55]

Rosenwald recommended formulation of a new declaration of policy on Palestine to replace all previous documents and commitments, which were ambiguous, confusing, and subject to various interpretations by different groups. The new policy should stress the special character of Palestine "as part of the religious heritage of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and make adequate provisions for the maintenance of the holy places under international control." Such a policy would help to solve the immigration problem and would lead to the early acquisition of self-government, in which all citizens should be free to participate.[56]

But Rosenwald emphatically opposed the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine or anywhere. Moreover, he strongly rejected as undemocratic preferential immigration by any religious group. Such Zionist proposals were embroiling Jews then living in Palestine in continuing civil strife and jeopardizing the status of those Jews who enjoyed full equality and normal lives in their respective homelands and did not want to be involved with the Jewish state. Thus, by attributing potentially damaging effects to Zionism, Rosenwald presented the Zionist program as a menace to Jews in Palestine and throughout the world.[57]

The Hull memorandum was one of the most articulate Council statements in 1944 and represented an effort by the organization to propose positive alternatives to Zionism. The main emphasis of the document was the need to promote political liberalism after the war. In a world in which equal rights and freedom from discrimination prevailed, the Council maintained,

Jews, *ipso facto,* would enjoy peace and security. Secretary Hull, who replied to Rosenwald personally, acknowledged the Council's statement was both "valuable and penetrating."[58]

In November, two events provided the Council with nationwide publicity. Morris Lazaron's article "Palestine: The Dream and the Reality" appeared in that month's issue of the *Atlantic Monthly*; and Lessing Rosenwald's coast-to-coast radio address "The Status of Jews in the Post-War World," a recapitulation of his memorandum to Hull, was broadcast over the CBS radio network on 25 November.[59]

Lazaron, like Rosenwald, was concerned about the fate of European Jews. He suggested three principles as a basis for helping Jews after the war: international guarantees of the rights of Jews everywhere; "rehabilitation of Jewish life in all its phases" as an integral part of postwar reconstruction; and international guarantees of the largest possible Jewish immigration to Palestine. "This may be an excursion into utopia," Lazaron concluded, "but since when have dreams and visions been banned from Church and Synagogue?"[60]

Lazaron's article deeply impressed Sumner Welles, who had resigned his position as undersecretary of state a year earlier. After reading galley proofs of the article, he expressed the hope that, when a final decision on Palestine was rendered, the high moral ground Lazaron had outlined would not go unheeded.[61]

Also in November, the ACJ reacted sharply to a Zionist call for a new American *halutziut* (pioneering) movement, which would send American Jewish settlers to Palestine to assist in building a Jewish commonwealth. For the Council, a Zionist appeal for American Jewish pioneers for Palestine was an affront to American Jews. Such Zionist activity was no longer an appeal for help for suffering Jews. Instead, it brought the logic of Zionism directly home to the American Jews. The Zionists were asking a sizable number of American Jews, out of loyalty to a Jewish state in Palestine, to cut their ties with the United States and "dedicate their talents and their futures to a country other than their own." That the Council would not accept. Considering American Jews an integral part of American life, it refused to envision their destiny "in any terms other than the closest identification with the future of the United States."[62]

Throughout 1944, considerable ambivalence and uncertainty characterized relations between the Council and the American Jewish Committee. Many ACJ members who also belonged to the AJC hoped for cooperation between the two organizations. But the professional staffs of both groups distrusted each other; the official views of the two bodies on

Palestine differed; and the AJC, unlike the ACJ, included anti-Zionist, non-Zionist, and Zionist members. Under such circumstances collaboration became difficult. Thus, the Council's repeated efforts to persuade the AJC to fight Zionism proved futile. The AJC leadership, although seeking to avoid conflict with the Council, was loath to engage in public controversy and thus refused to deviate from its cautious policy on Zionism.[63]

On 4 December 1944, Judge Proskauer, president of the AJC, and Lessing Rosenwald, president of the Council, met for two hours at the Manhattan Club, in New York, to talk about relations between the two organizations. After the two discussed various issues, Rosenwald asked Proskauer for a clear statement that would indicate the differences between the AJC and the ACJ. Proskauer replied he would like to think the matter through and consult his associates. He did not know whether he could give Rosenwald such a statement, but if he did, he would not want to publish it. Rosenwald assured Proskauer the ACJ wished to cooperate with the AJC. He even suggested that if the AJC would vigorously pursue the point of view of the ACJ, he himself would recommend that the Council join forces with the AJC and dissolve itself. On the other hand, Rosenwald also stressed that lack of AJC cooperation would not be allowed to stand in the way of Council efforts.[64]

There was to be no cooperation. The American Jewish Committee chose to pursue a moderate course on the Zionist issue. Thus, on 13 December 1944, Proskauer made a mild statement comparing the AJC, ACJ, and ZOA. In an address before a newly formed Washington, D.C., chapter of the AJC, a copy of which he forwarded to Rosenwald, he declared that the AJC had not been set up to propagate either the ultimate Zionist or the ultimate anti-Zionist viewpoint. The Council "was created for the purpose of opposing the ultimate creation of any Jewish state in Palestine," just as the ZOA "was created for the purpose of advocating such a state." The AJC, believing in freedom of thought and discussion, did not question the right of either organization to pursue its goals. In short, the AJC objectives "differ essentially from that of each of these organizations."[65]

In the meantime, Zionists continued to excoriate the Council, subjecting it to torrents of vituperation. They branded it an enemy "within the Jewish Camp" that engaged in slandering and misrepresenting Zionists. *New Palestine,* for example, rejected the right of the ACJ to hamper the realization of the immemorial hope and dream of the Jewish nation, which it disclaimed, and to use its political and social influence against "the will of Jewry." Resorting to *ad hominem* attacks on Council members, Zionists depicted them as "minimum Jews," traitors and saboteurs, ostriches who did

not like to draw attention to their Jewishness, *shtadlanim* (behind-the-scenes intercessors) fearful of losing their power to the Zionists, and persons suffering from "group fear-psychosis."[66]

The Committee on Unity for Palestine (CUP) spared no efforts in its attempts to undermine the legitimacy of the Council and to embarrass it. Rabbi Arthur Lelyveld, determined to "capture" the "not-yet-Zionists" through a careful campaign of Zionist education, compared the psychology of anti-Zionism to that of the anti-Semites and warned Zionists about the danger of debating "philosophy" with the ACJ. The CUP even used a pro-Zionist letter, which George W. Maxey, chief justice of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, sent to the ACJ, to show how a pro-Zionist Christian put the Council once again "in its place."[67]

On 4 December 1944 the CUP released an embarrassing exchange of correspondence between a Martha Silverman and Rabbi David Goldberg, Berger's assistant. Silverman had written that she agreed almost completely with the ACJ's philosophy and was particularly pleased with its opposition to a Jewish state. However, because she considered all religion outdated, she was unable to agree with the ACJ's claim that the basis of unity among Jews was religion. She wanted to know whether she could join the ACJ as an antinationalist who did not believe in the Jewish religion.[68] Rabbi Goldberg replied, "If one does not ignore the fact of his being Jewish—whatever he may choose to denote by that adjective—and is perturbed by the nationalistic philosophy which distorts his status as a citizen and even jeopardizes it, such one [sic] already belongs to us ideologically."[69]

In the cover letter sent with the Silverman–Goldberg correspondence, Rabbi Lelyveld stressed that the ACJ's willingness to accept into its ranks antireligious Jews was direct testimony to its purely negative orientation. The incident not only embarrassed the Council but also stirred internal dissension. Rabbi Wolsey, for one, was deeply distressed by the affair. Thus, the Zionists scored a major public-relations coup against the Council and put it clearly on the defensive.[70]

But despite the public posturing, the confrontation between the Council and the Zionists in 1943 and 1944 was marred by the tragic failure of the two groups to work for the rescue of European Jews. Instead of concentrating their efforts during the war on saving Jews, both were preoccupied with fighting each other and preparing plans for the postwar period.

An example of the Zionist preoccupation was the bitter campaign of the American Zionist leadership in 1943 and 1944 against the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe. Organized in 1943 by Peter Bergson (Hillel Kook), a Palestinian Revisionist, the Emergency

Committee wanted to separate the issue of rescuing Jews from the statehood question for the duration of the war. Bergson's group waged an intensive advertising campaign to draw attention to the situation in Europe and to generate pressure to save Jews. Through its influence, on 9 November 1943, identical resolutions were introduced in the Senate and the House urging creation of a "commission of diplomatic, economic and military experts" to prepare a plan to save the remaining Jews in Europe. The official Zionist leadership did not support the resolutions. Instead, apparently out of fear of competition from their Revisionist rivals, the American Jewish Conference and the AZEC attacked the Emergency Committee mercilessly throughout 1944. Moreover, the Zionists urged the State and Justice departments to have Bergson deported or drafted.[71]

Although the rescue resolutions were not put to a vote, they contributed to Roosevelt's decision to create the War Refugee Board (WRB) in 1944. The WRB engaged in some modest rescue operations in 1944 and 1945. The example of the WRB indicates the possibility that, if during the war years American Jews had been committed to rescue rather than to Jewish statehood, much more could have been done to save Jews. The Zionists' emphatic demands for Jewish statehood during the war, their reluctance to support the rescue resolutions, and their attacks on Bergson and his Emergency Committee confirm Council claims that Zionism was less concerned with saving Jews than with achieving its political objectives in Palestine. However, despite its correct analysis of Zionist policy, the Council was equally inactive on the matter of wartime rescue.

CHAPTER 5

Between War and Peace

The Council's First Annual Conference

In 1945, the year World War II ended and the Palestine question resurfaced as a serious international problem, the Council experienced its maximum growth. Elmer Berger traveled across the country for almost six months, working incessantly to help organize local ACJ branches. As a result of his and Rosenwald's efforts, the Council grew from 9 to 23 chapters and its membership increased from 5,300 to 10,300. Throughout 1945 the Council distributed close to 750,000 pieces of literature, of which about 500,000 were copies of the *Information Bulletin.* This distribution also included several pamphlets based on Wallach's and Berger's articles and speeches. One of the Council's most successful publications was *Christian Opinion on Jewish Nationalism and a Jewish State,* a compendium of comments by Christians sympathetic to the Council's viewpoint. Moreover, it was in 1945 that Berger published his important book, *The Jewish Dilemma,* the first comprehensive synthesis of his thoughts on the conflict between Zionism and anti-Zionism.[1]

Until late 1945 all important decisions in the Council were made by a small group of members who lived in or near Philadelphia. The ACJ executive committee held no meetings at all between 7 December 1944 and 23 September 1945 because both Rosenwald and Berger spent much time away on Council business; when they were available for a meeting, it seemed impossible to bring together a quorum. The situation so infuriated Rabbi Irving Reichert that he decided to resign his Council vice presidency as early as December 1944. He did not want to be held responsible for the activities of an organization that failed to consult him. Only after urgent appeals from Berger and Rosenwald was Reichert persuaded to remain in office.[2]

In 1945, despite an expanding membership, the ACJ found itself increasingly isolated and estranged from the larger Jewish community. It

failed to compete effectively with the Zionists, who were forcefully seizing the initiative among Jews. But, while becoming alienated from the majority of American Jews, the Council was actually evolving into a support group for the American government. Its views on Jewish immigration and Palestine coincided almost completely with those of the State Department.

Despite the crises of December 1944—the publication by the Zionists of Rabbi Goldberg's letter to Martha Silverman, Rabbi Wolsey's furious reaction to that embarrassing episode, and Rabbi Reichert's threat to resign—the ACJ proceeded to hold its first annual conference in Philadelphia on 13 and 14 January 1945. Attended by more than sixty delegates, the spirit of the gathering was upbeat. In their optimistic mood, the delegates decided on the very exaggerated goals—which they would not achieve—of bringing 50,000 members into the Council by June 1946 and securing a budget of $250,000 for 1945–1946.[3]

Rosenwald's presidential report set the tone for the conference. The tenets and ideas of the Council, essential to the Jew in the modern world, Rosenwald declared, clashed fundamentally with Zionist doctrines. Zionism was archaic, medieval, and undemocratic. A menace to both Jewish settlers in Palestine and the remnants of European Jewry, Zionist ideas implied a retreat from emancipation, which had been won at a great cost and after a long struggle. Such ideas, Rosenwald insisted, had to be opposed by the ACJ "as doctrines which would create a self-imposed ghetto for Jews in Palestine to which the vast majority of Jews in the rest of the world would be tied by the silver cord of religion."[4]

Ideologically, Berger's and Wallach's speeches were the main events of the conference. Both focused on contrasting the Council's vision with that of the Zionists, stressing the themes of Jewish emancipation and integration as real alternatives to Zionism.

In his address, "Emancipation—A Rediscovered Ideal," Rabbi Berger developed the theme that the ACJ's philosophy of emancipation and integration was not only older than Jewish nationalism but also inseparable from the Western liberal tradition. That philosophy was based on the idea that Jews, freed "from the isolation forced upon them on the pretext of separate race, national status and aspirations during the Middle Ages," should integrate themselves into the societies in which they had been living and share their destiny with their fellow citizens. By identifying Jews with their neighbors in everything except religion, liberalism freed Jews in the United States, in the nations of Western Europe, and in several other progressive countries.[5]

According to Berger, the program of Jewish nationalism had never expressed the real aspirations of Jews in America or elsewhere. "Spurious nationhood," he argued, had been imposed on Jews by reactionary societies in the Middle Ages and thus could not provide a solution to reaction in the modern world. The self-appointed spokespersons for the Jews, the Jewish nationalists, wanted to maintain a medieval type of control over a so-called worldwide Jewish people and to prevent the emancipation of the individual Jew. This process, he claimed, reached alarming proportions in 1897 at the first Zionist congress, where 197 men "arrogated to themselves the title 'the Jewish nation.' " Proceeding to create a worldwide political machine, they proclaimed that the medieval collectivism of the "Jewish people" wanted to realize its political destiny by creating a sovereign state in Palestine. They sought to achieve this objective by strengthening and fostering "Jewish national consciousness" among Jews all over the world.[6]

Zionism, Berger maintained, introduced confusion regarding the political objectives of Jews and created much misunderstanding about their status everywhere. On the one hand, Jews asked for equal rights and responsibilities—as individuals in a world based upon individual rights. On the other hand, they supported, either aggressively or by silence and default, a program that would define Jews as an indissoluble minority and asked the same world for special group rights for them. As a result, not only did they not understand themselves, but they also puzzled the world. Even worse, supporters of emancipation never exerted much effort in teaching their doctrine to fellow Jews. At the same time, however, exponents of the philosophy stressing the existence of a "Jewish people" portrayed those Jews who had insisted on complete, unconditional equality for Jews as "betrayers," "traitors," or "renegades."[7]

Attacks on the proponents of the philosophy of Jewish emancipation had occurred frequently during the preceding century and a half because the "official Jews" had always been opposed to the dissolution of the medieval collective—the "Jewish people." While the Jews, as a group, had been imprisoned inside ghetto walls, the individual Jew had no alternative but to bow to the will of the "official Jews." With the collapse of the ghetto walls, the functionaries of the organized Jewish community were weakened. Their power was limited to persuasion. Threatened by the process of integration and emancipation, they condemned it as "assimilation" and did their best to impede it.[8]

Since emancipation had succeeded, Berger considered Zionism the last attempt to maintain any traces of ghetto control over the lives of individual Jews. The progress of Zionism, however, troubled Berger. He attributed its

advances to the failure of emancipated Jews to understand both the regressive nature of the Jewish nationalist movement and the liberating process of emancipation.[9]

Berger predicted the further growth of Zionism, which in 1945 had more adherents than ever, as long as emancipated Jews failed to counter Zionism "with an adequate program for integration and emancipation." Providing an alternative to Zionism—not simply preventing establishment of a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine—was, therefore, the Council's responsibility. Since the Jewish masses had been largely left to the mercies of the Zionists, the Council's task would be difficult as well as revolutionary. The Council, representing the "free and emancipated Jews," had the obligation to lead this "revolution." The reward for this struggle would be the rise of a new generation of Jews "who will accept their Jewish religious heritage as normal, free to walk the entire earth—not alone a single plot of ghetto ground—with full dignity befitting men."[10]

Sidney Wallach warned the conference about the fierce determination of the Zionists to fight for their objectives. He accused their political machine of pressing hard for the immediate creation of a Jewish state. They employed every conceivable method of pressure, reaching from the highest offices of the government down to the common citizen. No temporary setback would stop them. Even if the Zionists did not succeed in obtaining an immediate pledge for a state in all, or part, of Palestine, Wallach predicted their drive for statehood would continue.[11]

Wallach saw only two alternatives confronting the ACJ. Either a Jewish state would come into existence in the very near future, or there would be growing Jewish agitation for such a state for years to come. The early formation of a Jewish state would endow Jewish nationalism with a powerful tool; a worldwide organization successful in achieving a Jewish state would not dissolve itself once such a state had been established. On the contrary, it would be used to meet the many needs of that minuscule state. A Jewish state, in Wallach's opinion, would mean that "for generations to come, political life in every country in which Jews reside as citizens, where they have a normal influence, will be manipulated for the advancement of the objectives of the Jewish state."[12]

The second alternative, which would generate protracted agitation and propaganda and involve efforts to politicize Judaism, was no more desirable than the first. It would have a disruptive effect on American Jews.[13]

During his address, Wallach shared with his audience a letter he had received from the historian Hans Kohn. A former Zionist, Kohn essentially

agreed with the Council's claim about Zionism's opposition to the liberal ideas of the West:

> The Jewish nationalist philosophy which gave birth to Zionist ideology has developed entirely under German influence, the influence of German romantic nationalism with its emphasis on "blood," race, and descent as the most determining factor in human life, its historizing attempt to connect with a legendary past 2,000 or so years ago (the Germans of Tacitus' time; the Hebrews in Palestine . . .), its emphasis on folk as a mystical body, the source of civilization. In that this romantic nationalism is dramatically opposed to the liberal concepts of the West, especially U.S.A. according to which men of all kinds of descent, "blood," past belong to the nation to which they wish to owe loyalty, and to the civilization in midst of which they grow up.[14]

The first annual conference brought together for the first time Council leaders from all over the United States; it also served to focus attention on the practical problems facing the organization. The Council now began to brace itself for a protracted confrontation with Zionism.

With only ten rabbis present, the Philadelphia conference differed dramatically from the June 1942 Atlantic City meeting. True, some deference was given to religion. Rabbi Wolsey conducted an introductory service; Rabbis Perilman, Fineshriber, Philipson, and Goldenson offered invocations before various business meetings. But the conference focused exclusively on the struggle against Zionism. It did not even pretend to do anything for the revival of Reform Judaism.[15]

The Council conference received attention at the State Department. Wallace Murray, director of the Division of Near Eastern and African Affairs (NEA), reported its proceedings to Undersecretary of State Joseph C. Grew. In his memorandum, he related that the ACJ's position represented fairly how Zionism was viewed by its Jewish opponents.[16]

The Palestine Question Comes into the Spotlight

The State Department, keenly aware of Zionist pressures, became a major center of the opposition to Zionism. Beginning in 1943, the State Department produced a formula that became the basis for the public statements of the American government: No decision should be taken on the basic problem in Palestine without "full consultations with both Arabs and Jews."[17]

During 1945, distrustful of Zionists and concerned about the impact of a pro-Zionist policy on the Arabs, the State Department consistently

advised against making concessions to Zionist demands. President Roosevelt, although in close touch with Rabbi Stephen Wise and aware of the sensitivity of Jews to the Palestine issue, was reserved on the question of Zionism. His policy on Palestine remained ambiguous and undefined until his death in April 1945. He tended to reassure Zionists with generalities but did not allow himself to be pinned down on specifics. Roosevelt's skilled evasiveness regarding Palestine has led some historians to suggest that had he survived until 1948 a Jewish state might not have come into existence.[18]

The NEA, under the direction of Wallace Murray until April 1945 and Loy W. Henderson from April 1945 to June 1948, was acquainted with the division of American Jews into Zionists, non-Zionists, and anti-Zionists. It was seriously worried about Zionist efforts to influence American foreign policy. Shortly after President Roosevelt's 16 March 1945 meeting with Rabbi Wise, at which, according to Wise, the president reiterated his support for unrestricted Jewish immigration and a Jewish state in Palestine, Murray warned that the president's support for Zionism could result in bloodshed in the Middle East, "endanger the security of our immensely valuable oil concession in Saudi Arabia," and even throw the Arab world "into the arms of Soviet Russia."[19]

Two weeks later, Paul Alling, NEA deputy director, warning that the president's statements in favor of Zionism were creating a bad impression in the Middle East, argued that "if we were actually to implement the policy which the Zionists desire, the results would be disastrous." American policy, he insisted, should be founded on the principle of implementing no solution to the Palestine problem "without consultation with both Arabs and Jews."[20]

President Roosevelt died on 12 April 1945. Six days later, Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., told President Truman about the possibility of efforts by some Zionist leaders to solicit presidential comments in favor of the Zionist program. He cautioned the president against making any commitments on Palestine until he had studied the matter thoroughly.[21]

On 20 April 1945, the leadership of the AZEC and Wise met with Truman, who assured them he intended to continue Roosevelt's policy.[22] Acting Secretary of State Joseph C. Grew, however, informed President Truman on 1 May 1945 of Roosevelt's contradictory statements to Jews and Arabs:

> Although President Roosevelt at times gave expression to views sympathetic to certain Zionist aims, he also gave certain assurances to the Arabs which they regard as definite commitments on our part. On a

number of occasions within the past few years, he authorized the Department to assure the heads of the different Near Eastern Governments in his behalf that "in the view of this Government there should be no decision altering the basic situation in Palestine without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews."[23]

In April 1945 Loy W. Henderson replaced Wallace Murray as director of the NEA. For three years he was the State Department's most important official concerned with the Palestine question. Henderson, who had been in the Foreign Service since 1922, served in Eastern Europe from 1925 to 1929 and in the Soviet Union from 1929 to 1938. Following his Russian tour, he became assistant chief of the Division of European Affairs, a position he held until 1943, when he was appointed ambassador to Iraq. During his directorship of the NEA, Henderson came to be viewed by Zionists as their chief opponent. There is, however, no evidence to justify their charges of anti-Semitism. Actually, he respected moderate Zionists, such as Judah Magnes, Chaim Weizmann, and Stephen Wise. Henderson's opposition to Zionism was based on his assessment of the best interests of the United States in the Middle East. He believed the establishment of a Jewish state within an Arab region was both impractical and wrong. Not only would such a state be neither economically nor militarily defensible, but it would also alienate the Arabs and violate the principle of self-determination. Henderson was convinced a Jewish state in the Middle East would be indefinitely isolated in a sea of Arab hostility; moreover, he considered it undemocratic to turn Palestine, a country with a clear Arab majority, into a Jewish state.[24]

On 28 July 1945, three and a half months after Truman had succeeded Roosevelt, Clement Attlee replaced Winston Churchill as prime minister in Great Britain. A little more than two weeks later, World War II ended. Thus, during the transition period between war and peace, both the United States and Great Britain acquired new leaders, neither of whom possessed the prestige of his predecessor.

President Truman had no clear policy on Palestine. After returning from the Potsdam Conference, where he had managed to discuss Palestine privately with Attlee, Truman declared he favored allowing as many Jews as possible to enter that country. However, such an objective would have to be worked out diplomatically—without American troops.[25]

At the end of World War II, the full dimension of the Jewish catastrophe in Europe became known. The enormity of the Holocaust had a significant impact on Zionism. On the one hand, it dealt a serious blow to the

Zionists because the death of more than five million Jews eliminated a significant source of citizens for the prospective Jewish state. On the other hand, the European catastrophe imparted momentum to the Zionist movement. It heightened its emotional appeal and increased its militancy. Thus, Henderson's observation in June 1945 that "the extreme Zionists" were gaining support among Jews in the United States and abroad was accurate. The August 1945 Zionist conference in London reflected the radicalization of Zionism as well as the emergence of Palestine and the United States as the major Zionist centers. The London meeting not only adopted the Biltmore Program but also, in recognition of the importance of American Zionism, elected Rabbis Wise and Silver to the WZO and the Jewish Agency executives. After considerable infighting, the conferees also decided to maintain two Zionist offices in Washington, D.C.—one for the AZEC, another for the Jewish Agency.[26]

President Truman, caught between the conflicting pressures of the Zionists and the State Department experts, limited his policy objectives to the humanitarian efforts, trying to find a way to transfer to Palestine as many of the Holocaust survivors as possible. His concern for the Jewish displaced persons (DPs) liberated from Nazi concentration camps led him, on 22 June 1945, to approve a mission, headed by Earl G. Harrison, dean of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, to investigate their living conditions and views on resettlement. The Zionists, on their part, tried to convince the American army and the president, who wanted to be relieved of the burden of dealing with the DPs, that the Holocaust survivors could be absorbed only in Palestine.[27]

During the early months of 1945 the Council continued to stress vigorously the themes that had been formulated at its first annual conference. It offered Jews a philosophy of hope based on emancipation and integration, as opposed to the Zionist program, which, according to the ACJ, had been founded on frustration, defeatism, and dissatisfaction. In contrast to the Zionist preoccupation with Palestine, the ACJ claimed to be concerned for Jews everywhere. Zionists sought to ghettoize Jews; the Council, to liberate them.[28]

The Council refused to make concessions to Zionism. In the spring of 1945, it even rejected the idea of a binational state in Palestine, which Rabbi Judah Magnes, president of Hebrew University, advocated. Only a truly democratic solution—not a national or binational state—was acceptable to the ACJ. Equating its own goal of integration with the highest objectives of democracy, the ACJ insisted that the best solution to Jewish

problems depended on the expansion of democracy, not on a retreat to Jewish nationalism.[29]

In July 1945, realizing that a long-term solution to the Palestine problem was impossible at the moment, Lazaron called for compromise. Asserting that most Jews throughout the world were living under conditions of freedom and equality, he feared that a Jewish nationalist solution might play into the hands of anti-Semites. Lazaron questioned whether the 550,000 Jews living in Palestine or the million or million and a half who might possibly live there in the future should take precedence over the stability and security of the ten million Jews living elsewhere.[30]

In Lazaron's opinion, only compromise could prevent bloodshed in Palestine. In his own compromise plan, Lazaron called for international guarantees to be given to the Arabs to allay their fears of Jewish domination, for a more generous Jewish immigration policy to satisfy Jewish nationalists, and for local autonomy for both the Jewish and the Arab communities in Palestine. But the British mandate would continue, under international authority, until both communities learned to live and work together peacefully. Gradually, Lazaron felt, the people of Palestine would come to view themselves not as Jews, Muslims, or Christians, but as Palestinians. In the meantime, the international authority would have to suppress the extremists and encourage the moderates.[31]

During the summer of 1945, in their concerted drive to secure passage of favorable congressional resolutions, the Zionists obtained the support of thirty-seven governors, who petitioned President Truman to allow mass immigration to Palestine and to bring about the transformation of that country "into a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth." In reaction to that petition, Rosenwald wrote to all those governors on 20 August 1945 informing them of the Council's position. From their replies, Rosenwald inferred that the governors "learned for the first time from us that they were entering a political question" and were not dealing merely with a search for a place of refuge for Jews.[32]

President Truman's pronouncement at his 16 August 1945 press conference, stressing his reluctance to send a half-million American soldiers to make peace in Palestine, pleased the Council. It interpreted the president's declaration as the most realistic statement to have come from the White House and the one most damaging to the Zionist objectives.[33]

On 21 August, Truman received Earl G. Harrison's report on the European DPs. Harrison painted a grim picture. "We appear to be treating the Jews as the Nazis treated them," he reported, "except that we do not exterminate them." The vast majority of the DPs were eager to leave

Germany and Austria; most wanted to immigrate to Palestine. Harrison recommended that one hundred thousand certificates be given to Jews who wished to go to Palestine.[34]

Moved by Harrison's report, Truman not only dispatched a message to General Eisenhower asking him to improve the conditions in the DP camps, but he also sent, on 31 August 1945, a copy of the report with a long letter to Prime Minister Attlee. In the letter, he endorsed the report's findings and urged that as many DPs as possible be permitted to enter Palestine. Truman's view did not reflect the position of State Department professionals, who on the same day that Truman wrote to Attlee advised against American support for large-scale immigration to Palestine. The president's letter, nevertheless, initiated a period of more than two months of negotiations between the United States and Great Britain, leading to the formation of the Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry.[35]

In the meantime, Zionist pressures intensified on all fronts: They increased armed resistance and illegal immigration in Palestine, organized mass demonstrations in the United States and abroad, and renewed agitation for passage of the stalled congressional resolutions. Zionists expressed their demands more forcefully than ever before.[36]

Harrison's report was made public on 29 September 1945. Responding positively, the Council observed that it "was concerned with the humanitarian needs of human beings": and not "with the fifty year old political ideology of Zionism." According to the ACJ, the DP question, if treated solely as a refugee problem, could be solved quickly. Unfortunately, the Zionists were using the suffering of the refugees to promote their political objectives.[37]

Throughout September 1945, in response to the mounting Zionist pressures, the Council pressed on with its own intensive anti-Zionist campaign. In the middle of the month, a Council editorial went so far as to claim that anti-Semitism, while declining in Europe, was rising in the Near East because of Zionist activities.[38]

As it was criticizing Zionism, the Council continued to tout the virtues of emancipation. On 28 September, it celebrated the anniversary of the granting of full citizenship to French Jews—their emancipation—in 1791. Berger used the occasion to remind Council members of how the French Revolution had led the way to a normal life for Jews in the liberal democratic world.[39]

Elmer Berger's Jewish Dilemma

The publication of Elmer Berger's book *The Jewish Dilemma* in September 1945 was an important event in Council history. Written under the stresses of his extremely demanding job, the book represented the crystallization of Berger's ideas about Zionism and anti-Zionism—ideas that he had outlined in his speech at the January conference of the Council. One of the most comprehensive Jewish critiques of Zionism, the book provided the ACJ with a powerful ideological weapon for its propaganda war with the Zionist movement.[40]

In *The Jewish Dilemma* Berger argued that the Western world in general and Jews in particular were confused about the status of Jews. On the one hand, Jews and others condemned the Nazis' ideas on race; on the other, some Jews were claiming to be a separate people or race. "Isn't it a curious thing, and tragically ironic," he pondered, somewhat overstating his case, "that Zionists and extreme anti-Semites agree on the same solution—isolate the Jews in a country of their own."[41]

Berger rejected the thesis that the history of the Jews was inexplicably unique and denied the existence of such a thing as a "Jewish people." Expounding the themes of emancipation and integration, Berger observed that "where men are free, Jews live in security. Where they are not free, Jews, and others know no freedom." To him, the German experience did not prove the failure of his ideas about the nature of emancipation and integration. On the contrary, it actually proved his thesis. In Germany, according to Berger, emancipation did not fail—it was never real. What failed in Germany was democracy, and that affected Jews just as it had affected all other Germans.[42]

For Berger, the philosophies of emancipation and Jewish nationalism were irreconcilable. He defined emancipation as the application of the principles of democracy to people who happened to be "of the Jewish faith." Emancipation entailed the universal principle of equal rights and obligations for Jews as citizens of the nations in which they lived. Jews who supported emancipation also believed in the freedom of Jews from corporate control of their lives by other Jews. In short, emancipation was really "another name for man's evolution of liberty."[43]

Jewish nationalism, Berger claimed, was based on the premise that the Jews were a "homeless people" in exile who shared a common aspiration for a Jewish state. According to the nationalists, Jews could regain their normality only in Palestine. Unlike believers in emancipation, Jewish nationalists were pessimists; they were willing to dismiss as a failure the

whole effort to win equal rights for Jews everywhere. Consequently, there was a fundamental conflict between supporters of emancipation and nationalists.[44]

Jewish nationalists, according to Berger, assumed that hostility to Jews was eternal and immutable. Thus, from its very inception, Zionism belittled emancipation, seeking persistently to segregate Jews and convince them to turn their backs on emancipation. Moreover, from the time of Herzl, Zionists were intolerant of opposition. Anti-Zionists, on their part, "never really understood Zionism." Consequently, they were usually outsmarted by Zionists.[45]

Berger did not spare the Balfour Declaration, the "Magna Carta" of Jewish nationalism, which had helped to create the impression that the average Jew wanted a separate political entity. Its entire premise was "medieval and unacceptable." Jewish organizations that were supposedly anti-Zionist in their orientation, including the American Jewish Committee, the Anglo–Jewish Association, and the Alliance Israelite Universelle, misunderstood Zionism: They "accepted the Balfour Declaration, protesting that it did not imply a Jewish state, that it was to be considered only in a philanthropic, refugee, benevolent, cultural spirit." Thus, ironically, institutions founded to defend the hard-won rights of emancipation "surrendered by default to a pre-emancipation concept."[46]

In the 1920s, Berger maintained, Zionists used the device of "synthetic Zionism," a fusion of practical and political work in Palestine, to gain the approval of antinationalist Jews. The invention of the term "non-Zionism" was another clever exercise in semantics that enabled antinationalist Jews to accept Zionism passively and at the same time to imply they were rejecting it. This anomalous position "was the first step in the newest chapter of the sorry, lamentable tale of appeasement of Zionism by anti-nationalist Jews." Ironically, "non-Zionism" came into existence in the 1920s, when Zionism was bankrupt. "In this beggared condition," Berger observed, "it came to the leaders of emancipated Jewry and emancipated Jewry through mistaken generosity surrendered." Vigorous opposition to Zionism stopped, and a "fellow-traveller" philosophy called non-Zionism evolved.[47]

Next came the creation in 1929 of the enlarged Jewish Agency. Berger considered the accord on the Agency, which had resulted from negotiations between Weizmann and Marshall, a development fraught with serious implications. First, it created an illusion of "Jewish unity" and made Palestine appear to play a central role in Jewish life. Second, the Agency provided a formula that made it easy to create the impression that antinationalism was ungenerous. With Zionism propagandized as the *only* solution to the

"Jewish problem," antinationalism was made to appear as a refusal to help unfortunate Jews. Third, it included antinationalists in a partnership in which they could not exercise any control. And finally, it freed the Zionist organization from sole responsibility for the implementation of the Palestine mandate and fulfilled Weizmann's otherwise unauthorized promise of support by a "Jewish people." The upshot was that there was nothing among emancipated and integrated Jews to match the concentrated, organized Zionist machine, although it was the emancipated Jews who had actually made the success of Zionism possible.[48]

According to Berger, the Zionists hoped to achieve their state out of the agony of World War II. Since Europe had come under Axis control, the Zionists had shifted their center of activities to the United States. Aware of the anti-Zionism of American Jews and the limited appeal of Zionism in the United States, the Zionists focused on the themes of rescue and sanctuary. Yet they certainly did "not neglect to organize an Emergency Committee [ECZA and AZEC] which labored with mounting zeal to inject Zionism's political-nationalism into every crevice of the American scene."[49]

Berger concluded his critique by referring to the congressional resolutions and the Zionist demands for a "Jewish Commonwealth." Throughout their campaign in support of the resolutions, the Zionists claimed all the work done in Palestine as an exclusively Zionist achievement. They used the tragic flight of persecuted Jews to Palestine as proof of world Jewry's "ineradicable striving for a national Jewish state." But the appeal for the abrogation of the White Paper in 1944 was lost because it had been unnecessarily linked to the Zionist demand for the "Jewish Commonwealth." Only Jewish nationalist ends mattered to the Zionists. In fact, Berger even suggested the Zionists feared the possibility of the abrogation of the White Paper, a matter on which all Jews agreed, because it might hinder the drive for a Jewish commonwealth.[50]

Berger's critique of Zionism was exceptionally frank and perceptive. Although intensely polemical, it was free of *ad hominem* attacks. Indeed, as Berger argued, Zionism was skeptical about the efficacy of emancipation, intolerant of opponents, and preoccupied with establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. Berger, however, did have a major problem. Treating Zionism as if it were a monolithic movement, he ignored its various ideological divisions and failed to differentiate between its American and Palestinian branches. As a result, his analysis of Zionism, although generally accurate, had the obvious flaw that plagues all polemical works—oversimplification.

Contrasted with Zionism, Berger asserted, "emancipation was the fulfillment of the desires of ordinary human beings who happened to be Jews,

to be free." The first expression of the wish to make emancipation a conscious program for the Jews was Moses Mendelssohn's, who had shown to the Jews that they could be both *free* and *Jews*.[51]

The greatest success story of Judaism was in the United States, where Jews could maintain their religious identity and live as free people. Indeed, American Reform Judaism represented emancipation at its best. Comparing Germany and the United States, Berger concluded that Reform Judaism failed in Germany because that country had been nurtured on "pseudoromantic blood–race theories." After 1848 many Reform followers, the disciples of Mendelssohn, came to the United States. It was in the atmosphere of American freedom that they "found the opportunity to develop the emancipation program." Unfortunately, lamented Berger, Zionism made inroads into American Jewish life and Reform Judaism. But there was no need for despair. Once Jews freed themselves from the false doctrine of Jewish nationalism and extended American democratic values, a new generation would accept itself and its Jewish religious heritage as something absolutely normal.[52]

The Jewish Dilemma, a synthesis of Berger's thought on Zionism and the alternative to Zionism, provided the Council with a systematic ideological statement for internal indoctrination as well as an important tool for external publicity as the Palestine issue was moving into the center of the political arena. Indeed, by the fall of 1945, both the Zionists and the ACJ were bracing themselves for the battle for Palestine.

Ironically, *The Jewish Dilemma,* probably the most comprehensive analysis of Zionism by a Jewish critic in the 1940s, appeared at a time when there was little willingness among American Jews to engage in sophisticated or scholarly discussion about the fine points of Zionism. For American Jews at the end of World War II, the Palestine issue had become an emotional, not an academic, question.

The Council's Campaign of Late 1945

Toward the end of 1945, the Council stepped up its anti-Zionist campaign. At the end of September, claiming that "no one possesses the authority or right to speak in the name of all Americans of Jewish faith," Rosenwald protested against the mass meetings and other devices employed by Zionists to create the impression that all the Jews in the United States supported Zionist aims.[53]

On 5 October, Rosenwald sent a confidential memorandum, endorsed by forty-six prominent ACJ members, to President Truman. Expressing his

wish to meet with the president, he described the ACJ as "the only organization with a mandate from its constituents to oppose Jewish nationalism and a Jewish state." Rosenwald requested that the Council "be consulted, in adequate time, before any decisions on this subject are reached." He explained to the president that establishment of the Council had become necessary because what once had been a humanitarian program, the issue of settling refugees, was being replaced by and exploited for a political goal—the creation of a Jewish state—that was unrelated to the humanitarian objectives and often even in contradiction to them.[54]

On the evening of 8 November 1945, Rabbis Lazaron and Stephen Wise met on the radio program "America's Town Meeting of the Air" to discuss the subject "Should We Support the Establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine Now?" It was a rare side-by-side presentation of the Zionist and anti-Zionist positions.

Rabbi Wise told the audience he was present at the occasion only out of respect for the democratic processes out of which the Town Meeting of the Air had grown. For him the question of Zionism had ceased to be a "debatable and discussable" matter. Presenting the Zionist position, Wise argued that the Jews built up Palestine in ancient times. The Arabs turned it into a wilderness, but in more recent times the Jewish people transformed Palestine into a beautiful and fertile country once again. Because of its commitment in the Balfour Declaration, Great Britain was specifically responsible for establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. As for the United States, not only every president from Wilson to Truman had spoken in support of Palestine as a Jewish national home, but also both the Democratic and Republican parties favored it in their 1944 platforms; therefore, the United States was obligated to support the plan. Wise was also certain that if a referendum were held on the issue among the five million Jews in America, four and a half million would vote for a Jewish state. Likewise, Wise asserted that "Christian opinion and the Christian conscience" sided completely with the Zionists in their "determination to create a Jewish state in Palestine now." As evidence of the desperate need for such a state, Wise quoted Earl Harrison's recommendation to let Jews go to Palestine "before the surviving perish."[55]

Wise concluded his statement with a strong assurance that the Jewish state would be founded on justice:

> The answer to the need is only one—a Jewish homeland, a Jewish state. There will be no injustice to any man or to any nation. It would not be a Jewish state if the Jewish state rested upon injustice. Justice, justice

> shalt thou pursue. We want to do injustice neither to a single Arab nor to the Arab people in Palestine as you know.[56]

Lazaron agreed with Wise on the need to save "the remnants of our brethren." Pleading for the abrogation of the White Paper, he fully endorsed Jewish immigration to Palestine. Almost immediately, however, Lazaron indicated that the question debated was a proposal for a Jewish state—not a discussion of a humanitarian issue. In response to Wise's claim, he correctly asserted that no American president had ever committed the United States to "the present Zionist program." The actual position of the American government was not to support a final decision that "would affect the basic situation in Palestine without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews."[57]

Concerning the Zioinist assumption of a Jewish majority in a Jewish state in Palestine, Lazaron's reaction was that "to withhold self-rule from the majority population until the minority becomes the majority violates all democratic procedure and will hardly commend itself as just." But he doubted that even unlimited Jewish immigration would give the Jews the majority they desired. Moreover, even if such a majority were to be achieved artificially, the high Arab birthrate would soon reverse it. Consequently, Lazaron declared:

> When one considers these facts as well as the fact that the Jewish state would probably be the object of economic boycott, ill will, anger, and would need military force to maintain it, surely it is not unreasonable to question whether our country should support the establishment of any state under such limitations.[58]

Lazaron suggested there were workable alternatives to a Jewish state, including: increased help to stricken Jews by private and intergovernmental agencies, a democratic and humanitarian arrangement for facilitating Jewish immigration into Palestine "without upsetting the equilibrium in the Near East," and opening other countries, including the United States, to Jewish immigration. The ultimate goal for Palestine should be the establishment of "a democratic commonwealth with cultural and religious autonomy guaranteed to the different communities."[59]

Four days later, continuing his own search for compromise in Palestine, Lazaron sent a note to Loy Henderson offering to talk to the Arabs. He wondered whether it would be worthwhile to explore the possibility of working out a compromise with the Egyptian minister or with a representative of the Arab League. Lazaron suggested that sometimes such things were done

"in extra official channels with greater ease than they would be if surrounded by the restraints of official status."[60]

On 13 November 1945, President Truman announced that the United States and Great Britain had agreed to create an Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry to examine the position of the Jews in Europe and the situation in Palestine. After strong pressure from President Truman, the British agreed that its emphasis would be on Palestine, not European Jewry, and the report would be ready within 120 days. The committee would have six British and six American members. Britain also announced it would allow Jewish immigration of 1,500 persons a month pending the outcome of the inquiry. When discussing the formation of the Committee of Inquiry in Parliament, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin firmly rejected the notion that all Jews were Zionists and the Zionist proposition that only Palestine could solve the Jewish problem.[61]

Many Zionists, perceiving it as a delaying tactic, were suspicious of another committee of inquiry. Nevertheless, the WZO leadership agreed to cooperate with the proposed committee. The Arabs were also suspicious, particularly because the British allowed Jewish immigration to Palestine to continue.[62]

On 14 November 1945, in a telegram to President Truman, Rosenwald enthusiastically welcomed the decision to form the Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry:

> We Americans of Jewish faith extend to you our deep appreciation for your sincere interest in alleviating the suffering of *displaced persons*, particularly Jews. We heartily endorse the program you have undertaken jointly with Prime Minister Attlee in the solution of the Palestine problem. We likewise *endorse the speech of Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin* and the comments at his press conference following his message to Commons. This organization stands ready to help you in every possible way in furthering the objectives of your policy.[63]

Three days later, Rosenwald publicly applauded the Anglo–American agreement in a statement that received widespread publicity in the daily press.[64]

In the meantime, Rosenwald had been trying for more than three months to arrange a personal interview with President Truman. His first request, in August, was denied. The White House did not respond to Rosenwald's 5 October confidential memorandum to President Truman. After talking with Representative Charles A. Eaton late in October and sending a letter to Secretary of State James F. Byrnes on 2 November,

Rosenwald received a reply from Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson informing him that Truman was extremely busy. Since the White House realized the Council represented only a minority of American Jews, there did not seem to be any hurry to grant Rosenwald's request.[65]

Rosenwald persisted. He immediately informed Acheson of the Council's complete agreement with the position of the State Department that the Zionist proposals might involve the United States in conflict in the Middle East and harm Jews in Palestine and elsewhere. Finally, after three more weeks of contacts with Dean Acheson, Samuel Rosenman, and Matthew Connelly (Truman's appointments secretary), during which the Council—in Rosenwald's judgment—made a nuisance of itself, Rosenwald received an appointment to see President Truman.[66]

On 4 December 1945, the same day he had spoken with Chaim Weizmann, President Truman met with Rosenwald. Although remaining noncommittal, the president gave Rosenwald the opportunity to explain the Council's position. After stressing that he was speaking only in the name of ten thousand Council members and that no one person could speak with authority for all Americans of Jewish faith, Rosenwald acquainted the president with the Council's views and asked to be allowed to present them before the forthcoming inquiry committee. Moreover, he urged the president to facilitate the entry of DPs into the United States as quickly as possible "under present immigration laws."[67]

Rosenwald also left with President Truman a memorandum that contained a seven-point plan for "a fair and peaceful settlement" of the Palestine situation and a rapid solution of the DP problem. The Council asked that "Palestine shall not be a Moslem, Christian, or a Jewish state but a country in which people of all faiths can play their full and equal part," that is, a democratic state, where all the citizens would share equal rights and responsibilities. As a solution for the Jewish DP question, the Council proposed a liberal immigration policy, according to which Jews would be allowed to resettle "on a basis corresponding as nearly as possible to their preferences, with countries of the United Nations cooperating to take in a fair number of the displaced." The Council hoped the United States would set a high moral example for the rest of the world by taking in as many DPs as possible.[68]

Shortly after seeing President Truman, Rosenwald also met with Lord Halifax, the British ambassador to the United States. Through Halifax, who received him cordially, Rosenwald presented the Council's position, including the request for continued Jewish immigration to Palestine, to the British government.[69]

December also saw the revival of the congressional resolutions on Palestine. Despite Truman's opposition, they passed the Senate on 17 December and the House on 19 December 1945 by overwhelming voice votes. Only Senator Tom Connally, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, spoke openly in favor of their defeat. It should be noted that, after their passage, Secretary of State Byrnes asked Colonel William Eddy, the American ambassador to Saudi Arabia, to explain to King Ibn Saud that the concurrent resolutions passed by Congress were not binding on the president.[70]

On 22 December 1945, President Truman announced he had directed several governmental agencies to expedite admission into the United States, within the quota system, of 39,000 DPs. Since it had been advocating precisely such a humanitarian approach, the Council hastened to thank Truman, expressing the hope that "followed by similar actions in other lands this will help solve the problem of the displaced persons at an early time."[71]

Throughout 1945 relations between the Council and the American Jewish Committee remained as delicate as they had been in 1944. The leadership of the AJC tried to avoid controversy and public debate with both the Council and the Zionists. Occasional discussions between the AJC and the ACJ led nowhere. Concerned about hostility and competition from the AJC, Rosenwald wanted to clarify the differences between the two groups. The AJC's professional staff, convinced that any connection with the ACJ would be harmful, favored complete dissociation from the anti-Zionists. John Slawson, Berger's counterpart in the AJC, weary of ideological discussions, wanted the AJC to concentrate on the creation of a wholesome Jewish life in America. There were still a few individuals, belonging both to the AJC and the ACJ, who hoped that the two groups might find some way to cooperate, but their efforts proved futile. By the end of 1945 the two organizations had drifted farther apart than ever before.[72]

Zionists remained as hostile to the Council in 1945 as they had been in 1944. For the Zionists the first annual conference of the ACJ looked "like a conspiracy underground movement" and a meeting of whining, self-pitying patricians. Repeatedly the Zionists described the Council as "enemies within," "self-haters," "assimilationists," appeasers or anti-Semites, defamers of Jews, practitioners of "America first" Americanism, and with similar appellations. The CUP advised its local chairmen that the best technique for fighting the ACJ was to keep up the "offensive—positive Zionist education—not point-by-point defense."[73]

Toward the end of 1945, the Zionists scored two very impressive coups in their propaganda war with the Council: a derogatory comment about the activities of the ACJ from Albert Einstein and the publication of a Roper poll showing overwhelming support for the Zionist program by American Jews.

In mid-October the CUP released a statement by Einstein harshly critical of the Council:

> This organization appears to me to be nothing more than a pitiable attempt to obtain favor and toleration from our enemies by betraying *true Jewish ideals* and mimicking those who claim to stand for 100 percent Americanism. I believe this method to be both undignified and ineffective.[74]

Rosenwald immediately wrote to Einstein asking the renowned scientist for a meeting in order to explain the Council's position to him.[75] Einstein, however, sent Rosenwald's letter back with an undated, handwritten note in German at its bottom margin:

> I have made my statement on firm conviction that it is my duty to counteract the baneful influence of the American Council for Judaism, Inc., with all the energy (at my command). My information is derived from material published in your own publication. I do not believe in interviews, for I know that nothing could be gained from people whose views are public property.[76]

Even more damaging was the publication late in November of a Roper poll of American Jews. It showed that 80.1 percent supported the Zionist goal of a Jewish state in Palestine and only 10.5 percent opposed it. The results of the poll caused apprehension among Council leaders and, of course, boosted Zionist morale.[77]

The Zionists were overjoyed. Commenting on the poll, Israel Goldstein, president of the ZOA, immediately proclaimed that it clearly revealed "the will and sentiment" of 90 percent of the "Jewish people." Felix Levy asserted that "no matter what the slick propaganda of the anti-Zionist groups may claim, the cold fact of the matter is that the Jews came to Palestine bearing peace and democracy." Arthur Lelyveld declared the poll was an indisputable proof that the Council represented a distinct minority within the American Jewish community.[78]

Thus, the accomplishments of the Council in 1945 were mixed. The organization experienced maximum growth in membership and chapters.

Throughout the year, its views and political objectives were clearly articulated. But in the battle for the minds of Jews the Council was no match for the Zionists. By the end of 1945, Jewish public opinion was definitely on the side of Zionism, with Council isolation within the American Jewish community increasing.

But the Council was not defeated. On the contrary, its views on immigration and Palestine were so close to those of the American government that it became, in effect, a support group for its policies. The formation of the Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry and the president's directive on the DPs pleased the Council and were supported by it. Above all, with the Palestine problem still far from settled, the Council considered itself very much an active party in the search for a solution. Thus, despite its growing estrangement from the Jewish public by the end of 1945, the ACJ still stood as the most redoubtable Jewish opponent of Zionism in the United States.

CHAPTER 6

The Search for Compromise in Palestine

The Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry: An Attempt at Compromise

Between January 1946 and February 1947, the Palestine question emerged as a major international problem. The period began on a promising note, with the United States and Great Britain cooperating in an effort to find a compromise solution. It proved a difficult task.

The Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry (AACI), the formation of which had been announced simultaneously on 13 November 1945 by President Harry Truman and Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, was a joint attempt by the United States and Great Britain to resolve the Palestine impasse. It was instructed to examine the condition of European Jews, to evaluate, in consultation with representatives of Arabs and Jews, the prospects for Jewish immigration to Palestine, and to recommend temporary and permanent solutions for these problems. The British and the Americans differed significantly in their expectations of the AACI. Bevin hoped it would become a means for committing the United States to a joint policy on Palestine, including financial and military assistance. Truman, however, wanted it to serve as an instrument for sanctioning the quick evacuation of many nonrepatriable Europeans.[1]

The AACI consisted of six Americans and six Englishmen, including American and British cochairmen. It was headed by Joseph Hutcheson, a federal judge from Texas, and Sir John Singleton, a judge of Britain's High Court. The other American members were Frank W. Buxton, editor of the *Boston Herald*; James G. McDonald, former League of Nations high commissioner for German refugees; Bartley C. Crum, a San Francisco attorney; William Phillips, former undersecretary of state; and Frank Aydelotte, director of the Institute for Advanced International Studies at Princeton University and former president of Swarthmore College. The remaining five British members were Wilfred P. Crick, Midland Bank economic

adviser; Sir Frederick Leggett, former deputy secretary of the Ministry of Labour and National Services; and Members of Parliament Richard S. Crossman, Lord (Robert) Morrison (both of Labour), and Major Reginald E. Manningham-Butler (Conservative).[2]

The AACI began its work in January 1946. It took testimony in Washington, London, the DP camps in Europe, Cairo, Jerusalem, Beirut, Amman, Damascus, Baghdad, and Riyadh. After hearing the views of Earl G. Harrison, the Zionists and other Jewish groups, and the European DPs, as well as the Arabs of Palestine and neighboring states, the AACI moved to Lausanne, Switzerland, at the end of March to prepare its report and recommendations.[3]

The Council sent the AACI a nine-page memorandum, and Rosenwald testified at its hearings in Washington. Both the memorandum and the testimony categorically rejected the creation of a Jewish state as a solution for the DP and the Palestine problems.

In the "Memorandum to the Anglo–American Commission of Inquiry," the ACJ repeated the recommendations it had made to President Truman during Rosenwald's visit to the White House on 4 December 1945. It warned that any other course of action would foster racial, religious, and nationalistic divisions in Palestine and, consequently, lead to civil war and potential international involvement in the conflict.[4]

The Council objected to any promise of a Jewish state. Such a pledge would imply artificially raising "one element of the Palestine population [Jews], now a minority, to the status of majority" and postponing the establishment of a democratic state in the country pending the transformation of the Jewish minority into a majority. This, claimed the ACJ, would inevitably encourage the formation of a state built on racial or religious foundations. Moreover, it would create numerous problems for the majority of Jews living outside Palestine—problems that would derive from their relationship with such a Jewish state, "a state of which they are not now and never will be citizens, but which, even in its present incipient state, claims, in varying forms and degrees, support and loyalty from among them." For essentially the same reasons the ACJ objected to proposals for creating a binational state in Palestine.[5]

According to the Council, granting official recognition and sanction to the development of separate nationalities in Palestine, instead of encouraging a Palestinian nationality, promoted discord and made conflict inevitable. In fact, the conflict in Palestine was already responsible for appeals to various groups outside Palestine: to Arab states in the Middle East and to Jews throughout the world. "So long as Palestine is subject to

pressures from people who do not, and never intend to, live in Palestine," warned the ACJ, "this situation will be fraught with danger."[6]

The ACJ asked for a reevaluation of past declarations concerning Palestine, stressing the need to base a new policy toward it on justice, workability, and peace. The Balfour Declaration, a confusing and ambiguous document, required careful reexamination. In particular, the phrase "a national home for the Jewish people," which had encouraged those who were seeking to nationalize the life of Jews throughout the world, required close scrutiny.[7]

Moreover, the two basic conditions appended to the promise of the Balfour Declaration also created confusion: One stressed that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine"; the other, that nothing shall be done which may prejudice "the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country." The ACJ considered establishment of a Jewish state a clear violation of the first condition.[8]

The creation of a Jewish state, the ACJ maintained, would *ipso facto* violate the second condition because it would affect the status of Jews in other countries. In fact, there were several current examples of the harmful effects of Zionism on Jews living outside of Palestine: the Zionist efforts to organize immigration of American Jews to Palestine, the introduction of Zionist issues into the political life of Jews in various countries and the false claim of a "Jewish bloc vote," as well as the damaging impact of the Palestine conflict on the status and lives of Jews in Arab countries.[9]

The ACJ insisted on a liberal approach to the issue of the Jewish DPs. A world in which Jews enjoyed equal rights would provide "a fundamental solution to the problem of the Jews, as well as the vexing Palestine situation." The ACJ also denied the Zionist assertion that nationalism drew Jews to Palestine. Jews went to Palestine, as they had gone to other countries, to escape anti-Semitism, discrimination, and oppression—not "out of any mystic national yearning." Hence, eliminating the violations of individual rights, including the evil of anti-Semitism, would reduce Jewish movement to Palestine to an insignificant trickle.[10]

For short-term action, however, the ACJ urged maximum aid for the DPs, rapid implementation of President Truman's 22 December 1945 directive on immigration, and acceptance by other members of the United Nations of a fair share of DPs. In the longer run, action should be taken to implement the human-rights provisions of the United Nations and "to assure the equality of rights and obligations of those of Jewish faith in all parts of the world." Moreover, future economic assistance to any country

should be contingent on its government's full acceptance of equality for all its citizens and commitment to human rights.[11]

Lessing Rosenwald testified before the AACI on 10 January 1946. Rejecting the classification of Jews as a race or nation and referring to pre–World War II immigration figures, he argued that Jews had not considered themselves "nationally" homeless. Nor had they been drawn to Palestine "out of any genuine sense of its being for them a national home." The sudden emphasis on Palestine as the only place holding hope for the immediate resettlement of European Jews was based on two erroneous beliefs: first, the assumption that in Palestine the refugees would be welcome by all the inhabitants and thus be able to resume living in peace and security; second, the supposition that there was no other place in the world the DPs could go.[12]

In Rosenwald's opinion, Palestine could at best be considered one—not the only one—of the places to which Jews should be able to immigrate. Palestine ought to contribute to the alleviation of the refugee problem. But this would be possible only if "the claim that Jews possess unlimited national rights to the land, and that the country shall take the form of a racial or theocratic state" were renounced once and for all, and if the Jewish DPs immigrated to Palestine in an orderly manner without upsetting its economic and political stability. These immigrants would also have to accept Palestinian nationality. Only under such conditions could Palestine ultimately hope to acquire a democratic self-government. Therefore, Rosenwald argued, everything possible, including amendment or annulment of former declarations or commitments, had to be done to insure peace in Palestine. Without such a peace, "Jews who may leave Europe and go to Palestine may go from 'the frying pan into the fire.' "[13]

Rosenwald argued that a liberal immigration policy and the granting of full citizenship to Jews would provide the best solution for the DP problem. Praising President Truman's immigration directive and asking other nations to take similar action, he proposed a UN conference at which member states would commit themselves to take in portion of the refugees. Moreover, he saw no reason why the DPs could not acquire full citizenship in the countries in which they were currently living, including the former Axis states and their satellites. Rosenwald concluded with the assertion that, since World War II had been fought to stamp out racial segregation and the Nazi pattern of race-states, to accept an attitude implying that Jewish DPs could not live in Europe and had to be removed to a state of their own would be a denial of "all that we fought to achieve." Thus, in effect,

Rosenwald equated the Council's rationale for its position on Palestine and the DPs to the liberal principles for which the United States and its allies supposedly fought in World War II.[14]

Rosenwald spent more than two hours responding to questions. The reactions of the members of the AACI to Rosenwald varied, ranging from the obvious sympathy of the cochairmen and Frank Aydelotte to Bartley Crum's and James McDonald's apparent hostility. McDonald, according to Rosenwald, asked questions intended to minimize the importance of the Council.[15]

In one lively exchange, McDonald asked Rosenwald to explain why the Council believed Zionism to be inconsistent with the Zionists' patriotism as citizens of the countries where they were living. He wanted to know specifically whether great statesmen such as Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, and Woodrow Wilson, who at various times shared the Zionist position on Palestine, "would have lent themselves to a program which would have implied even remotely divided loyalty." Rosenwald replied that those statesmen "probably did not understand all of the implications that were [involved] in Zionism."[16]

The Council's testimony infuriated the Zionists. When Rosenwald completed his presentation, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise asked Judge Hutcheson for permission to rebut Rosenwald's "defamation of the dead and the libel upon the living." At first Hutcheson was reluctant to let him talk, but Wise promised that he would require only two minutes or less. Hutcheson relented and gave him two minutes. Wise proceeded to read the passages from Justice Brandeis stating that Zionism and American patriotism were not incompatible and that "loyalty to America demands rather that each American Jew become a Zionist." Then, shaking his finger, he reprimanded Hutcheson for appearing to approve of Rosenwald's testimony, which he described as defamatory to the memory of such dead Zionists as Brandeis, Cardozo, and Mack, and which he said also questioned the loyalty of such living Zionists as Justice Frankfurter, Wise, and Wise's associates. "Your charity, Mr. Chairman, your kindness, to the witness," said Wise, "does not cover up or cancel the defamation of the dead. . . . In the name of 5,000,000 American Jews I resent that defamation of the dead and the living."[17]

Berger would not allow McDonald's questions concerning "dual allegiance" and Rabbi Wise's subsequent statement to go unanswered. On 25 February 1946, he sent the Anglo–American Committee a supplementary memorandum in which he explained:

> Almost universally American Jews, enrolled in the Zionist ranks, are so enrolled out of humanitarian and philanthropic motivations and without awareness of the legal and political implications of the movement. There can therefore be no challenging the loyalty and patriotism of American Jews, Zionists or anti-Zionists. There can be an inquiry into the implications and logical consequences of Zionism as a philosophy and as a political program.[18]

Berger insisted that the quotation attributed to Supreme Court Justice Brandeis did not, in itself, tell the whole story. Brandeis, he argued, was eminently qualified as an authority on Americanism, not on Zionism. Moreover, Berger called attention to Brandeis's removal from the leadership of the American Zionist movement and to the repudiation of his conception of Zionism "by the traditional and long-standing Zionists whose views had determined and currently still determine, the character and nature of Zionism."[19]

Only a week after Rosenwald's testimony, on 19 and 20 January 1946, the Council held its second annual conference in Philadelphia. About 150 delegates from all over the United States attended. In the major address, Berger spoke of the ACJ's responsibility to educate American Jews in the positive philosophy of integration, a task for which the organization was uniquely qualified.[20]

After thoroughly discussing the Council's problems and program, the delegates passed four resolutions. The ACJ thanked President Truman for his executive order regarding the DPs and appealed for a greater effort to solve the refugee problem. Urging members of the United Nations to open wide their doors for DP immigration, the ACJ also asked that measures be taken to insure equality and opportunity for people of all races and creeds. It called on Great Britain to abandon the restrictions imposed on Jews by the 1939 White Paper pending the findings of the AACI. Finally, the ACJ appealed to all American Jews, fortunate to have escaped the horrors that many European Jews had endured, to approach the problems of their coreligionists with compassion and understanding, while avoiding the "false lures of power politics and separatist nationalism." In short, American Jews should concentrate on the humanitarian effort of helping Jewish refugees without linking such assistance to the Zionist program. The underlying assumption of this approach was that solving the refugee problem would seriously weaken the Zionist cause.[21]

Between January and April 1946, while the work of the AACI was in progress, the situation in Palestine seriously deteriorated. Great Britain's

consent to the entry of 1,500 Jews a month—a number slightly exceeding the quota in the 1939 White Paper—pending the outcome of the inquiry, did not impress the Zionists. The Mossad le-Aliyah Bet (Institute for Parallel Immigration), the Haganah's instrument for promoting illegal Jewish immigration, intensified its activities but failed to crash the gates. The British seized all eleven Mossad ships that reached Palestine from January until June 1946.[22]

Violence in Palestine escalated dramatically. In fact, since October 1945, when the Jewish underground forces agreed to coordinate their anti-British activities, a united Yishuv resistance movement had been in existence. The three groups that joined in the struggle against the British were the Socialist-dominated Haganah, Etzel (*Irgun Tzvai Leumi,* National Military Organization), the underground military arm of the rightist Zionist Revisionists; and Lechi, (*Lochamei Herut Israel,* Fighters for Israel's Freedom), an extremist Etzel splinter faction. Between January and April 1946, these organizations committed more than half a dozen impressive terrorist acts against the British. They bombed a coast-guard station at Givat Olga on 20 January, attacked radar and police stations in Haifa and near Tel Aviv on 20 and 21 February, and assaulted the Lydda airport as well as the Kastina airdrome on 25 February; the British military camps in Sarafand and Rehovot were raided on 6 March. On 25 April, Etzel members killed seven British soldiers in an attack on the Sixth Airborne Division's car park near Tel Aviv.[23]

The Mossad's illegal immigration activities and the attacks of the Jewish underground groups on British military installations were intended to signal to Great Britain the Yishuv's readiness to fight for the fulfillment of the Zionist program. By defying the British, the Jewish Agency also hoped to affect world opinion. In particular, it wanted to demonstrate to the British and American publics that any policy contrary to Zionist interests was doomed to failure.

The Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry completed its report on 20 April 1946. President Truman released it ten days later. Wishing to make it proposals unanimous, the AACI produced a compromise. Its ten carefully worded recommendations were intended as parts of a single, balanced whole.[24]

After describing the unbearable living conditions of the DPs and claiming that Palestine alone could not possibly meet their needs, the AACI urged the British and American governments to secure immediate implementation of the provisions of the United Nations' Charter that required "universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental

freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion." The second recommendation asked for the immediate admission into Palestine of one hundred thousand victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution.[25]

Third, the AACI suggested adoption of three guiding principles regarding a Palestine settlement:

1. That Jew shall not dominate Arab and Arab shall not dominate Jew in Palestine.
2. That Palestine shall be neither a Jewish state nor an Arab state.
3. That the form of government ultimately to be established, shall, under international guarantees, fully protect and preserve the interests in the Holy Land of Christendom and of Moslem and Jewish faiths.[26]

Of course, a Palestinian state should ultimately guard the rights of all inhabitants, regardless of religion, and give "the fullest measure of self-government."[27]

In the meantime, tensions between the Jewish and Arab communities had to be reduced. Consequently, the remaining recommendations were intended to mitigate the Palestine conflict. They included: retaining the mandate structure while hostility between Jews and Arabs persisted, "pending the execution of a trusteeship agreement under the United Nations"; bridging the gap in the standard of living between Jews and Arabs; rescinding the discriminatory Land Transfer Regulations of 1940; promoting agricultural and industrial development for the benefit of Jews and Arabs; reforming the educational systems of both communities in Palestine; and suppressing local violence regardless of its source. In the last recommendation, the Jewish Agency was specifically urged to resume immediately its cooperation with the British authorities in suppressing terrorism and illegal immigration in order to maintain law and order in the country.[28]

With the rejection of the basic Zionist demand for Jewish sovereignty in Palestine particularly disappointing, the AACI report failed to give the Zionists what they wanted. Since James G. McDonald and Bartley Crum, who sympathized with Zionism, feared that an open attack on the report by militant Zionists might antagonize the president, they met with Rabbi Silver on 28 April and urged him not to criticize the report publicly. Persuaded not to attack, he decided to make the best of the situation by advising them that the best way to deal with it from the Zionist viewpoint would be for the president to limit his endorsement to the recommendation concerning the admission to Palestine of the hundred thousand Jews. This suggestion, indeed, became the basis for Truman's statement, drafted by David Niles

and Bartley Crum, which was made public on 30 April 1946, along with the AACI report.[29]

The president, pleased by the AACI's endorsement of his request for the immediate admission of a hundred thousand Jews into Palestine, explicitly approved the recommendations concerning immigration and the easing of the restrictions on land acquisition. He did, however, reserve judgment on the report's long-term policies, asserting they required further careful study.[30]

On 1 May 1946, Prime Minister Attlee issued the British response. The report involved long-term commitments that Great Britain could not undertake before ascertaining the extent to which the United States was "prepared to share the resulting military and financial responsibilities." Attlee also insisted that the hundred thousand new Jewish immigrants could not be admitted into Palestine before Jewish terrorism ended and the Jewish terrorist groups were disbanded.[31]

The State Department reacted favorably to the report. Henderson liked it. He urged its acceptance as a "valid basis for determining this Government's policy toward Palestine." Undersecretary of State Dean Acheson approved and passed to the president Henderson's recommendation that the United States initiate negotiations with the British to formulate a joint long-range policy, consult with Jews and Arabs, and announce publicly that the long-range policy would address the issue of placing Palestine under UN trusteeship.[32]

By the middle of May 1946, following Henderson's and Acheson's advice and after exchanging messages with Attlee, President Truman directed the State Department to initiate consultation with Jews and Arabs. One of the eight Jewish organizations consulted was the ACJ.[33]

The consultations were fruitless. Neither the Zionists nor the Arabs liked the report. Of all the American Jewish organizations, the ACJ alone supported its recommendations without any reservations. American Zionists and their sympathizers focused their activities on agitation for the immediate transfer of a hundred thousand Jews to Palestine. After a brief pause in May, the Yishuv resumed and even intensified its anti-British campaign, eliciting harsh, repressive countermeasures from the mandatory government. The British were irritated with the continuing American insistence on the immediate transfer of the new immigrants to Palestine. In a speech before a Labour party conference on 12 June 1946, Foreign Secretary Bevin suggested that the pressure from Americans to help Jews to enter Palestine was motivated by their unwillingness to have "too many of them in New York." His comment provoked a wave of righteous indignation in

the United States. Bevin touched a raw nerve. Americans, including Jews, were indeed much more eager to send Jewish DPs to Palestine than to liberalize immigration laws and thus allow more Jews to enter the United States.[34]

The Council began its campaign for the acceptance of the AACI's recommendations even before their publication. On 29 April 1946, in a "dear Dean" letter to Acheson, George L. Levison, who was emerging as the ACJ's foremost authority on American foreign policy and the Middle East, predicted the report would not satisfy the Zionists and that the State Department would "have its hands full with those boys." The ACJ, to which either a democratic state or a trusteeship in Palestine was acceptable, could "do some good" among both Jews and non-Jews by strongly supporting the document. He suggested it might be useful for Acheson and Henderson to meet with Rosenwald. Levison thus offered the Council's services to the State Department just as the Zionists were beginning to campaign for the selective implementation of the AACI's recommendations.[35]

Born in San Francisco in 1907, George L. Levison was the grandson of Louis Gerstle, one of the city's earliest Jewish settlers. He belonged to San Francisco's German-Jewish aristocracy and was a member of Rabbi Reichert's Temple Emanu-El. Levison served in Cairo from the fall of 1943 until the spring of 1945 as a special assistant to James M. Landis, director of American Economic Operations in the Middle East. Landis, who was responsible for overseeing American cooperation with the British Middle East Supply Center (MESC), worked directly under Acheson, then assistant secretary of state for economic affairs. In 1945 Levison was appointed special assistant in the office of the director general of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) in London. While in government service, he befriended numerous officials who were involved in Middle Eastern affairs, including Acheson, Henderson, and Kermit Roosevelt.[36]

Particularly important was Levison's relationship with Kermit Roosevelt, Theodore Roosevelt's grandson. Levison and "Kim" Roosevelt shared a residence in Cairo and became lifelong friends. Throughout World War II, Roosevelt worked as an intelligence agent for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which he helped to design; after the war, he participated in organizing the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which he joined as a Middle East specialist. George Levison's friendship with Roosevelt, Acheson, and Henderson, as well as his acquaintance with many other foreign policy experts, enabled the ACJ to enjoy easy access to the State Department. It was also Levison who introduced Roosevelt to Rosenwald

and Berger. Moreover, Levison became Berger's mentor and taught him how "to make it" in the State Department. From early 1946, he served as Rosenwald's senior political adviser and participated in shaping the ACJ's policy and formulating all of its important documents.[37]

About a week after the AACI had published its report, Acheson replied to Levison's 29 April message, assuring him the State Department was well acquainted with the Council's views and its general approval of the AACI's conclusions. Both he and Loy Henderson welcomed the opportunity to talk to Rosenwald.[38]

On 9 May, Rosenwald, Berger, and Wallach discussed the AACI's report with Frank Aydelotte, one of the committee members sympathetic to the ACJ. Aydelotte advised them to support the report as a whole. "On legalistic grounds," he explained, the Arab claim to Palestine was "practically watertight," but the Jewish claim was equally strong on "the grounds of creative achievement." Indeed, for these reasons the AACI concluded that Palestine was "no suitable theatre for nationalistic aspirations either of Arabs or Jews." Aydelotte was pleased with the ACJ's agreement with this conclusion.[39]

The next day, Rosenwald informed President Truman of the ACJ's enthusiastic approval of the AACI's report. He urged complete acceptance and immediate implementation of its recommendations *as a whole.* "Some day," he predicted, "when the passions of the moment will have become a memory, the unanimous Report of the Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry will be regarded as one of the most lucid, wise, humane and statesmanlike documents of our times."[40]

On 13 May 1946, in a special meeting, the Council leadership wholeheartedly committed the organization to a full-fledged campaign for the adoption and implementation of all of the AACI's recommendations. Rosenwald decided the situation required division of labor among the top leaders. He and Wallach would devote themselves to winning Christian and Jewish endorsement, "regardless of any immediate benefit for the Council." Berger was to assume responsibility for carrying on the ACJ's organizational business, to continue to concentrate on membership expansion "as reflection of Jewish support" for the Council's position, and to provide "any future organizational support" that the AACI report might require. To implement this policy, the executive committee decided to move Berger and the ACJ's national headquarters from Philadelphia to New York.[41]

The publication of the report and the ACJ commitment to its implementation pleased Berger, who only on 26 April had felt "discouraged

beyond redemption" by the organization's lack of substantial accomplishments. The report, he told the executive committee on 13 May, was nothing less than a "Magna Carta" for Jews who believed in integration. It did for the philosophy of integration in 1946 as much as the Balfour Declaration had done for the Jewish nationalists back in 1917.[42]

By mid-May, the ACJ's campaign in support of the report was in full swing. Several editorials and major articles in the *Information Bulletin* compared it favorably with the basic philosophy of the Council. On 24 May, Rosenwald met with Dean Acheson and Loy Henderson. He submitted a memorandum endorsing the report as a whole and offered the Council's service to the State Department. The report, which enjoyed the support of key State Department officials, gave new respectability to the ACJ's viewpoint. Consequently, from May 1946 until May 1948 it served as the standard against which the ACJ would measure any proposed policy regarding Palestine and Zionism.[43]

Despite its understandable gratification with the AACI report, by the middle of 1946 the ACJ had become isolated within the Jewish community. On the other hand, it drew closer to non-Jews. For example, the liberal *Christian Century* lauded Berger's *Jewish Dilemma*, and prominent clergymen, such as Henry Sloane Coffin and H. Richard Niebuhr, openly supported the Council's position. On 18 February 1946, speaking to the ACJ's New York chapter, Henry P. Van Dusen, president of Union Theological Seminary, applauded the group's "sound and constructive principles" and its insistence on opening the doors of all countries to Jewish immigrants. He pledged his "utmost effort" to assure that the United States would take in its share of DPs. Berger, increasingly frustrated by Zionist attacks and the ACJ's inability to attract more Jews, was so impressed with Van Dusen that he momentarily considered the idea of transforming the Council into a nondenominational group, whose members—Jews and non-Jews—would work for integration.[44]

Unlike Zionists, the Council offered the State Department unqualified support. Levison strengthened this orientation. This, in turn, resulted in even further ACJ estrangement from the Jewish community, which was reflected in its failure to recruit a sizable membership. In fact, throughout 1946, ACJ membership increased by only twenty-five hundred.

Zionists attacked the ACJ at every opportunity. They assailed its testimony before the AACI. A group of Zionist chaplains came to Philadelphia at the time of the ACJ's annual conference and protested against allegations that Zionism fostered dual allegiance. Council views continued to be

ridiculed. The battle between Berger and the Zionists took an ugly turn in New York City on 13 April at the Overseas Press Club of America. Berger participated in a forum about the Palestine problem before an audience of a thousand. After the meeting, described by Berger as the most obnoxious he had ever attended, several people yelled at him in Hebrew and Yiddish and grabbed at his clothes. They followed him and his two female companions into the street and continued to harass them. Berger had his glasses knocked off. One "particularly well mannered co-religionist" spat in his face. Two days later, Berger received a malicious telephone call. "It's too bad you didn't send Lessing Rosenwald," said the anonymous caller, "we would have really broken his neck. We were nice to you."[45]

Despite the efforts of Rosenwald, Wolf, and Arthur Goldsmith, relations between the ACJ and the AJC remained strained. The latest source of tension was a letter John Slawson sent to Edgar Aub, Wolsey's cousin in Cincinnati, on 20 December 1945, in which he described the ACJ as an extremist organization. Somehow, this letter turned into a widely distributed circular. Such an unprovoked attack disturbed the ACJ's leadership. The letter was radically different from the analysis that Proskauer presented in his 13 December 1944 statement. It assailed the ACJ without criticizing Zionists. Berger immediately wrote to Proskauer and demanded an explanation. Proskauer, offended by the aggressive tone of the request, refused to say anything until Berger retracted his letter. By May it became evident to the ACJ's leadership that a deadlock had been reached. Consequently, on 28 May 1946, it decided to drop the whole subject of its relations with the AJC and to "feel free to take independent action as it might find it necessary, dictated by events and circumstances."[46]

By June 1946, although despised by Zionists, isolated from the mainstream of American Jewish life, and estranged from the AJC, its last potential Jewish ally, the Council remained optimistic about its work for two reasons. First, the ACJ's position on compromise in Palestine largely coincided with the recommendations of the AACI. Secondly, it enjoyed relatively easy access to the State Department, which not only shared the ACJ's views regarding the AACI but also preferred its supportive gestures to incessant Zionist pressures. Implementation of the political solution suggested by the AACI might have led to consequences that would have fulfilled ACJ objectives. Agreement by Great Britain and the United States to enforce the compromise could have diffused the emotional issue of the DPs, deeply divided the Zionist movement, and possibly dealt a mortal blow to the efforts to establish a Jewish state in Palestine.

The Aftermath of the Anglo–American Committee of Inquiry: The Failure to Compromise

In June and July 1946, while the United States and Great Britain were attempting to find a joint solution for the Palestine problem, relations between the Yishuv and the mandatory government worsened. Angered by inaction on the AACI's recommendation regarding the hundred thousand DPs, the Jewish underground organizations, which had suspended operations in May, resumed their acts of sabotage against the British. On 10 June, the Etzel destroyed three trains; eight days later, its members kidnapped six British officers and held them as hostages for two Etzel colleagues who had been sentenced to death on 13 June. On the night of 17 June, the Haganah destroyed ten of the eleven bridges connecting Palestine with neighboring countries.[47]

On Saturday, 29 June 1946, known thereafter as "Black Sabbath," the British struck back. They cracked down on the Jewish Agency and placed the entire Yishuv under a virtual military state of siege. The mandatory authorities arrested 2,700 people, including many of the Jewish Agency's leaders, officials, and supporters. Significantly, Ben-Gurion, who was in Paris at the time, escaped detention. The British army occupied the Jewish Agency's Jerusalem headquarters and its Tel Aviv offices, confiscating massive amounts of documents. Severe censorship was imposed. For about two weeks, the British carried out intensive searches for weapons in Tel Aviv, in the Jewish sections of Jerusalem and Haifa, and in twenty-seven Jewish collective settlements.[48]

Weizmann opposed the campaign of violence against the British. After the "Black Sabbath," he threatened to resign from the WZO and Jewish Agency presidencies and to publicize the reason for this action unless the terrorism ended. The Jewish Agency's leadership, disheartened and weakened by the detention of many of its prominent members and by Ben-Gurion's absence, yielded. It could not risk Weizmann's resignation. Moreover, it realized that continued Jewish attacks on the British would evoke further repressive measures against the Yishuv. The Agency, therefore, moderated its position and instructed the Haganah to concentrate its activities on illegal immigration, a policy that remained in effect until November 1947.[49]

The more militant underground groups, the Etzel and the Lechi, independent of the Jewish Agency's supervision, not only refused to restrain themselves but actually intensified their attacks on the British. On 22 July 1946, the Etzel retaliated for the "Black Sabbath." It bombed the offices of

the mandatory government and headquarters of the Criminal Investigation Division (CID), located in the southern wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, killing ninety-one and injuring forty-five people, including Englishmen, Arabs, and Jews. The bombing shocked the Yishuv, embarrassed Zionists abroad, and resulted in the Haganah's final withdrawal from the united resistance movement. But the Etzel and the Lechi continued to fight. From July 1946 to November 1947, they waged a ferocious campaign of terror against the British, which, in turn, elicited equally brutal countermeasures.[50]

The King David Hotel bombing provoked a severe British reaction against the Yishuv. Tel Aviv was placed under a twenty-two-hour curfew and was isolated for four days from the rest of the country. To purge Tel Aviv of terrorists, 20,000 troops of Major General James Cassels's Sixth Airborne Division investigated 100,000 and detained 787 Jews. Three days after the bombing, Lieutenant General Evelyn Barker, commander of the British forces in Palestine, accusing all Palestinian Jews of complicity with the terrorists, issued a nonfraternization order to the British troops. It forbade any social or business contact with Jews, which was intended to punish them "in a way the race dislikes as much as any, by striking at their pockets and showing our contempt for them." The offensive phrasing of Barker's order embarrassed the British government and poisoned relations between the British army and the Yishuv.[51]

The situation in Palestine stimulated American Zionist agitation against Great Britain. Zionists responded to the "Black Sabbath" with renewed publicity campaigns, mass rallies, and lobbying among members of Congress and government officials. But they differed on how to exert pressure on Great Britain. For example, American Zionist leaders were divided on the issue of the British application for a $3.75 billion loan from the United States. Rabbi Silver's faction wanted to use the loan as a means to press Britain to admit a hundred thousand refugees into Palestine. Rabbi Wise's partisans, on the other hand, were reluctant to exploit it as a weapon. In fact, on 9 July 1946, Wise endorsed the loan in a message to Sol Bloom. Four days later, the House of Representatives approved it by a vote of 219 to 155.[52]

The ACJ condemned the escalation of anti-British terrorism in Palestine and the vociferous American Zionist reaction to harsh British countermeasures. It categorically objected to the introduction of the Palestine question into the debate on the British loan. Berger, after attending a Zionist anti-British protest rally in New York on 2 July 1946, described the event as "segregation in action." For him, it was an "orgy of emotion

which could never bring the help to the Jews of Palestine which is so glibly promised."[53]

During the July 1946 debate on the British loan, the ACJ argued for its consideration "solely on its merits" and in terms of American interests. In a statement on 9 July 1946, Rosenwald recommended keeping the Palestine problem out of the discussion of the loan. Emotionalism and partisanship, he insisted, "must not take the place of a calm and reasoned deliberation" of the issue. Two days later, he telegraphed Sol Bloom, urging approval of the loan because it served the best interests of the United States and would help "general economic recovery and world peace."[54]

The Council was seriously concerned about the growing violence in Palestine and the continuing plight of the DPs in Europe. In a nationwide radio address on 6 July 1946, Rosenwald spoke of the danger of the violence in Palestine and the suffering of the Jews "wasting away" in European DP camps. The refugees needed peace and security to rebuild their lives. The current violence in Palestine would not bring them the respite they needed. Moreover, the situation in Palestine threatened world peace. The best solution for the refugees and the Palestine impasse, Rosenwald declared, was embodied in the AACI recommendations.[55]

The ACJ repeatedly condemned the escalating violence in Palestine. It particularly objected to the propagation of the notion, which irresponsible Zionist spokesmen appeared to promote, that the Palestine conflict represented "a war between Great Britain and Jews everywhere." On 26 July 1946, after the bombing of the King David Hotel, the ACJ deplored the "indefensible activities of the terrorists in Palestine." It appealed for the repudiation not only of the perpetrators of the outrageous act but also of "those leaders of Jews, in and out of Palestine, whose incitement is equally responsible." According to the ACJ, "passionate nationalism" and fanatical Jewish nationalist propaganda were at the root of the violence in Palestine and contributed to prolonging the tragedy of the DPs.[56]

During the months of June and July 1946, the United States and Great Britain conferred on the implementation of the AACI's recommendations. President Truman, wanting to help the DPs without delay, offered to assist with their transportation and temporary housing. The British, however, did not want to discuss the matter of the hundred thousand immigrants without considering all aspects of the Palestine problem.[57]

To continue with the search for means to implement the AACI's recommendation, President Truman announced on 11 June the formation of a special cabinet Committee on Palestine and Related Problems, consisting of the secretaries of state, war, and the treasury. The committee itself met

only once or twice. Its actual work was done by alternates for the three cabinet members. Henry F. Grady, formerly assistant secretary of state, chaired the group; the two other members were Goldthwaite H. Dorr and Herbert E. Gaston from the war and treasury departments respectively. They were sent to London to negotiate with the British. In his instructions to them on 9 July, the president asserted American willingness to accept the AACI's report as a whole, which, significantly, differed from his limited endorsement of it on 30 April.[58]

On 19 July 1946, a week after his arrival in London, Grady accepted the British proposal for a federal scheme for Palestine. Better known as the Morrison–Grady plan, it envisioned converting the mandate into a trusteeship under British control, with Palestine divided into four zones: a Jewish province, an Arab province, a district of Jerusalem, and a district of the Negev. The provinces would have autonomy in purely intracommunity matters; the central government, controlled by the British, would rule directly over the districts of Jerusalem and the Negev and have exclusive authority over defense, foreign relations, and immigration. In the first year after "it is decided to put in effect the scheme as a whole," one hundred thousand Jews would be admitted to Palestine. Full implementation would depend on American cooperation with Great Britain and acceptance by Arabs and Jews. The proposed plan could lead to a unitary, binational state, or to the partition of Palestine. If the Jews and Arabs rejected the scheme, the British would submit the question of Palestine to the United Nations. At the end of July, both Prime Minister Attlee and Secretary of State Byrnes urged President Truman to endorse the Morrison–Grady plan.[59]

The negotiations between the United States and Great Britain were conducted secretly. But before the president could make up his mind about the merits of the plan, its details were leaked out by members of Grady's staff. The Zionists immediately launched an aggressive campaign to defeat it.[60]

The ACJ could not accept the British plan because it proposed the creation of separate Arab and Jewish districts in Palestine. On 1 August 1946, disturbed by reports about the contents of the recommended plan, Rosenwald and Berger urged President Truman to declare immediately "a consistent long-range American policy on Palestine," claiming that failure to establish a "definite and clear policy in the past has been one of the causes of continuing conflict." They also insisted that the acceptance of any recommendations of the Cabinet Committee be conditioned "upon their conforming to and implementing" the report of the AACI. They rejected the division of Palestine into the proposed provinces because "any policy that

sanctions and strengthens the forces of segregation and division among those living in Palestine would mean the perpetuation of antagonistic nationalistic conflicts and endless violence."[61]

A week later, George Levison wrote a personal letter to Dean Acheson outlining his private thoughts about the Palestine situation. The AACI's recommendations, he insisted, offered a practical solution. Levison also suggested that the British feelers regarding a UN trusteeship should be pursued, recommending that the United States "take its fair share of responsibility in the administration of such a trusteeship."[62]

In the meantime, early in August, a rump session of the Jewish Agency executive met in an emergency session in Paris at one of the darkest hours for the Zionist movement. With most of the leading members of the Agency in Palestine arrested, Zionist relations with Great Britain were at their lowest point. Among the Agency's leaders there was also some apprehension that the British would replace them with "friendly Jews." In that difficult moment, Nahum Goldmann offered a way out of the predicament. Seriously doubting the possibility of creating a Jewish state in the whole of Palestine, he persuaded the Agency's executive to opt for partition, which he described as "a viable Jewish state in an adequate area of Palestine." Thus, on 5 August 1946, the Agency rejected the Morrison–Grady plan but declared it was prepared to discuss a proposal "for the establishment of a viable Jewish state in an adequate area of Palestine." To implement such a plan, it demanded the immediate entry of a hundred thousand Jews into Palestine and full autonomy, including the right to supervise immigration, in the area designated to become a Jewish state.[63]

Having redefined its policy on 5 August, the Agency executive sent Goldmann to Washington to secure American support. In less than a week, from 6 to 11 August, Goldmann managed to persuade the Cabinet Committee to accept in principle the idea of partition."[64]

During his mission, Goldmann also won a new Jewish ally for the Zionists. He persuaded Judge Joseph Proskauer to endorse the idea of partition by appealing to his "Jewish conscience" and arguing "that he could not take the moral responsibility of blocking the decision of the Jewish Agency and the will of Palestinian Jewry." Moreover, Goldmann also assured Proskauer that the proposed state would be Jewish only in the sense that Jews would comprise the majority of its population. All citizens would enjoy equal rights. The word *Jewish* would not even be included in the name of the state. Proskauer, like many former opponents of Zionism, was deeply shaken by the Holocaust. Goldmann appealed both to his feelings of guilt and to his vanity. Thus, the former foe, who in 1942 wrecked the negotiations

between the Zionists and the AJC, now turned into a trusted partner of the Jewish Agency.[65]

The Morrison–Grady plan was not only rejected by the Zionists and their supporters but was also attacked by the staff of the Cabinet Committee itself and by the American members of the AACI. A two-day meeting between the Grady group and the American representatives on the AACI, held in Washington on 7 and 8 August, resulted in a fierce attack on the plan by Judge Hutcheson and his colleagues. President Truman finally realized that opposition in the United States had become so intense that the American government could not support the plan effectively. On 12 August, Truman informed Prime Minister Attlee of his decision to reject the Morrison–Grady plan. In the same message, he alluded to the Goldmann plan—"certain suggestions which have been made to us and which, I understand, are being made to you"—and recommended its consideration at the conference the British were planning to have with the Jews and Arabs in London.[66]

On 16 August 1946, Truman announced officially that the Morrison–Grady plan was unacceptable to the United States. At the same time he stressed that the American government "has not presented any plan of its own for the solution of the problem of Palestine." Moreover, accepting, in effect, Bevin's view that Palestine alone could not solve the DP problem, Truman promised to ask Congress for legislation allowing "a fixed number" of DPs, "including Jews," to enter the United States.[67]

The rejection of the Morrison–Grady plan by the United States ended the joint Anglo–American attempts to find a solution for the Palestine problem. The British were deeply disappointed. Although Great Britain intended to present the Morrison–Grady plan to the impending London conference on Palestine, Attlee told Truman, it would be willing to allow Arabs and Jews to present counterproposals and would give them "due consideration." As it turned out, the London conference, held in two installments, from 10 September to 2 October 1946 and from 27 January to 14 February 1947, proved an abysmal failure.[68]

Although regretting the failure of the United States and Great Britain to collaborate on the Palestine problem, the AC] was pleased with Truman's support for liberalizing American immigration policy. The realization of Truman's hope for the resettlement of the DPs in the United States and in other countries, Rosenwald wrote to the president, would actually implement one of the most important of the AACI's recommendations. He praised Truman's statement for differentiating between the political problems created by the rival nationalisms in Palestine and the humanitarian

problems involving the DPs in Europe. Separating the two kinds of problems, Rosenwald insisted, "would facilitate the solution of both."[69]

In August 1946, while continuing the detention of many Yishuv leaders, the British tightened their blockade of Palestine. On 12 August, they introduced severe measures to combat illegal immigration. The monthly immigration quota of 1,500 legal immigrants would be strictly maintained until the resolution of the Palestine problem at the impending London conference. But, henceforth, the British would divert all illegal immigrants to the island of Cyprus and intern them, instead of deducting them from the quota. This repressive policy provoked increasing noncooperation, terrorism, and illegal immigration, forcing the British to resort to harsh countermeasures. Between August 1946 and November 1947, thirty-five ships with 52,000 illegal immigrants left for Palestine; all, except one ship and three tiny boats, were seized by the British navy. The blockade proved effective. But the news and pictures of refugees, survivors of Nazism, fighting to get into Palestine, who were being arrested and sent to detention camps, created profound sympathy for the Zionist cause.[70]

On 15 August 1946, Great Britain invited the Jewish Agency to join the London conference. The Agency insisted that it would participate only on the basis of its 5 August partition scheme and on the condition that it would select its own representatives, including those who had been detained or were subject to detention. The British rejected those conditions. The Palestinian Arabs decided to boycott the conference because Great Britain refused to allow them to select their own delegation. Thus only the British authorities and representatives of the Arab states came to the conference. Without the participation of the Zionists and the Palestinian Arabs, nothing could be accomplished. Nor was it possible to do much without American support. The British government offered the Morrison–Grady plan as the basis for negotiations. The Arab states rejected the ideas of both autonomy and trusteeship, the core of the British proposal, insisting on the transformation of Palestine into an Arab state. On 2 October 1946, with the two sides deadlocked, the British suspended the conference.[71]

Late in August 1946, when the Council learned that the Jewish representatives at the London conference would presumably consist of designees of the Jewish Agency, it challenged vehemently the Agency's claim to speak for all Jews. It did so by introducing a new and ingenious argument against the Zionists—a concept developed by Berger—that the Jewish Agency was invading the rights of Jews living outside Palestine. According to Berger, the part of the Balfour Declaration intended to safeguard "the

rights and political status enjoyed by Jews" in any country other than Palestine could be specifically used to protect anti-Zionist Jews from encroachment by the Jewish Agency.[72]

In an official letter to Dean Acheson on 28 August 1946, the ACJ insisted that the Agency spoke only for those Jews who associated themselves with the Zionist movement and did not have the right to claim to represent all Jews. It also asked the U.S. government to oppose any proposals to establish a Jewish state and to convey to the British government two Council requests:

1. That the Jewish Agency be recognized as speaking only for those who are Zionist or pro-Zionist and as having no right to speak for Jews who are not supporters of the Jewish nationalist philosophy of Zionism.
2. That the proposal for a Jewish State is a matter of profound concern to all Jews all over the world, whose status will be seriously affected by the establishment of a Jewish State; and that spokesmen for Jews who oppose a Jewish State, therefore, be given full opportunity to express their view.[73]

As the 1946 congressional elections approached, many American Zionist leaders, including Rabbi Silver, Emanuel Neumann, Judge Bernard Rosenblatt, and Leo Sacks, urged the Zionist movement to organize American Jews into a bloc vote. Only through such political pressure, insisted Silver, would the American government support the Zionist program. But not all Zionists agreed. Rabbi Stephen Wise, for example, strongly opposed the idea. In fact, the matter of the "Jewish vote" was one of numerous sources of contention between him and Silver. Silver prevailed. At the AZEC's 1 October 1946 meeting, Judge Rosenblatt launched the Zionist political-action program.[74]

In the meantime, at the end of August 1946, Goldmann and Wise requested a statement of support for the partition of Palestine from either Acheson or Truman. But the State Department asked Truman not to issue such an endorsement at the time, certainly not during the London conference. He appeared to agree but soon changed his mind. Despite denials by Truman and Acheson, concern about the Jewish vote and an impending announcement in favor of partition by Governor Thomas Dewey apparently influenced the president's decision to issue a statement on Yom Kippur eve, 4 October 1946.[75]

In the statement, after reviewing his own record on the DPs and Palestine since the issuance of the Harrison report, Truman carefully

suggested that Great Britain's proposal, based on the Morrison–Grady plan, and Goldmann's plan for "a viable Jewish state in an adequate area in Palestine" could be bridged. Moreover, substantial immigration to Palestine could not await the solution of the Palestine problem; rather, "it should begin at once." Most important, he called for the liberalization of immigration:

> I state again, as I have on previous occasions, that the immigration laws of other countries, including the United States, should be liberalized with a view to the admission of displaced persons. I am prepared to make such a recommendation to the Congress and to continue as energetically as possible collaboration with other countries on the whole problem of displaced persons.[76]

Six days later, Truman sent Attlee a top-secret message about the DPs. Impatient with inaction on the problem of the refugees, he urged immediate transfer of one hundred thousand of them to Palestine.[77]

At this juncture, Gordon Merriam, director of the State Department's Division of Near Eastern Affairs, who served directly under Loy Henderson, wrote a top-secret memorandum critical of the president's statement. Merriam approved of the entry of a hundred thousand DPs into Palestine solely on humanitarian grounds. However, American support for partition as a solution of the Palestine problem could be justified only if it were based on Arab and Jewish consent. Any other course would violate the Atlantic Charter and the United Nations Charter. Even worse, if partition were introduced as a solution without the agreement of the contending communities in Palestine, Merriam warned, the consequences would be "bloodshed and chaos." Since Acheson considered the memorandum explosive, he refused to place it in the State Department files and ordered all copies, except Merriam's, destroyed.[78]

Whereas the majority of the State Department's Middle East experts, the British, and the Arabs were disturbed by Truman's 4 October statement, the Zionists were pleased. Although what the president actually said was strong on the humanitarian issue of the DPs and fairly noncommittal on the political question of partition, the Zionists publicized it as proof of his support for their program. Ironically, both militant and moderate Zionists felt encouraged. Silver's partisans considered it a vindication of their "Jewish vote" strategy; moderate Zionists, as evidence of the efficacy of a policy of moderation and restraint.[79]

The Council could not allow the Yom Kippur statement to go unanswered. On 10 October 1946, one day after meeting with Henderson in

Washington, Rosenwald wrote to the president, reminding him of the ACJ's opposition to a Jewish state and voicing the organization's concern about the implications of the president's 4 October pronouncement:

> Many members of the American Council for Judaism are greatly alarmed by what they believe the consequences of your statement may be as it affects those Jews who are dwelling in Palestine today, those who are passionately desiring to go there, and all Jews living throughout the world as free and equal citizens of many countries.[80]

The introduction of the Palestine question as an issue in American electoral politics troubled the Council. It vehemently attacked the notion of the "Jewish bloc vote" and its use as a weapon by Zionists. According to the ACJ, Zionist political agitation increased Arab feelings of alienation in Palestine, damaged prospects for the entry of the European DPs into Palestine, and gave credence to the allegations of anti-Semites in the United States that Jews had special alien "bloc" interests. Zionism, it warned, was "bringing about a state of mind among all Americans most unhealthy for those of Jewish faith."[81]

Although aware of claims by various public spokesmen that the Yom Kippur statement had been issued under Zionist pressure, Rosenwald chose personally not to comment on that particular aspect of the issue. Instead, he stressed the need for the ACJ to be "conscious of the fact that the Zionists created a Jewish issue in the elections" and that they had organized a powerful "unholy effort" to introduce consideration for "a so-called Jewish bloc vote, and a threat to use that bloc vote for punitive means." Rosenwald repudiated the idea and rejected the claim of "the Jewish vote," characterizing it as "a fraud upon the public" and as "one of the most evil and gravest injustices done to the Jews of the United States."[82]

By the fall of 1946, while vociferously opposing Zionists on the issues of Jewish statehood, "the Jewish vote," and the Zionists' claim to speak for all Jews, the Council was also working quietly on the problem of Jewish immigration. As early as February 1946, Rosenwald appointed Irving Feist, a Newark, New Jersey, realtor and insurance executive, to chair a special ACJ committee to consider the possibilities of facilitating Jewish immigration into the United States and other countries. Concentrating initially on the Dominican Republic and Cuba, Rosenwald and Feist discussed immigration possibilities with representatives of those countries. In March, Feist even traveled to Cuba, but he achieved nothing. He continued to search for a suitable home for Jewish refugees for almost two years. Nevertheless, his endeavors failed to produce any substantive results. By January 1948, Feist

was able to report only that after a two-year effort he and his committee felt frustrated by the endless delays and obstacles they had encountered.[83]

Rosenwald, nevertheless, fought hard to bring DPs into the United States. In March 1946, he submitted a memorandum to the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization against the Gossett bill (HR 3663), a law that proposed to cut in half immigration quotas. According to Rosenwald, the measure was contrary to the best interests of the United States. Adoption of a restrictive policy, he argued, would deprive Americans of the ability to exert moral leadership in the world. Moreover, he warned that failure to solve the DP question would endanger world peace.[84]

In the fall of 1946, Rosenwald played a major part in organizing and financing the Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons (CCDP), a nondenominational organization that was formed to lobby for liberalization of American immigration laws. The extent of his work and support for the CCDP went unpublicized. Like other Jewish supporters of the lobby, he wanted to downplay Jewish involvement with it, fearing that close Jewish identification with the group would damage its effectiveness. He was also concerned that a close connection with the ACJ might discredit the CCDP among Jews, many of whom had become deeply suspicious of any person or group associated with the Council. Therefore, although ACJ members were encouraged to support the CCDP as individuals, for tactical reasons the Council itself remained officially uninvolved. Ironically, the ACJ, frequently accused of negativism by its opponents, was supporting something idealistic and positive without taking the deserved credit for it. In fact, it was Rosenwald who helped to persuade Earl G. Harrison to accept the CCDP's chairmanship.[85]

Harrison, author of the September 1945 report on the DP camps and dean of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, greatly respected Rosenwald. He was so deeply impressed by Rosenwald's fierce commitment and selfless dedication to the cause of liberalizing American immigration laws that he praised him in glowing terms:

> I have come to have unbounded admiration and respect for the way he has thrown himself into this work which represents, to my mind, one of the great causes of the day. In fact, such is my regard for him and what he has done that I have modified a hymn I sometimes sing: "Praise God from whom all Lessings flow."[86]

By November 1946, advocacy for extending immigration opportunities for DPs and unconditional support for the AACI report had crystallized into the ACJ's standard alternatives to the Zionist demand for a Jewish state.

Thus, although after the Yom Kippur statement Rosenwald requested an appointment with the president primarily to discuss the implications of partition, by the time he met with Truman, on 26 November 1946, he had decided to concentrate on the immigration question. Consequently, he recommended to the president not only immediate adoption of the AACI's report "as a matter of policy" but also the liberalization of American immigration laws to allow a larger number of DPs to resettle in the United States. Easing immigration restrictions, he said, would provide a worthy example for other nations, contribute to the solution of a major humanitarian problem, and promote the reduction of tensions in the Middle East. It would even "strengthen the human resources" of the United States—a nation of immigrants.[87]

While Rosenwald was concentrating on the DP question, the British, hoping to induce the Jewish Agency to join the second stage of the London conference, tried desperately to reduce tensions in Palestine. The time seemed appropriate for appeasing the Zionists. Weizmann and moderate Zionists, who had retreated from the Biltmore Program early in August, temporarily controlled the Jewish Agency's executive. They denounced terrorism. On 5 November, the British released from internment the Jewish Agency leaders and more than one hundred others who had been arrested on the "Black Sabbath" and granted amnesty to David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Sneh, the Haganah's commander. They even postponed the second phase of the London conference to enable the leaders of the Jewish Agency to refer the issue of conference participation to the impending Zionist congress. The British authorities also tried to placate Palestinian Arabs by granting amnesty to a number of followers of the Grand Mufti al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni who had been excluded from Palestine since the Palestinian Arab revolt in the 1930s.[88]

The twenty-second Zionist congress was held in Basle, Switzerland, between 9 and 24 December 1946. Unlike previous sessions, the 1946 Congress was dominated by American and Palestinian Zionists. European Jewry had been decimated by World War II. The American delegation, dominated by Rabbi Silver, represented the largest voting bloc. Significantly, the rightist Revisionists, who had withdrawn from the WZO in 1935, rejoined the organization in 1946 and attended the congress. The delegates endorsed the Biltmore program. But in the struggle for the control of the WZO the moderate Zionists were defeated. A motion in favor of attending the London conference, which Weizmann, Stephen Wise, and Nahum Goldmann had supported, was voted down 171 to 154. The vote not only rebuffed Weizmann and his pro-British orientation but also reflected a new

power configuration in the WZO. Weizmann was not reelected to the presidency of the organization, although out of respect for him the office was left vacant. With Weizmann's and Wise's defeat, David Ben-Gurion and Abba Hillel Silver were victorious. Now the militants were clearly in command of the Zionist movement.[89]

The Basle congress had a powerful impact on American Zionism. It established a six-member American section of the Jewish Agency—two from the ZOA, two from Poalei Zion, one from Mizrachi, and one from Hadassah—under Rabbi Silver's chairmanship. Defeated by Silver, Wise resigned from all offices of the ZOA, which he described as a "collection of personal hatreds, rancours and private ambitions." Thus, Silver, a hard-liner and Ben-Gurion's ally, emerged as the undisputed leader of American Zionism.[90]

At the time of the resumption of the London conference in January 1947, the United States still lacked a clear policy toward the Palestine impasse. In fact, late in December 1946, Gordon P. Merriam characterized American policy as "one of expediency, not of principle." By the middle of January 1947, the State Department moved in the direction of some kind of partition. In a 14 January 1947 memorandum, Fraser Wilkins, the officer responsible for the Palestine desk, spoke about a "workable partition" of Palestine, that is, a peaceful solution, not one that would require enforcement against the Arabs. On 21 January 1947, Acheson told Lord Inverchapel, the British ambassador to the United States, that a "Solution based on partition would be the easiest to support." But he also stressed American reluctance to participate in implementing such a solution by force. Indeed, the reluctance to use American troops to enforce any solution in Palestine was to remain one of the few permanent features of U.S. policy in the area.[91]

The second session of the London conference met from 27 January to 14 February 1947. This time the Palestinian Arabs attended. They were represented by Jamal al-Husayni, acting chairman of the Arab Higher Executive and the Grand Mufti's cousin. The Arab Higher Executive was the Palestinian Arabs' supreme political institution, roughly the Arab counterpart of the Jewish Agency. Between September 1946 and January 1947, the Palestinian position had actually stiffened. By January 1947, the Grand Mufti al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni had resumed leadership of the Palestinian nationalist movement. Since he was not allowed to return to Palestine, the mufti directed the Arab Higher Executive from his exile in Cairo, while his cousin Jamal served as his proxy. The mufti, who during World War II cooperated with Italy and Germany, was thoroughly convinced of the justice of his people's cause. He insisted on full Palestinian independence and

absolutely refused to compromise with the Zionists. Like the Palestinian Arabs, the Zionists, under the control of the militants, were in no mood to retreat. The Jewish Agency formally boycotted the conference. Unofficially, however, its representatives met with the British.[92]

Bevin offered both the Palestinian Arabs and the Jewish Agency a modified version of the Morrison–Grady plan as the final British proposal. According to this new plan, Great Britain would continue to rule in Palestine for five years in the form of a trusteeship. During that time the country would be prepared for independence as a unitary Arab–Jewish state. The high commissioner would have supreme legislative and executive authority. Arabs and Jews would be given cantonal self-government instead of provincial autonomy. The Jewish Agency would be dissolved once the trusteeship agreement was concluded. Jews and Arabs would be represented by delegates in an advisory council. One hundred thousand Jews would be admitted over a period of two years. Afterward, the rate of immigration would be decided by the high commissioner in consultation with the advisory council. Both the Zionists and the Arabs rejected the proposal. The conference ended suddenly, with Bevin's announcement on 14 February 1947 that "His Majesty's Government had decided to refer the whole problem to the United Nations."[93]

Britain's decision to go to the United Nations was the result of weariness and frustration. The contending parties in Palestine were irreconcilable. Any attempt to impose a solution unacceptable to either side would have led to dire consequences. The British needed Arab as well as American goodwill. Forcing partition in Palestine would have turned the Arab world against them and thus seriously damaged their oil and strategic interests. On the other hand, imposing a unitary state, without free Jewish immigration, would have both antagonized Jews and alienated the U.S. government. Britain, experiencing one of the worst economic crises in its history, could not afford to risk a serious rift with the Americans, who only recently had loaned it $3.75 billion and were about to assume its financial obligations in Greece and Turkey under the Truman Doctrine. At the same time, as the Etzel and the Lechi intensified their campaign of terror, the British were also becoming increasingly demoralized by the virtual collapse of security in Palestine. In 1946, seventy-three Englishmen were killed in incidents related to terrorism. By February 1947, despite the presence of close to a hundred thousand troops, the British felt so unsafe in Palestine that they evacuated their civilians and dependents. Most of the British subjects remaining in Palestine were forced to live in security zones, "Bevingrads," behind barbed wire.[94]

Nevertheless, although control of Palestine had become a heavy burden for the British by early 1947, their decision to refer the Palestine problem to the United Nations did not necessarily mean that they intended to abandon the mandate. Rather, it signified Britain's desire to relieve itself of the sole responsibility for finding and enforcing a solution for the Palestine impasse by involving others, especially the United States, in the process. Moreover, it also seems that Bevin hoped his government's dramatic move could still induce the Arabs and Zionists to compromise. At any rate, it was not until September that the British finally decided to abandon the mandate. In the meantime, by introducing the United Nations into the picture, Britain threw the Palestine question into a new state of flux.[95]

The ACJ's third annual conference met on 12 and 13 February 1947, almost precisely at the time of the collapse of the London parleys. The central themes of the conference were the problems of Palestine and the DPs. All three guest speakers, Rabbi Irving Reichert, Carleton Beals, and Earl G. Harrison, addressed those issues. All the reports and most of the discussions centered on them.[96]

Rosenwald learned about the rejection of the final British proposal by the Arabs and the Jewish Agency one day before the opening of the ACJ's conference. It angered him. This rejection, he declared, was "to the eternal shame" of both the Arabs and the Zionists. Rosenwald rebuked the Arabs for rejecting the British compromise solely because it required them to offer a haven to a hundred thousand "distressed human beings." Moreover, despite the difficult situation in Palestine, he could not forget the "amazing contribution to the upbuilding of the country" made by the Jews who had migrated there. On the other hand, Rosenwald was irritated with the Zionists for dismissing the humanitarian provision of the British offer, which provided for admitting a hundred thousand into Palestine, because it did not give them a political victory, that is, a Jewish state. For him, the uncompromising stand of the Zionists was proof that their primary objectives were political, not humanitarian. Rosenwald, however, predicted that the Palestine problem would soon be brought before the United Nations. There, humanitarian considerations would "overcome the harsh voices of political domination," and the "organized community of nations" would "sustain the program and philosophy of the American Council for Judaism."[97]

In ten resolutions passed at the end of the conference, the ACJ reiterated its basic views on Palestine, Zionism, and the DPs. It declared that no Jewish organization could, in any way, speak for all Jews; stressed the distinction between the terms *Jew* and *Zionist*; rejected the concept of a "Jewish

vote," denouncing all who tried, in any way, to create the impression it existed; and condemned "all those who practice terror in Palestine." The Council stressed the need to treat the refugee and DP question as a humanitarian problem and supported President Truman's efforts on their behalf. But, above all, it thanked Earl G. Harrison for his leadership of the CCDP and urged every ACJ member to learn about the lobby's work and cooperate with it.[98]

On 13 February 1947, the ACJ also adopted a resolution, which George Levison submitted, requesting the American government to place the Palestine problem before the United Nations. Immediately, Rosenwald sent President Truman a telegram urging him, because of the serious threat to world peace that the turmoil in Palestine constituted, to instruct the U.S. delegation to the United Nations to "place the problem of Palestine before the United Nations in accordance with its charter."[99]

Foreign Secretary Bevin announced the British decision to bring the Palestine question before the United Nations only one day after the ACJ recommended exactly the same course of action. It represented an important turning point in the history of the mandate. The collapse of the London conference meant the failure of the efforts, beginning with the activities of the AACI, to solve the Palestine problem through compromise. Introducing the United Nations into the picture opened a new and critical phase in the conflict in Palestine. For the Council it signified the beginning of the final stage of the struggle against the establishment of a Jewish state. Its leaders and members realized they were confronting "a time for decision."[100]

CHAPTER 7
The Emergence of Israel

The Palestine Question Before the United Nations

On 18 February 1947, Ernest Bevin officially informed the House of Commons of the British cabinet's decision to refer the Palestine question to the United Nations. This decision ushered in the final phase of the struggle for Palestine, fifteen months of dramatic political, diplomatic, and military developments that culminated in the establishment of the State of Israel in May 1948. For the Council, it was a time of unusually frantic activities, a frenzy signifying the last leg of its desperate campaign to prevent the creation of a Jewish state.[1]

Immediately after learning about the shift in Britain's policy, the Council began to plot its own new strategy. As early as 21 February, Berger urged the ACJ to prepare its case against the Jewish Agency and submit it to the proper UN authorities. In its presentation to the United Nations, the ACJ would have to explain that the Jewish Agency could speak only for Zionists and should be known as a "Zionist Agency."[2]

At the same time, George Levison rushed to Washington, D.C., to learn more about State Department thinking on the Palestine question. He stayed there from 20 to 24 February and discussed the Palestine situation with Dean Acheson, Loy Henderson, Kermit Roosevelt, and William Eddy. They not only expressed respect for the Council's work but also gave him the impression that constructive suggestions from the ACJ would receive sympathetic consideration. From this visit, Levison also learned about the general feeling in the State Department that the British were "through" in the Middle East. The real question was whether the United States or Russia would take control over the region. He was told that the American government would attempt to persuade Britain to stay in Palestine as a UN instrument, but it did not seem likely the British would accept such a task. As far as the "Jewish National Home" was concerned, it was a "*fait accompli,* which must be preserved, and which the Arabs must

accept." But the State Department felt pessimistic about the passage of emergency DP legislation, despite its intention to fight for that cause, because of popular opposition within the United States to the relaxation of immigration laws.[3]

Rosenwald himself went to Washington on 26 February and met with Loy Henderson. Rosenwald told him that the Council intended to testify before the United Nations at the proper time and would approach the Palestine problem on the basis of the AACI's recommendations. Moreover, until that time, he offered to take the heat off the State Department:

> It would be our duties and functions to try to point out to our Jewish citizens the dangers involved of bringing pressures to bear on our State Department to espouse the creation of a National Jewish State before the United Nations. It would be our duty to try to indicate to Christian citizens that our State Department should be represented at the United Nations strictly in a judicial capacity without any fetters or commitments; that in no other way could we honestly discharge our obligations.[4]

Throughout March, the ACJ concentrated on organizational and public-relations matters. Rabbi Berger spent most of the month on a recruitment and publicity trip, visiting Council centers in St. Louis, Dallas, Houston, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport, Cincinnati, Lexington, Galveston, Evansville, and Dayton. The tour was extensively publicized. Local newspapers usually carried advance as well as follow-up stories about his activities.[5]

In March the ACJ also spent considerable time and energy in its sustained effort to inform the American public that the words *Jew* and *Zionist* were not synonymous. Letters emphasizing this distinction, signed by Berger, were sent to seventeen hundred newspaper editors and a thousand radio-station directors.[6]

On 17 March a letter from Rosenwald, which upset Zionists, appeared in the *New York Times.* Challenging the Zionist publicity campaign with its stress on humanitarianism, Rosenwald asserted that Zionists were, in fact, not primarily interested in the welfare of European Jews but in "contention for political domination" in Palestine. Emanuel Neumann, vice president of the ZOA, angrily dismissed Rosenwald's letter as "a further proof of his anti-Zionist campaign and a renewed attempt to spread a monstrous slander against the Jewish Agency."[7]

While fighting Zionists, the Council continued to work for the relaxation of American immigration laws. Thus, in March an entire issue of the

Information Bulletin was devoted to the CCDP. Rosenwald asked all ACJ members to support the CCDP, to disseminate information on the problem of the refugees, and to urge Congress to liberalize DP legislation.[8]

But the CCDP faced many obstacles. Failing to obtain the sponsorship of such senators as Homer Ferguson, Arthur H. Vandenberg, and Robert Taft, it finally settled for William G. Stratton, a representative-at-large from Illinois, as the sponsor of its legislative proposal. On 1 April 1947, he introduced in the House of Representatives the CCDP proposal (HR 2910), which recommended admission of four hundred thousand DPs into the United States over a period of four years. The Council fully endorsed the Stratton bill. On 11 April, Berger wrote to all ACJ chapter leaders: "I hope that every member of the Council as an individual, will feel it to be his obligation as a citizen to help the Citizens' Committee to build up public opinion in support of the proposed legislation."[9]

The CCDP's campaign relied on both humanitarian and political arguments. It emphasized that the United States, one of the few countries not ravaged by war, had to set an example for others by permitting about one-half of the 850,000 people still living in DP camps to settle within its borders. The CCDP was aware of the tendency to identify DPs with Jews as well as the overwhelming opposition to immigration. Thus, it carefully emphasized that only 20 percent of the DPs were Jews and that the emergency legislation would not alter the basic quota law.[10]

Despite efforts by the CCDP, the ACJ, the AJC, the Departments of State and War, the Truman administration in general, and the American Federation of Labor, the Stratton Bill was tabled. Significantly, Truman supported it but did not endorse it publicly. In a major shift from its policy of opposition to Jewish immigration before and during World War II, the State Department in 1947 strongly supported the admission of Jewish DPs into the United States. Like the ACJ, many foreign-policy experts hoped that the relaxation of immigration restrictions would blunt the powerful drive for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Ironically, when the Displaced Persons Act was finally passed on 18 June 1948, not only did the legislation clearly discriminate against Jews, but it also came too late to affect in any way the establishment of the State of Israel. The American public, increasingly sympathetic to Zionism and extremely generous in its support for Jewish immigration to Palestine, was much less willing to receive Jews into the United States.[11]

While the DP legislation remained bogged down in Congress, the Palestine question came up before the United Nations. On 2 April 1947, one day after the introduction of the Stratton bill, Great Britain formally

requested a special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of forming a special committee to make recommendations on Palestine and its future government for presentation to the General Assembly's regular session in September. With this action, the struggle for Palestine took the center stage of international politics.[12]

For the Council it represented the beginning of the final and most hectic phase of its anti-Zionist campaign. It immediately began to coordinate its moves with the State Department, particularly with Henderson and his NEA Division. In fact, by mid-April, the ACJ had informed Henderson of its eagerness "to cooperate one hundred per cent" with the State Department in matters related to the United Nations "so that our every move is in line with the plans which you have developed."[13]

Rosenwald, Berger, and Wallach mapped out the ACJ's broad strategy for the General Assembly's special session. Besides denying "the validity of the Jewish Agency's attempt to represent all Jews," they also decided to reiterate the Council's support for a democratic state in Palestine as well as its insistence on the complete dissociation of Jews throughout the world from the Jews in Palestine. On 23 April, Berger explained the ACJ's plans to State Department officials in "off the record" conversations in Washington.[14]

In the meantime, on 17 April, Rosenwald left for a three-week visit in Germany at the invitation of the War Department. There, along with twelve other businessmen, he discussed with General Lucius D. Clay, the commander of the American forces in Europe, the economic reconstruction of Germany. During his trip he also visited several DP camps and saw for himself the wretched conditions under which the refugees lived. After his return, Rosenwald reported on the problem of the DPs at a Washington press conference, using the occasion to urge passage of the Stratton bill.[15]

The United Nations General Assembly held its special session between 28 April and 15 May 1947. Three days before the United Nations began its deliberations, Berger openly announced the ACJ's objection to the request of the Jewish Agency for a nonvoting seat in the General Assembly and emphatically rejected the Agency's claim to speak for the "Jewish people." After the session opened, the ACJ carefully monitored developments at the United Nations. To emphasize the dissociation of Jews in general from the Jewish Agency, the Council repeatedly reminded both Secretary Marshall and Ambassador Warren Austin that the ACJ, for one, considered the members of the U.S. delegation as its "only authorized political spokesmen at the United Nations."[16]

At minimum, the ACJ must have reinforced the position of the State Department. On 2 May, echoing the Council's viewpoint, Ambassador Austin declared in a speech before the General Assembly: "It should also be borne in mind that the Jewish Agency is not speaking for all the Jews of the world. My Government is in receipt of numerous communications from various Jewish groups which make it clear that they do not recognize the Jewish Agency as their spokesman."[17]

Nevertheless, after complicated maneuvers lasting more than a week, the General Assembly permitted the Jewish Agency, as the representative of the Jews in Palestine, to present its views before the Assembly's First (Political and Security) Committee, consisting of all the fifty-five member states of the United Nations. The ACJ, however, regarded Austin's statement and a subsequent letter from Gordon Merriam, both of which rejected the Jewish Agency's claim to speak for all Jews, as important victories for anti-Zionist principles "in the highest tribunals of international affairs."[18]

When, on 8 May 1947, Abba Hillel Silver claimed before the First Committee that he spoke for the "Jewish people of the world," Berger immediately lodged a vigorous protest, urging Austin to publicize the view that there could not be any single spokesman for all Jews. The Council, Berger reiterated, recognized only Austin as its representative in the international forum.[19]

On 13 May 1947, the First Committee adopted the terms of reference for the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP). Consisting of the representatives of Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay, and Yugoslavia, the UNSCOP was given "the widest powers to ascertain and record facts, and to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine." It was instructed to complete a report no later than 1 September 1947. On 15 May, after voting forty-five to seven to approve these recommendations, the General Assembly adjourned.[20]

The ACJ immediately began to make preparations to submit its case to the UNSCOP. On 16 May, Berger traveled to Washington to consult Henderson. Henderson advised the ACJ to present its brief, as quickly as possible, directly to the UNSCOP and to every government whose representatives sat on the committee. He thought they should know of the existence of an anti-Zionist Jewish group in the United States. Such information would help to counteract the extreme Zionist pressures to which they were subjected.[21]

On 4 June 1947, the Council, through the State Department, transmitted its memorandum to the secretary general of the United Nations. In the

introductory section the ACJ stated its standard position: It spoke only for its own members, was deeply concerned about the condition of the DPs, and opposed a Jewish state in Palestine or anywhere else. Creation of a Jewish state threatened peace in Palestine and harmed Jews throughout the world. The ACJ then emphasized that the Jews in Palestine comprised only a small fraction of world Jewry. Thus, Jews throughout the world must be clearly dissociated from the political structure developed in Palestine. The memorandum's central argument focused on the necessity to take international action to protect Jews in the countries in which they were living "against invasion of their status as free and equal citizens" by the ideology and policy of the Zionists. Prudent and effective international action would seek a worldwide humanitarian solution for the problem of DPs of all faiths, prevent the creation of a Jewish state, and assure the "guaranteed rights" of Jews everywhere.[22]

The memorandum provided the Council with an excellent opportunity to publicize its position. Berger exhorted publicity chairmen of local chapters to acquaint their own communities with the document's contents. Copies were sent to the eleven representatives of the UNSCOP and to the members of all fifty-five UN delegations and their foreign offices. The ACJ also brought the memorandum to the attention of members of Congress, radio commentators, and newspaper editors. Although pleased by the numerous favorable responses it received, the ACJ was particularly gratified by an enthusiastic editorial in the anti-Zionist *Christian Century*. This leading liberal Protestant journal praised the ACJ, declaring that it was "wise occasionally to remind ourselves that many of the most influential Jews in the country are openly opposed to Zionist nationalism."[23]

The General Assembly urged all governments and peoples as well as the inhabitants of Palestine, in particular, to avoid issuing threats or using force while the UNSCOP was conducting its inquiry. President Truman also appealed for restraint. He specifically asked Americans to refrain from doing anything that might aggravate the tense situation in Palestine. But the very creation of the UNSCOP and the real possibility that it might propose a decisive solution for the Palestine problem actually intensified the unrest in that country.[24]

The UNSCOP held hearings in Palestine from 16 June to 24 July 1947. While testimony was being taken, despite martial law and the imposition of the death penalty for convicted terrorists, violence in the country was rampant. In fact, on 16 June the British sentenced to death three Etzel members for participating in an attack on the Acre prison and freeing 251 inmates. An UNSCOP appeal for clemency was rejected. On 12 July the Etzel kidnapped

two British sergeants and warned they would be killed if its three members were executed. The British carried out the executions on 28 July. Two days later, the sergeants were found hanged. Incensed by the hangings, British troops and police rioted in Tel Aviv, killing five Jews. Thus, in the middle of the UNSCOP's inquiry, tensions in Palestine reached a new peak, creating the impression that the mandate was doomed.[25]

The most spectacular publicity coup for the Zionists during the UNSCOP's visit in Palestine was the *Exodus-1947* affair. On 11 July an old Chesapeake Bay ferry, the *President Warfield,* renamed *Exodus-1947,* with 4,550 DPs on board, left the French port of Sète, near Marseilles, and sailed for Palestine. British warships, which kept it under surveillance, escorted the refugee ship all the way to Palestine. Outside of Haifa, the British boarded the vessel and, after a bitter struggle in which three Jews were killed and more than one hundred were injured, they captured it. The story of the battle for the *Exodus-1947* was radioed to the Haganah's headquarters in Tel Aviv and later broadcast to the outside world. Angry at the Zionists, Bevin decided "to make an example of this ship." Instead of sending the DPs to Cyprus, he ordered them returned to the French port of embarkation. The French were willing to receive them, provided they came ashore voluntarily. Only a few accepted the French offer. The majority, insisting on going to Palestine, refused to disembark. After three weeks, concerned about the possible outbreak of epidemics, the French ordered the British ships to leave. At an emergency session, the British cabinet made the insensitive decision to return the refugees to the DP camps in Germany. The tragic story of the *Exodus-1947* generated immense sympathy for the Zionist cause and clearly affected some members of the UNSCOP. Indeed, the Yugoslav representative commented that it was "the best evidence we can have."[26]

The ACJ reacted indignantly to the apparent Zionist exploitation of the misery of the refugees. It criticized the Zionists both for planning the *Exodus-1947* incident for propaganda purposes, in ruthless disregard for the suffering of the DPs, and for whipping up emotions at a time when the fundamental problem of Palestine was being reviewed. On the other hand, it praised France for its generous offer to grant refuge to the ship's "unhappy passengers." The ACJ regarded France's gesture as an example that other members of the United Nations should emulate.[27]

Berger was also deeply suspicious of Zionist activities among the refugees in the DP camps. When he learned about the UNSCOP's intention to send a subcommittee to the camps to determine the refugees' resettlement preferences in "a true and unprejudiced" manner, Berger immediately appealed to the UNSCOP's chairman to "make due allowance

for the long period of Zionist propaganda" and to acquaint the DPs with the situation in Palestine before polling them.[28]

Throughout the summer of 1947, while carefully watching the progress of the UNSCOP's investigation, the Council also engaged in extensive lobbying at the United Nations. Alfred M. Lilienthal, a lawyer who belonged to the ACJ's Washington chapter, contacted members of twenty-six of the permanent delegations to the United Nations. From his conversations with the diplomats, he concluded that if the ACJ fought for its ideals aggressively it had a good chance to succeed. "I saw little evidence of sympathy with political Zionism," Lilienthal reported to Berger.[29]

Berger, who had been trying to see Ambassador Austin since 7 July, finally met him at the United Nations on 11 August. Austin impressed Berger as being sympathetic with the "humanitarian motivations so frequently expressed by the Zionists" but cognizant of "the fallacies of their political thinking." Berger came away from the meeting feeling that, despite his past cooperation with the Zionists, Austin was trying to approach the Palestine problem "from a fresh and objective position."[30]

On 31 August 1947, the UNSCOP completed its report. The Committee agreed unanimously on eleven recommendations. The most important were that the mandate should be ended and Palestine granted independence, that the new state or states ought to be founded on democratic principles, that the country's economic unity should be preserved, that the sanctity of the holy places and access to them should be safeguarded, and that action should be taken immediately to solve the problem of the Jewish DPs in Europe. With two dissenting votes, the UNSCOP adopted a twelfth recommendation stating that "it be accepted as incontrovertible that any solution for Palestine cannot be considered as a solution of the Jewish problem in general." These twelve recommendations provided guidelines for UN action. The UNSCOP, nevertheless, was divided on the question of the future of Palestine. Seven members, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, and Uruguay, proposed partition. A minority of three, India, Iran, and Yugoslavia, recommended a federal solution. One member, Australia, abstained.[31]

The majority plan presented a scheme for the partition of Palestine into independent Arab and Jewish states and an internationalized zone of Jerusalem, joined with one another in an economic union. Western Galilee, the hill country of central Palestine, and the coastal plain from Isdud to the Egyptian border were assigned to the Arab state. The Jewish state was to consist of eastern Galilee, the coastal plain from south of Acre to north of Isdud, and the Negev. Both states were to become independent

within two years from 1 September 1947. In the interim period, Britain, alone or jointly with one or more members of the United Nations, was to administer Palestine under the auspices of the United Nations and was to admit 150,000 Jewish immigrants into the area proposed for the Jewish state. The international zone of Jerusalem, consisting of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and their suburbs, was to be governed by the United Nations under a permanent trusteeship agreement. To preserve the country's economic unity, the plan proposed a ten-year treaty between the two states, providing for common customs, currency, and communications.[32]

The minority, considering partition unworkable and anti-Arab, contended that "the well-being of the country and its people as a whole" was more important than the Jewish aspiration for statehood. They proposed that, after a three-year transitional administration by the United Nations, the Palestine mandate be transformed into an independent federal government with Arab and Jewish states and Jerusalem as the capital. Whereas the state governments were to have jurisdiction over internal affairs, a central government, with a bicameral legislature (one chamber based on proportional representation; the other, on equal representation), would be responsible for immigration, foreign relations, and national defense. All laws would require majority votes of both houses. Jewish immigration into the Jewish state was to be allowed for three years, but only in such numbers as would not exceed its "absorptive capacity" and would demonstrate proper consideration "for the rights of the population then present within that state and for anticipated rate of increase."[33]

The Arab Higher Committee, as the Arab Executive now called itself, rejected both the majority and the minority plans. It characterized both as "absurd, impracticable and unjust." The Zionists, however, though unenthusiastic about its territorial provisions, cautiously accepted the majority plan. For them it signified the prospect of fulfilling two of their major goals: the acquisition of sovereignty and uninterrupted immigration.[34]

Despite their reservations, the Zionists launched an aggressive publicity campaign to generate sympathy for the majority plan. Most American Jews rallied enthusiastically behind the partition proposal. The American public, the press, and Democratic as well as Republican politicians quickly joined the bandwagon. The U.S. government, on the other hand, was more cautious. Consequently, from early September until the end of November the Truman administration faced intense Zionist pressure.[35]

Many Defense Department officials and State Department professionals, including James Forrestal, Loy Henderson, Gordon Merriam, Fraser

Wilkins, and Dean Rusk, strongly opposed partition. They feared alienating the Arabs and thus endangering American interests in the Middle East.[36]

Henderson, the most persistent opponent of Zionism in the State Department, offered the best-reasoned arguments against partition. He based his analysis of the plan both on its fairness to those directly affected by it and on its impact on American interests. Moreover, he was convinced that acceptance of the majority proposal would necessitate implementation by force.[37]

On 22 September, claiming to express views shared by almost all Foreign Service and State Department officials who had worked "to any appreciable extent on Near Eastern problems," Henderson presented to Secretary Marshall a top-secret memorandum highly critical of the UNSCOP's majority plan. American support for partition or the establishment of a Jewish state, Henderson stressed, would undermine the American position among the Arabs and in the Muslim world. Furthermore, creation of a Jewish state would necessitate a major American contribution in force, materials, and money. The partition plan would not only perpetuate the Palestine problem but also further complicate it. Moreover, the plan contradicted the principles of the United Nations Charter as well as American ideals of government. For instance, the principles of self-determination and majority rule were slighted in favor of a theocratic state that would in some cases discriminate on the basis of religion and race.[38]

According to Henderson, there was no workable solution for the Palestine problem that the majority of both Arabs and Jews would accept. A workable solution could emerge only after long discussions between moderate Jews and Arabs. Consequently, the United States should maintain a strictly impartial attitude in the General Assembly debate. He saw one ray of hope: the possibility of agreement by moderates on both sides to a temporary trusteeship, followed by a plebiscite on the question of partition. Such an arrangement could probably also provide for the immigration of a hundred thousand Jews. Henderson conceded, however, that the kind of delayed solution he suggested might prove impossible to arrange. "If so," he warned, "the Palestine problem will become even more of a world problem than at the present time."[39]

Two months later, only five days before the General Assembly's vote on the Palestine question, Henderson still considered support for partition contrary to U.S. interests. Partition, he predicted, would lead to wide-scale violence in Palestine.[40]

The Council's initial reaction to the UNSCOP report was cautious. On 9 September its executive committee issued a statement commending the

UNSCOP's "earnest and conscientious attempt" to find a solution for the Palestine problem. But, despite its appeal to the General Assembly to bring about a settlement compatible with the lofty democratic principles proposed by the UNSCOP, the ACJ suspended judgment on the committee's report as a whole.[41]

The Council's statement reflected considerable anxiety and confusion among its members about the situation at the United Nations. Berger and Levison, its main strategists, were critical of the UNSCOP report. Berger immediately denounced the entire report. In his opinion, it was by far "the most unsatisfactory" of all the numerous attempts to examine and solve the Palestine problem. Levison, who could see some sense in the minority plan, considered the majority plan "fantastically impractical."[42]

Some members urged the ACJ to pursue a more aggressive policy. For example, Alfred Lilienthal and Joseph Kaufman, the Washington chapter activists, believed it was necessary to "fight fire with fire" in order to defeat the UNSCOP's majority plan. The ACJ had to let the General Assembly know that a large segment of Jews was opposed to a Jewish state. Moreover, since the diplomats in the United Nations could not be expected to take positions that would open them to the charge of anti-Semitism, the ACJ must widely publicize its arguments against the Jewish state. Indeed, according to Lilienthal, members of the UN delegations to whom he had spoken would not hesitate to express publicly the feelings they voiced privately if the ACJ were to "express those sentiments initially."[43]

Berger had been dissatisfied with the ACJ's position since the presentation of its memorandum to the UNSCOP. The ACJ's passiveness since the publication of the committee's report deeply irritated him. Consequently, he spent the entire weekend of 14 and 15 September formulating a critique of the UNSCOP's majority report.

After much reflection, Berger concluded that the ACJ had to fight vigorously against partition, without moving to its second line of defense—the emphasis on dissociating Jews outside Palestine from a Jewish state—until such retreat was absolutely necessary. If, indeed, the United Nations were to resort to partition and a "Jewish state" were actually established, Berger thought that comprehensive safeguards from the American government would be needed to protect American Jews from interference in their lives by various "Zionist instrumentalities."[44]

By the end of September, as a consequence of Berger's instigation, the Council had finally formulated its official response to the UNSCOP report in a long memorandum prepared for Secretary Marshall. On 30 September 1947, Rosenwald and Levison presented this memorandum to Marshall at a

secret meeting also attended by General John Hilldring and Herschel Johnson, members of the UN delegation. Marshall listened attentively to Rosenwald's arguments but said very little. Hilldring, who recalled Levison's UNRRA work, was impressed with Rosenwald and spoke of the vital importance of breaking the theory of "Jewish unanimity" in the United States. Levison came away from the meeting with the feeling that no decision on Palestine had yet been reached but that Hilldring wanted to capitalize on the ACJ's memorandum. A week had passed before Marshall, through Hilldring, gave the ACJ clearance to publicize its document. Marshall, however, insisted on one condition: No mention was to be made of the meeting between the secretary and the ACJ's representatives. The memorandum was made public on 8 October.[45]

The memorandum rejected the UNSCOP's majority report and presented the ACJ's own peace plan. The partition of Palestine, the ACJ argued, echoing Henderson, would not only intensify existing problems but might create new ones. Any permanent solution for Palestine would require adherence to the moral and legal principles of the United Nations Charter and all twelve principles stated by the UNSCOP report, a solution for the problem of the Jewish DPs, and elimination of special claims on Palestine by people other than its citizens. The ACJ offered a ten-point plan for Palestine:

1. The United Nations shall be named Trustee for Palestine without delay.
2. Self-government at the earliest possible time shall be a primary objective of the Trustee. The country's readiness for self-government shall be determined by the Trustee.
3. Special consideration must be given to establishing educational and economic equality between the Jewish and Arab groups.
4. Land reform laws must be provided to remove control and ownership from racial or religious entities and to make the land the possession either of individuals or of the national government.
5. The Jewish Agency, as well as counterparts of an Arab nationalism, must be liquidated.
6. Immediate provision must be made for the admission of 150,000 Displaced Persons of Jewish faith.
7. Subsequent immigration shall be determined by the then existing government of Palestine.
8. Simultaneous with the solution of the Palestine problem the members of the United Nations are morally bound to absorb among

them the remaining Displaced Persons of all faiths and national origins.

9. The United States must take leadership in advocating this solution of the DP problem in the United Nations by a tacit pledge that every possible effort will be made to secure necessary legislation to admit our fair share of DPs into this country.
10. The Holy Places shall be internationalized.[46]

Kermit Roosevelt, who had been impressed with both the June 1947 and the 30 September memoranda, described the Marshall memorandum as "the best thing by far" he had yet seen on Palestine. He reassured Levison: "We'll keep plugging, and we may yet win." In fact, by now Roosevelt had begun to work closely with the Council. From October 1947 until the middle of May 1948, Roosevelt was one of the ACJ's strongest allies in Washington.[47]

On 23 September 1947, one week after the opening of the fall session of the United Nations, the Palestine issue was referred to an *Ad Hoc* Committee, consisting of all member states. This committee discussed the Palestine problem in fourteen meetings that took up twenty-four days. The Arab Higher Committee, representing the Palestinian Arabs, and the Arab states rejected both partition and federalism. They insisted on the formation of a unitary Arab state in Palestine. The Jewish Agency, on the other hand, accepted the UNSCOP partition plan as the "indispensable minimum."[48]

The ACJ confronted a new situation on 11 October, only three days after it publicly rejected the UNSCOP majority plan. On instructions from the president, Herschel Johnson informed the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the American government's decision to endorse "the basic principles" of partition, subject to "certain amendments and modifications."[49]

Johnson's announcement deeply disappointed the Council. Although Rosenwald, Wallach, and Levison were relatively restrained in their reactions, Berger strongly urged the ACJ not to accept "the weakly stated American position as *fait accompli.*" Convinced the ACJ was facing a historic moment, Berger advocated an aggressive publicity campaign against the latest American position. He refused to give up without a fight.[50]

Levison, believing Johnson's statement was an occasion that required diplomacy, counseled against pressure tactics. The ACJ's objective, he advised, should be to influence the ultimate decision on Palestine, not simply to broadcast its views. Accordingly, the Council should continue to rely on Henderson's advice. In fact, by mid-October, Levison still thought the ACJ had an important task to perform before the UN vote on partition.

Doubting that partition was already a *fait accompli,* he urged continued reliance on the Marshall memorandum as the basis of Council policy and even suggested widely publicizing the recommendations contained in the document.[51]

Levison's reluctance to accept partition as a *fait accompli* probably reflected his awareness of the attitude of Henderson and other State Department officials who continued to oppose partition. With minor exceptions, neither the State Department nor the American delegation to the United Nations favored partition. But the political reality was that American public opinion increasingly supported it. Moreover, mounting Zionist pressure, reinforced by the pro-Zionist advocacy of David Niles and Clark Clifford in the White House, had an effect on President Truman. Consequently, despite his annoyance with the Zionists because of their lobbying tactics, he eventually sided with them.[52]

On 21 October 1947, the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Palestine appointed a subcommittee of nine supporters of partition, including the United States and the Soviet Union, to modify the UNSCOP majority plan by considering various objections raised during the general debate. Another subcommittee of nine, consisting of six Arab states, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Colombia, was assigned to formulate a plan for a unitary Palestinian state according to suggestions from Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Syria. Not until 24 and 25 November were their respective proposals ready for a vote.[53]

In the meantime, Council membership faced with increasing anxiety the prospect of partition and the creation of a Jewish state. On 5 November, in an attempt to allay their fears, Rosenwald sent a letter to ACJ members in which he discussed the situation at the United Nations. The ACJ, he assured them, was in constant contact with the State Department and the UN delegation. Moreover, it continued to support the policy outlined in the Marshall memorandum. If a proposal contrary to the position of the Council were accepted by the United Nations, Rosenwald concluded, then the organization's program would still remain clear—the opposition to "all manifestations of a universal Jewish nationalism."[54]

Rosenwald's letter did not satisfy Berger, who wanted to prepare the organization's "second line of defense" and to take precautions against the growing feeling among some members that the ACJ's job was finished. He insisted on a stronger and more comprehensive statement about the future of the Council.[55]

On 20 November, in response to Berger's pressure, the Council's leadership sent a long statement to its members explaining the future of the

organization if the United Nations were to adopt the partition plan. Essentially, the ACJ's policy would be:

> A continuation of our concern with and opposition to the almost certain efforts of Jewish nationalists to link all Jews—"The Jewish People"—to the future of the proposed "Jewish state." Zionists will continue to seek control of the lives and institutions of Americans of Jewish faith. They will attempt to solidify support for their principle that Jews are members of that "nationality" and that the homeland of members of that "nationality" is in their "Jewish State."
>
> Against this certain, continued drive of Jewish nationalism, in our opinion, the work of the Council will be of even greater importance and necessity than in the past. Against the claims of Zionists for rights of *all* Jews, as Jews, in their "Jewish National State" we must intensify our program of integration as the answer to the problem of Jews in the United States.[56]

Thus, in the event of partition, one of the major tasks of the ACJ would be to work for the creation of explicit and detailed safeguards to prevent any political affiliation between the proposed "Jewish state" and Jews, as Jews, in the United States. The ACJ would insist on the complete and unequivocal political dissociation of Jews living outside Palestine from the Jewish state.[57]

While Zionist pressures on the American government and at the United Nations were peaking in the days immediately before the decisive vote by the General Assembly, the ACJ began to show signs of weakening. Even at the Houston chapter, once a bastion of anti-Zionism, there was a growing sense of restlessness. When Kermit Roosevelt spoke at an ACJ dinner in Houston on 10 November 1947, the local board asked him to eliminate from his speech part of his attack on the Zionists. According to James Baumohl, the chapter's president, negative feelings about the group were increasing; some members were even suggesting that the ACJ might have outlived its usefulness. A similar message arrived from the Dallas chapter. I. Edward Tonkon, one of its most devoted leaders, warned the national leaders about considerable talk among local members of liquidating the organization.[58]

Berger was troubled by the growing demoralization among many Council members as the decision on Palestine approached. He found the situation in Houston particularly distressing. Berger feared that if the ACJ was in trouble in Houston, with the whole background of Congregation Beth Israel, then it might be doomed to failure in the United States. On 28

November, one day before the partition vote, Berger warned that if the Council's viewpoint were to be lost in the United States the future of American Jews would be hopeless, because the Council was "the last barricade against the flood of Jewish nationalism in this country."[59]

Between 19 and 25 November, Zionists scored two important victories. Through Weizmann's direct intervention with President Truman, they succeeded in thwarting a State Department attempt to modify the UNSCOP's majority plan by excluding the Negev from the proposed Jewish state. Then, on 24 November the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Palestine rejected the subcommittee report favoring a unitary state by a vote of twenty-nine to twelve; a day later, by a vote of twenty-five to thirteen, it approved an amended version of the subcommittee report on partition.[60]

On 29 November 1947, after four final days of feverish lobbying by Zionists and their sympathizers, by a vote of thirty-three to thirteen, with ten abstentions, the United Nations General Assembly approved a resolution containing the *Ad Hoc* Committee's partition proposal. For Zionists, it was the successful culmination of more than five years of hard and persistent work, during which they had won over the support of both American Jews and the general public.[61]

The resolution provided for the division of Palestine into an Arab state, a Jewish state, and an International Regime for the City of Jerusalem, all linked in an economic union. The two new states were to become independent by 1 October 1948 or two months after the termination of the mandate, which was to occur "as soon as possible," but not later than 1 August 1948. Partition was to be supervised by a five-member United Nations Commission under the guidance of the Security Council. It was expected that Britain would cooperate with the commission during the transition. In the interim period, the internal order of the new states and the prevention of border clashes were to be secured by the militia of each state, commanded by their own officers, but under the general military and political control of the commission. The Security Council, however, could intervene if there was a threat to peace in Palestine.[62]

The passage of the partition resolution, a tremendous victory for the Zionists, was a major defeat for the Council. The Jewish state, against which it had been fighting for more than five years, was now closer than ever to reality. The ACJ's anti-Zionist barricade was crumbling.

In the struggle for a Jewish state, the Zionists proved more effective combatants than the Council. Unlike the Council, which focused on supporting the State Department's position, Zionists concentrated their

pressures on the White House, where the real decisions concerning Palestine were ultimately made. But that was not the only reason for their triumph. The Zionists also benefited from several other circumstances. The impact of the Holocaust on Jews and non-Jews, President Truman's political sensitivity to Jewish voters, Great Britain's decline from great-power status, ineffective Arab opposition, and, above all, the fierce determination of the Jewish community in Palestine—all contributed to Zionist success.

From the Partition Resolution to Statehood

Zionists and the vast majority of Jews throughout the world received the news of the UN vote with jubilation. Arabs in Palestine and in the surrounding states, surprised by what they considered an unjust and invalid act by the international body, reacted violently. In Palestine, mass demonstrations and a three-day general strike, lasting from 2 to 4 December, expressed the anger and frustration of the Arab population with the decision of the General Assembly. As early as 30 November, the first clashes between Arabs and Jews in Palestine left seven Jews dead. The situation looked grim as casualties quickly mounted. In December alone, the violence in Palestine claimed 450 dead and 1,000 wounded. On 5 December, to curb the violence, the United States imposed an embargo on the sale of arms to the Middle East. Despite the turmoil in the country, the British announced on 11 December their intention to relinquish the Palestine mandate as of 15 May 1948. They made it clear they would not enforce the partition plan.[63]

Although the ACJ leaders expected the partition decision, the UN vote precipitated a crisis in the organization. At its 5 December 1947 meeting the ACJ's executive committee decided not to make an immediate public statement on partition. Instead, it accepted the principle of partition as a *fait accompli,* wished the "Zionist state" well, and began to plan for the group's "second line of defense." The new long-range program of the ACJ would be to educate Jews and non-Jews regarding the effects of the emergence of the proposed "Zionist state." Contacting American officials to obtain "safeguards" against the invasion of the rights of American citizens by Zionist spokesmen and agents would be an important part of the new strategy. The feeling among the members of the executive committee was that the Council's job had become "greater and more important now than ever before." They urged the general membership to rely on Rosenwald's 20 November 1947 letter for general guidance until the Council's annual conference in January 1948.[64]

Despite the encouraging rhetoric of its leaders, the UN decision of 29 November seriously damaged the morale of Council members. There was a growing feeling among many of them that the partition vote eliminated the need for the ACJ. Berger, therefore, hastened to remind them that the ACJ was not organized for the sole purpose of opposing a Jewish state, but to resist Jewish nationalism and to promote the integration of Jews. Rabbi Schachtel, however, began to doubt the usefulness of the Council; the ACJ had been initially correct to oppose a Jewish state, he argued, but the matter had been taken out of its hands. He believed anything the ACJ did now would probably be misconstrued and held against it. Moreover, because of the growing violence in Palestine, Schachtel feared another Holocaust. Therefore, for the time being, he urged the ACJ to suspend its activities and allow its members to "think things through together."[65]

From early December 1947 until the middle of January 1948, Berger diligently directed preparations for the Council's annual conference. During this period he also notified the secretary general of the United Nations that the Jewish Agency did not speak for all the Jews of the world and asked editors of all American daily newspapers to distinguish clearly between the words *Jew* and *Zionist*.[66]

At its fourth annual conference, held in St. Louis, Missouri, between 17 and 19 January 1948, the ACJ accepted partition, ending its official opposition to the creation of a Jewish state. Because of its unpopularity among Jews, the ACJ failed to find any Jewish speakers outside its membership. Consequently, three Christians, Paul Hutchinson, editor of the *Christian Century*, Carrol Binder, editorial editor of the *Minneapolis Tribune*, and William S. Bernard, executive secretary of the CCDP, addressed the conference. Lazaron, Rosenwald, Berger, and Wallach, all of whom spoke to the conference about the consequences of the UN partition decision, emphasized the primacy of the United States in ACJ policy and the need for American Jews to separate themselves from the proposed Jewish state.[67]

At a special meeting of the executive committee on 17 January 1948, the ACJ's leaders examined the implications of the imminent formation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Levison reported that his contacts in Washington were deeply concerned about the growing strife in Palestine and about the many difficulties confronting the implementation of the partition plan. In fact, they were beginning to have serious doubts about the feasibility of partition.[68]

Levison's report initiated a lively discussion on the exact role the ACJ ought to adopt in relation to Palestine. Ultimately, Rosenwald best

articulated the majority opinion. Since in the past the Council held the view that the U.S. government represented it in foreign affairs, it would be inconsistent to reject publicly the government's official policy. The ACJ should merely explain how the partition decision affected it as an organization. Negative comments about partition would reflect poorly on the ACJ and would create the impression of a spiteful act by a defeated group. The ACJ, asserted Rosenwald, had always stood for much more than opposition to a Jewish state. Its basic objection was to Jewish nationalism. In light of the new reality, the ACJ should reconcile itself to the Zionist state but at the same time concentrate more than ever before on fighting Jewish nationalism.[69]

After three days of speeches, discussions, and arguments, the conference approved a series of resolutions and a new statement of principles. In ten resolutions the ACJ expressed its views on many subjects, all emphasizing the organization's dissociation from Jewish nationalism and the Zionists. With the United Nations deciding to create a Zionist state in Palestine, the ACJ committed itself firmly against involvement in the political destinies of that state, reserving its single, indivisible, and exclusive allegiance for the United States. It appealed to the press and the opinion makers to differentiate between "Zionism" and "Judaism." While urging all American Jews to contribute to philanthropy, the ACJ criticized the method whereby the United Jewish Appeal (UJA), the major American Jewish fund-raising organization, mingled relief and political funds. Since the Zionists received a major portion of UJA funds, anti-Zionist contributors to the UJA were in effect being forced to finance a cause they opposed. The ACJ, therefore, asked the UJA to allow for a method that would allow conditional contributions. If the UJA did not comply, the ACJ would develop its own philanthropic plan.[70]

Finally, on 19 January 1948, the conference approved a new ACJ statement of principles. Prepared essentially by Berger, the statement stressed the dissociation of American Jews from the projected Zionist state:

1. Nationality and religion are separate and distinct. Our nationality is American. Our religion is Judaism. Our homeland is the United States of America. We reject any concept that Jews are at home only in Palestine.
2. The United Nations Assembly has recommended the partition of Palestine. We hope that it will bring peace to that long troubled land and that each of the proposed states will be a peace-loving, democratic nation. The nationalism of the proposed Zionist state

must be confined to the boundaries of that state. Its spokesmen, representatives, agencies and instrumentalities in no way represent us.

3. We are dedicated to extend the fullest philanthropic aid to our co-religionists and to suffering humanity everywhere.
4. No Jew or group of Jews can speak, or represent, all the Jews of America.[71]

One of the major goals of the St. Louis conference was to revitalize Council activity in the aftermath of the historic UN vote. As a part of this general effort to review interest in the organization, Rabbi Lazaron embarked on a two-month speaking tour. From the latter part of January until the middle of March 1948, Lazaron visited major ACJ strongholds in the South, Southwest, and West. He explained the reorientation of the ACJ's policy and urged members not only to continue their support for the organization but also to become more active in it.[72]

Significantly, at the time of the St. Louis conference the partition plan was in considerable trouble. Indeed, as Levison reported, there was growing skepticism among foreign policy experts about its feasibility. Consequently, by 17 January, ACJ leaders already knew that influential State Department officials had second thoughts about the UN decision.[73]

The mood that Levison discovered among his Washington friends reflected a growing concern of the professionals in the State Department about the deteriorating situation in Palestine. The initial limited attacks by Palestinian Arabs against Jews rapidly escalated into a widespread conflict. In January 1948 an "Arab Liberation Army," consisting mostly of Syrian volunteers and commanded by Fawzi al-Qawuqji, a veteran of the 1936 Arab rebellion, crossed into northern Palestine. Forces led by Abd-al-Qadir al-Husayni and Hasan Salamah, loyal to the Grand Mufti, fought against the Jews in the Jerusalem region and in central Palestine. While the Haganah adopted an essentially defensive posture, the Arabs resorted to attacking Jewish settlements and transportation. Indeed, until the end of March, the Arabs had an advantage. The British, reluctant to damage relations with the Arabs and angry with the Zionists because of Jewish terrorist attacks as well as the hostile publicity campaign against Britain, refused to cooperate in enforcing the partition plan. They were determined to leave Palestine on 14 May 1948.[74]

Initially, the British even attempted to prevent the United Nations Palestine Commission, assigned to supervise the implementation of the partition plan, from entering the country before 1 May 1948. When the

British authorities eventually allowed a small advance group of the commission's staff to come to Palestine, they refused to provide it with any meaningful assistance. Consequently, the commission was unable to do more than observe the conditions in Palestine steadily deteriorate. On 16 February, in its first special report to the Security Council, it described the situation as moving toward organized warfare. The casualty rate was high. Between 30 November 1947 and 1 February 1948, 869 people were killed and 1,909 were wounded. The commission recommended replacement of the British security forces with "an adequate" international force, for only through such external intervention would it be possible to implement the partition plan. Otherwise, the commission warned, "the period immediately following the termination of the Mandate will be a period of uncontrolled, widespread strife and bloodshed in Palestine, including in the City of Jerusalem. This would be a catastrophic conclusion to an era of international concern for that territory."[75]

Loy Henderson, Secretary Forrestal, and other officials in the State and Defense departments who had been opposed to the partition plan regarded the escalation in the fighting between Jews and Arabs as confirmation of their predictions. The worsening situation in Palestine enabled them to seize the initiative again and steer the United States toward a retreat from its commitment to partition.[76]

In fact, the retreat had begun even before the actual vote on partition. On 24 November 1947, Secretary of the Army Kenneth C. Royall sent an undated report on Palestine to the National Security Council (NSC) in which he requested an assessment of the UN discussion of the Palestine problem on American security interests. One section raised the possibility of trusteeship in case the partition plan was defeated. Royall's request initiated a general review of American policy on Palestine by the State Department and other governmental agencies. By 17 December 1947, when the State Department completed a draft of the policy review, the situation in Palestine had already become so tense that the author of the document (probably Henderson) concluded that partition was "impossible of implementation."[77]

The next phase in the review procedure was a report the State Department Policy Planning Staff (PPS) presented to the NSC. Prepared in cooperation with Henderson, the report provided a thorough examination of the Palestine problem and urged the United States to undertake no "further initiative in implementing or aiding partition." Moreover, if it became obvious that partition could not be carried out without force, the matter should revert to the General Assembly, where the United States could support a

plan for "a federal state or trusteeship," which would not depend on external armed force for implementation.[78]

On 17 February, having completed its study of the Palestine issue, the NSC offered a series of recommendations hinting at the abandonment of partition. It concluded that any solution that would introduce the Russians into Palestine or result in the continued hostility of the Arab states toward the United States would endanger American security. The NSC strongly opposed sending a military force to Palestine to implement partition against the wishes of the population of Palestine. But if the General Assembly reconsidered the Palestine problem, the United States should propose "a trusteeship in Palestine with the UN Trusteeship Council as administering authority." Such a proposal might also provide for "an international force to maintain order during a transitional period."[79]

By mid-February, professionals in the State and Defense departments and the intelligence community realized that, in the face of Arab opposition, it would be impossible to implement partition without the use of a sizable force, a step they rejected. On 21 February, the State Department informed President Truman that, since the partition resolution could not be carried out by the United Nations without the use of force, Palestine must be judged unready for self-government. Accordingly, "some form of United Nations trusteeship for an additional period of time will be necessary."[80]

When Ambassador Austin, on 24 February, declared that the United Nations Security Council was empowered to keep peace but not to enforce partition, his statement was widely viewed as a hint that the United States was having second thoughts. This deeply worried the Zionists. Fearing the lessening of American support, they resumed their intense lobbying and exerted enormous pressure on President Truman to reaffirm his commitment to partition. This barrage of appeals irritated Truman. "As the pressure mounted," the president reminisced, "I found it necessary to give instruction that I did not want to be approached by any more spokesmen for the extreme Zionist cause."[81]

Late in February, approximately one month after it had reluctantly recognized the reality of the Jewish state, the ACJ resumed its campaign against partition. In this initiative, its last frantic attempt to prevent the formation of a Jewish state, the ACJ collaborated closely with the NEA Division of the State Department and with Kermit Roosevelt.[82]

On 21 February, as the Security Council was meeting to consider the Palestine crisis, Rosenwald wrote to Secretary of State Marshall. The events since 29 November 1947 had shown the incorrectness of the basic assumptions made by the General Assembly, including claims that there

would be no need for an international force to implement partition and that the majority of the inhabitants of Palestine would not resist it. Thus, a careful review of the situation was in order. Rosenwald suggested that if it were determined that American interests would be best served by a review of the 29 November decision and by an alternative plan more conducive to peace, a UN trusteeship could be instituted in Palestine. It would remain in effect until it was possible to replace it with an independent government satisfactory to its inhabitants. During the trusteeship, efforts could be made for reconciliation in the country.[83]

At the end of February, a Christian group joined the fight. Kermit Roosevelt and Virginia Gildersleeve organized in Washington the Committee for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land (CJP), a pressure group committed to the reversal of partition. The CJP had a hundred-member national council, which included some well-known American Protestant churchmen and educators who had once lived in the Middle East. Virginia Gildersleeve, dean emeritus of Barnard College, was elected CJP chairman; Henry Sloane Coffin, former president of Union Theological Seminary, assumed the vice chairmanship; and Roosevelt became executive director. From March until May 1948, the leaders of the ACJ and the CJP cooperated closely. Lazaron was the only Jew on the CJP's national council. Berger worked with the committee behind the scenes. He often participated in meetings of its executive board, helped to plan publicity, and even recruited members. Levison, in an effort to increase the CJP's prestige, attempted to persuade Dean Acheson to join. Acheson, who had been contacted previously by Roosevelt, declined and thus probably saved his political future.[84]

The CJP, officially formed on 2 March 1948, committed itself to four basic aims: to bring a just peace to the Holy Land; to promote the best interests of Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Middle East; to foster friendship among the peoples of the three faiths; and to strengthen the United Nations.[85]

The Committee for Justice and Peace recommended immediate adoption of the following steps—measures in complete harmony with those of the ACJ:

1. The Security Council should appeal to both sides "to cease fire," pending reconsideration by the General Assembly of its recommendation concerning Palestine and reference of the case to the International Court of Justice as provided in the United Nations Charter.

2. The Palestine question should be removed as an issue in American domestic politics by adoption of a bipartisan policy.
3. The United Nations should act rapidly to find homes for displaced persons, and the United States should adopt legislation to admit its full share.[86]

By early March, the ACJ was well aware of the pressure within the State Department to reconsider partition. The first public hint of the ACJ's own inclination to retreat from its erstwhile acceptance of partition was Rosenwald's article, "The Fallacies of Palestine," in the 13 March 1948 issue of *Collier's*. The partition plan, asserted Rosenwald, could not solve the so-called Jewish problem because most Jews would continue to live outside Palestine. Rather, it might complicate their problem enormously by possibly creating another self-imposed ghetto. Only the universal observance of the ideals of decency, liberalism, and democracy could end the "Jewish problem."[87]

For the diehard anti-Zionists in the ACJ, Rosenwald's article was not enough. From Washington, Alfred Lilienthal and Joseph Kaufman called for greater militancy. Describing the Zionists in Washington as "busy as bees all the way from the White House to Congress," Kaufman exhorted the ACJ to be more aggressive. Lilienthal, who felt that ACJ timidity in November 1947 had contributed to the UN's approval of the partition plan, urged Rosenwald to launch a vigorous publicity campaign aimed at persuading the U.S. government that American Jewry would not be outraged by arrangements for a new compromise in Palestine, one in harmony with ACJ principles.[88]

By mid-March, despite Lilienthal's worry about Zionist pressures, Berger had regained his confidence. From his viewpoint, developments regarding Palestine were moving in the right direction. In fact, he knew the State Department was reconsidering the partition plan and even offered it the ACJ's services and wholehearted support.[89] On 12 March he wrote to a leading ACJ member:

> Partition is dead. I don't know when the obituary will be published or who will actually pronounce it or in what form it will be made public. But I am ready to join the Irgun if there is a Jewish state in Palestine next October 1st. This is probably due to the fact that the State Department and the Army and Navy have put Mr. Truman in his place and are now managing the Palestine problem as they should have been allowed to manage it last November. The difficulty, of course, is that they have to undo some of the things which were done and the maneuverings of the

United States delegation have been exceedingly clever, cautious and delicately managed.[90]

Berger was right, at least for a while. On 19 March 1948, one day after President Truman had assured Chaim Weizmann of continuing American support for partition, Ambassador Austin announced before the United Nations Security Council the decision of the U.S. government to suspend support for the plan.[91]

Since the Jews and Arabs of Palestine and the British authorities were unable to agree on peaceful implementation, and in view of the serious danger that the withdrawal of Britain would result "in chaos, heavy fighting and much loss of life," Austin declared, the Security Council must seek a cease-fire. In fact, because of the gravity of the situation, he suggested a temporary UN trusteeship for Palestine:

My Government believes that a temporary trusteeship for Palestine should be established under the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations to maintain the peace and to afford the Jews and Arabs of Palestine, who must live together, further opportunity to reach an agreement regarding the future government of that country. Such a United Nations trusteeship would, of course, be without prejudice to the character of the eventual settlement, which we hope can be achieved without delay.[92]

Austin's statement was a bombshell. There is still considerable controversy over whether Truman specifically endorsed the change of policy. He knew about the statement and approved of trusteeship as a means of last resort, but he had not been informed about the actual timing of Austin's speech to the United Nations and thus was unable to prepare the necessary political groundwork for it.[93]

In short, the president was caught in an awkward situation, but he could not contradict Austin without making himself and the American government look ridiculous. In his calendar for 19 March 1948 he wrote:

The State Dept. pulled the rug from under me today. I didn't expect that would happen. In Key West or en route there from St. Croix I approved the speech and statement of policy by Senator Austin to U.N. meeting. This morning I find that the State Dept. has reversed my Palestine policy. The first I know about it is what I see in the papers! Isn't that hell? I am now in the position of a liar and a double-crosser. I've never felt so in my life. There are people in the third and fourth

> levels of the State Dept. who have always wanted to cut my throat. They've succeeded in doing it.[94]

Although Truman protested against the actions of the State Department officials, he did not immediately reverse their policy. In fact, he actually considered a temporary trusteeship in Palestine a good idea. Nevertheless, he also hastened to inform Weizmann that support for trusteeship did not signify a change in America's long-term policy.[95]

Austin's statement shocked the Zionists. Sensing a growing drive for the reversal of partition, they resumed their letter-writing and publicity campaigns, organized mass rallies, and mobilized supporters throughout the country. They even introduced a new argument in defense of their position: The reversal of partition would severely damage the prestige of the United Nations. For eight weeks following Austin's speech the Zionists worked feverishly to salvage partition. It was a tense and trying time for them. Many felt as if they were experiencing 1947 all over again. Only when the military balance in Palestine shifted in favor of the Jews were the Zionists able to regain their composure.[96]

Austin's 19 March 1948 statement infused the ACJ with a new sense of vitality. It was the only American Jewish group that approved of the apparent shift in American foreign policy. Almost immediately, Henderson, the CJP, and the ACJ proceeded to coordinate their activities. After consulting Henderson, Roosevelt, and Rosenwald, Levison reported to Berger:

> I've just spoken to Loy, to Kim and to Lessing! Loy is very strong for our sending a strong letter of support to the Secretary, and giving it wide publicity. He says the battle has only started in Washington because of the terrific pressures that are being brought to bear. He wants us to do all we can to put over the fact that there are Jews who are not Zionists. He says a few sincere telegrams (not mass stuff) would be helpful too. Kim says he is going to try to get his group to send wires, too. He and Loy both feel that the new policy took great courage on Truman's part, as it is a tough move from the domestic political side, and was made only because the President was finally convinced (mainly by Forrestal) that the thing is too serious to play politics with. Lessing is willing to go all out.[97]

On 22 and 23 March 1948, through telegrams and letters that were made public, Rosenwald informed President Truman, Secretary Marshall, and Ambassador Austin of the Council's wholehearted endorsement of the new American policy and urged the government to pursue it vigorously.

The Palestine problem, he advised, "must be kept above partisan interests and domestic politics." Any attempt to enforce partition would be disastrous. Rosenwald also suggested that, rather than weaken the United Nations, the American position would strengthen the international organization.[98]

Levison, who was subjected to abuse and threats for his outspoken views on Palestine even in tolerant San Francisco, realized it would be difficult to carry out Austin's proposal. "The decision by the Government to recommend abandoning the partition plan in favor of a U.N. partition," he wrote to Acheson, "was a bold and yet essential move." Still, there was a "long road ahead before the recommended action will be put into effect, and probably a very tough political situation is bound to develop from it."[99]

On 7 April 1948, a week after Rabbi Silver presented the Zionist point of view over the CBS radio network, Rosenwald made known his position. Disturbed by the violence in Palestine and the political threats against the president, Rosenwald asserted that both had to stop. Calling for an end to the "glib double-talk" of those politicians who were more concerned about assuring their own elections than with vital national interests, he insisted on an immediate truce in Palestine, a review by the General Assembly of its 29 November 1947 decision, and a trusteeship under the United Nations for an indeterminate period. During the trusteeship, the people of Palestine would learn to "exhibit statesmanship, understanding and conciliation."[100]

Rosenwald's 7 April radio address, which attracted a large audience only one month after his article appeared in *Collier's*, was the culmination of several weeks of unusual national exposure for the ACJ. The organization was favorably mentioned in the 29 March 1948 *Life* editorial, "Easter in Palestine," and in Bayard Dodge's article, "Must There Be War in the Middle East," in the April issue of *Reader's Digest*.[101]

Council and CJP leaders were in constant contact during April and May 1948. Early in April, while visiting Levison in San Francisco, Kermit Roosevelt was honored at a small ACJ lunch, addressed a large audience at the Commonwealth Club, and spoke informally to a number of interested groups. Upon his return from California, Roosevelt again received Berger's and Wallach's help in developing the advertising strategy of the CJP. Roosevelt, on his part, kept Rosenwald informed about the situation in Washington. On 15 April, for example, he reported on his recent conversations with officials in the State and Defense departments. Roosevelt found their mood generally subdued. They urged the ACJ and CJP to do as much as they could as quickly as possible.[102]

In April 1948 Rosenwald, in cooperation with the State Department and a number of Jewish supporters of trusteeship, played a major role in convincing Judah Magnes, president of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and a peace activist, to join the efforts to prevent partition. Loy Henderson sent a secret message to Magnes on 10 April requesting him to come to the United States at the earliest moment. Henderson, however, advised him that any special connection with the American government would diminish his usefulness. Magnes, according to his own suggestion, consented to come to the United States at the invitation of an *ad hoc* committee of friends and supporters.[103] Therefore, on 16 April, through a secret telegram from Undersecretary of State Lovett to the American consul in Jerusalem, Maurice Hexter, executive vice president of the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies of New York, sent Magnes the following message:

> I have been asked by Justice Horace Stern, Admiral Lewis Strauss, Lessing Rosenwald, Adele Levy, General Edward Greenbaum and Judge Jerome Frank to invite you and Beatrice to fly here immediately where they believe you can be uniquely serviceable in achieving peace before everything is too late. They are acting solely as individuals and do not necessarily subscribe to Ichud or any other program. They will fully finance all expenses. I support their proposal fully and beg you to come forthwith.[104]

When he helped to bring Magnes to the United States and finance his living expenses in New York, Rosenwald acted on his own. He was careful not to compromise the prospective peace mission. In fact, Rosenwald and the other supporters of trusteeship did not want to jeopardize Magnes's political effectiveness by linking him to controversial groups outside Palestine. Any official connection with the ACJ would have certainly damaged his position. Thus, Magnes came to the United States merely as a spokesman for the Ichud Association, which was a Palestine-based Jewish organization committed to Arab–Jewish binationalism. In that capacity, he openly endorsed the American trusteeship plan.[105]

Magnes arrived in New York on 22 April 1948. Although he met with his supporters on 26 April and with Secretary of State Marshall on 4 May, Magnes failed to accomplish more than to demonstrate that some Jews disagreed with Zionist aims. Two developments contributed to the failure of his mission: By the end of April, the military position of the Yishuv was improving, and there was little support for the idea of trusteeship at the United Nations.[106]

By the end of April, the ACJ's hopes had begun to fade again. The

transfer of the supervision of Palestine matters from Henderson to General Hilldring on 29 April was a bad omen. Nevertheless, the Council would not relent. In the last two weeks before the end of the mandate, it fought the Zionists as hard as ever.[107]

From the end of April until the middle of May 1948, the ACJ sponsored speaking tours by Rabbis Irving Reichert and Israel Mattuck. Reichert came to the East for nineteen days, from 30 April until 18 May. He visited New Haven, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., New York, Pittsburgh, Wheeling, Youngstown, Richmond, Philadelphia, and Cincinnati, where he delivered seventeen addresses, including several over the radio.[108]

Rabbi Mattuck visited the United States as the ACJ's guest from 26 April to 15 May. The rabbi of the largest British Reform congregation, Mattuck was also the spiritual leader of the Jewish Fellowship, an organization of British anti-Zionist Jews founded by Basil Henriques in 1945. The fundamental principle of the Jewish Fellowship was that Jews are a religious community, not a nationality. Unlike the ACJ, however, the Jewish Fellowship was committed more to strengthening Jewish religious life than to fighting Zionism. Although Rosenwald and Henriques consulted about matters concerning their organizations, the two groups never cooperated officially. Both Berger and Mattuck feared that joint action would imply the existence of an international anti-Zionist group. Mattuck's speaking engagements included addresses before the Council's New York and Philadelphia chapters.[109]

On 6 and 11 May 1948, the Council sponsored two major meetings, one in Washington, the other in New York. Those were, in effect, its last public demonstrations against Jewish statehood. Under the auspices of the Washington chapter, a rally for "Peace in Palestine Through Truce and Trusteeship" was held on 6 May. An audience of more than four hundred persons heard Rabbis Lazaron and Reichert as well as Kermit Roosevelt reject partition, oppose the establishment of a Jewish state, and support trusteeship.[110]

Close to a thousand members and guests, the largest audience in its history, attended the annual meeting of the ACJ's New York chapter on 11 May. The main speakers, Rabbi Mattuck, Rosenwald, and Paul Hutchinson, praised the trusteeship plan. Virginia Gildersleeve, unable to attend, sent a message urging new efforts to diminish the "grave danger" to the relations among Jews, Christians, and Muslims caused by "present happenings in Palestine."[111]

Despite its own extensive efforts and its cooperation with the CJP as well as the State Department, the Council could not stop the Zionist juggernaut.

By early May, after the Yishuv had acquired substantial arms supplies from Czechoslovakia and switched from a defensive to an offensive fighting strategy, the military balance in Palestine shifted in favor of the Jews. Throughout April, the Palestinian Arabs experienced major disasters: a terrible massacre of 254 people by Etzel and Lechi fighters in the village of Dayr Yasin; the occupation of Tiberias, Safed, Haifa, and Jaffa by Jewish forces; and the opening of the road to Jerusalem by the Haganah's "Nahshon" brigade. Arab exodus from the areas assigned to the Jewish state, which had begun as a trickle in January, turned into mass flight in April after the massacre. A new military and political reality was emerging in Palestine: the land was, in effect, being partitioned. Consequently, it seemed less likely that an external force would be needed to implement partition. The special session of the General Assembly, which convened on 16 April and engaged in a long debate, showed little interest in the American trusteeship plan and accomplished nothing.[112]

Nevertheless, fearing a large-scale war between Jews and Arabs, the State Department, through requests by Dean Rusk, Lovett, and Marshall, attempted to persuade the Jewish Agency to postpone temporarily the projected declaration of the Jewish state on 14 May. The Jewish Agency refused to retreat. In the meantime, President Truman was constantly reminded by Jewish spokesmen and Democratic party leaders that he needed Jewish votes and financial contributions in the approaching 1948 elections. In fact, during the last few days preceding 14 May the president found himself subjected to conflicting pressures from his White House advisers, led by Clifford and Niles, who urged immediate recognition of the Jewish state, and the foreign-policy professionals, represented by Undersecretary of State Lovett, who were deeply concerned about Arab reaction and how to prevent war in Palestine.[113]

On 14 May 1948, at 4:00 P.M., speaking from the Tel Aviv museum, Ben-Gurion read the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel in the area assigned to the Jewish state in the partition plan. On the same day, Eliahu Epstein [Elath] requested the United States to recognize the new state. President Truman realized that the Jews controlled the territory in which they were living, an area they were ready to defend, and that, after the final British withdrawal, there would be no real government or authority in Palestine. Consequently, he granted the State of Israel *de facto* recognition on 14 May 1948 at 6:11 P.M., Washington time, eleven minutes after midnight, 15 May 1948, in Palestine.[114]

The Zionists accomplished their goal. A Jewish state came into existence and was recognized by the U.S. government. The Council's persistent campaign to prevent its establishment had failed.

Epilogue and Conclusion

One week after the Israeli declaration of independence, the Council officially accepted the reality of the Jewish state. At the same time, however, it clearly dissociated itself from that state. To American Jews, the ACJ declared, Israel was neither the state nor the homeland of "the Jewish people." It was simply a foreign state. Distrustful of Israel and Zionists, the ACJ reiterated its commitment to oppose their interference in the affairs of American Jews.[1]

The establishment of Israel precipitated a major crisis within the ACJ. Berger and his partisans believed that the organization should continue its work. On the other hand, many members, feeling demoralized by the Zionist success, lost the desire to fight. Some of them thought the creation of the Zionist state would lead to the dissolution of the movement responsible for its formation and thus render anti-Zionism unnecessary. Others felt that opposition to Zionism was now futile because the power of a sovereign state made the movement invincible. "We fought a good fight, but we lost," they argued, "let us not be spoilsports."[2]

Before it had time to evaluate the new situation, the ACJ came under devastating attack from its disillusioned founder, Rabbi Wolsey. In a speech at Temple Rodeph Shalom on 15 May, he called on the Council to disband. But his bitter denunciation of his former associates did not imply his conversion to Zionism. On the contrary, Wolsey also appealed to Zionists to "dissolve into a unity of world Jewry for the creation of a Jewish culture and a Jewish life in the land of Israel." Despite mistakes on both sides, he felt that Israel offered a great possibility "of freedom, decency and dignity" for suffering Jews.[3]

Wolsey's attack and the publicity surrounding it were serious blows to the ACJ. The Zionists exploited them to the utmost. They sent copies of the speech and articles about it to ACJ members. Rabbi James G. Heller, once his archenemy, was delighted with Wolsey and thanked him for the "great deal of good" he had done. Playing on the old rabbi's anger with the

ACJ, Heller wrote to him: "A decent person like yourself could not forever contend with his indignation at the standpoint of Rosenwald, Wallach, Berger, et al."[4]

From May 1948 until early 1949, the ACJ focused on two main issues: the matter of securing "safeguards" against Israeli and Zionist interference in the lives of American Jews and the question of whether the organization ought to continue. For eight months the ACJ tried to persuade the American government to condition its *de jure* recognition of Israel on a written Israeli commitment not to intervene in the affairs of American Jews. The attempt failed. On 31 January 1949, a week after holding general elections, Israel was granted *de jure* recognition unconditionally.[5]

Until early fall 1948, there was serious doubt among Council leaders about the organization's future. Many spoke seriously of liquidation. With much soul-searching, at a meeting in Chicago on 9–10 October 1948, forty-two chapter leaders debated the question of the Council's continued existence. After long discussions, they recommended against terminating the organization, concluding that the ACJ now had two significant tasks: to promote integration and to continue its vigilant opposition to "Jewish" nationalism.[6]

At its annual conference, held in Chicago from 22 to 24 April 1949, the Council endorsed the recommendations of the 9–10 October meeting. Conference resolutions also rejected efforts to create political ties between American Jews and Israel, criticized the "Zionization" of Jewish philanthropy, and called for the reinvigoration of an *American* Judaism. Rosenwald set the tone for the new orientation: Despite the defeat in the battle against the establishment of Israel, it was imperative for the ACJ to continue its work. In fact, opposition to Zionism was now more important than ever. "As *Jews* we could ill afford to lose to 'Jewish' nationalism in Palestine," Rosenwald told the conference, "but as *Americans* we *could* afford it. We *cannot* afford to be stampeded into losing the continuing struggle with 'Jewish' nationalism in the United States; in *our national* home."[7]

Thus, the ACJ committed itself to preventing Zionists from dominating American Jewish life. To accomplish that, between 1949 and 1955 it created public-affairs, religious-education, and philanthropic programs designed not only to oppose Zionism but also to offer an alternative to it. In so doing, the ACJ developed its principles to their logical conclusion.

Continuing opposition to Zionism dominated its public-affairs program. The ACJ publicly objected to Zionist calls on American Jewish youth to migrate to Israel, to displays of Israeli national symbols in American

synagogues, to the reference to the United States as a "diaspora" or an "exile" (*galut*), to the sale of Israeli bonds in synagogues and the implication that Jews were obligated to purchase them, and to the suggestion that any Jew or group of Jews, including the representative of Israel, could speak for all Jews. The destiny of American Jews, the ACJ steadfastly maintained, was bound exclusively with the United States. Therefore, it objected to any manifestations of favoritism toward Israel and supported an impartial American foreign policy in the Middle East.[8]

Berger, whose power in the ACJ increased following the establishment of Israel and after many less militant anti-Zionists had left the organization in 1948, became the chief architect of the public-affairs program. Adopting a policy of "informed vigilance," the Council incessantly analyzed, publicized, and protested against those Zionist activities in the United States it considered unwelcome intrusions into the lives of American Jews. In essence, the ACJ accused Zionists and their allies of fostering Jewish separatism, seizing control of philanthropic institutions, building a tremendous pro-Israel lobby, and suppressing Jewish opponents.[9]

After the creation of Israel, except during the tenure of Henry A. Byroade as assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern, South Asian and African affairs from 1953 to 1954, the Council enjoyed no close relations with the State Department. Loy Henderson had left the directorship of the NEA in July 1948. Despite Levison's friendship with Secretary of State Acheson, the State Department maintained a policy of "polite coolness" toward the Council. Israel was a *fait accompli*, and the ACJ ceased to be a useful ally in the fight against the creation of a Jewish state. Moreover, officials in Washingtion, fearing political repercussions and potential damage to their careers, were reluctant to become embroiled in bitter controversies involving Jews.

On 8 April 1953, Rosenwald and Levison met with President Eisenhower and left a memorandum for Secretary of State John Foster Dulles that explained the ACJ's principles and outlined its concern about the problems created by the "confusion of Judaism" with the nationalism of Israel. This document opened an era of almost two years of close contacts between the ACJ and the State Department. Dulles took the memorandum to the Middle East on his tour of the area in the spring of 1953. The document seems to have impressed the secretary favorably. Views expressed in it coincided with his own. In fact, Dulles's 1 June 1953 report on his trip reflected similarities not only to the ideas but also to the language of the memorandum. He spoke of Arab fears of "expansionist Zionism," suggested an impartial

policy toward the Middle East, and asked Israel to become "a part of the Near East community and cease to look upon itself, or be looked upon by others, as an alien to this community."[10]

Beginning with the presentation of the memorandum, a close friendship developed between Berger and Henry Byroade. This enabled Berger, even more than in 1947 and 1948, to be attuned to State Department thinking and to offer his own advice to a major policymaker. Indeed, throughout 1953 and 1954 he practically became Byroade's adviser on Jewish and Zionist affairs. On 9 April 1954, virtually using Berger's language and style, Byroade shocked Zionists in a speech in Dayton, Ohio. He urged Israelis to come to view themselves as a Middle Eastern state, not as headquarters of a "world wide grouping of people of a particular faith who have special rights within and obligations to the Israeli state."[11]

Persuaded by Berger and with Dulles's knowledge, Byroade agreed to address the ACJ's annual conference on 1 May 1954. He thus became the highest-ranking government official to appear before a Council forum. In his speech, Byroade warned of the Soviet threat to the Middle East as a result of the turmoil in the area. Concerning Israel, he repeated the arguments of his Dayton speech, calling on the Israelis to reconcile themselves to becoming "a Middle Eastern state." Byroade asserted that the Arabs had to be reassured that Israel had no expansionist aims and cautioned the Israelis against public statements urging vast expansion of Jewish immigration to Israel because of their inflammatory impact on their neighbors.[12]

Byroade's comments pleased the Council. Berger, for one, felt that American foreign policy was once again on the right track and in agreement with ACJ policy. However, because of the violent Zionist reaction to Byroade's 9 April and 1 May 1954 statements, those policy declarations did not amount to more than mere theoretical victories for the ACJ. They were never translated into an American policy. In January 1955, Byroade was transferred to the ambassadorial post in Egypt. Thus, by 1955 the ACJ had achieved nothing, except to earn the abiding contempt of most American Jews, who perceived all of its political activities, including the involvement with Byroade, as blatant attempts to hurt Israel.[13]

Although founded by rabbis, the Council did not begin to develop a religious-education program until a year after the creation of Israel. Eighty-seven-year-old David Philipson, dean of the Reform rabbinate and an unreconstructed anti-Zionist, took the first step. At the 1949 annual conference, two months before his death, he proposed a resolution pledging the ACJ to contribute to the revitalization of American Judaism and to build in the United States "a Judaism that will serve as a shining example" to

Jews everywhere. Consequently, in May 1949, the ACJ created a Committee on Religious and Synagogue Programs. It was chaired for many years by Bernard Gradwohl and Clarence L. Coleman, Jr., laymen who were particularly interested in religious matters. Beginning its work with an analysis of Reform religious-school textbooks, the committee found that most of them had a pro-Israel and a nationalist orientation. Displeasure with the textbooks convinced the committee of the need to encourage the creation of textbooks free of Jewish nationalist bias and supportive of classical Reform Judaism.[14]

The first tangible results of the ACJ's sponsorship of the production of religious-school textbooks were Berger's *Partisan History of Judaism* in 1951 and Allan Tarshish's *Not by Power* in 1952. Significantly, though his work was financed by the ACJ, Tarshish feared that association with it would doom his book in the Jewish community. Therefore, when the book was published, he did not disclose its sponsorship. By 1955 the ACJ had supported the publication of a number of textbooks, including Abraham Cronbach's *Judaism for Today,* Samuel Halevi Baron's *Children's Devotions,* and David Goldberg's *Holidays for American Judaism.*[15]

In November 1951, the Council appointed Rabbi Samuel Halevi Baron as full-time director of its religious and synagogue activities. Shortly thereafter, the ACJ began to plan the development of its own religious-education program. In the fall of 1952, the first three Council-sponsored "Schools for Judaism" opened in Westchester, New York; Highland Park, Illinois; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. By the end of 1955, ten such schools were in existence. Founded on the principles of classical Reform Judaism, these schools emphasized student participation in worship, avoided identification with such collective concepts as Jewish "peoplehood" or "community," and sought "to make the child's association with Judaism pleasant and keep it on the level of spiritual experience." By the end of 1955, the parents of the students in the three original schools had actually founded religious congregations: the Congregation for Reform Judaism in Westchester, Congregation Sinai in Milwaukee, and the Lakeside Congregation for Reform Judaism in Highland Park. Clarence Coleman, Jr., founder and leader of the Lakeside Congregation, succeeded Rosenwald to the presidency of the Council in 1955.[16]

The religious-education program, directed from 1953 to 1955 by Leonard Sussman, was undoubtedly the most successful Council activity. Berger actually considered it an integral part of the overall struggle against Zionism. Moreover, by providing religious education devoid of Jewish nationalism, the program attracted new members who were still committed

to classical Reform Judaism. Nevertheless, the religious-education program neither converted many to the ACJ's views nor ended the organization's almost complete estrangement from the mainstream of American Jewry.[17]

The Council's involvement in philanthropic activities was a direct result of its opposition to Zionist domination of the United Jewish Appeal. Rosenwald failed to persuade the UJA to establish the principle of separating political and philanthropic funds. Consequently, the ACJ decided to develop its own philanthropic program. Since the UJA matter divided Council members, it was not until May 1955, after three and a half years of fastidious preparations under the direction of Harry Snellenburg, Jr., Rosenwald's son-in-law, that the ACJ Philanthropic Fund was established. According to the fund's charter, contributions were purely voluntary and could be designated for specific allocation. Moreover, the fund was an independent organization, not a department of the Council. Contributions to it did not necessarily involve commitment to the ideology or program of the ACJ. This emphasis on voluntarism and independence from political entanglement was clearly intended to highlight the basic differences between the UJA's and the ACJ's approaches to philanthropy.[18]

The Philanthropic Fund's first grants, amounting to forty thousand dollars in 1955, were allocated to the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Shaare–Zedek Hospital in Jerusalem, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and the American Red Mogen David. In general, in 1955 and subsequently, the fund assisted Jews who had chosen either to leave Israel or not to settle in it and who were therefore neglected by the UJA. Nevertheless, the ACJ Philanthropic Fund failed to develop into a major Jewish institution. Although enabling some Jews to contribute to philanthropy without being compelled to support Jewish nationalism, it was no match for the UJA.[19]

Despite efforts to develop a comprehensive anti-Zionist political, religious, and philanthropic framework for its activities after the establishment of Israel, the American Council for Judaism did not have an appreciable effect on American Jews. Its message, too cold and rational, lacked the emotional appeal of Israel, the creation of which most Jews perceived as compensation for the Holocaust. Nor was the ACJ able to shed the negative image of itself that years of a propaganda war with Zionists had created. In effect, it lost its credibility among American Jews. While continuing to reiterate essentially the same message year after year, the ACJ became no more than a marginal, isolated, unpopular, and largely ignored gadfly, an irritating critic of Zionism of all shades and degrees.

Nevertheless, the American Council for Judaism, the only American Jewish organization created to fight against Zionism, was far from an aberration. The group came into existence in direct response to the unprecedented intensification of Zionist activities in the United States in the early 1940s. In essence, its formation represents the final and perhaps the most vocal reassertion of a long tradition of opposition to Zionism by Reform Judaism, which until the 1930s had been the most formidable American foe of Jewish nationalism. The leaders and members of the ACJ were predominantly Reform Jews of German descent who resented both the growing influence of Zionists within the Reform movement and their relentless efforts to politicize American Jewish life.

Although initially founded by Reform rabbis, the ACJ was rapidly transformed into an essentially secular anti-Zionist political-interest group after Lessing Rosenwald assumed its presidency in April 1943. Three factors account for this change. First, Rosenwald was not interested in leading a primarily religious movement. Second, Rabbi Elmer Berger insisted on the primacy of the campaign against the establishment of a Jewish state. For him, preventing the creation of such a state was a prerequisite for reviving Reform Judaism. Third, a chronic shortage of funds severely hampered the ACJ's work, forcing it to commit its limited resources almost entirely to political activities. Thus from 1943 to 1948, except for supporting the liberalization of American immigration laws, the organization concentrated on its battle with Zionism. As a result, despite the ACJ's ideology being based on the fundamental doctrines of Reform Judaism, it neglected to develop a religious program before 1949. That was a damaging omission, resulting in the defection of many rabbis from its ranks. Moreover, it undoubtedly contributed to the impression that the Council's objectives were entirely negative.

The ACJ's principles, based on the tenets of classical Reform, that is, nineteenth-century Reform Judaism, stressed the purely religious nature of Judaism and unequivocally rejected Jewish nationalism. Optimistic about the future of Jews in the Diaspora—in the United States and throughout the world—the Council regarded the anti-Semitic atrocities committed during World War II as a temporary aberration and firmly believed that a free and democratic society would provide the best guarantee for the well-being of Jews wherever they lived. Establishment of a Jewish state was repudiated as regressive, undemocratic, and contrary to Jewish interests.

For the Council, Zionism was a philosophy of despair, signifying loss of faith in Jewish emancipation and a return to ghettolike self-segregation.

Thus, it vehemently opposed all forms of Jewish separatism, denied the right of any group to speak for all Jews, denounced talk of their homelessness, and opposed granting them special privileges. Instead of a Jewish state, it strongly supported free Jewish immigration throughout the world as well as the political emancipation and social integration of Jews in the countries that they inhabited. For Palestine, specifically, the ACJ advocated establishment of a democratic state wherein all citizens, regardless of their religion, would enjoy equal rights. It categorically rejected the creation of a Jewish state.

From 1943 until 1948, the Council and the Zionists fought a ferocious propaganda war. In general, the Zionists were more abusive than the Council. Frequently resorting to *ad hominem* attacks, they not only questioned their opponents' mental health but also accused them of treason, blasphemy, selfishness, and self-hatred. Moreover, the Zionists almost never acknowledged the Council's right to its dissenting viewpoint. In their eyes, the anti-Zionist position had no legitimacy.

The Council, on the other hand, despite fierce attacks on the Zionists, was usually more restrained in tone and style. Although privately many in the Council spoke harshly about their opponents, the organization's literature and public statements tended to be careful and dignified. It was Lessing Rosenwald, more than anyone else, who insisted on maintaining good taste and proper decorum in the public dispute with the Zionists. This moderation, however, did not guarantee success.

The Zionists enjoyed a number of distinct advantages in their confrontation with the Council. First, by the time they launched their campaign to convert American Jews to their cause, they had already penetrated all major branches of American Judaism and many secular Jewish organizations. Second, on the eve of World War II, the overwhelming majority of American Jews were East Europeans. They, unlike Jews of German descent, tended to define themselves as an ethnic or national group and were thus receptive to Zionism. Third, the virulent anti-Semitism of the 1930s and the Holocaust of the 1940s broke the remaining barriers between Jews of German and Jews of East European descent, fusing them into an increasingly homogeneous American Jewish community united by a strong sense of responsibility for suffering Jews abroad. Indeed, intense feelings of guilt about their failure to rescue Jews during the war made American Jews, regardless of background, exceptionally sensitive to the needs of their coreligionists in Europe and in Palestine, rendering them extremely susceptible to Zionist appeals. Fourth, the Zionists offered a practical program for solving the Jewish DP problem: a Jewish state in Palestine. In that country, there already existed a viable

Jewish national community eager to receive Jewish immigrants. Thus, armed with a pragmatic plan for helping refugees and supported by a sympathetic American Jewry, the Zionists had acquired powerful weapons in their political arsenal.

By the end of 1945, the enormous growth of pro-Zionist sentiment among American Jews and the successful campaign of the Committee on Unity for Palestine had effectively arrested the growth of the anti-Zionist movement. As a result, the Council failed to make significant inroads into the American Jewish community, forcing it to rely mainly on cooperation with non-Jews.

In the struggle against the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, the ACJ found a powerful ally in the American foreign-policy community, the main adversary of the Zionists within the U.S. government. From 1943 to 1948, and especially between 1946 and 1948, acting as its most—if not only—reliable Jewish support group, the ACJ collaborated closely with the State Department. This partnership, based on a common opposition to Zionist political objectives, was also reinforced by the friendship of several leading ACJ members with State Department officials.

Significantly, despite Zionist denunciation of its membership, motives, and Jewish loyalties, the ACJ regarded its activities, including its staunch support for the State Department, as correct from the standpoint of both Jewish interests and American patriotism. Considering itself an organization concerned primarily with the United States and its Jews, the ACJ maintained that Zionists were subverting the status of American Jews by associating them with a foreign nationalism.

Rosenwald and Berger were undoubtedly the Council's paramount leaders. They molded its character and for many years shaped its policies. The impact of their forceful personalities left an indelible mark on the organization.

Rosenwald, although shy, reserved, and unpretentious, provided strong, steady, and statesmanlike leadership, without which the Council might have experienced an early demise. A mild-mannered man, he never enjoyed public disputes. His integrity and compassion are reflected in his tireless work on behalf of the liberalization of American immigration policy, most of which was done without publicity. On the other hand, his lack of interest in formal religion and his reluctance to head a religious movement, as well as his unwillingness, despite his wealth, to provide the organization with greater financial support, were largely responsible for the transformation of the ACJ from a dissident faction of Reform rabbis into a purely secular political group that appeared to lack a truly positive program.

Rabbi Elmer Berger, who had been intimately involved with the Council since its inception, played a central role in its history. Deeply convinced that Zionism was a wicked movement with devious designs to foist Jewish nationalism on unsuspecting American Jews, he fought it obsessively. Believing that the Council was the last barrier against the mighty deluge of Jewish nationalism, Berger dedicated himself totally to fighting Zionism, a struggle that became his lifework. Consequently, Berger became the Council's brain, heart, and spirit—its central driving force.

The pressure of Zionist attacks on him and the ACJ drove Berger to greater defiance and immeasurably stiffened his anti-Zionist position. As the ACJ's isolation within the American Jewish community increased, he drew closer to non-Jews.

Nevertheless, in the confrontation with Zionism, Berger considered himself a champion of the tradition of classical Reform Judaism. An advocate of Judaism based on universal ethical precepts, not particularism, he totally rejected any suggestion that Jews differed from non-Jews in anything except for religion. Ironically, however, Berger was promoting a radically liberal viewpoint during the 1940s, a time when the fundamental assumptions of liberalism were being subjected to the most savage attack in modern times.

In the end, the Council failed. Despite its fundamentally liberal orientation, it did not strike a sympathetic chord among American Jews. The organization became neither a focus for the revival of the classical version of Reform Judaism nor an effective force for fighting Zionism and preventing the establishment of a Jewish state. The Council's ultimate failure may be attributed to three major causes: the timing of its formation, the essentially unemotional character of its philosophy, and the apparent impracticability of its plan for Palestine.

The creation of the Council at almost precisely the time when reports about the mass murder of European Jews were being confirmed undoubtedly destroyed any real possibility for its success. By the end of World War II, once the full extent of the Holocaust had become known, the ACJ's fate was sealed. While infusing Zionism with a crusading zeal and creating widespread sympathy for the Zionist cause among American Jews and non-Jews, the murder of European Jews demoralized and silenced most of the erstwhile anti-Zionists by discrediting their optimism and liberal faith. By the end of 1945, Zionist organizations were being flooded with new members. On the other hand, the Council was becoming increasingly isolated among Jews, and its growth slowed down considerably. Thus, the Holocaust, which made the birth of Israel possible, rendered the Council's ultimate failure inevitable.

On the question of Palestine, aroused emotions, not tame reason, proved decisive. Therefore, neither the Council's cold, unexciting rationalism nor its highly idealistic proposals for Palestine could match the intensely emotional appeal of Zionism with its promise of a Jewish state in Palestine. Moreover, the ACJ's dispassionate style tended to confirm, albeit unjustly, Zionist allegations of the anti-Zionists' insensitivity and indifference to suffering Jews, which resulted in increasing antipathy to the Council among Jews.

Nevertheless, contrary to Zionist claims, the ACJ's philosophy was firmly rooted in a long historical tradition. In fact, only fifty years prior to the Council's formation, the ideals it espoused reflected the thinking of a majority of American Jews. Had an anti-Zionist organization come into existence even as late as the end of World War I, it might have been more successful. It could have developed various social, religious, and philanthropic institutions based on anti-Zionist principles. With an institutional framework of this kind, such a group would have acquired a positive image among Jews. In fact, it might have conceivably become a major force for rescuing Jews during World War II.

Unlike the Zionists, who had skillfully penetrated most American Jewish institutions by the 1940s, the Council was unable either to penetrate or to influence significantly even a single important Jewish organization during its struggle against the Jewish state. After the emergence of Israel, it finally established a program of religious education and a philanthropic fund, but those endeavors came too late. By then, the ACJ had become a marginal Jewish group, hopelessly trapped by its unfavorable image among American Jews.

In sum, the Council was unable to stop the Zionist juggernaut. The emotional impact of the Holocaust on Jews and non-Jews, the fierce determination of the Yishuv, the absence of a well-defined American policy toward Palestine coupled with President Truman's political sensitivity to Jewish voters, the ineffective political organization of the Palestinian Arab community as well as the internecine rivalries among the Arab states, the economic weakness of Great Britain and the loss of its great-power status in the aftermath of World War II—all contributed to the Zionist triumph. The Council had hoped to offer a viable alternative to Zionism but was forced by overwhelming circumstances to become merely a protest group. Ultimately, the anti-Zionist organization achieved only one major objective—it established a record of dissent.

One aspect of the confrontation between the American Zionists and the Council is most troubling. Neither of the two antagonists made serious

efforts to rescue Jews during the Holocaust. That was an inexcusable failure. Rather than suspend temporarily their ideological war and join in a common endeavor to save Jewish lives during a time of crisis, both groups were preoccupied with plans for the postwar period. The ACJ issued impressive statements about the virtues of emancipation and free immigration after the war as the best way to solve the problem of Jewish suffering. The Zionists, who campaigned steadfastly during the war to convert Americans to their program, assigned a much higher priority to promoting support for Jewish statehood than to rescuing Jews.

In retrospect, the behavior of the Zionists was most distressing between 1943 and 1945, after they had learned about the destruction of European Jewry. Throughout those years, the Zionists not only bickered among themselves but also spent large sums of money and much energy on various schemes to destroy Jewish organizations that opposed their policies. At the end of 1943, they launched a sustained propaganda counterattack against the Council by forming the Committee on Unity for Palestine, their principal instrument for fighting anti-Zionists. At about the same time, they also began their concerted drive to discredit and destroy the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe, an organization whose wartime priority was rescuing Jews rather than mobilizing support for Jewish statehood.

Both the ACJ and the American Zionists were wrong on the issue of rescue. Once they had learned about the Holocaust, they should have made peace and diverted all their resources to saving Jews. Thus, from a Jewish standpoint, the wartime behavior of neither the Zionists nor the anti-Zionists was defensible.

The emergence of Israel, however, was by no means an unqualified victory for Zionists. Although they achieved their primary goal—the creation of a Jewish state—American Zionism lost its dynamism, with membership in its organizations declining sharply. Moreover, after Israel came into existence, serious differences arose between American and Israeli Zionists over the very definition of Zionism. Rejecting the Israeli claims that the United States was an exile (*galut*) for American Jews and that commitment to immigration to Israel (*aliyah*) was a prerequisite for authentic Zionism, American Zionists generally defined themselves as an essentially philanthropic, not a nationalist, movement. Despite their strong support for Israel, they considered it a state for other Jews, not for themselves.[20]

In fact, very few Americans, Zionists or not, chose to settle in Israel or to fight in its wars. The overwhelming majority of American Jews remained strongly attached to the United States. True, they were pro-Israel and felt a

special responsibility for the new state, but their first loyalty was to the United States, their national home. Thus, the conversion of American Jews to full-fledged Jewish nationalism, a peril against which the Council had repeatedly warned and, in fact, the original reason for its formation, never really materialized.

Despite the Council's losing battle with Zionism, many of its predictions about the consequences of the establishment of a Jewish state did come true. As the ACJ had foreseen, the birth of the state created numerous problems—problems the Zionists had minimized. For example, Israel became highly, if not unusually, dependent on support from American Jews. Moreover, the formation of the state directly contributed to undermining Jewish communities in Arab countries and to precipitating a protracted conflict between Israel and the Arabs. Indeed, as the Council had often warned and contrary to Zionist expectations, Israel did not become a truly normal state. Nor did it become a light to the nations. Ironically, created presumably to free Jews from anti-Semitism and ghettolike existence as well as to provide them with abiding peace, Israel became, in effect, a garrison-state, a nation resembling a large territorial ghetto besieged by hostile neighbors.

Ultimately, the Zionists won and their opponents lost. Israel was born. However, the ominous predictions of the American Council for Judaism are still haunting the Zionist venture.

• but not the Zionist venture in the US which is alive & strong

Appendix

Statement of the American Council for Judaism, Inc., 30 August 1943

The American Council for Judaism, Inc. was organized to present the views of Americans of Jewish faith on problems affecting the future of their own lives and the lives of World Jewry in the present hour of world confusion.

The Council reaffirms the historic truth that the Jews of the world share common traditions and ethical concepts which find their derivation in the same religious source. For countless generations, "Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God, the Lord is One," has been the universal cry that united all Jews in trial and tribulation, in suffering, hunger and want, in despair—and in achievement. It is still the concept which distinguishes Jews as a religious group.

Racist theories and nationalist philosophies, that have become prevalent in recent years, have caused untold suffering to the world and particularly to Jews. Long ago they became obsolete as realities in Jewish history; they remain only as a reaction to discrimination and persecution. In the former crises of Israel in ancient Palestine, the Prophets placed God and the moral law above land, race, nation, royal prerogatives and political arrangements. Now, as then, we cherish the same religious values which emphasize the dignity of man and the obligations to deal justly with man no matter what his status.

As Americans of Jewish faith we believe implicitly in the fundamentals of democracy, rooted as they are, in moralities that transcend race and state, and endow the individual with rights for which he is answerable only to God. We are thankful to be citizens of a country and to have shared in the building of a nation conceived in a spirit which knows neither special privilege nor inferior status for any man.

For centuries Jews have considered themselves nationals of those countries in which they have lived. Whenever free to do so, they have assumed, and will again assume, full responsibilities of citizenship in accordance with the ancient Jewish command, "The law of the land is the law." Those countries in which Jews have lived have been their homes; those lands their homelands. In those nations where political action was expressed through minority group, the Jew, following the law of his land, accepted minority status, thereby frequently gaining an improvement over previous conditions of inferior citizenship. Such East European concepts, however, have resulted in a misunderstanding, shared by Jews and non-Jews, a misunderstanding which we seek to dispel. American Jews hope that in the peace for which all of us pray, the old principle of minority rights will be supplanted by the more modern principle of equality and freedom for the individual. The interest of American Jews in the individual Jew in countries where the minority right principle prevailed is not to be confused with acceptance of this East European political concept.

As a result of the bigotry, sadism, and ambitions for world conquest of the Axis powers, millions of our co-religionists who had homes in and were nationals of other lands have been violently deported and made victims of indescribable barbarism. No other group has been so brutishly attacked and for one reason only—on the false claims that there are racial barriers or nationalistic impulses that separate Jews from other men.

The plight of those Jews together with millions of oppressed fellowmen of all faiths, calls for the profoundest sympathy and the unbounded moral indignation of all free men. The restoration of these broken lives to the status and dignity of men endowed by God with inalienable rights, is one of the primary objectives of the peace to come as expressed in the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms of President Roosevelt. We believe that the Jew will rise or fall with the extension or contraction of the great liberal forces of civilization. By relying upon the broad, religious principles inherent in a democracy and implementing them wherever possible, we join our forces with those of all lovers of freedom; strengthened, in that we do not stand segregated and alone upon exclusive demands.

We ask that the United Nations secure the earliest feasible repatriation or resettlement under the best possible conditions of all peoples uprooted from their homes by the Axis powers, and that even in the face of obvious and discouraging obstacles the United Nations persevere in their efforts to provide immediate sanctuary for refugees of all faiths, political beliefs and national origins. We believe that wherever possible the forced emigrees should be repatriated in their original homelands under conditions which will enable them to live as free, upstanding individuals.

For our fellow Jews we ask only this: Equality of rights and obligations with their fellow-nationals. In our endeavors to bring relief to our stricken fellow Jews, and to help rebuild their lives on a more stable basis, we rely wholly upon the principles of freedom, justice and humanity, which are fundamental to both democracy and religion, and which have been declared as the principles which shall prevail in the better world for which the United Nations are fighting. We ally ourselves with those who believe this war will not have been fought in vain, that the mistakes of the last peace will not be duplicated.

Palestine has contributed in a tangible way to the alleviation of the present catastrophe in Jewish life by providing refuge for a part of Europe's persecuted Jews. We hope it will continue as one of the places for such resettlement, for it has been clearly demonstrated that practical colonizing can be done, schools and universities built, scientific agriculture extended, commerce intensified and culture developed. This is the record of achievement of eager, hardworking settlers who have been aided in their endeavors by Jews all over the world, in every walk of life and thought.

We oppose the efforts to establish a National Jewish State in Palestine or anywhere else as a philosophy of defeatism, and one which does not offer a practical solution of the Jewish problem. We dissent from all those related doctrines that stress the racialism, the nationalism and the theoretical homelessness of Jews. We oppose such doctrines as inimical to the welfare of Jews in Palestine, in America, or wherever Jews dwell. We believe that the intrusion of Jewish national statehood has been a deterrent in Palestine's ability to play an even greater role in offering a haven for the oppressed, and that without the insistence upon such statehood, Palestine would today be harboring more refugees from Nazi terror. The very insistence upon a Jewish Army has led to the raising of barriers against our unfortunate brethren. There never was a need for such an

army. There has always been ample opportunity for Jews to fight side by side with those of other faiths in the armies of the United Nations.

Palestine is a part of Israel's religious heritage, as it is a part of the heritage of two other religions of the world. We look forward to the ultimate establishment of a democratic, autonomous government in Palestine, wherein Jews, Moslems and Christians shall be justly represented; every man enjoying equal rights and sharing equal responsibilities; a democratic government in which our fellow Jews shall be free Palestinians whose religion is Judaism, even as we are Americans whose religion is Judaism.

We invite all Jews to support our interpretation of Jewish life and destiny in keeping with the highest traditions of our faith. We believe these truths provide the basis for every program for a more hopeful future put forth by free men. To proclaim those views at this time, we believe, is to express the abiding faith, shared by a great number of our fellow Jews, that in the fruits of victory of the United Nations all, regardless of faith, will share alike. It is also, we believe, to render a service to the task of clarifying the hopes and the purposes for which this war is being fought by free men everywhere.

Source: New York Times, 31 August 1943, p. 4; *Information Bulletin,* 15 October 1943, pp. 3–4.

Council Rabbis

Rabbis Who Signed the Council Statement of 30 August 1943

Name of Rabbi	*Location of Congregation*
Ira Sanders (1894–1985)	Little Rock, Arkansas
Irving F. Reichert (1895–1968)	San Francisco, California
Samuel H. Baron (1900–1971)	Fort Lauderdale, Florida
David Zielonka (1904–1977)	Tampa, Florida
David Marx (1872–1962)	Atlanta, Georgia
George Solomon (1874–1945)	Savannah, Georgia
Louis Binstock (1895–1974)	Chicago, Illinois
Abram Hirschberg (1876–1950)	Chicago, Illinois
Milton Greenwald (1903–1969)	Evansville, Indiana
Maurice M. Feuerlicht (1879–1959)	Indianapolis, Indiana
Joseph Rauch (1880–1957)	Louisville, Kentucky
Julian B. Feibelman (1897–1980)	New Orleans, Louisiana
Morris S. Lazaron (1888–1979)	Baltimore, Maryland
William Rosenau (1865–1943)	Baltimore, Maryland
Stanley Brav (b. 1908)	Vicksburg, Mississippi
Solomon E. Starrels (1895–1983)	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Samuel H. Goldenson (1878–1968)	New York, New York
Jerome Rosenbloom (b. 1907)	New York, New York
Hyman Judah Schachtel (b. 1907)	New York, New York
Solomon Foster (1878–1966)	Newark, New Jersey
Abraham Cronbach (1882–1965)	Cincinnati, Ohio (Hebrew Union College)
David Philipson (1862–1949)	Cincinnati, Ohio
Victor E. Reichert (b. 1897)	Cincinnati, Ohio
Joseph Blatt (1878–1946)	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Elmer Berger (b. 1908)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
William Fineshriber (1878–1968)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Louis Wolsey (1877–1953)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Samuel R. Shillman (1896–1977)	Sumter, Texas
David Lefkowitz (1875–1955)	Dallas, Texas
Henry Cohen (1863–1952)	Galveston, Texas
Edward N. Calisch (1865–1946)	Richmond, Virginia
Samuel Koch (1874–1944)	Seattle, Washington
Samuel Hirschberg (1869–1954)	Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Source: New York Times, 31 August 1943, p. 4.

Rabbis Who Supported the Council Who Did Not Sign the Statement of 30 August 1943

Name of Rabbi	*Location of Congregation*
Walter G. Peiser (b. 1899)	Baton Rouge, Louisiana
David Lefkowitz, Jr. (b. 1911)	Shreveport, Louisiana
Leo M. Franklin (1870–1948)	Detroit, Michigan
Charles A. Rubenstein (1870–1948)	Baltimore, Maryland
Abraham Holtzberg (1892–1951)	Trenton, New Jersey
Isaac Landman (1880–1946)	New York, New York
Solomon Landman (1895–1951)	New York, New York
Nathan A. Perilman (b. 1905)	New York, New York
Isador E. Philo (1873–1948)	Youngstown, Ohio
Allan Tarshish (1907–1982)	Hazleton, Pennsylvania
David Goldberg (1886–1977)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Malcolm H. Stern (b. 1915)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Henry Barnston (1868–1949)	Houston, Texas

Source: Correspondence of the rabbis listed above in American Council for Judaism Papers, 1943–1953, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.

Key National Leaders of the Council, 1943–1948

Name	*Residence*	*Occupation/Business*
Elmer Berger (b. 1908)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Rabbi
Jane Blum (b. 1913)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Community Worker
Irving J. Feist (1907–1978)	Newark, New Jersey	Real Estate, Insurance
William H. Fineshriber (1878–1968)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Rabbi
Fred F. Florence (1891–1960)	Dallas, Texas	Banker
David Goldberg (1886–1979)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Rabbi
Samuel H. Goldenson (1878–1962)	New York, New York	Rabbi
Arthur J. Goldsmith (1891–1964)	New York, New York	Stockbroker
Leo Gottlieb (b. 1896)	New York, New York	Lawyer
Bernard S. Gradwohl (1905–1985)	Lincoln, Nebraska	Lawyer
Joseph D. Kaufman (1889–?)	Washington, D.C.	Merchant
Morris S. Lazaron (1888–1979)	Baltimore, Maryland	Rabbi
George L. Levison (b. 1907)	San Francisco, California	Insurance
Alfred M. Lilienthal (b. 1913)	Washington, D.C.	Lawyer
Henry A. Loeb (b. 1907)	New York, New York	Lawyer, Stockbroker
Jerome Louchheim (1874–1945)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Contractor
Henry S. Moyer (1897–1976)	Youngstown, Ohio	Sportswear Manufacturer
Irving F. Reichert (1895–1968)	San Francisco, California	Rabbi
Lessing J. Rosenwald (1891–1979)	Jenkintown, Pennsylvania	Philanthropist, Art Collector
Hyman J. Schachtel (b. 1907)	Houston, Texas	Rabbi
Hattie H. Sloss (1874–1963)	San Francisco, California	Community Worker

Key National Leaders

Name	*Residence*	*Occupation/Business*
D. Hays Solis-Cohen (1887–1978)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Lawyer
Aaron Straus (1864–1958)	Baltimore, Maryland	Merchant, Philanthropist
I. Edward Tonkon (1900–1968)	Dallas, Texas	Millinery
Sidney Wallach (1905–1979)	New York, New York	Public Relations
Morris Wolf (1883–1978)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Lawyer
Ralph Wolf (1880–1951)	New York, New York	Lawyer
Louis Wolsey (1877–1953)	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Rabbi

Sources: Information Bulletin, 1943–1947, and *Council News,* 1947–1949; Minutes, Executive Committee, American Council for Judaism, 1943–1949, ACJ–NY.

The Formal National Leadership of the Council, 1943–1948

President
Lessing J. Rosenwald (1891–1979)
Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, 1943–1955

Vice Presidents
Rabbi Louis Wolsey (1877–1953)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1943–1946
Rabbi Irving F. Reichert (1895–1968)
San Francisco, California, 1943–1951
Fred F. Florence (1891–1960)
Dallas, Texas, 1943–1950
Ralph W. Mack (1878–1945)
Cincinnati, Ohio, 1943–1945
Rabbi Louis Binstock (1895–1974)
Chicago, Illinois, 1943–1946
Mrs. Ely Jacques Kahn (1890–1962)
New York, New York, 1945–1946
Mrs. J. Walter Freiberg (1862–1962)
Cincinnati, Ohio, 1946–1948
David B. Stern (1880–1960)
Chicago, Illinois, 1946–1951
Ralph Wolf (1880–1951)
New York, New York, 1946–1951
William H. Fineshriber (1878–1968)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1947–1950
Milton S. Binswanger (1877–1950)
Memphis, Tennessee, 1948–1950

Regional Vice Presidents
George L. Levison (b. 1907)
San Francisco, California, 1948–1951
Henry A. Loeb (b. 1907)
New York, New York, 1948–1951
Henry S. Moyer (1897–1976)
Youngstown, Ohio, 1948–1951
I. Edward Tonkon (1900–1968)
Dallas, Texas, 1948–1951

Treasurer
D. Hays Solis-Cohen (1887–1978)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1943–1951

Secretary
Morris Wolf (1883–1978)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1946–1951

Formal National Leadership

Paid Professional Staff
Elmer Berger, Executive Director, 1943–1955
David Goldberg, Research Director 1944–1957
Sidney Wallach, Public-Relations Consultant, 1943–1950
Donald Bolles, Public-Relations Consultant, 1947–1948
Maurice Spector, Publicity Director, 1948–1951
Sigmund H. Miller, Administrative Assistant, 1945–1955
Julius Grad, Assistant Director, 1947–1952
Nathan Lowenstein, Finance Director, 1946–1949

Source: Information Bulletin, 1943–1947, and *Council News,* 1947–1949; survey of correspondence, American Council for Judaism Papers, 1943–1953, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.

Notes

Abbreviations are used for the primary sources cited frequently in the notes.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACJC	American Council for Judaism Collection, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio
ACJ-NY	Records, American Council for Judaism, New York, New York
ACJP	American Council for Judaism Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison
ACJP-R	American Council for Judaism Papers, Unprocessed Rosenwald Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison
ACJP-X	American Council for Judaism Papers, Unprocessed Papers, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison
AJC-RCA	American Jewish Committee Record Center and Archives, New York, New York
CCARYB	*Central Conference of American Rabbis Yearbook.* Vols. 18–92 (1908–1982) (published by the CCAR annually in various cities).
FRUS	U.S. Department of State. *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers* (1941–1948). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.
GLLP	George L. Levison Papers, San Francisco, California (now in author's possession)
Hearings	U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs. *Hearings on H.R. 418 and H.R. 419, Resolutions Relating to the Jewish National Home in Palestine.* 78th Cong., 2d sess., 1944.
LWP	Louis Wolsey Papers, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio
Minutes, A.C.	Minutes of Atlantic City Meeting of Non-Zionist Rabbis, 1–2 June 1942, Louis Wolsey Papers
MSLP	Morris S. Lazaron Papers, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio
SSWC	Stephen S. Wise Collection, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio
SSWP	Stephen S. Wise Papers, American Jewish Historical Society, Waltham, Massachusetts
WHFR	William H. Fineshriber Records, Archives of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania

PREFACE

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CHAPTER 1

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CHAPTER 5

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CHAPTER 6

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CHAPTER 7

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