

sacrifice more.... The Jewish people will respond to our demands if we serve as an example and accept an even heavier burden upon ourselves....

The Speaker, N. Nir-Rafalkes: There are three proposals: a. MK Rubin's that the subject should be referred to the appropriate committee, which should examine the status of the Zionist Organization; b. MK Bader's that the subject should be referred to the appropriate committee, which should make detailed recommendations about the coordination; c. MK Aharonowitz's that the Knesset has heard and noted the Prime Minister's statement about the coordinating institution.

(MK Aharonowitz's proposal is adopted.)

Law of Return; Nationality Law

Introduction

Only two years after the establishment of the state, the Government presented to the Knesset twin laws of fundamental importance: the Law of Return, granting every Jew wherever he may be the right to immigrate to Israel, and the Nationality Law, defining the rights of all Israelis, both Jews and non-Jews, in that area. The elaboration of these laws had been delayed by considerations of both principle and political expediency. The importance of the laws was underlined by the fact that they were introduced by the Prime Minister. In view of frequent and bitter discussions in later years, it is remarkable that no attention was paid in the course of the debate to the question of defining "a Jew" in legal terms.

Sitting 160 of the First Knesset

3 July 1950 (18 Tammuz 5710)
Knesset Building, Jerusalem

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, may I first of all welcome the Speaker, M. Sprinzak, on his return from his important national mission to the other side of the world.

The Law of Return and the Nationality Law...are closely connected and share the same ideological basis, deriving from the historic uniqueness of the State of Israel as regards both the past and the future, on both the internal and the external levels. These two laws determine the special character and destiny of Israel as the bearer of the vision of the redemption of the Jewish nation.

Israel is a state just like any other...having its own land, population and sovereignty....The Jews of the diaspora, who are nationals of their countries and wish to remain there, have no civil or legal connection with Israel, and Israel does not represent them. But Israel differs from other countries in the reasons for and trends of its existence. It was founded only two years ago, but its roots extend to the distant past....Its rule is limited to its nationals, but its gates are open to all Jews. It is a Jewish state not solely because most of its inhabitants are Jewish but also because it is open to any Jew who wants to come here.

On 14 May 1948 the Jewish state was established not as something completely new but as the restoration of our ancient glory, 1813 years after our independence had been destroyed, supposedly forever, at the time of Bar Kochba and Rabbi Akiva. The establishment of Israel was

not due solely to the immediate events preceding the proclamation of the state; in history, as in nature, there are miniscule elements which cannot be seen even under a microscope, as well as huge factors which our imagination cannot grasp, and both are governed by universal laws....

The revival of the Jewish state cannot be understood without some knowledge of settlement here during the last three generations, the Hibat Zion Movement, Zionism, the Enlightenment and Hebrew literature, as well as the national and revolutionary movements of nineteenth century Europe—the revival of Hungary, Italy, the Balkan nations, etc.—the results of the First and Second World Wars, and the foundation of the League of Nations and the U.N. But neither can the revival of the Jewish state be understood without knowing the history of the Jewish people during the periods of the First and Second Temples, the history of Jewish prophecy, spirit and vision, the history of the Jewish diaspora and the concept of messianism, and its various manifestations, the incessant attempts of the wandering nation throughout the generations to return to its land...and the history of the eternal culture which was forged in this land and its influence on the Jews and the rest of the world.

...It was no coincidence that our Proclamation of Independence opened with a brief statement regarding the eternal connection between the Jewish people and its ancient land, that it states as one of its first basic principles that: "The State of Israel will be open to Jewish immigration and the ingathering of the exiles," and that it calls upon "the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to join forces with us in immigration and construction, and to be at our right hand in the great endeavour to fulfill the age-old longing for the redemption of Israel." And just as it was clear that the revival of the State of Israel was a continuation, not a beginning, so is it evident that it is not a conclusion, but one stage in the long road towards complete redemption.

The Jewish dispersion did not end upon the establishment of the state. The dispersion is not a new phenomenon, it existed long before our independence was destroyed. Jews lived outside Israel as early as the seventh century B.C.E., when the Jewish kingdom ended....The Jewish historian who lived at the time of the destruction of the Second Temple, Josephus Flavius, wrote: "There is no nation in the world where our people cannot be found." That statement is probably as true today as it was then...even though the frontiers of the world have been expanded....The fact that volunteers from 55 countries came to help us in our War of Independence is unprecedented in its extent and variety even in Jewish history....This is the crucial event of our time which will determine the fate of the State of Israel and mold the character of the Jewish nation for generations to come....

The motives for Jewish immigration to Israel have always been many and varied, including the yearning for redemption, ancient

memories, religious sentiments and love of the homeland, not to mention economic, political and spiritual hardship. With the establishment of Israel another factor has been added—the attraction of the Jewish state. Our ability to increase this attraction, to make Israel a center for the fulfillment of the nation's...physical and spiritual needs, will determine the pace and extent of immigration, including that from the New World.

The Law of Return is one of the State of Israel's basic laws. It encompasses the central mission of our country, the ingathering of the exiles. This law determines that it is not the state which accords the Jews of the diaspora the right to settle here, but that this right belongs to every Jew by virtue of the fact that he is Jewish...although...Jews do not have preference over non-Jews within Israel. The State of Israel is based on the complete equality in rights and duties of all its citizens, as stated in our Proclamation of Independence....It is not the state which grants the Jews of the diaspora the right to return, this right existed before the state did, and it is that which built the state. This right derives from the historic, unbroken link between the people and the land, which has also been recognized "de facto" by the world.

The Law of Return is not one of those immigration laws which determine under which conditions the country will accept certain kinds of immigrants....It is the unchanging law of Jewish history, reflecting the principle whereby the State of Israel was established.

It is the historic right of any Jew anywhere to come and settle in Israel...for whatever reason....The Nationality Law complements the Law of Return, determining that by virtue of the fact that he has immigrated to Israel a Jew becomes a national of his country, needing no further formal verification or condition other than his desire to settle and live here. The Law of Return and the Nationality Law constitute the charter of rights guaranteed to every Jew...in Israel.

...

The Minister of Justice, M. Shapira: Distinguished Knesset, this is a festive occasion for us, as we give our young state the law which will define those who are its nationals and the ways of acquiring nationality. A state and its national citizens are two interconnected concepts...and if it has taken two years since the proclamation of the state until this law is submitted to the Knesset it is mainly because during the War of Independence and immediately afterwards it was difficult to formulate the precise legal tools for dealing with the various problems associated with nationality rights.

This does not mean that the state has been without citizens during these past two years. "De facto," Israeli citizenship existed from the outset even without a Nationality Law...even appearing in various documents, including those used for travel abroad....But "de facto" nationality is not enough....There are a great many spheres in which the legal

definition of nationality is important. Internally this applies particularly to the right to vote for and be elected to parliament. In most countries only nationals may do so. Till now we have adopted a different policy, giving this right to anyone who was a resident of Israel on a certain date...

Another sphere which necessitates clarification of the question of nationality is...that of civil law...namely, marriage, divorce, alimony, inheritance, etc....Uncertainty as to the nationality of the parties concerned...can complicate matters....The same applies to the international arena. The absence of a Nationality Law has prevented the Government from signing certain international treaties, such as those concerning extradition, sea trade, air trade, etc., because these involve the interests of the nationals of the countries concerned. In the absence of a Nationality Law the Ministry of Immigration was unable to provide persons going abroad with national passports. Instead they were given a laissez-passer, and Israelis had to explain to every customs official and policeman abroad why someone from Israel had to travel on the basis of a document generally used by stateless persons.

...Our representatives abroad encountered difficulties in providing diplomatic protection or consular assistance to our people because they were unable to prove that those persons were really nationals of our state. All this is enough to show how badly we need this law....For us, however, as Jews living in their own land, the Nationality Law has special significance.

The Nationality Law does not create or renew the link between a Jew and the Jewish people, this link between the individual and the nation has never ceased throughout the years of our dispersion. But the legal-political link between the individual and his state, that connection which Jews lacked and yearned for ever since our independence was ended 2000 years ago...will be renewed by this law.

Many Jews were "nationals" in the dispersion, but that was in countries which were not their own and, despite assurances and legal undertakings of various kinds, their position was insecure and could easily be worsened, as is evinced by the large number of stateless Jews. Now, with the establishment of the Jewish state, the Jews will also have a genuine nationality in their own land....The Palestinian nationality which Jews could acquire during the Mandate was not nationality in the full sense of the term. It constituted external, formal affiliation to an artificial political unit....Even before the establishment of the state the Jewish population of Palestine regarded itself as the heir of the nation which had dwelt in this country in ancient times....Affiliation to the Jewish population of Palestine has now been replaced by nationality of the...sovereign, independent State of Israel. All this great change will be reflected legally and officially in the Nationality Law before you....

The Law of Return defines the rights of Jews to immigrate to Israel, and the Nationality Law defines their rights to be nationals of Israel....But there will be no discrimination between those who are nationals by birth and those who are nationals by immigration....Consequently, the Law of Return is mentioned in only one paragraph of the Nationality Law, and all the others deal with acquiring nationality by being included in the population register, by birth, and by marriage, as well as with losing nationality, and apply equally to Jews and non-Jews.

...The population register derives from the census taken in November 1948 as a basis for elections to the Constituent Assembly. The right to participate in those elections was the first right of Israel's nationals, and the Nationality Law accords Israeli nationality retroactively to all those who were given that right then. Children born to Israeli nationals will be given Israeli nationality, even if only one of the parents has nationality and even if the birth took place abroad. Children born in Israel will be granted Israeli nationality even if neither of the parents is a national, provided the children do not receive different nationality at birth.

...As is the case in other countries, women marrying an Israeli national will be accorded nationality, although they may waive that right if they thereby lose their nationality in their country of origin....We are introducing a bold innovation by extending the right to acquire nationality by marriage to men marrying Israeli nationals. Nationality may also be acquired by fulfilling certain conditions, namely: residence in Israel of at least three of the last five years, permission to remain permanently in Israel, the intention to settle in Israel and some knowledge of Hebrew. All these conditions...which are common in other countries, must be supplemented...by the permission of the Minister of the Interior.

A person may waive his right to nationality if he wishes to do so and is a national of another country...although in most cases nationality will be granted automatically, both to immigrants and to those in the population register....People who are nationals of another country may hold dual nationality....

On the day the Nationality Law goes into effect all the Jews living in Israel will become Israeli nationals, as will approximately 63,000 non-Jews who appear in the population register of November 1948....In extending nationality to non-Jews living in Israel we will be adhering to the vision of the prophets, who even at the dawn of our nation preached equality, as it says in the Holy Book: "Ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land." Knesset members, the Government has considered the bill before you very carefully, now you are called upon to complete the work, so that one of the basic laws of the state may go into effect.

...

I. Bar-Yehuda (Mapam): Immigration to Israel...is the natural right of every Jew. It need not even be called a charter, as the Prime Minister said...The state should give a charter to the Zionist Organization, which is still bringing masses of Jews to Israel; but there is no need to give a charter to the Jews. It is a natural law, it is their natural right, which no one can give them or take away from them....

There are two points which I would like to raise. Firstly, is it correct, and advisable, that there should be so many people in Israel with dual nationality?...I think that the Committee should examine this closely, with the object of reducing the number of people with dual nationality to a minimum....Secondly...the power to permit or forbid immigration to Israel is in the hands of the Minister of Immigration, since he may prevent the immigration of someone who "has acted against the State of Israel or could endanger public health."...The Minister of the Interior may also deprive a person of his Israeli nationality "if he thinks that the welfare of the state requires this." In my view, this matter is too weighty to be placed in the hands of one man, whoever he may be. We must be as careful in these matters as in passing the death sentence, where the subject is reviewed at several levels before a final decision is made.

Z. Warhaftig (Religious Front): The Law of Return falls into the category of laws for which we would make a blessing in the Provisional Council of State....This law answers the question of the connection between world Jewry and Israel, giving every Jew the right to come and live here. This is both a right and a duty...in accordance with every Jew's ancient right, as a member of one of the tribes among which the land was divided up, to a share in Israel, and in accordance with the Biblical precept that Jews should live in their land.

...I would like to propose that clauses be added to the Laws of Return and Citizenship...enabling the State of Israel to grant nationality to Jews abroad even before they come here, in certain cases. The bitter experience of recent years has taught us that if the State of Israel had existed and had been able to grant nationality to Jews who were still abroad...lives would have been saved....

I oppose giving new immigrants the right to opt out of receiving Israeli nationality...although I can accept this in the case of persons who are already living here. The immigrant can always request a different kind of visa, such as a tourist's, but should not be enabled to forego nationality after coming here as an immigrant....

I do not agree with MK Bar-Yehuda's reservations about persons with dual nationality. We...want to encourage immigration in a variety of ways, and if this will facilitate the immigration of people from certain countries, all the better, though the possibility of dual citizenship

should be limited....On the whole, I agree with the basic approach of both these laws....

Y. Bader (Herut): ...I pray that this law will really succeed, because the experiment regarding dual nationality arouses doubts....In my view, nationals should link their fate and that of their children to their country, and this law gives people an easy way out, if they want it, though I realize that in some cases it is difficult for people to abandon their former nationality.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: What is the danger in having dual nationality?

Y. Bader (Herut): The danger is first of all a formal one, of dual loyalty, preventing us from demanding unlimited loyalty from someone with dual nationality....It may also raise conflicts regarding such duties as military service. If someone has both British and Israeli nationality, for example, and the cold war which prevails between Britain and Israel today erupts into an armed conflict and that person serves in our army, he will be regarded as a traitor under British law. There may be other dangers too. I agree that people should be able to hold dual nationality, but not as widely as the law proposes.

...

J. Gil (General Zionists): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, this sitting of the Knesset...is an historic one, and it is a pity that not all the Members have honored it by attending...We are molding a legal pattern and organizational framework for the connection between the Jewish people in its land and its state, and between the state and the diaspora....I have two amendments to propose....

The Law of Return, which is an historic law, should not contain a clause enabling the Minister of Immigration or any other Minister to prevent the entry into Israel of any Jew because he acted against the Jewish people or the State of Israel. If he is a criminal, he should be brought here and judged here. Let me use an historical example: According to Saul, David had committed a crime against the state, but when he had to leave the country David said: "They have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods." This is interpreted as supporting the Jewish view that residence in this country is given to all Jews unconditionally....

The problem is more difficult regarding someone who endangers public health. A leper endangers public health, but in the Bible lepers are merely kept outside the camp, not driven out of the country. Why do we have hospitals? Why do we have a Minister of Health? Let those Jews who are sick be brought here and cured, or isolated....The same applies to criminals. Why do we have prisons?...I think it is a mistake to put these things into the Law of Return and limit the right of Jews to live in

their country....The case is similar with regard to depriving Jews of Israeli nationality....

I would like to propose an amendment to the Nationality Law which concerns the basis of the state and the nation. If one studies the law one sees that it is a philosophical-ethnographic law, and is by no means superficial. It addresses the problems of state and nation...raising the question of what is a nation and what is the Jewish nation....The problem of defining a nation is a relatively recent one which emerged only after the French Revolution. In the ancient world and during the Middle Ages nationhood was not defined. The problem of nationhood arose for the Jews after the French Revolution with regard to their receiving equal rights. Since that time thinkers have studied the problem of nationhood....Allow me to quote the definition given by the foremost thinkers, namely, that a nation is a building which consists of four storeys. One is land and a homeland...one is the state...another is culture and religion...the fourth, controversial, one is race....The Jewish nation has suffered a great deal because of this problem....The Jews of the diaspora do not have the first three storeys, in many cases...and the fourth alone is not enough to form a nation here in Israel....It is our task to provide the nation in Israel with Jewish culture, the Hebrew language and nationality—which constitutes part of the second storey—...and to bind the nation in Israel to the diaspora....

I propose that the Nationality Law be extended to encompass the Jews of the diaspora who wish to become Israeli nationals, enabling them to hold dual nationality just as Jews living in Israel may....We must find the optimal way of linking the two parts of our nation, by granting nationality, by imparting our culture, and enabling those who live elsewhere to feel that they are part of our state....

...

I. Cohen (Progressives): ...The Prime Minister said that the right of every Jew to return to his homeland does not depend on the state and its laws but is part of the essence of the state and the nation. The Law of Return is merely a symbol and a testimony of this....I must, however, point to the bitter fact that...as the gates to Israel open, those leading out of other countries are closing. The question is whether the Government intends to act on the international diplomatic level, primarily within the institutions of the U.N., in order to ensure people's right of exit?...I fear that without the basic human right...to decide where one wants to live...which is one of the basic premises of our state, Israel may be deprived of its security and existence.

I would also like to point out that one of the countries of Eastern Europe, which until recently...had opened its gates to those Jews who wished to leave, has now stopped the departure of the Jews, preventing the Zionist leaders of Romania from joining their people here....We do not know the reason for this...and at this moment of rejoicing over the Law

of Return I would like to express my sorrow at this arbitrary closing of the gates.

In conclusion, I implore the Government to do everything in its power...to bring about the liberation of the Romanian Zionists....I hope that it will soon be able to report its success in this to the Knesset, which would indeed be an appropriate and necessary conclusion to the legislation of the Law of Return.

...

B. Mintz (Religious Front): We have long awaited this law, and it is a good thing that it has at last been brought before us....I would like to propose, however, that where it states that every Jew is entitled to immigrate to Israel, the words "and to live there" should be added, since that is, after all, the principal object of the law....I also think that the term "immigrant" (*oleh*) should be defined....

I endorse MK Gil's proposal that...the clauses authorizing the Minister of the Interior to prevent the immigration to Israel of Jews who have acted against the nation or who endanger public health be removed. I think that this right should not be given...to anyone. No Jew has the right to prevent another from immigrating to Israel....

I. Cohen (Progressives): Even if he is a criminal and has converted?

B. Mintz (Religious Front): Yes, if a Jew is a criminal, he will be judged here when he comes. We read in the Torah that Moses buried the Egyptian in the sand after he killed him, and our sages comment that he did this after God had enabled him to look into the future and see that no good would ever come of him or his descendants. We have no way of foreseeing the future, and we should not punish the future descendants of someone who endangers public health or has committed a crime.

I would like to note that I have heard that the Nationality Law was reworded 20 times, and in my view even now it is not perfect....I propose that it be submitted to the Internal Affairs Committee.

Law of Return (Second and Third Readings)

Introduction

To enhance the symbolic value of the adoption of these laws it was decided to adopt them, on the third reading, on the anniversary of Herzl's death, which in 1950 fell on July 5. Thus, the committee stage was inordinately brief—only two days, quite an unusual phenomenon when important laws were being discussed.

Sitting 162 of the First Knesset

5 July 1950 (20 Tammuz 5710)
Knesset Building, Jerusalem

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J. Lamm (on behalf of the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...two days ago the Prime Minister explained the details of the law from this podium, and I do not want to repeat what he said. I would like to confine myself only to the important changes introduced by the Committee....

There was considerable debate as to the title of the law and its first clause....Suggestions such as "The Ingathering of the Exiles," were made, but it was felt that "The Law of Return" best conveys the idea of our nation's return to its ancient land....The Committee rejected the proposal that the words "and to live there" or "to settle there" be added to the first clause, after the sentence "Every Jew is entitled to immigrate to Israel"...since it felt that the term "immigrate" encompasses the senses of "to live" and "to settle."...

...The original proposal enabled the Minister of Immigration to refuse to grant an immigrant's visa to someone who had acted against the Jewish people or the State of Israel, or who might endanger public health. The Committee considered it superfluous to mention acting against the State of Israel, since this is included within actions against the Jewish people....The Committee changed the word "acted" to "acts"...feeling that a Jew should not be prevented from immigrating to Israel because of things he did in the distant past, and has stopped doing. If he has not stopped, then he still acts, in which case the Minister of Immigration can prevent his immigration....

The Committee also added the right of appeal to the law, in the following clause: "Anyone who has requested an immigrant's visa or certificate and has not received one within three months, or whose application has been rejected, may appeal to the Supreme Court."...Any person in Israel or abroad who feels that he has received unjust treatment through administrative action is entitled to make use of the Supreme Court...so that arbitrary and unjust considerations and decisions may be overruled....

...
J. Klivanov (General Zionists): ...The first clause of the Law of Return, which says that every Jew is entitled to immigrate to Israel, is so absolute as regards both its internal intention and its external form that it is impossible to qualify and restrict this in the following clause....I fear that if the matter is brought before a court of law it will be decided either that the second clause has no place in the law, in view of the first one, or that the law contains mutually contradictory clauses, and the court will have to decide which of them is to override the other....The aim of these

restrictions...is not so crucial as to warrant undermining the basic, sacred principle expressed in the first clause—the right to immigrate freely. It says that the Minister of Immigration may withhold a visa from someone who acts against the Jewish people. I think it is unnecessary to dwell on the political significance of this and explain that this enables the ruling power to interpret things in various ways and prevent anyone from immigrating whom it does not want....But if there really are Jews who act against the Jewish people, is it not better to let them come to Israel so that we can control them and prevent them from acting against us? The same applies to the restriction regarding someone who endangers public health....It may perhaps be necessary to restrict immigration to Israel in times of war or emergency....At that time special emergency laws can be passed to prevent undesirable elements from entering the country, but why should we qualify the Law of Return, which should be a fundamental law of our national revival, intended for normal times?

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Because we wanted to hasten the passing of the law we could not answer all the points raised two days ago, so I would like to address them now....I share the feelings of MKs Bar-Yehuda and Klivanov regarding the content of the law, but if they think that the second clause detracts from the first one they are mistaken. On the contrary, without the second clause the first one is an empty phrase....The entire law is, in effect, the proclamation of Zionism, but we must not empty the law of content by putting too much into it....Nothing is better for the Jewish people than Zionism, but not blind Zionism....Every Jew has the right to immigrate to Israel, and this right derives from the Jewish people's right to live as a free nation in its own land. This right is not something metaphysical. I oppose MK Gil's suggestion that we bring criminals or prostitutes or madmen here and put them in prison or hospital. We are building a country for the Jewish people, not prisons or lunatic asylums.

Every Jew has the right to immigrate to Israel because he is part of the Jewish nation and wants and is able to participate in rebuilding it. But we will not make a mockery of the idea of immigration and bring prostitutes and base persons here. Immigration is not going to prison. People immigrate to Israel in order to join in building their country, their culture and their national revival, not to sit in prison because they are a danger to the public.

J. Gil (General Zionists): Even though a Jew has sinned, he is still a Jew.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: One can always find verses for anything. The thing has become quite absurd. Without the second clause, which gives the law a realistic framework, the first clause is meaningless....I would also like to protest...on behalf of the Hebrew

language against the Committee's amendment of "acted against the Jewish people" to "acts." In Hebrew there are only two tenses, past and future....Einstein's physical-mathematical theories confirm the logic of the Hebrew language, where there is no present....

I have doubts about appeals to the Supreme Court. It appears to me that the Knesset, i.e., the representative of the people, is the body to which appeals should be directed....I think it is unnecessary to accept MK Bar-Yehuda's amendment that someone who cooperated with the Nazis should be prevented from immigrating to Israel. Anyone who did this acted against the Jewish people, and as such is precluded from immigrating....Many Jews had to cooperate with the Nazis when their country did so, and I do not know if we should punish them for that.

E. Lankin (Herut): Distinguished Knesset, the Government has found an easy way out of implementing laws. In almost every law we find a tiny clause giving a Minister almost unlimited authority to make a mockery of the law....I think this habit has been passed down to us....As you know, the Governor-General, by virtue of the Emergency Regulations, could do as he wished with Jews who were defined as endangering security—exile or imprison them or prevent them from entering the country. There is a well-known instance when the Governor-General was at a party in Jaffa...and was asked to sign a document exiling 3,000 immigrants on the grounds that they were a danger to security, which he did, in the middle of drinking and making merry. Did he check that every immigrant was a danger to security?

Y. Duvdevani (Mapai): Aren't you ashamed to compare the British Governor-General with a Jewish Minister?

E. Lankin (Herut): I am making no such comparison, and you have no right to preach to me. I fought to replace the Governor-General with a Jewish Minister more than you did. (Shouts from the Mapai benches.)

...Gentlemen, the wording of this law allows for too many interpretations of who endangers public health or acts against the Jewish people....And who is to guarantee that the information on which the Minister acts is correct?...I ask the Knesset to delete the clause enabling the Minister of Immigration to keep certain people out of Israel, particularly since this is a basic law.

M. Wilner (Maki): ...I propose that the clause preventing persons from immigrating to Israel who endanger the security of the state be omitted from the law....The security of the state is a political concept which could be used as a tool by the bourgeoisie and the present Government against sections within the Jewish people. Neither the Minister of Immigration nor the entire Government is entitled to define who endangers the security of the the state....

...As regards persons...accused of acting against the Jewish people...the Prime Minister might think that supporting those in the U.S. who are preparing a third world war, or handing the oil refineries to the British is in the interests of the Jewish people, and then he might change his mind and think the opposite. That is why "cooperating with the Nazis" must be added to "acts against the Jewish people." (From the Mapai benches: "What about cooperating with the Mufti?") That is what the Government is doing now by placing fascist elements over the Arab minority, so as to repress the free trade union of the democratic Arab labor movement in Israel.

...In conclusion, I propose that the phrase "endanger the security of the state" be deleted, since it is arbitrary...and be replaced with "cooperation with the Nazis" against the Jewish people, and that the authority should not be solely in the hands of the Minister of Immigration. But my first proposal is that that clause be removed.

...
(The Knesset votes on the various amendments to clauses of the Law of Return and all are defeated.)

A. H. Sha'ag (Religious Front): I propose...that in view of the historic nature of this law the vote be taken upstanding and conclude with the national anthem.

The Speaker, N. Nir-Rafalkes: We cannot vote on proposals of that nature. We will vote on the Law of Return in its entirety.

(The Law of Return, as approved by the Committee, is adopted.)

The Speaker, N. Nir-Rafalkes: Today, the twentieth of Tammuz, the anniversary of the death of Theodor Herzl, the First Knesset passed the Law of Return unanimously, symbolizing the aspirations of our people for two thousand years.