

IN SEARCH OF STATUS

THE ISRAEL GOVERNMENT AND THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT

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THE STORY of the World Zionist Organization (WZO)-Jewish Agency's (JA) "status" is an interesting one. So interesting that the temptation is to report *all* the events surrounding it rather than focusing on our particular concern—diaspora Jewry's influence in shaping Israel's public policy. In the pages that follow the temptation is resisted as far as possible although the pattern of the story is so complicated that not all the seemingly extraneous threads can be unwound without destroying the pattern itself.

We deal here with three groups of actors. First of all, there is the government of Israel led by David Ben-Gurion. Ben-

Gurion's position on the World Zionist Organization represented an extreme view but, after some concessions, he prevailed upon the government to accept his position. Theoretically therefore, one can talk about a government position, or conflict between the government and the WZO, but this is only a partial truth. It was really Ben-Gurion's position as opposed to that of the WZO. Had anyone other than Ben-Gurion been the prime minister the outcome would have been more favorable to the WZO and hence, less favorable to the WZO's major antagonist, the American Jewish Committee (AJC). The paradox, however, is that Ben-Gurion's position which at the time was attributed to his peculiar and iconoclastic views respecting the WZO, was, in effect a "statist" view, that subsequent Israeli governments would have had to accept. To put it another way, I am suggesting that Ben-Gurion was ahead of his time in his view of the relative role of the WZO and the government. But precisely because he was the man he was, he was able to press this view on a reluctant government. Nobody else could have done it. Within a few years, it was obvious he was right. Since I have permitted myself the expression of a personal view I will go a step further and permit myself the expres-

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sion of a personal value. The fact that in retrospect Ben-Gurion was right, does not heighten my sympathy for his position or soften the tragedy of the blow which he dealt to the WZO.

The second group of actors is the WZO-JA. The WZO-JA represents neither a peculiarly Israeli nor peculiarly diaspora interest. One might anticipate that its point of view would lie somewhere between that of the government of Israel and that of a strictly diaspora organization such as the AJC, but this was not the case.

### Parties and Groups

Since we have mentioned both the WZO and the JA it is necessary to indicate their relationships to one another. The JA, when first organized in 1929 included non-Zionists, whereas the non-Zionists had ceased their participation by the beginning of World War II. Consequently in the period under discussion the WZO and the JA were synonymous. The JA executive was, therefore, the WZO executive. The latter term, however, was almost never used and the press on occasion mistakenly referred to the JA when what they really meant was the WZO executive. During this period, the JA executive was divided into an American section located in New York, under the chairmanship of Nahum Goldmann and a Jerusalem section under the chairmanship of Berl Locker. Since there was no President of the WZO at the time (Goldmann was elected to that office in 1956), Locker and Goldmann were the two formal leaders of the WZO.\*

Within the WZO we may distinguish a number of sub-groups. The WZO was organized on a party basis in this period. The first sub-group was comprised of Israelis who were members of parties that were part of the government coalition. An example would be Eliyahu Dobkin of Mapai, a member of the JA executive.

A second sub-group was comprised of diaspora Jews whose WZO party was aligned with parties of the Israeli coalition. These representatives tended to adopt a public position almost identical with that of the first group. They were, however, less vociferous in defending the government and they played almost no role in our study.

The third sub-group was comprised of diaspora Jews whose parties were uninvolved in Israeli politics. An example was Hadassah who tended to support the government position with some important qualifications. On the question of an expanded JA they were far more critical of the government position than were the first two sub-groups.

A fourth sub-group was Israelis who were members of parties in opposition to the government. An example was Yaacov Hazan, a member of the Knesset from the left wing Mapam and also a representative of Mapam on the Zionist General Council. It is important to understand that despite Mapai's predominance in the WZO, the JA executive was composed of representatives from almost all the parties, and Mapai's dominance there was far less secure than its hegemony in the government. Cer-

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\* In 1971 the Jewish Agency was reconstituted and it was separated from the World Zionist Organization. See Charles Liebman, *Does the*

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*Diaspora Influence Israel? The Case of the Reconstituted Jewish Agency, Dispersion and Unity-Forum*, 1975, No. 23.

tainly, it had to make far greater compromises within the WZO than it did within the government.

The final sub-group within the WZO consisted of diaspora Jews who were members of parties aligned with Israeli parties in opposition to the Israeli government. For example, Emanuel Neumann, a member of the JA executive was identified with the General Zionist party in Israel, which was an opposition party of the right.

The order of the sub-groups listed here indicates the order (in reverse) in which the sub-groups were critical of the government's attitude towards the WZO. This can be illustrated from an event as early as 1948 which also has some bearing on our case study.

In the first year of statehood, it was the diaspora Zionists, primarily those from the U.S. and England who insisted on a clear separation of leadership between the government and the WZO in order to avoid "dual loyalty" charges. It was clear to all that the functions of the two would also have to be delineated. This, along with the personnel problem was discussed at the September 1948 meetings of the Zionist General Council.<sup>1</sup> The critical problem was the division of responsibility over immigration. One of the decisions was to allow the government to determine aliya quotas. Both Mapam and the Revisionists (Herut) wanted the decision to be left to the JA executive,<sup>2</sup> but they were in a minority.

<sup>1</sup> The General Council, also known as the Actions Committee is the supreme governing body of the WZO in the interval between World Zionist Congresses. The General Council is elected at the close of each Congress and it in turn elects the executive.

<sup>2</sup> As a matter of historical curiosity the Mapam

The controversy over who was to decide on quotas was typical of all the controversies that followed. The opposition Zionists parties favored strengthening the authority of the WZO-JA at the expense of the government. It would be a mistake to pretend that ideology played no role in the controversy but it would be an even greater mistake to believe that it played the only or even the predominant role. When one finds Mapam of the extreme left and Herut of the extreme right constantly allied against the government and on behalf of the WZO one must look beyond their "shared" ideology for other characteristics they may also have shared, their having been opposition parties.

We have mentioned two major groups of actors—the government and the WZO; The third major set of actors were the non-Zionists from the diaspora.<sup>3</sup> The voice of diaspora non-Zionists was expressed primarily through the representations of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) and its leader and major spokesman at that time in Israel-Diaspora relations, Jacob Blaustein, to whom Ben-Gurion had made certain commitments in their 1950 "exchange of views."\*

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representative who introduced the motion to let the JA rather than the government decide on quotas was Yitzchak Ben-Aharon. *Ha'Olam* (September 2, 1948), p. 685.

<sup>3</sup> There were also Israeli non-Zionists such as the representatives of the Communist party and Agudat Israel who voiced their position on these issues. Both adopted distinctive positions stemming partly from their ideology but more immediately from the fact that they were not represented within the WZO. Their weight was so slight that we have chosen to ignore them.

\* The full exchange of views is reported in Morris Fine (ed.), *American Jewish Year Book*

### Authority and Prestige

The issue around which these three major groups centered was what sort of status or legal authority Israel was to bestow on the WZO. Essentially the objective of the WZO was to obtain the broadest authority and the maximum status; the AJC objected to conferring any special status on the WZO, except in a very specific area of activity within Israel. As an opponent of the WZO, the AJC did not want Israel to lend its prestige to the WZO. The government's objective is harder to infer. It seems most correct to say that its efforts were directed toward conciliating between the contrary objectives of the WZO and the AJC so that neither side should be very unhappy, but doing so in a manner that retained the maximum degree of latitude for the Government and was least compromising to its own sovereignty. This is a perfectly natural position that one might expect any government to adopt. Since it was the WZO which was asking the government to surrender a degree of sovereignty to it, one might have anticipated from the outset that the government would adopt a position closer to that of the AJC thus making the outcome of the controversy a foregone conclusion. It was not. The reason for this involves us in the additional complication of mixed motives and cross-cutting allegiances.

Members of the government, after all,

were past leaders of the WZO. Ties of party, ideology, and past institutional loyalty should have led them to a position much closer to if not identical to that of the WZO. The fact that the government did oppose the WZO was because of Ben-Gurion. As the leading exponent of Israeli sovereignty he formulated a new ideology and a new view of relations between the WZO and Israel which he succeeded in pressing upon the government and later the Knesset. In many respects the "status" fight became the paradigm for a whole new set of relationships which were to emerge in the years that followed—relationships that are so clear today that it is difficult in retrospect to grasp what the argument was all about. But in those days, things were not quite so clear.

The effective Jewish leadership of the *Yishuv*, the Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel prior to creation of the State, was the *Vaad Leumi* (the national committee). In preparation for eventual statehood the Vaad Leumi decided on March 1, 1948, that the provisional government of Israel would be a council composed of members of the Vaad Leumi and the JA executive. In other words, whereas the Vaad Leumi itself had been selected by a body representing the *Yishuv* and could certainly claim to voice the will of the *Yishuv*, it itself chose to coopt the JA executive as the supreme representative body of the provisional government.

Two other examples illustrate the authority and prestige of the WZO even after the state was created.

In May 1950 the prime minister announced the formation of a Government-JA Coordinating Board with four governmental representatives, four JA represen-

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1952 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1952), pp. 565-567. On the background and consequences of the exchange see Charles S. Liebman, "Diaspora Influence on Israel: The Ben-Gurion-Blaustein 'Exchange' And Its Aftermath," *Jewish Social Studies*, 36 (July-October, 1974), pp. 271-280.

tatives, and one representative from the Jewish National Fund. The board's first responsibility was to be the coordination of activity in the sphere of *aliya*.<sup>4</sup>

Two aspects of the announcement are of special interest. First, Ben-Gurion prefaced the announcement by noting that the decision to create the board was based on a resolution of the Zionist General Council of the previous month. Secondly, he noted that the government's representatives would be responsible to the government itself. Both these points were probably mentioned in order to answer criticisms of the government for not granting more formal legal status to the WZO and for not choosing representatives to the coordinating board from all the coalition parties, i.e., all the parties that comprised the Israel government. But whatever the motivation for the announcement it did indicate a degree of sensitivity to WZO demands and a willingness to surrender a degree of governmental sovereignty. As *Ha'Aretz* noted, "recognition of majority rule (on the coordinating board) places the sovereign state under a higher authority . . ."<sup>5</sup> In practice, this limitation had no practical import. But in theory, not only had Israel conceded part of its sovereignty to the WZO, it had done so without anybody finding it very startling or a subject of criticism.

A more striking example of how lines between the Government-State of Israel and the JA-WZO were blurred in those early years of statehood came in the 1952 Knesset debate on the Status Law which is the subject of this study. Opposition

speakers stressed the point that the Status Law which the government proposed was contrary to the resolution which the World Zionist Congress had passed the previous year. Ben-Gurion found it necessary to remind the Knesset that despite the fact that they were all Zionists, the Congress resolutions were *not* the law of Israel and were *not* binding on members of the Knesset.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the administrative delineation of WZO and Governmental activity as early as 1948 and later in 1950, the ideological distinction and theoretical responsibility of each was not at all clear. It is this lack of clarity in the minds of many of the principal actors which explains the subsequent events. As they unfolded, the role and status of each was clarified and Ben-Gurion's position emerged triumphant. This position was never set out on a point by point basis but it emerged rather clearly in a series of speeches to the Knesset and the Zionist General Council and may be summarized as follows:

1. The State of Israel is a sovereign body representing its citizens, responsible to its citizens and not accountable to any other body.
2. The State of Israel and not the WZO is the major institution around which the Jewish people are united and which evokes their sense of commitment and Jewish loyalty. The WZO cannot stand between Israel and the Jewish people.
3. Israel will not grant the title "representative of the Jewish people" to any organization. It is the State more than any institution that represents the Jewish people. (Ben-Gurion himself never actually said this. It was said, explicitly, as we

<sup>4</sup> *Ha'Aretz* (May 16, 1950), pp. 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* (May 18, 1950), p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Diurei HaKnesset*, May 6, 1952, p. 1924 and Nov. 5, 1952, p. 60.

shall see, by Bebah Idelson. It is implied, however, in many of Ben-Gurion's statements and was stated explicitly a few years later). In any event, for Israel to call any organization a representative of the Jewish people would be interference by Israel in the affairs of the diaspora.

One suspects that Ben-Gurion also objected to granting the WZO a status as the "representative of the Jewish people" because by so doing he would theoretically grant it an authority greater than that of the State of Israel. Since Ben-Gurion, like all subsequent prime ministers have declared that their first loyalty is to the Jewish people and not to the State of Israel, any organization which they acknowledged as representing the Jewish people would have prior claims on their loyalty and the loyalty of all good Zionists.

4. To the extent that the WZO-JA wants any kind of special status within Israel it has to demonstrate that it is indeed a broadly based organization. This, it can only do by broadening its structure to include non-Zionists who are just as deeply devoted to helping Israel as are the Zionists.

5. The government of Israel will not bestow any special status or privileges on the WZO outside Israel or limit its own sovereignty by committing itself to consult and coordinate its activities in the diaspora with the WZO.<sup>7</sup>

It is doubtful, though not impossible, that Ben-Gurion grasped all these points as early as 1950. If so, he stood virtually alone in subscribing to them. By 1952 he had not only converted them into govern-

mental policy, but he had won many over, even within the WZO, to accepting his point of view. This, however, jumps us ahead of our story.

The first formal demand on the part of the WZO for granting of "status" came at the April 1950 meetings of the Zionist General Council. The demand was based on a 1949 report by the Israel Goldstein Committee to the American section of the Jewish Agency. That report had recommended that the State of Israel grant a charter to the WZO-JA recognizing its authority and right to operate in Israel. This charter would be, as it were, a substitute for the authority which the Mandatory Government had granted to the Jewish Agency and which now, of course, no longer had validity. The second recommendation was that Israel recognize the WZO as the exclusive body representing efforts on behalf of Israel within the Diaspora.<sup>8</sup>

According to Emanuel Neumann, Ben-Gurion had objected to any Status Law and proposed instead that the JA cease its activities within Israel in the fields of immigration, absorption, and settlement, i.e., the major activities of the JA. The compromise was that the WZO would not insist on a "charter" and Ben-Gurion not insist that the JA transfer its most significant activities to the State.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> These points are to be found in Ben-Gurion's speeches before the Zionist General Council session of April, 1950 and reprinted in *Molad*, 5 (May, 1950), pp. 67-76 and *Divrei HaKnesset*, May 5, 1952, pp. 1886-1890; May 6, 1952, pp. 1919-1927; and Nov. 5, 1952, pp. 56-61.

<sup>8</sup> The background and recommendations of the Goldstein Committee are summarized in an article by Emanuel Neumann in *Haboker* of June 30, 1950. In fact, as early as September, 1948 the JA executive appointed a sub-committee to investigate the legal status of the JA. (*Zionist Archives* S5/T1125, Letter from Lauterbach to the JA executive, Sept. 2, 1948.)

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

The outcome of this compromise was the decision to create the coordinating board, referred to earlier. This body would presumably resolve the immediate problem of duplication and conflicting policy between the government and the JA especially in the field of *aliya*. It was, by implication, a recognition of the special position of the WZO-JA, at least in so far as activities within Israel were concerned. On the other hand, it fell short of what the WZO would have liked. Indeed, in addition to a coordinating board the April 1950 General Council sessions had also requested that the JA be given the right to coordinate the work of all outside Jewish organizations operating in Israel.<sup>10</sup>

We should add that there were some within the JA who felt that a law was only required to guarantee the legal status of the JA.<sup>11</sup> But all the parties within the

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<sup>10</sup> *Sessions of the Zionist General Council, April 19-25, 1950* (Jerusalem: The Zionist Executive, 1950).

The Council had resolved that it is:

"... essential that the government of Israel authorize the Jewish Agency to regulate the activities in Israel of the Jewish organizations abroad and coordinate their plans with the general programme of activities of the Jewish Agency in Israel" (p. 186).

In his speech to the council, Nahum Goldmann stressed:

"It is necessary to determine that Zionism represents organized Jewry, and that if others cooperate it can only be through this channel. Everything must go through the Zionist movement as the sole authorized representative of the Jewish people in its work in Israel." (p. 25).

<sup>11</sup> See for example that draft prepared by A. L. Lauterbach for the Organization Dept. of the JA. *Zionist Archives* S5/T1126 and further

WZO continued to press for a charter which would confer prestige as well as legal rights on the WZO both within Israel and abroad. There were a variety of reasons why the WZO wished legal recognition by the State. There was, first of all, a technical consideration. As Dr. Joshua Freudenheim, legal adviser to the JA executive indicated in explaining a draft law which he prepared in April 1951, the WZO had no legal standing at the time, was not entitled to own property, to sue or be sued, or create any other bodies who could be legally recognised.<sup>12</sup> More significantly, the WZO wanted a law delineating not only its formal and legal authority, but a law in which Israel would set out in broad lines the role and status of the WZO. This, its leaders felt, would grant prestige to the WZO whose informal status within the Jewish world had been in constant decline since the creation of the State.<sup>13</sup> Of course, the very fact that the WZO felt that it required an act of the Knesset to buttress its prestige, indicated more than anything else how rapidly the

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correspondence with Dr. Freudenheim, legal adviser to the JA executive, May 7, 1951.

<sup>12</sup> *Zionist Archives* S5/T1125. "Explanations to the Draft Law: 'The World Zionist Organization' and 'The Jewish Agency for Israel.'"

<sup>13</sup> Maurice Boukstein, legal adviser to the JA in New York, conducted many of the negotiations with the Government over the Status Law. He envisaged legislation similar to that through which the American Congress brought the American Red Cross into being. To enhance the WZO's status, Boukstein insisted that it not be incorporated like any other corporations but rather be singled out through an act of the legislature which would begin with a declaratory statement setting out the organizations's significance. (Interview, March, 1973).

shift in status had taken place from the Zionist movement to the State. But these were the facts.

The government, especially Ben-Gurion, in his attacks on the WZO, in the recognition he had accorded to non-Zionists (especially in his "exchange of views" with Jacob Blaustein of the AJC referred to earlier) had created an impression that the state no longer accorded any special role to the WZO. The "prestige" factor outweighed all other considerations in the WZO. It insisted on a Status Law (the name by which the proposed law came to be called). In responding to a draft law which the government had prepared as early as April 1951, Freudenheim contrasted the government draft and his own, finding the former inadequate. He noted that the government draft, by only conferring authority on the WZO in limited spheres distorts "the primary aim of the granting of legal status, to raise the prestige of the WZO relative to other bodies operating in the Jewish world and to expand its influence and power of attraction."<sup>14</sup>

### Ben-Gurion's Objections

Apparently at this point Ben-Gurion raised objections to any Status Law. This is apparent in cables and correspondence between New York and Jerusalem, in which, as one correspondent notes, "... the request for a State recognition has now become a matter of contention."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Zionist Archives*, S5/T1125, "Notes on the Government's Proposed Law Concerning the World Zionist Organization."

<sup>15</sup> In the period from May 24 through June 5, 1951 there is much interesting correspondence in *Zionist Archives* S5/T1125.

If Ben-Gurion did indeed object to any Status Law, he was not able to carry his own party. In fact, his own party supported a resolution more favorable to the WZO than the original draft which the Ministry of Justice had prepared.<sup>16</sup> By mid-1951, Elyahu Dobkin, a Mapai representative on the JA executive announced that all parties had agreed on the necessity for a Status Law which only awaited formulation and detailed discussion by the Knesset and the Zionist Congress.<sup>17</sup> In fact, as we noted, the government had already prepared a draft law which the WZO legal advisor found unsatisfactory, but following the Mapai deliberations a more favorable draft was anticipated.

The World Zionist Congress is the supreme authority of the WZO. The 23rd Zionist Congress, the first to take place since the establishment of Israel, met in August, 1951. Shortly before the Congress met, Goldmann announced that the Congress would have to make a decision respecting a proposal to expand or broaden the base of the JA. According to Goldmann, since Israel was going to confer legal status on the WZO many non-Zionists would want to join.<sup>18</sup> As far as one can tell this was Goldmann's own proposal.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> According to Nahum Goldmann, in a decisive meeting of Mapai the party supported Goldmann and insisted that Ben-Gurion withdraw his objections to the Status Law. (Interview, October, 1970).

<sup>17</sup> *Ha'Aretz* (June 12, 1951).

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* (August 3, 1951), p. 8.

<sup>19</sup> In response to an inquiry Goldmann wrote that his idea was to "bring in all the leading Jewish organizations which would be ready to accept the Jerusalem program and join the Agency. I felt, at the time, that there might be



Possibly he was issuing a trial balloon. In his speech to the Congress he didn't mention it again but observed that the WZO must find a way to involve many Jews who want to help Israel "either by organizing them within the movement or by new forms of cooperation."<sup>20</sup> The issue was barely alluded to by subsequent speakers. It was, however, picked up by Ben-Gurion at a later date and became the focus for serious controversy.

Mapai spokesmen joined by Nahum Goldmann saw another set of implications to the granting of "status." From their point of view, since the State of Israel was granting a special role to the WZO, the WZO in turn was required to pledge its unconditional support to the state. The opposition parties from both Israel and abroad, raised all kinds of objections to this proposal. It was an issue of bitter debate between Abba Hillel Silver and Golda Meyerson (Meir), but is of less direct interest to us. What is of interest is that all parties agreed on the desirability of a Status Law. The draft resolution, submitted to the Congress by Eliyahu Dobkin called upon the government to recognize the

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a good chance to get most of them in, particularly as the Law of Status—which I was sure would be passed—would make the World Zionist Organization more attractive to world Jewish organizations. . . . In order for this to become effective, it would have been necessary not only for the WZO to give the diaspora organizations a proper status and the right to participate in the decisions, but also to overcome the domination of the Zionist movement by the parties." Letter from Dr. Nahum Goldmann to the author, Feb. 18, 1973.

<sup>20</sup> Twenty-third World Zionist Congress, *Stenographic Report* (Jerusalem: Zionist Executive, 1951), p. 32.

WZO as "the representative of the Jewish people" within Israel. Consistent, however, with Ben-Gurion's position, the draft made no mention of relationships between Israel and the WZO outside the borders of the State.<sup>21</sup> Mapai spokesmen were insistent that the proposed Status Law should limit itself to WZO activity in Israel.<sup>22</sup>

Other speakers addressed themselves to the necessity for WZO "status" in the diaspora as well as in Israel. Yaacov Hazan of Mapam accused Ben-Gurion of seeking alternatives to the WZO which he, Hazan, insisted should be recognized as "the only representative of the State of Israel among the masses of the Jewish people in the diaspora (Golah)."<sup>23</sup> Emanuel Neumann also stressed that WZO status meant recognition of the WZO in its role within the diaspora. According to Neumann, without such a provision the Status Law would be meaningless.<sup>24</sup>

### Compromise

Goldmann vacillated. In his opening remarks he limited his demand to recognition of the WZO as the instrument of world Jewry in the execution and direction of all organized Jewish efforts on behalf of Israel.<sup>25</sup> Later he stated his objection to granting the WZO a formal status outside Israel, noting that he agreed with Ben-Gurion that the WZO must not become a wall separating Israel from all Jews. But he did agree and maintained

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<sup>21</sup> *Ha'Aretz* (August 23, 1951), p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Twenty-third World Zionist Congress, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-144.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

that Mapai representatives at the Congress also agreed that there must be a "gentlemen's agreement" that "all large and important activities which the state will want to carry out among the large Jewish communities of the diaspora must be done in consultation with the WZO and in coordination with it."<sup>26</sup>

The Zionist Congress resolution, adopted unanimously, reflects a compromise. With respect to WZO status in Israel the resolution stated that:

The Congress considers it essential that the State of Israel shall grant, through appropriate legislative act, status to the World Zionist Organization as the representative of the Jewish people in all matters relating to organized participation of the Jews of the Diaspora in the development and upbuilding of the country and the rapid absorption of the immigrants.

This section caused no controversy. This is important to note, because as we shall subsequently see, referring to the WZO as "the representative of the Jewish people" was later to arouse a great storm. In fact, the phrase "representative of the Jewish people" was used by Goldmann in his speech to the General Council in 1950. Immediately prior to the Congress, the *Ichud Olami*, the World Labor Zionist organization of which Mapai was the dominant partner had resolved that the State of Israel should confer "recognized status . . . on the WZO as the representative of the Jewish people."<sup>27</sup> This resolution was more radical than the proposal which the

Congress actually adopted. The Congress resolution only asked the government to recognize the WZO as the representative of the Jewish people for certain explicitly stated purposes.

It was the following section, and not the former, which was clearly a compromise proposal:

In relation to all activities conducted in the interests of the State of Israel within the diaspora it is essential that the government of the State of Israel shall act in consultation and coordination with the World Zionist Organization.

In other words, the Congress wrote the "gentlemen's agreement" to which Goldmann had earlier referred, into the resolution. Mention was made of the WZO's relationship to Israel in the diaspora, but in a manner far less compelling than maximalists such as Hazan and Neumann would have liked.

### **Blaustein and Ben-Gurion**

The AJC did not even wait for the adoption of the final resolution before it issued its first protest. On August 15th Blaustein wrote to Ben-Gurion objecting to the granting of special status to the WZO within Israel unless it was restricted to the Jewish Agency (sic) in its resettlement and rehabilitation activity. He reminded Ben-Gurion of the aid which the AJC had given to Israel, in return for which "we have not asked for special status, but have expected and do ask that Israel observe the proper relationship toward Jews in other countries."<sup>28</sup> On August

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>27</sup> *Zionist Archives*, S41/132, Resolutions from the Conference of "Ichud Olami," August 13, 1951.

<sup>28</sup> *AJC Files*, Executive Committee Meeting, October 13-14, 1951. The minutes contain the text of Blaustein's letter to Ben-Gurion, and a summary of the subsequent exchanges.

29th Ben-Gurion replied to Blaustein agreeing that no monopoly should be granted to WZO outside of Israel to represent Jews living in other countries. But he felt that it was proper to accord the representatives of the Zionist Executive in Jerusalem a special status.<sup>29</sup> On September 4th, Blaustein, together with two leading members of the AJC staff, conferred with Abba Eban, Israel's Ambassador to the U.S. Eban in turn communicated with Ben-Gurion, urging him to clarify the situation by cable. Eban also submitted a draft statement for his consideration. Ben-Gurion cabled his reply which Blaustein termed "satisfactory to us in some respects but not in all."<sup>30</sup> He noted that:

... we are disappointed by his failure to state that Israel would consult equally and directly on matters affecting itself and whatever organizations American Jews establish inside or outside the Zionist framework. Instead, Ben-Gurion stated that "such direct relations of the government of Israel with Jewish bodies and organizations will naturally be coordinated with the Jewish Agency."<sup>31</sup>

According to Blaustein, this formulation accords a special status to the JA with regard to work undertaken on behalf of Israel in other countries.

At its October 13-14 Executive Committee meetings the AJC considered three courses of action—to ignore the developments, to publicly condemn Israel and the occurrences at the Zionist congress announcing that these developments have made continued support for Israel impossible, or to express concern, call on Is-

rael to avoid certain actions, and serve notice that AJC's desire to help Israel might be frustrated if Israel persisted in certain activity. The third alternative was adopted and a resolution was passed which not only expressed AJC's opposition to Israel's granting political status in Israel to the WZO but also expressed opposition to granting "any organization any special status . . . outside of Israel."<sup>32</sup>

On October 30 Blaustein again wrote to Ben-Gurion. He stated that :

... We believe that the granting of any kind of special status to the Jewish Agency *outside* of Israel—such as that indicated in the sentence of your cable reading "Such direct relations of the government of Israel with Jewish bodies and organizations will naturally be coordinated with the Jewish Agency"—would be harmful to Israel as well as to Jewish communities outside of Israel.

Also, as I mentioned in my previous communications to you, the granting by the Knesset of a political or diplomatic status *within* Israel to the Jewish Agency or to the representative of the Zionist Executive in Jerusalem (the designation used in your August 29 letter to me) would carry with it the connotation that Jews throughout the world constitute a political unit of which the Agency or the World Zionist Organization is its representative.<sup>33</sup>

Blaustein's letter is extremely important since it suggests that at least two months after the congress had concluded its meeting Ben-Gurion was inclined to honor their request to be given the rights of consultation and coordination with respect to Is-

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* Letter from Blaustein to Ben-Gurion, Oct. 30, 1951.

raeli activity among diaspora Jewry. Ben-Gurion apparently was more than willing to pay lip service to this request since he mentions it to Blaustein. Ben-Gurion's subsequent opposition to granting the WZO rights of consultation and coordination outside Israel was unquestionably what he originally wanted, but did represent a change from a position into which he may very well have been coerced following the congress resolution. In that event, there is no reason to doubt that the AJC's strong protestations against the congress resolution influenced his position and reinforced his original inclinations.

From this point on, there are virtually no references to granting the JA status outside Israel. The fight centered now on its status within Israel. Ben-Gurion apparently decided to acquiesce to the AJC demand on the other point as well. On December 4, 1951 Goldmann and Locker wrote to Ben-Gurion protesting his decision to omit or amend the opening sentence of the draft Status Law which the minister of justice had prepared. That sentence referred to the WZO as "the representative of the Jewish people in all matters relating to organized participation of the Jews of the diaspora in the development and upbuilding of the country," etc. (The wording is identical to that of the Zionist congress resolution).

Goldmann and Locker stated that:

This sentence represents the very basis of the law and without it the law has no content. This is the formulation which was also adopted in the resolutions of the 23rd Congress and the meetings of the parties which took place before the congress convened. We, therefore, repeat our request to bring the full text of the law before the government, including the

above sentence, as it was phrased by the minister of justice.<sup>34</sup>

The signatories noted that the matter was discussed the previous day at a meeting of the Jewish Agency executive and that their letter expressed the unanimous opinion of the members of the executive.

The December 4th letter from Goldmann and Locker apparently had results and the phrase "representative of the Jewish people" remained, temporarily, in the draft law. In March, 1952 Blaustein met with Eban and Golda Myerson (Meir) in Washington. He persuaded them to cable Ben-Gurion to accept the AJC position of the JA status.<sup>35</sup> He also met with Sharett and obtained an agreement that he would "be afforded the opportunity to review in advance (as the foreign minister agreed) the pertinent portions of any proposed Knesset Act."<sup>36</sup>

His own cable to Ben-Gurion threatened that "if any special status given Jewish Agency... [it should] in no way directly or indirectly embody the concept quote as the representative of the Jewish people unquote which would cause storm irreparable unfavorable reaction alienating from Israel many Zionist and non-Zionist friends..."<sup>37</sup>

On March 9, Teddy Kollek, a close associate of Ben-Gurion's, then in Washington, assured Blaustein that, from reports he heard, "I do not think there is much

<sup>34</sup> *Zionist Archives*, "Letter from Goldmann and Locker to Ben-Gurion, Dec. 4, 1951."

<sup>35</sup> *AJC Files*, Letter from Jacob Blaustein to John Slawson, March 3, 1952.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* Letter from Jacob Blaustein to Abba Eban, March 3, 1952.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* Cable from Jacob Blaustein to David Ben-Gurion, March 3, 1952.

to worry about.”<sup>38</sup> This was confirmed by a phone call from Eban to Blaustein. Eban reported that Ben-Gurion had called Eban and asked for Blaustein’s views on the wording of the proposed Knesset act. Blaustein stated that most of the draft was acceptable but the status should be confined to the JA and not the WZO and that the phrase “on behalf of the Jewish people” should be eliminated.<sup>39</sup> Apparently, the words “representative of the Jewish people” had been changed to “authorized Agency operating in Israel on behalf of the Jewish people.” Consistent with Blaustein’s request, the words “on behalf of the Jewish people” were also dropped although his first request, that the law refer only to the JA and not the WZO was not honored.

### Expanding the Jewish Agency

According to the press, Goldmann proposed expanding the JA in order to soften Ben-Gurion’s objection to labelling the WZO a “representative of the Jewish people.”<sup>40</sup> This same report cited JA members as noting that Ben-Gurion’s objection to the term “representative of the Jewish people” was a concession to the non-Zionists.

Goldmann’s version is similar. He noted that Ben-Gurion was responsive to non-Zionists who argued that the WZO does not represent world Jewry since it does not represent them. Ben-Gurion, according to Goldmann, wanted the status to be

conferred on an expanded JA. Goldmann, in turn, claimed that he insisted on status for the WZO. In that case, Ben-Gurion said, “We cannot say you are the representative whom I need, and they argue that the JA does not represent them.”<sup>41</sup> The result, according to Goldmann, was the compromise in which the WZO was not recognized as a representative of the Jewish people but as an “authorized agency” with the right to coordinate the activities of other organizations in Israel.

*Molad*, Israel’s major intellectual periodical, provided a similar story with a slightly different nuance. According to an article that appeared there, Ben-Gurion decided that the JA must be expanded to include non-Zionists. He therefore conditioned his acceptance of the congress resolution that the WZO be recognized as the “representative of the Jewish people” on the obligation of the WZO to undertake to expand the JA. According to the report, Goldmann and other leaders personally favored the expansion but they did not feel authorized to make this commitment and they therefore surrendered their demand for the term “representative of the Jewish people.”<sup>42</sup>

What is not clear is whether Ben-Gurion really wanted a commitment to expand the JA or whether he really wanted to deny the label “representative of the Jewish people” to the WZO. In the end, he got both. In fact, as subsequent reports indicate, Ben-Gurion’s demand became not only that the JA commit itself to expanding, but that it do so before the Status

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* Letter from Teddy Kollek to Jacob Blaustein, March 9, 1952.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* Letter from Graydon Snyder (on behalf of Blaustein) to John Slawson, March 13, 1952.

<sup>40</sup> *Ha’Aretz* (March 12, 1952), p. 3.

<sup>41</sup> *Sessions of the Zionist General Council, May, 7-15, 1952, op. cit.*, p. 123.

<sup>42</sup> *Molad*, 6 (April-May 1952), p. 9.

Law was passed. The issue then became not the principle of expansion but the timing.<sup>43</sup> It was on this basis, therefore, that Ben-Gurion was able to make his concession—by agreeing to a Status Law before the JA was actually expanded although the WZO was to be designated “the authorized Agency” and not as the “representative of the Jewish people.”

It should be clear that Ben-Gurion's demand to expand the JA was not a *concession* to non-Zionists although he might have had the AJC in mind as a party to the expansion.<sup>44</sup> In fact, neither the AJC nor its top leadership were likely to have joined the JA at that time nor did they ever even hint that they wanted an expanded JA to include themselves. They were far too sensitive to “dual loyalty” charges.

Other candidates whom Ben-Gurion might also have had in mind, that he might have liked to see in the JA, were leaders of the local Jewish Federations in the U.S. These large contributors from the local Jewish communities were already assuming the leadership of the UJA, with whom Ben-Gurion and subsequent prime ministers established personal relationships. Ben-Gurion trusted them more than Zionist leaders such as Silver and Neumann. From Ben-Gurion's perspective, these local philanthropists did far more for Israel than the Zionists. They gave

far more money, were equally willing to provide political support in the U.S. on behalf of Israel, and were no more opposed to aliya than were American Zionist leaders. Therefore, they were more useful than Zionist leaders and, on the other hand, they demanded less in return. A handshake, an autographed picture, an invitation to dinner, a testimonial in their honor were all the compensation they sought. Zionists like Silver and Neumann, Ben-Gurion feared, would utilize their position of strength within the WZO to seek to influence Israeli policy.

It is most reasonable, therefore, to believe that Ben-Gurion did want to expand the JA not as a concession to non-Zionists but as a way of involving them even further in activity on behalf of Israel and neutralizing the less malleable Zionists.<sup>45</sup> The point of all this, however, is to indicate that to the extent that Ben-Gurion was satisfying a demand of the AJC it was not in his insistence that the JA be expanded, but in his insistence that the WZO not be designated as a “representative of the Jewish people.”

### Victory For Ben-Gurion

On March 14th, *Davar* announced that an agreement had been reached between

<sup>43</sup> See the press interview of Israel Goldstein in the *Jerusalem Post* (March 13, 1952), p. 1, who concedes the point of expansion although negotiations between the government and the JA were not yet concluded.

<sup>44</sup> Maurice Boukstein (interview, March 1973), believed that Ben-Gurion thought that Blaustein would join an expanded JA.

<sup>45</sup> This explanation strikes me as the most reasonable one. Eliyahu Elath, Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. from 1948 to 1950, was also of the opinion that when Ben-Gurion spoke of an expanded JA he had U.S. Jewish Federation leaders in mind. (Interview with Elath, Feb. 19, 1973). On the other hand, it is possible that Ben-Gurion was closer to Goldmann's notion of including non-Zionist organizations rather than large contributors. In fact, the two possibilities are not mutually exclusive.

the JA and the government's representatives. According to the report, the JA would undertake to include non-Zionists, and the WZO would be recognized as an "authorized agency... to coordinate... the activities of other Jewish organizations" operating in Israel.<sup>46</sup>

One cannot help adding that not only did the WZO not get what it asked for, but its designation as an "authorized agency... to coordinate... the activities of other Jewish organizations" conceded even less to the WZO than had been conceded in a draft which the government had prepared a year earlier. That draft had designed the WZO as "the representative of the people in all matters relating to the organized participation of the diaspora in the establishment, development and furthering of the State of Israel." It was this phrase which Freudenheim had rejected as being inadequate.<sup>47</sup>

In the light of all this, it appears that the "compromise" was really a one-sided victory for Ben-Gurion. One might argue that if Ben-Gurion really objected to any bill then all the concessions which the WZO made were minor compared to the fact that they obtained some kind of Status Law. It was considerably less than the 23rd Congress had requested, it was accompanied by an agreement to expand the JA which the WZO accepted most reluctantly, but it was something. On the other hand, one can argue that Ben-Gurion hardly made any concessions. If it is true that he opposed any legal status for the JA his opposition was unrealistic. If the

JA was to hold property, sue or be sued, it had to have legal status.

The question therefore, was the nature of its status. Perhaps Ben-Gurion might have preferred a simple act of incorporation rather than a Knesset Law. But he successfully insisted that the Law look toward the expansion of the JA. He also insisted successfully that the Law make no mention of JA or WZO activities outside Israel. Finally, he successfully resisted the demand that the WZO be designated "the representative of the Jewish people" which would have conferred upon it enormous ideological authority. On these last two points he was also satisfying demands of the AJC but, as we suggested earlier, he was not acting contrary to his own wishes.

One might therefore, argue that Ben-Gurion's only real concession was in agreeing to a Status Law before the JA was actually broadened. But one must also wonder whether Ben-Gurion wasn't simply being pragmatic. The AJC certainly was not prepared to join the JA. But one also wonders how many other non-Zionist leaders or organizations would have been willing to do so at that stage. There is no evidence that they sought membership. It is possible that despite the accusation of his opponents,<sup>48</sup> Ben-Gurion was offering the non-Zionists more than they were prepared to accept. In that case, having won an agreement on principle from the WZO-JA to include non-Zionists, he obtained

<sup>46</sup> *Davar* (March 14, 1952), p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> "Notes on the Government's Proposed Law..." *op. cit.*

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, the statement by Israeli General Zionist leader, Fritz (Peretz) Bernstein, that the notion of an expanded JA "did not come from Mapai headquarters" but rather came from non-Zionists. *Ha'Aretz* (March 21, 1952), p. 3.

all he possibly could. As for the AJC's intervention, we have already suggested that it was of some consequence, not in forcing the government to do what it otherwise would not have wanted to do, but in permitting the government (i.e. Ben-Gurion) to do what he really wanted to do but might not have otherwise been able to see through to its final enactment.

### In the Knesset

The Status Law was finally submitted to the Knesset. As might have been anticipated, the opposition parties attacked the law as weakening the WZO and contrary to the congress resolution. Ben-Gurion defended the proposed law and clarified his objections to the congress resolution. He observed that it is the State of Israel, not the WZO which is "the new crown, more important and more precious to the people."<sup>49</sup> In expressing his objection to a proposal that Israel consult and coordinate its activities in the diaspora with the WZO, he noted in language reminiscent of his "exchange of views" with Blaustein two years earlier, that Israel would not pass any law on internal matters of Jewish communities in the diaspora.<sup>50</sup>

Simultaneously, the Zionist General Council was holding its sessions. The proposed bill was attacked there, as well, by Zionists aligned with opposition parties. Nahum Goldmann defended the draft law and stressed the necessity for an expanded JA. He argued that the JA could then devote itself to helping Israel politically

and economically and allow the Zionist movement to devote itself to Zionist activity free from the necessity for ideological compromise. To raise money, he noted, it is necessary "to give in a little on Zionist ideology."<sup>51</sup>

Goldmann also defended, on principle, the absence of any mention of the WZO rôle in the diaspora. The only major concession which he admitted he made was in the "representative" label to which we have already alluded.

However, Goldmann recommended to members of the Zionist General Council on behalf of the executive, that they influence their friends in the Knesset to amend the law.<sup>52</sup>

It is difficult to explain Goldmann's about-face other than by the possibility that he wished to protect his reputation for independence and defend himself against charges that he had surrendered completely to Ben-Gurion. In any event, the Council appointed a sub-committee to formulate specific amendments to the Status Law as proposed by the Government in the Knesset. The subcommittee, in turn, did not request any amendment on the question of WZO "status" abroad. It did propose some minor technical changes. For our purposes the only recommendation of interest was a very minor change in language, softening some-

<sup>51</sup> *Sessions of the Zionist General Council, May 7-15, 1952, op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124. He suggested, for example, that the Council seek to secure an amendment providing that the government must consult with the JA executive before it undertakes any activity among diaspora Jewry. *Zionist Archives* S5/T1125 ("Extracts from the Discussions of the Zionist General Council on the Status of the Zionist Organization.")

<sup>49</sup> *Divrei HaKnesset, May 6, 1952, p. 1923.*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.* p. 1925.



what the thrust of the recommendation within the Status Law itself for an expanded JA. That is, the Status Law itself could not expand the JA. It merely recommended it. What the Zionist General Council sub-committee did was to request that the language of the recommendation be softened to provide more flexibility to the WZO. In the fact the changes were minor. Indeed, if one wasn't told to begin with, that this was the intent of the sub-committee's recommendation, one could hardly deduce it from the actual wording.

(The various documents are found in the *Zionist Archives* S41/1321. In a letter dated May 26, 1952 from the Organization Department of the Executive to Dr. I. Schwartzbart (*Zionist Archives*, S5/T1126) the writer says that the General Council proposed that the Knesset "delete its recommendation for an expanded JA in the Status Law." According to the author of the letter, whose name cannot be ascertained, "the committee of the Zionist General Council which dealt with this matter was not on the whole in favor of the proposition to enlarge the Jewish Agency through the joining of non-Zionists; some members rejected it outright, others did not like to have it, as it were, forced upon the Zionist Organization by the Government."

However, as we indicated, the General Council did not request the Knesset to delate this recommendation.)

The Status Law was returned from Knesset Committee for its second reading (an article by article reading) in August. The Committee had accepted some minor changes proposed by the Zionist General Council.<sup>53</sup>

Within the Knesset the opposition concentrated its efforts on reintroducing the term "representative of the Jewish people" for the WZO rather than the term "authorized agent." In a surprise vote, the opposition's amendment was accepted by a vote of 31 to 27. The size of the vote (there are 120 members of the Knesset) suggests that the opposition had a chance majority at the time of the vote.

The following day the government withdrew the bill and Ben-Gurion announced he would resign if the Knesset did not accept the original wording of the bill. He stressed that "the government of Israel unanimously decided that the WZO will not be recognized as the representative of the Jewish people."<sup>54</sup> He labelled the amendment as interference in the internal affairs of diaspora Jewry and added that "there are organized and important masses of Jews in the world who are not members of any Zionist organization and despite this they are committed heart and soul to the State of Israel."<sup>55</sup>

WZO leaders were not prepared to fight for what they had already agreed to surrender. The government immediately introduced a new bill which was virtually identical to the bill as originally introduced

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played the whole idea of an expanded JA. According to the chairman, "if the WZO decides to broaden its base, with the agreement of the government" then the new body will benefit from the status now being conferred on the WZO. (*Divrei HaKnesset*, August 11, 1952, p. 2866.) The chairman's language suggested that the matter lie entirely in the hands of the WZO which was under no pressure to make any structural changes whatsoever. The language of the bill, however, was more forthright.

<sup>54</sup> *Ha'Aretz* (August 13, 1952), p. 1.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> Committee chairman Moshe Unna down-

in May. Locker, in a letter to Goldmann, expressed his general satisfaction that some law would eventually pass.<sup>56</sup>

While some prominent Zionists aligned with parties in opposition to the Israel government charged the JA executive with acting contrary to the wishes of the Zionist General Council by agreeing to the new draft, and some even suggested that no law was preferable to the proposed draft,<sup>57</sup> the AJC expressed its satisfaction. At the Executive Committee meetings of October 25–26 Blaustein reported the accord by which Ben-Gurion assured the AJC that the WZO would not be granted status. He proved his good faith when “on the following day, he withdrew the bill.”<sup>58</sup> Blaustein told the Executive Committee that Ben-Gurion had renewed his assurances that his government would hold out for the bill approximately as originally submitted.

Again, one can only conjecture, but it does seem reasonable to suppose that Ben-Gurion might not have been quite as adamant in rejecting the opposition amendment or acted quite as drastically in threatening to resign had he not had to consider the pressures and obligations which he undertook to non-Zionist organizations and individuals. In his speech on behalf of the new bill, Ben-Gurion stressed the importance of non-Zionists in words which could only have pleased AJC leaders. For example, he said:

The State of Israel does not assume, and has no right to assume the authority to determine who is the representative of the Jewish people... Any effort to remove Jews who are not members of the Zionist Organization from the totality of the Jewish people and the totality of direct assistance to the State and direct contact with her—is not only a political mistake but an arbitrary distortion of the Zionist idea.<sup>59</sup>

Bebah Idelson, of Mapai, was much sharper in her objection to labelling the WZO “the representative of the Jewish people.” According to Idelson, the WZO was indeed the representative of the Jewish people until the State was established. “. . . the State of Israel now represents the Jewish people, there is no other representative and none other is possible.”<sup>60</sup>

The law was passed as submitted and it would only be anticlimactic to add that Nahum Goldmann expressed his satisfaction.<sup>61</sup> For its part, the AJC hailed the outcome as a great victory. Irving Engel summarized the events as follows:

. . . Zionist pressures within the Knesset notwithstanding, Israel, after formal protest by the AJC, refused to grant the World Zionist Organization the recognition it had been so eagerly seeking as “the representative of the Jewish people the world over.”<sup>62</sup>

In January, 1953 the AJC “noted with satisfaction the refusal of the government of Israel to grant the WZO recognition

<sup>59</sup> *Divrei HaKnesset*, November 4, 1952, pp. 24–25.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>61</sup> *Ha'Aretz* (November 26, 1952), p. 2.

<sup>62</sup> Irving Engel, “Highlights of 1952”—Report of the AJC; Morris Fine (ed.), *American Jewish Year Book, 1954, op. cit.*, p. 506.

<sup>56</sup> *Zionist Archives*, S41/1321. “Letter from Locker to Goldmann,” August 22, 1952.

<sup>57</sup> *Ha'Aretz* (September 5, 1952), p. 1.

<sup>58</sup> *AJC Files*, Executive Committee Meeting, October 25–26, 1952.

as the representative of the Jewish people the world over."<sup>68</sup>

### Defining the W.Z.O.

In retrospect the AJC's victory was a qualified one. First of all, the WZO did receive special recognition. Secondly, the AJC's achievement was almost purely symbolic. Whether the WZO was a "representative" or an "authorized agent" meant absolutely nothing in the long run. Indeed a major difficulty in researching the question was that respondents active in the controversy at the time could not recall what it was all about twenty years later. Of course, the AJC did avoid having the WZO granted status outside Israel. But in this respect, as suggested, the AJC got what Ben-Gurion wanted to give them. One might more properly evaluate the outcome as a victory for Ben-Gurion who

achieved his objectives due, in part, to AJC support. If one asks, therefore, whether this is a successful instance of diaspora pressure on formation of Israeli public policy, the answer would be only a qualified yes.

There is perhaps a more important point to be learned from this case. Within the framework of this study one wonders how to define the WZO. Is it a diaspora organization, and if not, what is it? In fact, its constituency cuts across Israel and the diaspora. The problem of locating the WZO within our framework of analysis only reinforces our understanding of the complexity of Israel-Diaspora relations. There may be separate Israel and diaspora interests, but the inter-relationships are so intense that it is rare when the two sides can be neatly isolated and aligned one against the other. In our case, diaspora interests and Israel interests were aligned against the interests of an organization or an ideology, the WZO, which simply does not lend itself to any simple classification.

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 117.