

Volume 4

MAJOR KNESSET DEBATES,
1948-1981

Fourth Knesset 1959-1961

Fifth Knesset 1961-1965

Sixth Knesset 1965-1969

Edited by
Netanel Lorch

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*For my grandchildren—Gilad, Ariel, Guy, Shani
and Dafna.*

May they grow up, and understand.



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FOURTH KNESSET 1959–1961

Arms Sales to Germany

Introduction

The Fourth Knesset had a short life. Elected in November 1959, it decided to dissolve itself on 23 March 1961. From the summer of 1960 onwards it was increasingly dominated by "The Affair," which brought about not only the demise of the Fourth Knesset but also led directly to the end of Ben-Gurion's leadership.

The Government formed in the Fourth Knesset and led by Ben-Gurion was identical in political composition to the last Government in the Third Knesset, despite the crisis concerning "Who is a Jew," which had brought about the resignation of the Ministers of the National Religious Party, and the revolt of the Ahdut Ha'Avoda and Mapam Cabinet members over the sale of arms to the Federal Republic of Germany.

The latter subject continued to occupy the Knesset's attention.

Sitting 35 of the Fourth Knesset

20 January 1960 (20 Teveth 5720)

The Speaker, K. Luz: We now proceed to MK Mikunis' motion for the agenda—that we cancel the sales of arms to West Germany in view of the revival of Nazi anti-semitism.

S. Mikunis (Maki): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, our Communist party group proposes that the Knesset discuss and decide on the immediate cancellation of the arms deal with Adenauer's neo-Nazi government, as an act of protest and an expression of vigorous opposition to the renewed outbreak of anti-semitism in West Germany. The Jews of the world, the inhabitants of Israel and all the friends of the Jewish people everywhere are waiting for the response of the Jewish state to the fascist-anti-semitic manifestation. Our slaughtered nation, which has escaped the Nazi sword, is entitled to ask the Knesset to...take a stand opposing the emergence from the underground of the Hitlerites...

In the last few weeks West Germany has proved itself to be the lair of Nazism, the center organizing anti-semitic provocations in Germany and other Western countries. The aim of Hitler's heirs is to stop the positive trend in the international situation and prepare the ground for renewed bloodshed, start a destructive war and drown mankind in a sea of blood and tears. This is not surprising when, under the auspices of Nato, militarism and Nazism have been cultivated in West Germany, the Wehrmacht has been established, the arms industry has been rehabilitated, de-Nazification has been cancelled and Hitlerite war

criminals have been placed at the head of the Wehrmacht, the diplomatic service and the legal, economic and education systems.

In view of these facts what can one say of the shameful phrase coined by Ben-Gurion before the conclusion of the Third Knesset, that "The Germany of today is not the Germany of yesterday"? What can one say of another statement made by Ben-Gurion at the same sitting—

The Speaker, K. Luz: In accordance with the procedural code, you must say: "the Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion" or "Knesset Member Ben-Gurion."

S. Mikunis (Maki):—made by the Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion, at the same sitting that he and the Government of Israel will work to tighten Israel's ties with West Germany on the basis of mutual trust and friendship? How can one describe the shocking fact that even now the Ben-Gurion Government is continuing and intensifying its efforts to create close ties with Bonn, to establish diplomatic relations with it, provided its neo-Nazi rulers are kind enough to permit this?

Woe to us, for at this very time, while the nations of the world are opposing the resurgence of Nazi anti-semitism in West Germany, the Government of Israel is preparing a new deal to export Israeli arms to the neo-Nazi army, as the spokesman of the West German War Ministry announced yesterday. Is there any power in the world which could bring such shame and danger upon Israel as the Ben-Gurion Government has done?

Mass protests and warning demonstrations were held in France, Britain, West Germany and other Western countries by both Jews and non-Jews. A massive demonstration with 100,000 participants was held in East Berlin and received by the Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic, Grotewohl. The Prime Minister of Poland issued a grave warning against the wave of anti-semitism....All the countries of the socialist camp, all the communist parties in the world, all the forces of peace and democracy in both the east and the west stand firm in their struggle against the reemergence of anti-semitism. A few weeks ago the Prime Minister of the U.S.S.R., Khrushchev, spoke out sharply in front of the Supreme Soviet against the wave of anti-semitism and fascism in West Germany, issuing the Adenauer government a severe warning.

N. Lewin (Herut): Is there no anti-semitism in Russia?

S. Mikunis (Maki): In conclusion: in the name of national honor, the memory of the Holocaust and the security and future of our people and our brethren throughout the world, in the name of our sacred obligation to the preservation of world peace, our Communist party group proposes that we discuss and decide on the immediate cancellation of the previ-

ous arms deal and the banning of future arms deals with neo-Nazi Germany.

The Speaker, K. Luz: I give the floor to MK Shofman for a motion to the agenda on a similar subject: a ban on exporting Israeli arms to Germany.

J. Shofman (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, a fairly strange situation has been created. A few minutes ago we heard the representative of the Communist party group, MK Mikunis, who exonerated East Germany of Nazism. I fear that we will soon hear the same regarding West Germany, and thereby all of Germany will be exonerated of Nazism, as a result of the strange alliance between Maki and Mapai.

Once again the vile topic of our relations with Germany is on the agenda....The Prime Minister has said, in a newspaper interview, that the current generation in Germany is not the one which supported Hitler...does not favor Nazism...and that we must win its friendship.

To hear that phrase "friendship with Germany" spoken by a Jew, regardless of the Prime Minister's high position...is anathema to us....With his usual dogmatism, the Prime Minister claimed that Germany, that Germany which brought the disaster of two world wars on the world...not to mention the Holocaust...neither can nor will bring a third disaster on the world.

A man who knows something about the Germany of today...the head of the Lutheran Church in West Germany, said in London that the church and schools of Germany have not succeeded in eradicating the anti-semitism of Nazi Germany. Three-quarters of German youngsters feel anger towards the world, and want a strong leader who will be able to change things. This confutes the Prime Minister's two premises that the Germany of today does not seek war and does not aspire to the position it held in the past. German youth once again dreams of the appearance of a new Hitler...and the spirit of anti-semitism is rife....

Throughout the world the outbreak of Nazism in Germany is regarded as a threat to world peace and a danger to its future. This explains the sharp reaction of world public opinion to the disgraceful events which originated in Germany....The world sees the resurgence of the same Germany which we have known for the last 40 or 50 years.

Incidentally, this also seems to be the official position of the Israeli Government, because in its name the Minister of Justice said from this podium on January 5, in his cautious style: "Although there is no clear evidence, there is some reason to suspect that what is at work here is an international organization whose center is in Germany or some other country, and which at any rate uses the German language in other countries too. Otherwise it is difficult to explain the coordination between the actions taken in various countries."

Even the German Chancellor, who called on the inhabitants of his country to beat the inciters and bullies, proved that the evil has penetrated deeply and that the state is powerless to suppress it....

Our friendship with Germany was not acquired through the deal which has been debated in the Knesset in the past....The Prime Minister's hand is still extended, though I do not know which one, because one is still extended to Nasser in peace and the other to Germany to establish diplomatic relations. Our party group does not regret the fact that that hand is still hanging in the air. But that is Germany's reply. You thought you would gain friendship by putting weapons into the hands of murderers, without knowing how they would use them. Is it not the same abhorrent hand which daubs swastikas and anti-semitic slogans which will grasp the "Uzi" which your Government, Mr. Prime Minister, will supply to Germany? Will it not use the bombs you send?

Consequently, we propose that the Knesset discuss this problem, and perhaps this time the Government will aspire less stubbornly to friendship with Germany.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I understand the confusion of the last speaker, whose lot it was to say the same things as the person who spoke on behalf of the Communist party group, and in order to extricate himself from his confusion identified Mapai with Maki. I will not respond to that kind of thing.

If I might address a word to the Speaker, who must of course adhere to the procedural code, I would like to say that as far as I am concerned the name Ben-Gurion is no less important than the title Knesset Member or Prime Minister.

The Speaker, K. Luz: That is the procedure.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: The Speaker must observe procedure, but I do not see anything wrong in being called Ben-Gurion.

To the first speaker I will say that I do not believe he is being sincere when he says that he wishes to defend the honor of Judaism. Why? He tried to speak here on behalf of both the Jews of the world and the Jews of Israel; they have not empowered him to do so, they have dissociated themselves from him in everything, including his exoneration of East Germany, which both murdered and inherited. His account with West Germany is an alien, not a Jewish one, for reasons which are well-known and which I will not go into here....

(Shouts from the floor from MK Mikunis.)

Don't interrupt. Your party group numbers only three members out of 120. Your dream of ruling with 2 percent will never be realized.

And so, when he exoneres East Germany, which has no fewer Nazis than West Germany—and I know that there are Nazis in West Germany too—but which did not see fit to compensate the Jewish people in any way, no one, no Jew, can take his excitement and anger on be-

half of the Jews seriously. I will not argue with him, what connection is there between him and Judaism?

The second speaker cited a newspaper interview with me from a few weeks ago. I don't know why he had to wait so long because on July 1 I spoke at length here about the problem of relations with Adenauer's Germany and the difference between it and Hitler's Germany. I am not prepared to take a single word back, MK Shofman. I knew then that there were Nazis in Germany, and I know that there are Nazis in other countries, including some where anti-semitism flourishes and synagogues are burned. But I do not draw conclusions about those countries, because we want to maintain good relations with them. I will not repeat what I said here on 1 July, although I stand behind every word.

I would like to point out, MK Shofman, that although you quoted the head of the Lutheran church, you interpreted what he said in your own way, not his. I heard a different opinion. I could not assess the situation myself because I have not been to Germany; your colleagues have, but I have not. But from someone whose judgment and honesty I respect, namely Carlo Schmidt, the Chairman of the Bundestag and one of the leaders of the Social Democratic Party, I heard the view that the problem is that the youth of Germany is too pacifist, is light-headedly pacifist....The fact that youngsters want a strong leader occurs in many places, including Israel. There is a name for such movements, which I would not like to pronounce.

It is true that regrettable and even worrying phenomena have occurred recently. I think that they began in Germany, but they have also appeared in many other countries, and diaspora Jewry will be short-sighted, as it usually is, if it ignores them....But I reject the term "a nation of murderers" in referring to the German nation today. To my mind that is racist talk. I detest racism, and we must beware of it. Each man shall be judged according to his deeds, as shall each regime.

I understand why the representative of the Communist party group has an account to settle with the West German government. The East German government is pure and clean, bearing the banner of socialism and the redemption of the world. But I cannot share in MK Shofman's definition of an entire nation. There is no justification for that....The younger generation is not Hitlerist, on the contrary, most of it is pacifist.

I repeat, I have not been there, but I rely on someone for whom I have great respect, Carlo Schmidt, even if he is a German. He is a socialist, not a Communist, and I would like to remind MK Mikunis that the great Communist who was called the father of the people and the redeemer of mankind once made an alliance with Hitler against the socialists, and that alliance brought disaster on the world, to the best of my historical knowledge.

That is why I have nothing to add to what was said on this subject a few weeks ago by the representative of the Government, the Minister of Justice. The Government of Israel sent a circular on this subject to most of the countries of the world, and I would like to tell the Knesset that we received an encouraging response from several governments. Of course, that does not mean that they will eradicate anti-semitism from their countries....

The subject continues to arouse concern, but it has nothing to do with the arms deal and our relations with the present German state and nation. I therefore propose that the two identical proposals be removed from the agenda.

S. Lorincz (Religious Front): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, my party group proposes that the clarification of the important problem be transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

In our view, after the Jewish people and the nation in Zion has been shocked by the recent wave of anti-semitism in the world which began in Germany, and after...it has been proposed here that we should examine the situation and ban arms sales to modern Germany, there is justification for transferring the problem to the Committee. Our party group opposes the sales of arms to Germany on principle.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: If I am not mistaken, MK Lorincz's party group sits on the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, and any member of it may raise any question he desires, including that one.

I would like to add that we have charged one of our services, which is capable of doing so, with clarifying whether there is in Europe and America...an international organization which is involved in the sudden manifestations of anti-semitism in more than twenty-five countries and three continents. We do not know whether this service will succeed in getting to the root of the matter, but we are doing our best....

I append MK Lorincz's motion to the other two and propose that it be removed from the agenda because there is no need to transfer it to the Committee. If the Committee sees fit...it can decide as it wishes. But there is no need to accept a particular position regarding the arms. I propose that all three motions be removed from the agenda.

The Speaker, K. Luz: We will now vote. We will vote on all three proposals together...unless there is opposition to this.

S. Lorincz (Religious Front): After the Prime Minister's statement that the subject will be clarified in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, I withdraw my proposal.

The Speaker, K. Luz: We will now proceed to the vote.

MK S. Mikunis' motion for the agenda is not adopted.

MK I. Shofman's motion for the agenda is not adopted.

The motion that the subject be removed from the agenda is adopted.

E. Talmi (Mapam): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, on behalf of Mapam I have the honor of announcing that our opposition to the arms deal is expressed this time through our abstention, in accordance with the commitments we accepted upon the establishment of the present Government, and we will continue to do so as long as there is no majority in the Knesset in favor of annulling the arms deal.

Nevertheless, since the revival of anti-semitic and fascist activity has proved false the assessment of those who approve of the situation in Germany, providing additional evidence of the fact that their attitude has no political or moral basis, Mapam will work to gain a majority to support its opposition to arms deals with Germany....

M. Carmel (Ahdut-Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, our party group opposes the sale of Israeli arms to the German army for both Jewish-historical and political reasons.

There have recently been new outbreaks of anti-semitism and racism, starting in Germany and spreading to many other countries. This phenomenon makes it patently evident that German Nazism and militarism are not yet dead and that they still endanger mankind, and especially our nation, requiring us to be alert and to take action.

Post-war de-nazification has not yet been completed, and still confronts freedom-loving mankind, including ourselves. These worrying events give greater moral and political impetus to preventing the rearming of Germany and our opposition to the export of Israeli arms to the German army.

We feel that the new manifestations, which aroused justified concern in the world, and among us too, oblige those who supported the sales of Israeli arms to Germany in the past to reconsider and amend their historical mistake.

For our part, we will not cease our efforts to influence the public so that the decision to supply arms to Germany may be revoked. When the current Coalition was established we agreed that collective responsibility would not oblige us to support the Government's position regarding the sale of arms to Germany, and we continue to oppose that view.

We abstained from the vote on the motions proposed by Maki and Herut, and we see no reason why we should aid their party-political maneuvers.

Questions and Answers About the Nazi War Criminal Eichmann

Introduction

In May 1960 Adolph Eichmann was abducted by Israeli agents from Argentina, where he had been hiding under a false identity, and brought to trial in Israel for his pivotal role in the implementation of the Holocaust. A few months earlier his name was mentioned in a Parliamentary Question. It has been suggested that the information concerning Eichmann's presence in Kuwait was a deliberate misinformation plant.

Sitting 60 of the Fourth Knesset

29 February 1960 (1 Adar 5720)

On 29 December 1959 (28 Kislev 5720) **MK M. Sneh** asked the **Minister of Justice**:

Information originating from Frankfurt (on 24 December 1959) states that the Attorney-General of the State of Hessen has announced that it has been proven almost indubitably that the war criminal and murderer of Jews, Eichmann, is now in Kuwait, where he acts as an agent between the Emir of Kuwait and certain West German companies.

I therefore ask the Minister of Justice whether the Government of Israel intends to take any initiative in order to impel the British protectorate authorities in Kuwait to identify, arrest and try the criminal Eichmann?

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: As you know, the British authorities have denied any knowledge of this.

Religious Front's Motion of No-Confidence

Introduction

Because of their intrinsic importance to the ethos of the state, as well as due to the peculiarities of its political system, issues pertaining to the place of religion in Israel's life were frequently aired on the floor of the Knesset. Even so, a motion of no confidence based on a biblical exegesis ventured by the Prime Minister was an unusual event.

Sitting 97 of the Fourth Knesset

18 May 1960 (21 Iyar 5720)

I.M. Lewin (Religious Front): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, something serious has occurred; in the period between the festivals of Passover (Pesah) and Pentecost (Shavuot)...the voice of apostasy has issued forth from Israel's leading city....The Prime Minister and Minister of Education dared to injure the deeprooted and hallowed faith of generations, and that is why our party group is proposing a motion of no confidence. This is not something we do joyfully or readily...but the moment religion and faith are harmed we will not hesitate to raise our voices in protest....

...We know that among both Jews and non-Jews there have been those who have criticized the Bible and our religion, but till now the Prime Minister of Israel was not among them....The Prime Minister's words were broadcast on the radio and published in the press....Our approach to the Bible and religion is the age-old one of Divine authorship. Every letter and syllable of the Bible is hallowed for us...and it is for that unwavering belief that our fathers and forefathers gave their lives. We do not regard the Bible as a text for historical or archaeological study!...If there is something in it which we do not understand, that is because human intelligence is limited....

The ancient scholars—including Maimonides—approached the interpretation of the Bible in awe and trembling....As a believing Jew it is difficult for me to repeat what Mr. Ben-Gurion said...but it is also impossible for me to ignore it....Mr. Ben-Gurion has reached the conclusion, heaven forbid, that only six hundred persons left Egypt and received the holy Law, that most of the Jewish nation is of unclear descent...that God has not chosen the Jews to be His special people, and so

forth. Mr. Ben-Gurion even referred mockingly to sacred principles...wounding the highest feelings of the Jewish people.

...It is evident that if Mr. Ben-Gurion had posed his thirty questions to Sages and rabbis he would have received answers to them all....To us it is clear that Jacob and his sons were the entire House of Israel, that they went down into Egypt and that they all left Egypt together. The Jewish nation is descended solely from our father Jacob, also known as Israel, and hence our name; it alone left Egypt, under Moses' leadership, and entered the Promised Land under Joshua, establishing the first Jewish settlements there since Jacob's departure from it. Any attempt to deny this belief, which was sanctified at Mount Sinai and throughout the generations, is tantamount to denying the God of Israel and His Law.

...Mr. Ben-Gurion's words are, to my regret, a series of absurdities. The Law says that six hundred thousand left Egypt, not including infants. Mr. Ben-Gurion claims that "thousand" means "family," and concludes that only six hundred left Egypt, ignoring the verses in the Book of Numbers listing the numbers in each tribe only one year after the Exodus, "Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty," not including the Levites. There are other explanatory verses in the Bible, and when Jethro told Moses to appoint captains of thousands, of hundreds and of fifties, was this meant only for the six hundred?

Mr. Ben-Gurion asks how the seventy persons who went down into Egypt became millions, ignoring the verses: "And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty, and the land was filled with them." "The people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; come on, let us deal wisely with them." "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew; and they were grieved because of the children of Israel." Were the Egyptians so afraid of 600 persons? A simple calculation will show that...if each person had an average of ten children or less, by the fifth or sixth generation, within 210 years, they would number millions. That is just for the sake of the argument, because we believe that everything in the Bible is absolutely true.

Mr. Ben-Gurion asked what became of Abraham's 318 pupils, and the Sages tell us that they remained Jews only during Abraham's lifetime, assimilating among the surrounding nations after his death. He also asked what became of the sons of Shechem, who were circumcised. The Bible tells us quite clearly that Simeon and Levi killed all the males of Shechem. Thus, there are answers to all the questions....

"I saw water issuing forth from a rock at Kadesh Barnea, but there was only a trickle," Mr. Ben-Gurion said. What is so funny? Then there was a miracle and there was water for everyone. Does it make any difference if the Prime Minister believes in it or not? Mr. Ben-Gurion also used irony to deny the miracle of the manna. We believe that all

nature is a series of Divine miracles, but their continuity leads us to forget that, and that is why every now and again the Lord allows nature to depart from its customary course....The entire history of the Jewish people is a chain of miracles: the exodus from Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea, the manna, the quails, the water from the rock, the war against Sihon and Og, Joshua's entry into and conquest of the Promised Land....

Mr. Ben-Gurion's mockery of the righteous Joseph...as well as his attitude in general, is the result of reading the Bible without taking into account the phenomena which have occurred meanwhile in the nation....Contrary to the Prime Minister's pronouncement at Brandeis University, the Jewish people's spiritual life and resources have not dwindled since our exile from our land. The Sages and commentators on the Bible throughout the generations have enriched us greatly....Mr. Ben-Gurion claims that it was not God who chose the Jewish people but the Jewish people who chose God, and quotes Joshua to prove this. But it was Joshua who said in God's name: "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left." Jews recite the daily blessing upon rising: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who hast chosen us above all other nations."...How dare the Prime Minister wound the sensibilities of all believing Jews throughout the ages?...Is this the way to educate the younger generation? Is this "Jewish consciousness"?... Does not the Prime Minister see that by his words he justifies the Canaanite heresy among us which seeks to sever every connection between us and our past...?

...Many Gentiles believe in the Bible and its sanctity...Is it the Prime Minister's task to refute all that?...Furthermore, our entire historic right to the Land of Israel is based on God's promise in our holy Law, and anyone who undermines that denies the basis of our right....The summit conference has collapsed and the Cold War continues; the neighboring tyrant continues to receive destructive weapons, threatening our situation, but the Prime Minister has nothing better to do than to attack the foundations of the Jewish faith.

My advice to the Prime Minister is: concentrate in your capable way on the defense of the state and the improvement of our foreign relations...and leave other spheres alone. For the benefit of the Jewish people and the education of the younger generation, summon up all your courage and say: I was wrong! I take back what I said. And if you do that I will also withdraw my motion of no confidence....

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, no confidence motions which have been brought before the Knesset on various occasions, in my humble opinion, had no validity other than the

purely formal one, since they concerned matters which were pertinent to the Knesset....

I do not know if the Aguda's proposal is justified formally or not, I am not a formalist, but I do not think that its subject matter concerns the Knesset. I have great respect for Rabbi Lewin's views; I respect the sincere beliefs of any Jew. But there is no reason to bring the argument raised by Rabbi Lewin into the Knesset....The Knesset cannot decide on matters of history or faith....The Knesset must debate on matters which are within its jurisdiction and upon which its decision is binding, which is not the case regarding religion and religious law, even should the decision be unanimous....Rabbi Lewin knows that what I said is my personal opinion and does not reflect any official position, and that he and I have disagreed on these matters for the last 12 years or so....

I.M. Lewin (Religious Front): Then you were more careful.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: He sat on the Government with me and he knew that we disagreed on certain matters. It is true that there was a time when the circles from which Rabbi Lewin comes maintained that one should not associate with Jews whose views were different from theirs...and I am glad that this attitude has changed over the years and that I have helped a little to bring the Aguda nearer the state and the demand to establish the state. To Rabbi Lewin's credit, I should say that he has helped me in that.

But the present argument is not one for the Knesset. I have answers to his criticisms, and I am willing to debate with him in the religious press, if he will permit me to. Then I would ask him how he would resolve the discrepancy in the Bible, which says in one place that the Jews were in Egypt 210 years and in another 430 years.

I.M. Lewin (Religious Front): The Sages have discussed this.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: That proves that the Sages also dealt with Bible criticism....I do not regard myself as an historian, nor do I consider history to be a science...and I do not think it possible to know precisely what happened 3,000 or 4,000 years ago....The whole nation knows, Rabbi Lewin, that opinions are divided in the Jewish people on this matter. Rabbi Lewin is entitled to claim that he speaks on behalf of all the generations, and so am I. I regard myself as no less a Jew than he is, but I do not deny your right to think that you alone represent all the generations....But you must respect others too, even if you do not agree with them. You knew perfectly well before and during the establishment of the state that the views of many members of the Government—myself included—were different from yours....

This issue has never and will never be discussed by the Government. The Government is not totalitarian and does not seek to decide what is science, what is truth and what is morality....It is not within the

Knesset's jurisdiction to decide what the nation should or should not think, and it is a pity that you brought this matter before the Knesset. You may be more learned than I am when it comes to the Bible....I do not regard myself as an expert in anything, not in military matters, not in economics, nor anything else. In many things I do not trust the experts. I have seen the experts fail in certain things because they knew only one field...while we, who were experts in nothing, succeeded....

...I respect every religious Jew, even if he opposes the state, who lives here...and I do not respect those who live in the diaspora, speak and write in a foreign language and attack the state and those religious Jews who live here....For you, Rabbi Lewin, I have the greatest respect. But you must also respect the views of others. You must get used to that. You may disagree with people and criticize their views, but no more than that. That is why, in my opinion, there is no room for this topic in the Knesset.

...There is one thing that I regret...and that is that what I said was broadcast on the radio....I think the radio was wrong to give the contents of my speech instead of merely stating that I addressed the press on the exodus from Egypt, and I apologize for that....

I.M. Lewin (Religious Front): You forget that you are Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: When I act as Prime Minister I do not forget that I am Prime Minister, but I also study the Bible. You mentioned defense matters, Rabbi Lewin, and said that had it not been for the Bible we would not be here. I study the Bible, and you will not deter me from doing so....I know that certain religious circles oppose the study of the Bible....In my view, the Bible is our most precious heritage, and I study it whenever I have time to do so. Don't tell me to deal with defense matters. Believe me, Rabbi Lewin, I do my best in matters of defense...and I agree with what you said...but I regret the fact that you brought a biblical discussion into the Knesset.

Naturally, I oppose the motion of no confidence. I maintain that there was no reason for it. The procedural code does not permit us to propose that a motion of no confidence be removed from the agenda, so if Rabbi Lewin insists on his motion of no confidence we will have to put it to the vote.

The Speaker, K. Luz: In accordance with the decision of the House Committee, the party groups will submit statements.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I would like first of all to reassure...Rabbi Lewin that the Prime Minister will eventually retract what he said....In the past he brought a law before the Knesset—not an opinion but a law—as to who is a Jew. This he later retracted. Today he is expressing an opinion as to who were the Jews of the exodus, and he will retract that too one day....

If we do not accept the explanations and assumptions of the man who was responsible for the exodus from the Sinai, how can we accept them from the man who is not responsible for the exodus from Egypt? I hope that the expert will admit that he is not responsible for the exodus from Egypt.

If you think that we take anything that scholar says about the exodus from Egypt seriously, you are mistaken....I will speak in the same vein the Prime Minister uses in addressing the Knesset....

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: You're not capable of that.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Of course not, but I will try to go down to his level. And so, there were miracles when the Jews left Egypt and there were miracles when the Jews left the Sinai. But in Egypt the Jews benefited from the miracles, while in the Sinai the Egyptians did. There the Egyptians pursued the Jews and drowned in the sea, while in the Sinai the Jews pursued the Egyptians and almost dipped in the sea, then returned to Gaza. The exodus from Egypt will always be an exodus from slavery to freedom. While the exodus from the Sinai, the withdrawal from the Sinai, will be judged by history....

If we do not accept the said expert scholar's explanations about the Sinai Campaign and the War of Independence, how can we accept his explanation of what happened 3,000 years ago? We reject both....One could also ask how 600 men could have built Pithom and Ramses, could have fought against nations and cities? One can of course answer questions in the spirit of the scholar: if in our time one man can claim that he established the State of Israel, six hundred men could have destroyed the walls of Jericho. And so, one does not need to be an expert in the Bible, one needs to be an expert in experts; one has to have studied the person who wrote that explanation....

Our legends tell us of four sons, each one with his own character, each one with his own questions, but now we have a fifth one, a superson, who has both questions and answers. He knows exactly how many Jews left Egypt, exactly how they entered and conquered Canaan. The distinguished scholar is not only the Prime Minister, he is also the Minister of Education. This is his first cultural contribution to the education of the nation. Will he want to influence matters and change the school curriculum in the spirit of his supposedly scientific studies too?

Mr. Speaker, we will not vote in favor of the motion of no confidence. Nor will we abstain. We will simply not participate in the vote. What has the Knesset got to do with this issue? As for the issue itself, it is merely a manifestation of the desire of all tyrants to rewrite history.

M. Hazani (National Religious Party): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...it goes without saying that we dissociate ourselves from what Mr. Ben-Gurion said in his private capacity at the press conference in Tel Aviv....But Mr. Ben-Gurion's personal opinion...regarding be-

liefs and views have nothing to do with our confidence or lack of confidence in the Government he heads. As far as we are concerned Mr. Ben-Gurion is not an authority in these matters, which are not within the jurisdiction of the Government and the Knesset, and his opinion carries no more weight with us than that of anyone else....As long as the Government remains faithful to the agreed guidelines...we will continue to support it; if it departs from them or acts in opposition to religious law we will not hesitate to leave it....

Be that as it may, it is not for the Knesset or the Government to decide on matters of faith. It is nothing new that the members of the Government hold different personal views and beliefs, and those of some of them oppose those of religious Judaism. This was also well-known to the Aguda...but it nevertheless joined the Government—

I.M. Lewin (Religious Front): If he had talked then as he does now—

M. Hazani (National Religious Party):—headed by Mr. Ben-Gurion and supported it, making a clear distinction between personal views and governmental functions. It is the Aguda's right, being now in the Opposition, to use every opportunity to express no confidence in the Government...but it shall not dictate to us the course of our struggle to build the state and mold its spiritual character. Consequently, we will vote against the motion of no confidence.

P. Bernstein (General Zionists): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...whether the subject belongs in the Knesset or not, I think the real issue is...why Mr. Ben-Gurion saw fit to revive biblical criticism, and in the State of Israel of all places....What was his intention? Had he done so in a private forum, such as the Bible study group, no one would have taken issue with him. But he did so in a public, much-publicized lecture....He also spoke as the Prime Minister of Israel which, although it is a secular country, has many problems as regards the link between religion and nationality....Mr. Ben-Gurion's interpretations of the exodus also contain many logical inconsistencies...and his statement was altogether unnecessary....We will abstain on the vote of no confidence.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make two comments....To the last speaker I will say that genuine biblical criticism begins only in Israel. This is where the most important book in the field, Professor Kaufman's *The History of Jewish Belief*, was published...as well as the *Biblical Encyclopaedia* and many other books. You don't have to know about them, but if you do not, you would be better advised not to speak on the subject. In my view, only biblical criticism which originates in Israel is valid, because those people live here....There are many Bible scholars of the first rank in this country.

The speaker from Herut...who claimed that I brought the law known as "Who is a Jew" before the Knesset was speaking falsely. It is a figment of Mr. Ben-Eliezer's imagination.

The Speaker, K. Luz: ...We will now vote.

The Vote

Those in favor of the motion of no confidence	6
Those against	61
Abstentions	6

Prime Minister's Statement on the Arrest of Eichmann

Sitting 98 of the Fourth Knesset

23 May 1960 (26 Iyar 5720)

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: I would like to inform the Knesset that some time ago Israel's Security Service ascertained the whereabouts of one of the greatest Nazi criminals, Adolf Eichmann, who was responsible, together with the Nazi leaders, for what they called "The Final Solution of the Jewish problem," i.e., the murder of six million European Jews.

Adolf Eichmann is now under arrest in Israel and will soon stand trial here, in accordance with the Nazi and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law, 5710-1950.

Minister of Justice's Statement to the Press Regarding the Eichmann Trial

Introduction

While the Eichmann trial was being prepared, an important constitutional issue was raised in the Knesset.

Sitting 109 of the Fourth Knesset

8 June 1960 (23 Sivan 5720)

The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: I give the floor to MK Sneh, who has a motion for the agenda....

M. Sneh (Maki): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, on behalf of the Communist party group I propose that we debate the appeal made to the newspaper editors yesterday by the Minister of Justice, and which was broadcast on the radio, that they refrain from publishing anything which could affect the Eichmann trial and its outcome, because the matter is *sub judice*.

The newspaper editors did not accede to the Minister of Justice's request, despite his hint that this would constitute a violation of the law

and would be punishable. This is not a matter between the Minister of Justice and the editors, however, it is a subject for the Knesset. A statement made by a Minister represents the Government, the Government is accountable to the Knesset, and it is our view that the Knesset cannot approve of the step the Minister of Justice has taken. The Prime Minister has ignored my appeals from this podium that he annul that statement...but the Knesset cannot ignore this.

The Minister of Justice treats the Eichmann trial as if it were a regular trial. But that is not the case. Since Eichmann's identity has been proved beyond all doubt, there is no doubt that he is guilty, and must be punished by death. There is no one in Israel, I hope, who advocates a lynch trial. We all want the Eichmann trial to be conducted in accordance with judicial procedure. Moreover, we do not regard the trial as merely fulfilling a formal obligation. This trial has a great, historic purpose, namely, to reveal the full enormity of the crime...not the criminal. For after all, the criminal is known: the Nazi gang which ruled the third German Reich and which included Adolf Eichmann aimed at destroying the Jewish people. There is no doubt of that.

The scales of justice in this trial have been weighted from the outset. The crimes...are so heavy that there is no counterweight in the world which can move the scales even slightly. Themis' eyes are open. Of course, the matter is *sub judice*, but it is at the same time *sub populo*, because the Jewish people is the judge on behalf of all mankind, constituting the jury, as it were. There are trials in which *vox populi is vox justitiae*, and this is such a trial.

The Knesset annulled the death penalty for murder, but left it for crimes committed by Nazis and their collaborators. For whom was that exception made if not for Eichmann and his ilk? Even the Prime Minister disregarded the Minister of Justice's request. In his first statement to the Knesset he defined Eichmann as: "one of the greatest Nazi criminals, who is responsible together with the Nazi leaders for the murder of six million European Jews." He did not say "suspected."

Moreover, ever since the Minister of Justice's statement there has been considerable public discussion, both in Israel and abroad, of the Eichmann trial. We find it inappropriate that the Knesset should be condemned to silence on these issues, and that Knesset Members should be obliged to comment on it in different contexts. For example, the question has been raised as to whether the trial should be held in Israel and whether the court should be Israeli or international. In our view...the Knesset should state its opinion and reject the anti-Israel attacks of British, American and other circles, which apparently fear the revelation of the truth about Hitler's associates because the latter live under their auspices and through them are reviving the swastika crusade. The Knesset should give its official approval to an Israeli trial before an Israeli court.

I would also like to remind the Knesset that the Nazi and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law...states that even if a Nazi criminal has been tried abroad this does not absolve him from being tried by an Israeli court....Each day that passes proves that the assumption underlying the Minister of Justice's appeal, namely, that this is a trial like any other, is false....Are the letters exchanged by the Governments of Israel and Argentina an everyday matter...? Here, too, the Knesset should have had its say: we all respect the Argentinian nation, which is celebrating 150 years of independence this year, but if anyone should apologize it should be those who gave shelter to acknowledged Nazi criminals like Eichmann, not those who removed him from that shelter. And there are many such countries, not only on the American continent but primarily in the German Federal Republic, where a congress of 1,500 members of the S.S. is currently being held....

Thus, in Germany today it is possible to create a Nazi atmosphere, while in Israel the press is prevented from expressing anti-Nazi views....What is the point of the trial if not to permit the anti-Nazi cry to be heard all over the world?...The Israeli press needs guidance of a different kind to that given by the Minister of Justice, i.e., how not to create a soft, forgiving atmosphere towards Eichmann....The headlines we have read about his "good behavior" in prison, and so on...serve to restore a human element to that monster, that two-legged beast...and human he is not....

The trial is purely public, national and historic, and we therefore propose, regardless of political differences, that we debate it, so that the Knesset's voice may be heard.

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, even MK Sneh's speech will not induce me to discuss something which in my humble opinion is *sub judice*, and if someone thinks that the Minister of Justice is a formalist without any basic Jewish or human feeling—

M. Sneh (Maki): I did not say that.

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: But someone wrote that....Let them think what they will. If a person has been found fit to stand trial in Israel, the trial must be conducted in accordance with the due process of the law. The law may be too considerate of persons standing trial...but that is our law...and a Minister of Justice may certainly ask...the public to abide by it. The law does not distinguish between regular and special criminal trials, nor between criminal trials of passing or historic significance.

MK Sneh requests a discussion of my statement. By chance, next Monday there will be a debate on the Ministry of Justice's budget...and anyone who still thinks that the Minister of Justice erred in making that statement will doubtless speak his mind then. I am glad to note that

there have been increasing signs of late that my moderate appeal to the newspaper editors is understood as not having been completely superfluous....In conclusion, I propose that we remove MK Sneh's proposal from the agenda.

J. Shofman (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I propose that MK Sneh's proposal be transferred to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee. The problem is not as simple as the Minister of Justice tries to present it....There are other aspects which are of public concern. For example, at one stage we were told that a public figure met with Eichmann in prison and collapsed. Then we were informed that only persons involved in the trial had had contact with him....Half an hour ago a newspaper reported that the public figure was the Minister of Labor, Giora Josephthal....

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: That is a lie.

J. Shofman (Herut): That's what the paper says.
(From the floor: We're entitled to know if it's correct.)

M. Begin (Herut): If it's correct, it's a disgrace.

M. Argov (Mapai): Who is "we," the Jewish people?

E. Raziell-Na'or (Herut): We who sit here.

M. Argov (Mapai): Who do you mean by "we?"

The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: Anyone can say "I," "we," "everyone." Although you are entitled to ask who is meant by "we," I ask you not to interrupt.

J. Shofman (Herut): At the initiative of the Minister of Justice, certain legal problems have been brought before the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, and I think that this problem...could also be transferred to that Committee. As for the issue being *sub judice*, that contention were better not bandied about in the Government's name....Before the establishment of the state three Jews were suspected of a certain action, and those parties which now form the Government disregarded the principle of *sub judice* and referred to them as murderers. When the man who murdered six million Jews is caught, do you think you can teach us what *sub judice* is? Shame on you.

M. Argov (Mapai): ...What are you talking about?
(Shouts from the Mapai benches.)

The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: I ask the Knesset Members to calm down. Knesset Member Shofman, you are entitled to say that it is shameful, or that people should be ashamed, but not: shame on you.

J. Shofman (Herut): I correct myself. I say: people should be ashamed, or more correctly, be careful, of what they say....I propose that MK Sneh's proposal be transferred to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee.

...
The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I vehemently oppose both the content of and the reasoning for MK Shofman's proposal....I say once again that those people who spoke to Eichmann in prison did so solely for reasons connected with the trial....To the best of my knowledge, the Minister of Labor was not among them. I would ask the House to refrain from raising this subject. I propose that the matter be removed from the agenda.

The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: We will now vote on the three proposals.

The Vote

The proposal that the topic be discussed in the plenum is defeated.

Those in favor of transferring the topic to the
Constitution, Law and Justice Committee 20

Those against 29

(The proposal to transfer the matter to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee is defeated; hence the Minister of Justice's proposal to remove the subject from the agenda is adopted.)

Prime Minister's Review of the Lavon Affair

Introduction

At the end of June 1954 several Jewish youngsters were detained in Egypt as Israeli agents and accused of having carried out sabotage operations in Cairo and Alexandria in order to damage Egypt's foreign relations. Some months later the then-Minister of Defense, Pinhas Lavon, resigned. He did not take the floor to explain his resignation, the reasons for which remained a secret for a number of years.

It was only in the autumn of 1960 that some of the relevant facts were leaked. The question that was asked was, who had given the order to implement the sabotage operations in Egypt. The (anonymous) senior officer, subsequently identified as Chief of Military Intelligence at the time, claimed that he had been so instructed by Lavon in the course of a *tete-à-tete* (the then-Chief of Staff, Dayan, being abroad at the time). Lavon strenuously denied that version and insisted on the dismissal of the senior officer. A secret, high-level, informal committee of two, Chief Justice Olshan and former Chief of Staff Dori, appointed to investigate the matter, concluded that on the basis of the evidence available to the committee it was impossible to decide which of the two versions was correct. The Prime Minister therefore decided to reject Lavon's request for the dismissal of the senior officer, whereupon Lavon resigned. Soon afterwards he was elected Secretary-General of the Federation of Labor, an extremely important political position.

In 1957 a key witness in the Olshan-Dori investigation ("the Third Man") was imprisoned. He had headed the sabotage operation and had managed to escape, whereupon it was ascertained that he had been a double agent. In the course of his interrogation he confessed that he had lied to the Olshan-Dori Committee, and that in fact all the sabotage operations had been carried out in accordance with instructions he had received from his superior (the senior officer) *before* the date of the alleged *tete-à-tete*. On the basis of this new evidence Lavon now appealed to Ben-Gurion—once more Prime Minister and Minister of Defense—to clear his name. At the time of the original "mishap," in 1954, Ben-Gurion had not been a member of the Cabinet, and thus he had no direct involvement in the Affair. All the same, it was widely believed from the outset that he was not an impartial bystander.

Ben-Gurion charged his military aide with reviewing the new evidence, and was told that it justified the reconsideration of the Olshan-Dori conclusions. A military commission of inquiry was then appointed, and was headed by Justice Haim Cohen of the Supreme Court

who was recruited for the purpose. It concluded that false evidence had indeed been given to the original committee, at the behest of one of the senior officer's aides. The Attorney-General opined that although the military commission of inquiry had not been asked to decide who had given the order, the answer could be deduced from its conclusions.

At the end of September 1960 a major portion of the above was leaked to the press. The Knesset Foreign Affairs Committee, on which both Coalition and Opposition members serve, decided to deal with the issue. It summoned Lavon, who for the first time presented his version of the events leading to his resignation. Moshe Sharett, the former Prime Minister, basically supported that version. When Ben-Gurion was asked to present the relevant documents, and primarily the Cohen Commission report, to the Committee, he refused on the grounds of secrecy. Indeed, the full report had not been made available even to the members of the Cabinet.

When the Knesset's winter session of 1960 was opened, Ben-Gurion presented a wide-ranging report on the state of the nation, not mentioning the Affair. The participants in the debate—on both sides of the House—did not follow his lead, and most of their comments referred to the Affair, which had all the signs of becoming a major political crisis, the stages of which will be followed in the course of the ensuing sittings.

Sitting 156 of the Fourth Knesset

24 October 1960 (3 Heshvan 5721)

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, this is the last sitting before we celebrate thirteen years of our independence, and it is therefore fitting that we review our achievements as well as our failures....

Elections to the Knesset have been held four times...and although the composition of the Government...has changed several times over the years...there has been continuity in its activities and aims. Its policy has always been directed at attaining Israel's historic objectives: the ingathering and absorption of the exiles; the defense and welfare of the state; the improvement of the economic, social, cultural and moral standard of the individual; economic independence; relations of friendship and cooperation with near and far neighbors; the creation of social patterns based on...*"liberty, equality, tolerance, mutual aid and the love of mankind."* We still adhere to the guidelines of the first Government: an internal regime guaranteeing complete equality of rights and duties for all Israeli citizens, regardless of religion, race or nationality; the assurance of freedom of religion and conscience; complete equality of rights and obligations in every sphere for women....

Our primary economic objectives...were: populating those parts of the country where the population was sparse and avoiding the exaggerated concentration of people in the cities; encouraging private capital as well as private and cooperative initiative...; aiding urban and rural enterprises...; making extensive use of modern scientific and technological methods....

Our principal cultural aims were: to provide free, compulsory education up to a certain age to be determined by law, to expand agricultural and vocational education, to extend pure and applied science, to encourage literature, science and art, to attract leading Jewish scientists, scholars, writers and artists to Israel, to provide tuition in Arabic to all the Arab citizens of the country....

...The test of policy lies, however, in its implementation....I would like to remind you that the Mandatory Government left the country in chaos and did not hand over the reins of power in an orderly fashion, as it did in India, Burma and Ceylon, for example....In addition, immediately upon declaring our independence we were invaded by the armies of the neighboring Arab countries and were obliged to fight long and hard to repel them....

Many people regard the establishment of the state as a miracle...I prefer not to talk in those terms because I regard the entire universe and all human existence as a tremendous, daily miracle....What I regard as our major achievements are, however, the absorption of mass immigration...the settlement of the desolate areas...and turning most of the immigrants into a productive working force....

...The nature of immigration changed after the establishment of the state....Whereas formerly the immigrants came primarily from Europe, bringing with them economic means as well as a cultural and ideological background which fitted them for life and work here...the immigrants from the Islamic countries are penniless, their education is minimal and they have not been taught to think and work in terms of the pioneering endeavor required of us here....

...We tend to overlook the terrible tragedy which befell the State of Israel before it was established. The six million European Jews who were murdered were those who had laid the foundations of the state and who had the needs, the means, the general and Jewish education, the professional skills and the psychological characteristics needed for building the state. The Holocaust of European Jewry harmed the nascent state of Israel more than it did the entire Jewish nation....

If we are unable to impart the moral and intellectual superiority of the generation which created the state and the IDF to the younger generation of today...there is a danger that that generation will turn the state into a Levantine country, and in my view that is a greater danger than all Nasser's and Kassem's threats to destroy Israel. That is a danger to the Jewish people throughout the world. Our nation every-

where looks to Israel for leadership....In a Levantine country the IDF will be unable to be a small force which can withstand huge armies....A Levantine country will degrade us in the eyes of the world....

There is no natural, inherited difference between the intelligence and ability of Jews from different continents. During the Middle Ages Sephardic Jewry bore the banner of Judaism and cultivated Jewish poetry, philosophy and scholarship. Prior to that that function was fulfilled by Babylonian Jewry. But, like anyone else, the Jews cannot avoid the influence of the environment in which they live, and the Jews of Islamic countries...have lived for the past few centuries in an environment devoid of standards, education, independence and human respect. The distortions of hundreds of years cannot be corrected overnight, not even after those concerned are removed from an impoverished Arab ghetto to a vibrant, independent Jewish state. The older generation will not change fundamentally, although it, too, has displayed qualities of creativity and heroism...but we must focus on the younger generation, the five-and ten-year olds, who will be running the state in another twenty or thirty years. We must teach it the best Jewish and general values...at the center of which is the vision of our national redemption....I regard the education of the younger generation as a mission no less important than ensuring the professional and moral standards of the IDF....

...Although we have done a great deal to settle the desolate areas...establishing urban and rural settlements in the Negev and the south...we still have a long way to go....It is difficult to pinpoint the beginning of an historic revolution which extends over several generations, because many pioneering acts are not appreciated and are sometimes not even recognized at the time; it is only many years later, when their results are seen, that they are valued....The starting point of the Jewish revival may be dated to the Hassidic immigration of 1777, the immigration of the Vilna Gaon's disciples in 1805, Moses Montefiore's actions in 1856, or the founding of the Mikveh Israel agricultural high school in 1869. I think, however, that no one will deny the primordial importance of the founding of Petah Tikva in 1878, followed by Rishon LeZion, Zichron Ya'akov and Rosh Pina. Jewish agricultural settlement was without a doubt the purest expression of the rebirth of the Jewish state....Other economic branches are also vital for the success of our economy...and we are doing our utmost to develop them, but agriculture serves the dual purpose of making the desert bloom and alleviating our defense problems....

...As in every new country, the burden of development rests primarily on the Government. The debate stemming from ideological differences as to the extent to which the Government should be involved in economic activity may be valid in established, developed countries...but very few people would dispute the fact that in a young country

(regardless of its age-old history) the Government must play an active role.... Various industrial enterprises which were started in the past by private capital would have collapsed had it not been for the Government's intervention and support.... I am referring to the Dead Sea Works, the Phosphates Company and the Electric Company, to name but a few....

...Transportation has been improved, tourism is growing...and savings are increasing.... The neighboring countries should and could learn from what the Government of Israel has done to improve the cultural, economic and physical situation of its Arab citizens.... Our neighbors' hostility towards us has not declined, however, and immediately after the Egyptian ruler's peace speech at the U.N. he returned to Syria and began his public advocacy of the destruction of Israel. This tone has also been revived recently in Baghdad.... The Arab boycott is growing stronger.... Libya and Morocco have joined it and are also preventing their Jewish inhabitants from immigrating to Israel and from corresponding with their relatives here.... What arouses most concern, however, is the increase in arms in the possession of our neighbors to the north and the south, the object for which they are intended being obvious to all.... But we are always on the alert, and the quality of our men and weapons assures our superiority....

Nevertheless, it is not enough to prevent war...and our aim is peace.... Only by entrenching ourselves internally, reinforcing our international position and gaining friends among the nations...will we eventually be able to break through the wall of hatred surrounding us and attain peaceful relations as well as political, economic and cultural cooperation with all the peoples of the region.... That was the objective of my talks this year in Washington, New York, London, Paris, Brussels and the Hague. Those talks reinforced my view that in all those capitals there is considerable sympathy for Israel....

...In the thirteen years since Israel's establishment...there has been a deep-seated change in the world; the Asian and African countries which were subject to European colonial regimes for tens or hundreds of years, except for those conquered by Czarist Russia, have gained their independence or soon will do so....

...The two Great Powers—the U.S.S.R. and its allies in Eastern Europe and the U.S.A. and its allies in Western Europe—are involved in a competition known as the Cold War.... That phrase means really that those Powers are vying for the allegiance of the new countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, whose populations account for almost half mankind.... The real problem of our time is...the terrible gap between the wealthy, developed countries...and the impoverished, undeveloped ones.... Those countries need help, and Israel has something to offer them in the field of agricultural and technological know-how...despite our own poverty....

Our country is situated at the crossroads of three continents.... Our ancient nation sprang up in the ancient Asian world...and upon being exiled scattered to Western Asia and North Africa, later reaching Europe and America.... By the nineteenth century most of the Jewish nation was European, sharing in that continent's rich culture, while in the last century North America has seen the rise of a large and wealthy Jewish community....

...Our country, which gained its independence at almost the same time as India, Burma and Ceylon...has succeeded to some extent in closing the gaps between immigrants from different cultural and economic backgrounds, in cultivating desolate areas and developing industrial projects. It has also created new social patterns which are particularly appropriate for young countries, being based on mutual help and cooperation on the basis of free choice and individual freedom.... In addition, it has built a strong army...and has cultivated science and research....

We must recognize our limitations, however.... We cannot send hundreds of experts to other developing countries. Only the best people, those who regard their work in young countries as a mission, not a way of increasing their earnings and adopting a haughty stance, will succeed.... But there are not so many such people among us, and we need them here, because we ourselves still have a long way to go.

Our aid to developing countries is not philanthropic. We need those countries' friendship just as much as they need our help.... The centers of Jewish life in the diaspora will continue for many years to be Europe and America...and we must maintain good relations with those countries too, amongst other things because it is from them that we receive arms.... Our relations with the developing countries are important to us, and that is why the Egyptian tyrant is doing his utmost to bring us into bad light among them, claiming that we are a base of imperialism....

If those difficulties do not deter us...and if we do not become arrogant we will be able to be an important factor in helping new countries.... Young people from those countries have flocked here to learn from our experience in cooperative enterprises, in agriculture, in establishing an army, in running labor unions and in overcoming ethnic barriers.... We must strengthen ourselves from within morally as well as militarily...and if we continue along the path which took us to independence...we may become a light unto the nations....

In our time our nation has stood at the edge of the abyss of destruction and annihilation. If we fulfill our mission in Israel faithfully and continue to mold Israel's character as a pioneering, productive, cultural, heroic nation...bearing the banner of fraternity and progress, I am sure that our nation will see the peak of redemption in our time....

M. Begin (Herut): Mr. Speaker...I would like to begin at the end. At the conclusion of this debate Herut will propose the following motion: "The

Knesset asks the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Mr. David Ben-Gurion, to inform the Government in full and without delay of the report prepared by the military commission headed by Supreme Court Justice Cohen, who was made a colonel for the purposes of the investigation, and appointed by the Chief of Staff at the above Defense Minister's instructions."

...Last night the radio...announced that the Prime Minister had laid the Cohen Commission's findings before the Government in part but not in full...despite requests to do so, claiming that the report contained defense secrets....I do not recall any other instance in which a Prime Minister expressed no confidence in the Government he headed....The Government has the support of the majority in the Knesset, and the Prime Minister is *primus inter pares*, first among equals....The principle of collective responsibility applies to the entire Government...but now one of the members of the Government, namely the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, claims that he does not trust the other members of the Government to keep a secret....This has very serious constitutional implications....

...No one will deny that the report should be given in full to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, since it deals with our armed forces...and "the mishap," as it has come to be known, concerns Israel's armed forces and security. My colleagues and I propose, however, that the report should first of all be brought before the Government....

...As for the Prime Minister's review...permit me to disagree with the Prime Minister's opinion of Nasser's speech at the U.N. as being one of peace. He suggested that the leaders of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. should meet, it is true, but he also proposed that the situation in Israel should be restored to what it was before the Balfour Declaration, namely, that Israel should be destroyed and the vast majority of its Jewish inhabitants killed or exiled. Is that a peace speech? It would seem to me to be more of a speech made by a modern Hitler....Nasser has also demanded that all the Land of Israel to the west and the east of the Jordan River, currently known as the Kingdom of Jordan, should be annexed to Syria, i.e., to the United Arab Republic....The ruler of Iraq has said that if this occurs Iraq will not sit idly by.

These statements have serious implications for us. We may think that we stand to benefit by disputes between the Arab countries, but that is not so....Any day we could find ourselves facing serious changes in the map of the Middle East beyond the armistice lines within our homeland. The nation is lulled into thinking that the status quo will remain as it is now....The trends and aspirations are clear....Egypt will demand that section of the Land of Israel for Syria; Iraq will demand it for some reason or another. Does it belong to Hussein's family? Will we remain silent?

...We have not waived our right to the Old City of Jerusalem....If all the Arab forces unite against Israel, we will be in very great danger....Why are we not preparing world public opinion for such an eventuality?...Why was this not done before the Sinai Campaign? Why did you say then that we did not want an inch of foreign territory, implying that the Land of Israel beyond the armistice lines is foreign territory? After the Campaign did you not say that Gaza was part of the liberated homeland?...Is not our right and duty apparent, namely, to declare that that territory has belonged to the Jewish people from days of yore?

...I would now like to go on to certain internal matters...starting with something which contradicts the idea of a free state, namely, censorship. Some time ago I wrote an article in which I demanded...that two persons in official positions be given the chance to reply to a very serious accusation which had been made against them. The former Minister of Defense...maintained that there had been a conspiracy against him by three persons in a certain service. It can be said today that although that accusation has not been proved completely, it was borne out by the findings of the three-man commission as well as by the opinion of the Attorney-General.

The three-man commission and the Attorney-General said that one officer lied to the two-man committee appointed by the then-Prime Minister, another officer convinced him to perjure himself, and a third officer, the most senior of them, knew that this was going on. That is a conspiracy....The former Minister of Defense...claims that two of the people did not conspire against him but merely jumped on the bandwagon. Those two are Mr. Moshe Dayan and Mr. Shimon Peres. In my article I suggested that those two men be given the opportunity to explain what kind of jump that was, in what direction the bandwagon was going...and what it all means....I demanded that those two persons appear before the appropriate authority, i.e., the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, to defend themselves and give an explanation for their actions....

But the Censor removed Mr. Dayan's name from my article...although he left Mr. Peres'....Why did he do that?...Mr. Dayan was our Chief of Staff at the time. Well done. Now he is a civilian, a member of the Government. Mr. Shimon Peres is also a civilian, Deputy Defense Minister, a very important official post. What right did the Censor have to remove one name and not the other?...

Kol Yisrael, supposedly the national radio station, announced that...an article in *Davar* and the *Jerusalem Post* written by Moshe Dayan stated that as Chief of Staff he had at one stage tendered his resignation to the Minister of Defense, Mr. Lavon....Mr. Dayan's article had not been so explicit and had mentioned no names....What one may infer from all this is that Kol Yisrael, which holds the monopoly of

broadcasting in Israel, does not speak in the name of the nation—since the Opposition is not heard there—or of the Government, or even of one party in the Government, but of part of one party in the Government....

...Matters reached such a pass that after a certain meeting of the Mapai Secretariat, when Kol Yisrael reported that the Prime Minister, Mr. Moshe Dayan and Mr. Shimon Peres had participated in the meeting, the members of Mapai protested: what about us?

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): The Censor removed them.

M. Begin (Herut): Thus it goes, from the state to a certain group within Mapai. Is this to be the only broadcasting station in our country? Not long ago the Prime Minister appeared before the Central Committee of his party.... On that day he had received the findings of the Cohen Commission and had even said that he had transferred them to the Attorney-General. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister told his party's Central Committee: "I doubt whether the truth can be revealed because all men are equal before the truth, and one cannot prefer one man at the expense of another."

When he said that, the Prime Minister knew that the commission of inquiry appointed by the Chief of Staff had concluded that the three officers, one of them being known as the senior officer, had conspired to commit perjury, because the Attorney-General had relied on this conclusion of the Cohen Commission in his opinion.... The Prime Minister also said: "I would not propose that we investigate the matter anew, because I know that the two-man committee reached a dead end." He said this knowing that the findings of the commission of inquiry indicated that...one witness had lied, an officer had persuaded him to lie and the third officer had known about this.... In other words, he proposed that no effort be made to get to the root of the matter....

Is this how we are to educate the younger generation?... Without a doubt, what happened is very tragic, but the State of Israel will not collapse.... Similar things have happened in other countries. An effort must be made to get to the truth, to do justice...and to restore someone's good name if it has wrongfully been taken away from him.... All that has to be proved, has to be investigated...and if the Prime Minister attempts to obstruct the discovery of the truth...he seeks to uphold the lie, to maintain the conspiracy and to pervert the course of justice. Is this how we are to educate the younger generation?

...The Prime Minister submitted the Cohen Commission's findings to the Attorney-General for his opinion. He asked him three questions. I will read out only the second: "Does the inquiry indicate who gave the orders for "the mishap," or did the three-man committee not deal with "the mishap" at all?... The Attorney-General replied...that the answer lay within the jurisdictional competency of the Cohen Commission.... Is it possible that the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense did not

know what the Commission was supposed to examine?... This is pretended innocence.... The Attorney-General continued by saying that the Cohen Commission had not dealt with the subject directly.... In other words, and as the Prime Minister knew, the jurisdictional competency of the Cohen Commission contained no instructions to deal with that matter.... The Prime Minister seeks, on the basis of this, to remove the discussion of this great defense matter from the appropriate Knesset committee. This requires an explanation.... The Prime Minister also seeks to cast aspersions on the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, saying that it is not authorized and implying that it is not capable...and claiming that some of its members have spoken ill of the Army and its officers...meaning my colleague, MK Bader.... In the past the Prime Minister himself has said, from this very podium, that moral lacunae were found in the Army. When the subject was examined it was found that a certain young officer had submitted a false report.... Was that a reason to blacken the reputation of the entire Army? Was that not speaking ill of the army?...

...The former Minister of Defense...claims that many of the Ministry's officials are currently involved in spreading gossip and defamatory statements. On the day that I read that...I told my friends that the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee must ask the former Minister of Defense to prove his accusations.... He would not have said that without some basis. He knows the people of the Ministry. But I do not accept his words *prima facie*....

...Two newspapers, one in English, the other in Hebrew, publish articles...whose shared inspiration is evident. The *Jerusalem Post* explains that the former Minister of Defense did not have a feeling for defense. What that mystical feeling is has not yet been explained to us. He demanded that certain persons, a high officer and a senior official, be dismissed. It was immediately made clear that if they went many others would go, so he was forced to go. The background is given in the following sentence: "Good soldiers do not seek to take civil rule into their hands unless the civilians forget their duty to provide good government and err by playing pointless political games." That is the theory.... In the Hebrew paper we read: "Lavon realized that first of all he had to gain the trust of those boys (incidentally, I never used the expression: "Ben-Gurion's boys"). And since he apparently thought that the Army wanted to let off steam, from the outset he allowed them to conduct reprisal raids with far greater ease than they had ever enjoyed in Ben-Gurion's time."...If that is not speaking ill of the Army and the Minister of Defense, I don't know what is.... How could the correspondent of a Hebrew newspaper write such things? How could a certain source of inspiration encourage that line of thinking? That is the background....

...The English-language paper writes...that there was a danger that the Army would "disintegrate" because...the Minister of Defense de-

manded the resignation of two people, one in the Army and the other in his Ministry...and that is why the Minister of Defense had to go. If that is the case, under what kind of regime are we living, what kind of world is this? If this is the background, who is entitled to investigate this subject and these problems if not the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee?...

...I believe that the Committee should go into the subject...that Mr. Dayan and Mr. Peres should appear before it...and that it should draw its conclusions. On what does the Prime Minister base his contention that it may be impossible to get to the truth? Has he tried to find the truth? He was asked to do so four years ago. Where are the findings of that investigation? He was asked to do so two years ago. Where are the findings? He was asked to do so a few months ago. Where are the findings?...Why should not the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee examine the subject...?

I maintain...that anyone who wishes to prevent the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee from investigating the affair before reaching the truth and drawing its conclusions is seeking to conceal something, although we may not know yet what. It is hardly surprising that the former Minister of Defense claims to have a file with papers which he has not yet shown to anyone, but which he threatens to use should the situation become unbearable. I hope the situation does not become unbearable....The person who seeks to prevent the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee from discussing the affair seeks to conceal what that file contains.

...We ask you to permit this investigation not for our sakes...do it for your sakes and for the sakes of your children. Do it for the sake of the most abstract, the most real, the simplest and the deepest thing—the thing for which our fathers went to the stake, for which our blood was shed, the thing which gives a point to our lives and greatness to our aspirations—namely, justice....

...

J. Hazan (Mapam): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, the Prime Minister has described Israel's achievements and problems...though in terms which are too wide and general to enable any clarification of the serious issues he has raised.

...As for the serious affair which is occupying Israel now, I could have understood—even justified—the fact that the Prime Minister appeared before the Knesset and made no mention of the problem...had he not expressed his opinion about it elsewhere....

I am a member of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, and this fact imposes serious restrictions on me....I think we are facing a very grave problem of justice and the individual....The problem is very grave because in this instance doing justice to one person must cause

hardship to another. But there is no alternative, and in my view the state is now at an unprecedented turning point.

Failure to do justice is the beginning of degeneration. The matter will not end with the failure to do justice to one individual or another. It is the start of an awareness which will penetrate every section of the population that there is no justice in Israel; that anything goes; that a person may be deeply wounded...and no one will say anything. The failure to respond may be for "reasons of state," but...that is an invalid reason. On the contrary, for reasons of state we must do justice to the end, because of the fundamentally human nature of the state....The State of Israel must be a just state, or not exist at all....

The second problem is...who is responsible for one of the most serious things that have ever happened in our foreign policy?...The answer to this must determine the way we organize matters in future, so that we may ensure that it does not happen again....

...One cannot simply say that it is impossible to get to the truth. We have to get to the truth, or at least know for sure that we have made every effort to do so. For herein lies the greatest danger to democracy. What is democracy? It is accountability to elected institutions, whether military or civilian, because without accountability there is no democracy. The question of who is responsible goes beyond the issue of doing justice to the individual, it involves doing justice to the state, and the state cannot survive unless justice is done in it.

A third, and no less serious, problem is that of the relations between the military and the civilian authorities....There is no need to say how much respect, love and admiration we have for the IDF. We must remember, however, that the IDF is ourselves, our sons, our brothers, our friends. The IDF means civilians in uniform....It is not a sacred relic which must not be touched. On the contrary, it is sacred only provided we correct its faults....

...There is no disrespect in asking what the relation between the IDF and the civilian authorities should be....In my opinion it is evident that in times of both peace and war the final decision should be in the hands of the civilians....

Mr. Lavon's proposals have been made public. There is no need to accept them en bloc. They require discussion and consultation...but of one thing I am sure—the proposals are serious and concern the most serious issues regarding the character of our political life. One may accept them or alter them, or make other, alternative proposals...but we must learn from experience...and do everything we can to make sure there is no recurrence....I think on this score there must be cooperation...not competition, between the military and civilian authorities.

Finally, I am very sorry to have to say this, but for me personally, the worst thing about this whole affair is the Prime Minister's behavior. Why did he have to be involved in this? Was he a member of that Gov-

ernment?...No. He was a Knesset Member then. He was a respected citizen at Sde Boker....So why did he have to take a stand? In fact, he is entitled to know just as much as I am....Why did he have to say that he doubts whether we will ever be able to get to the bottom of things? Why did he say that? Had he investigated the subject? Why did he have to decide that there was no connection between this topic and another? Had he gone into it? Did he know? I must admit that I do not know what it all means. I know that Knesset Member and Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion is a very clever man. So I ask: what is he doing?

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): He did not say that it is impossible ever to get to the bottom of things. He said he is doubtful whether it can be done.

J. Hazan (Mapam): The last thing I want is to present this as a party matter. Basically, it belongs within Mapai...but I want Mapai to be a healthy party. I hope it will be weak numerically, but we want a rival which is ideologically and socially healthy, because we cooperate as well as compete with that rival....There is no party aspect to this affair, and I believe that Mapai, as a party, must place itself at a distance from it; it is a purely political matter.

There is only one institution which can deal with it today, and if any other institution does people will say that the matter is being obscured. At the time (now I can reveal this) we proposed to the Government that a Ministerial Committee be established, but this was rejected and the subject was transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. If we were to remove it from the Committee's jurisdiction now and transfer it to various institutions we would be accused of attempting to obscure matters. There is no way back. I warn the entire Knesset that anyone who tries to remove the subject from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee will arouse the public's suspicions that the subject is being obscured....

There are people who say that these are matters of security. Who can be responsible for security matters if not we members of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee? I understand that there are certain details which cannot be revealed even to us...but that does not mean that we cannot handle the subject. I have heard that not even the Government is trusted with all the material...but I reject anything which implies that the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee cannot be trusted....If we cannot, then who can?...I believe that that argument is an arbitrary and untrue one. If the subject is not passed on to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, the Knesset must demand this....The Committee must receive all the material....Only then will it be able to get to the truth. The country needs the truth and justice now.

...

J. Serlin (General Zionists): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, in his review...the Prime Minister chose the easy path of depicting the

country's achievements in the course of thirteen years rather than the Government's actions during the last sitting and its plans for the future....This does not give the Knesset anything concrete to discuss, regardless of the undoubted achievements there have been....

...In coming to discuss the Affair which has been troubling the country for several weeks...I would like to say first and foremost that neither I nor my party have any party interest in it. We are interested in it on a national level; I am interested in it as an individual, as the father of children who have to live in this country. I would like to add, Mr. Prime Minister, that although I do not know what happened, something happened....The background may be the excessive stability and continuity within the country....There is a general feeling that we are stuck in the moral mud. I believe and hope that we all want to get out of it, and that efforts are being made in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee to put an end to the Affair, in order to clear the air. The Prime Minister...seeks to remove the matter from the Committee's hands. A veteran Knesset Member told me that if the Knesset has any prestige among the public at the moment it is because of the way the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee has dealt with this affair....

...I would like to tell the Knesset—and MK Hazan said this yesterday—that any attempt to remove the treatment of this matter from the hands of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee will give the public the impression that...people are trying to cloud the issue.

...If the subject is dealt with by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee the object will be not only to pull the cart out of the mud...but also to ensure that it never gets stuck there again....Together with the Prime Minister, we are all proud that we have become a light unto the nations. I have a greater ambition, however, that we should become a light unto the citizens of Israel and the Jewish people.

A. Govrin (Mapai): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...in connection with what MK Hazan said here yesterday...I would like to point out that my colleagues and I have always said that justice must be done with regard to the Affair....By what right, then, does MK Hazan declare that the state is at an unprecedentedly grave moral turning-point? Who gave him the right to decide this? What proof does he have for his contention?...That means, MK Hazan, that certain people do not want justice....But I took his question to be a rhetorical one, because he immediately continued with the next, very interesting, one and asked why the Prime Minister had to be involved....On what basis did MK Hazan decide that the Prime Minister was involved? The things would seem to be connected; first one says that the state is at a turning-point as far as justice is concerned, then one claims that the Prime Minister was involved. Why didn't MK Hazan explain how and why the Prime Minister was involved...?

...All I know—and I get my information from the newspapers—is that the Minister of Defense who is the Prime Minister, or the Chief of Staff at the advice of the Minister of Defense, appointed a commission to investigate a certain aspect of the affair....The members of the Cohen Commission were criticized in the press...and an attempt was made to imply that the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense was involved and had therefore appointed the Cohen Commission. After...the publication of the Attorney-General's opinion, which was based on the findings of the Cohen Commission, everyone clamored for the Commission's conclusions. Now the Commission has become sacred....How is it that no Knesset Member has retracted the aspersions cast by him and his party on the Minister of Defense and Prime Minister? Why don't you have the courage to say that, after the Commission's findings? Now you shout about the Commission's findings being sacred, but still continue to speak of justice and honesty and of the country being at a "turning-point."

...The person who claimed here just yesterday that the Prime Minister was involved, and is so shaken by that fact that he does not even address the Knesset or the Prime Minister but turns directly to God Almighty and asks: God Almighty, what happened? should have had the courage to get up and say: all those who suspected the Minister of Defense because of the appointment of the Commission were wrong.... Why didn't MK Hazan ask his colleague MK Ya'ari why, without investigating or knowing anything, he defined the affair as a "new Dreyfus case?"

...Everyone...knows what that terrible phrase means....At that time, if my memory serves me well, the Prime Minister, or the Minister of Defense, conspired with two or three officers, forged documents and accused Dreyfus. If one uses that definition today, everyone knows what is implied...and who is involved in that implication. He is pointing at the Prime Minister, whom MK Hazan claims is not involved, was not a member of the Government and was not Minister of Defense....MK Ya'ari should come to the podium and state that his use of the term was general....The members of Mapam should come out and say plainly what it is they want. Where is the justice they purportedly seek? What is it made of and what does it mean?

...Someone else who has asked questions is MK Begin's colleague, Dr. Bader. Today he regards himself as a judge because he is a member of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. He wants the matter clarified properly. I admit that he is one of the best jurists in the Knesset, but he also said a few things in the papers....After using the phrase "a new Dreyfus Case" does my friend Dr. Bader think that I and others can regard him as a judge?...You have reached your decision, and have debarred yourself from discussing the affair. When you talk about justice I...begin to wonder if you really want justice....

...The Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee has become inde-
fensively garrulous of late, however—

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Don't say such things.

A. Govrin (Mapai): I say this in pain. There is no defense for the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee—and don't interrupt me.

(Shouts from the Herut benches.)

And it is you who have done this indefensible deed. How did it happen?

H. Landau (Herut): Your colleagues have published everything....

A. Govrin (Mapai): ...There is no guarantee that the discussions of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee will not be published in the future too....None of you can guarantee that....(More shouts.) The question is, then, if the members of the Committee...have the moral right to demand—

Y. Bader (Herut): Ask whether the Prime Minister has the moral right to speak of this matter after having expressed an opinion.

A. Govrin (Mapai): —to decide. I ask if they have the moral, not the parliamentary, right....It is not I who have disqualified them, they have disqualified themselves, and continue to do so daily. I don't know why....

H. Landau (Herut): What do you think of the Prime Minister of this country, MK Govrin? He was the first to leak the issue.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Does he disqualify me? Does he have the right to do so?

Y. Bader (Herut): This is a provocation which is unprecedented in the Knesset.

(Shouts from the Herut benches.)

The Speaker, B. Idelson: Knesset Members Ben-Eliezer and Bader, I call you to order for the last time. You are disturbing the proceedings of the Knesset, and I will not allow you to do that. Let the speaker conclude.

Y. Bader (Herut): What does that mean "to order for the last time?" It can be for the first, second or third time, but not the last time.

The Speaker, B. Idelson: I am informing you, gentlemen, that I will not let you continue to interrupt and destroy the Knesset sitting.

(Shouts from the Herut benches.)

...

A. Govrin (Mapai): ...Serious accusations were also made in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee against officials of the Ministry of Defense....Things were said without names or proof, and I am one of

those who think that every possible help should be extended to ensure that Pinhas Lavon gets justice. I was glad to hear that he has been rehabilitated, but everyone deserves justice. As a member of the Federation of Labor, I would object if anyone spoke of a group of workers of any kind in the way they have of the employees of the Ministry of Defense...without inquiring who was involved....

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): We inquired....

A. Govrin (Mapai): I would be glad if one of the members of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee were to prove that what I have said is incorrect...though the reports I have read in the papers seem to indicate that it is not...and one cannot abandon people, neither on a moral nor on a public basis. I can understand someone whom sorrow has thrown off balance, but people sit on the Committee who are not involved in the Affair, and they remained silent.

...It has always been the practice that when Ben-Gurion is attacked, his staunchest colleagues keep quiet, knowing that he can take those "slings and arrows."...But I would like to say that...since I know and believe that truth and justice will emerge in the final event...I maintain that both Ben-Gurion's colleagues and his rivals, all those who are participating in this criminal campaign against him, will not forgive themselves for this....

M. Carmel (Ahdut Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion): Distinguished Knesset and Members, I think the innovation of the Prime Minister's review... is to be welcomed...even though it tends to make the ensuing debate too diverse and not sufficiently focused....

...Impediments have been revealed in the Army in the past... mainly peccadilloes by isolated individuals...and these have in no way impaired the integrity of our Army or weakened the nation's trust in it....The Army cannot always be entirely perfect, but it is able to overcome internal defects. In the storm of the last few days the IDF has stood as firm and silent as a rock, while the murky waves break upon it in vain.

I must praise the general public, which has reserved its judgment and retained its responsibility in everything connected with the Affair. Even though it was fed on scraps of information and hints, the public did not make the error of passing judgment prematurely and refused to be led astray by vicious rumors and gossip....The public remained calm even though it is very sensitive to any attempt to harm democracy and every revelation of injustice....But we must not let the public remain in the dark indefinitely, and we must not stop the investigation before it is completed.

There have been several strange aspects to the Affair....The first concerns the evidence of a person's good character....If a person claims to have been the victim of a gross miscarriage of justice...what has evi-

dence of his good character got to do with this? Let's say that the person who was Minister of Defense in 1955 did not have a feeling for defense, did not know what an army involved, did not grasp the difference between an officer in the army and an official in a government ministry, does that justify injustice, if there was injustice? The heart of the matter needs to be examined, irrespective of the ability and understanding of the individual seeking justice. The focus on giving evidence of the individual's good character can be suspected of merely sidetracking the investigation from its proper course.

Furthermore, I fail to understand why an attempt is being made to withhold the documents necessary for clarifying the affair from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which is in the middle of its work, and even from the Government itself. From my own experience...I know that the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is one of the most thorough, reliable and discreet committees in the Knesset....

There is nothing wrong in having the Affair clarified in a restricted committee of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, if the Committee decides that this should be done. On no account, however, can we accept the proposal that this Committee should consist solely of members of the Coalition or a specific party or parties. I say this as a member of the Coalition....Despite my opposition to the ideas and ideology of the Opposition...whose representatives sit on the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee...there is no doubt as to their loyalty to the state. They have been apprised of state secrets of the gravest kind throughout the years and, to the best of my knowledge, nothing untoward has ever happened because of this.

In a well-run democratic country the parliament and its committees must be esteemed by the people, the parliament itself and the Government. The parliament means both the Coalition and the Opposition, the majority and the minority....In a democracy the majority decides, and when it decides it must do so with all its strength and validity....In some cases, however, the majority cannot decide alone...and the Opposition must be involved in the preliminary investigation and the decision-making process, as has been the case in the twelve years of the Knesset's existence. There are no good reasons...for removing this topic from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee....We must not rush to conclude this matter at the expense of a thorough investigation...and the attainment of truth and justice. This is not something which concerns only one person....The character and security of the state are involved too...and the outcome of this investigation must determine our future actions as well as the organization of the defense network in such a way as to accord with the nation's free will and the democratic way of life.

M. Kol (Progressives): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, we welcome the innovation of the Prime Minister's review...which we hope

will become a regular feature....As to the Affair, I would like to say that the debate in the Knesset, even though there were leaks in the press from the deliberations of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, did not impair...the nation's esteem and trust for the IDF. If most of the members of this House wish to clarify the matter fully, this is so that there should be absolutely no doubt....That is why I think the House is united...in its trust in and love for the IDF, and nothing in the Affair can undermine it....

I regret the fact that...MK Govrin claimed that the leaks to the press came from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. That has by no means been proved....

E. Meridor (Herut): It was a stream, not leaks.

M. Kol (Progressives): I don't know where it came from....The Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is known to be trustworthy and discreet. That is why we must be very careful and refrain from making accusations....There are things, however, which perhaps should not be clarified in the forum of the entire Committee...though I deny that there is any tendency to remove the subject from the Committee....We said that there are defense matters, relations between the Army and the Government, which are fundamental to our democratic life, and because of the Affair we have been made aware of many things which the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee should continue to discuss....

...The jurists among the members of the House will know that in certain investigations it is necessary for...witnesses to take the oath and for matters to be conducted as in a court. Since this cannot be done by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which is a parliamentary forum, we have suggested that the Government, with the consent of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and in coordination with it, appoint a subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee which would be granted the special status of an investigatory committee....That is what we proposed, and that was also published. That is also our right and our duty as a member of the Coalition. I do not understand why MK Begin, who heads the largest Opposition party group in the Knesset, feels he has the right to interfere in the work of the Government and give advice on that score. We said that we, as a member of the Coalition, by means of our Minister, proposed a way of clarifying this. The Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee wants the Government to express an opinion on this score. The Government has not ended the debate. There was a discussion within the Government, as is customary in any democratic forum. We made a certain proposal, namely, that a Ministerial Committee should examine the matter within the Government. But there is absolutely no intention...that the Government should deal with it instead of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. We

said that the arrangement we proposed would help the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee....

It is true that the Government should respect the Opposition, but the Opposition should also be interested in respecting the Government and honoring its procedures. Our proposal to set up a Ministerial Committee concerns the Government's procedures. I suggest that MK Begin refrain from making suggestions which conflict with the procedure of the House, since the Legislature may not intervene in the work of the Executive.

M. Begin (Herut): Who said that?

M. Kol (Progressives): The Opposition cannot propose how the Government should act. That has to be left to the Ministers. I am sure that the Government is able to respect its Ministers...who in turn know what to do and how to do it. They respect the Prime Minister who, I hope, also respects and trusts them, because every Government is based on mutual trust within it and on complete confidence in its Ministers.

M. Begin (Herut): I proposed that there should be trust.

M. Kol (Progressives): I propose that we let the Government hold its deliberations, and that the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee should anyway continue with its work. The Government will undoubtedly propose further action to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. Finally, I ask the Speaker to ask MK Govrin to retract the dishonorable accusations he made concerning the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

The Speaker, B. Idelson: MK Govrin elucidated his ideas during the course of his speech, and that was sufficient.

B. Azaniah (Mapai): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset...before making a few remarks about the Affair, allow me to express my displeasure at the precedent created by the debate itself. I remain loyal to the Knesset and its constitution and there is a legitimate way of raising issues which are not on the agenda; one proposes a motion for the agenda, and the Knesset decides....I do not approve of the course adopted, and I am not trying to end the discussion on this point, since it has already been raised....

An accusation has been made that there has been an attempt to obscure the facts....The Cohen Commission did its work and came up with serious though not comprehensive findings....Two testimonies were given before the Olshan-Dori Committee; the Cohen Commission dealt with one of them and not with the other. After the Cohen Commission completed its work its conclusions were submitted to the Attorney-General, who gave his opinion on them and made it public. I maintain that at this stage of the developments there is no danger of any cover-up,

because we are in the process of clarification....On this point I would like to say that the Minister of Defense who was in office most of the time since the establishment of the state made every effort to ensure that all military matters were undertaken with complete moral rectitude and honesty, and I have no reason to believe that the other Minister of Defense deviated from that....

...Abroad people are saying that a military junta has been revealed here. Very interesting. I would like to tell you that I know the social and ideological backgrounds of the colonels, the lieutenant colonels and the generals, I know who they are and where they come from....They are very far from being a military junta...very far indeed....

A further point is that there must be justice for the individual, of that there is no doubt....The public must not be given the impression that there is any argument on that score....This is not an abstract principle...but the deepest wish of my heart for my colleague of many years....

In my view, the clarification of justice has become complicated.... The efficiency of the clarification processes has been called into question....Furthermore, public hygiene requires that the clarification of such matters should not be done in a loud, provocative manner, and will consequently not be subject to the danger of personal or party-political subjectivity.

...I would like to make it quite clear that the defense network, and Mr. David Ben-Gurion who heads it, enjoys the trust of the nation in Israel and the diaspora....The defense network has not disappointed us. David Ben-Gurion has never disappointed us. We all went through the Sinai Campaign, from which our Army returned triumphant, with David Ben-Gurion at its head....A badly-run defense network would not have brought us that victory....

The serious matter which we are speaking of occurred six years ago. The Sinai Campaign took place four years ago, i.e., after that event. The examination of the defense network of six years ago requires a different temperament and approach than the quest for justice for the individual....It cannot be done noisily, and the two discussions must not be interconnected....

...In conclusion, I would like to address a few words to Mr. Begin. The weakness of the leader of the Opposition derives from the fact that he regards himself as an alternative to David Ben-Gurion....This saps Mr. Begin's intelligence...and causes a grave disproportion between his imagined and real position in the nation. I saw him thus during the election campaign, and when he attacked the Prime Minister on a petty basis. I saw and heard him thus yesterday too, when he posed as the investigator appointed by history in this affair, always without realizing that rhetoric is always vastly inferior to action. The action of the nation, when guided by Mapai and led by David Ben-Gurion, as has been the case these last thirty years or so, will also redeem us from this passing

difficulty. At any rate, rivals will not gain from the temporary complication....

...

Z. Aran (Mapai): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...I will permit myself to make a few remarks about what is known as the Affair. In 1955 I was a Minister without Portfolio. I was near to the events of the Affair, as well as to the appointment and conclusions of the Olshan Committee. I would like to say that even in 1955 I was sure that the then-Minister of Defense, MK Pinhas Lavon, was not guilty and was not involved in giving the unfortunate order; I am glad that the new material, the findings of the Cohen Commission and the opinion of the Attorney-General, have exonerated Pinhas Lavon. This was given moral reinforcement by the statement of the then-Prime Minister, MK Moshe Sharett.

I regret what happened five and a half years ago as much as you do, and I also regret the dimensions of the storm which has blown up in the country as a result of the recent clarifications. I would also like to say that my faith in Israeli democracy has deepened, because it did not flinch from a dangerous shock and acted firstly to reveal and correct the injustice caused to an individual years ago.

...The fact that two or three officers slipped up badly in 1955 did not undermine...the nation's unqualified admiration for and belief in the IDF. I am sure that its moral fortitude will enable it to overcome this crisis too....

...Allow me to say, as a party member, that I am proud that Mapai has had the moral strength to refrain from discussing the Affair itself, and did not recoil from a crisis which was unprecedented in its history....

It is no secret that I disagreed with the Prime Minister...regarding the recent procedural moves in clarifying the Affair. I disagreed with him with deep respect and complete trust in the purity of his intentions....We all know the Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion. He is no stranger to judicial and procedural processes. Only someone who is completely confident in the justice of his position and course could leave cracks in his statements which invited the arrows of both friends and foes.

I will not go into details, since I expect the Prime Minister to do so more capably than I. I have a bone to pick with MK Hazan, however, as regards his assertion: "For me personally, the worst thing about the Affair is the Prime Minister's behavior." For me personally and publicly, the worst thing in MK Hazan's speech was the sentence I have just quoted.

I would also like to warn MKs Begin and Hazan that Ben-Gurion is a mighty rival. One may disagree with him, as happens within the party and as is recorded in the *Knesset Record*. But he is a mighty rival,

and one must not dispute with him on a petty basis....That merely reveals your own pettiness....I say that with regard to the very serious and dishonorable attempts of those two Knesset Members to cast aspersions on the Prime Minister himself.

...In my view there is only one very serious issue with which the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is entitled to deal...namely, the administration of the Ministry of Defense and the IDF. The Committee could do that in the past as well as at present, regardless of the Affair. In the course of its deliberations it is entitled to summon before it the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, the Chief of Staff and senior officers, it can hear various proposals to amend the administration...and can discuss them....

I was the first chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. I also contributed to molding its method of work, authority and prestige...and I hold it in very high esteem....In its clarification of this issue, however, I have criticisms of the Committee, since not only has information been leaked from it but almost the entire clarification has become public property, though I do not know by whom....I do not remember this ever happening before in the Committee's deliberations...but this casts a shadow over the reliability of all the members of the Committee....The Affair involves very important secrets. MK Begin may make fun of the Government and announce that he intends to propose that the Knesset resolve that the Prime Minister submit the Cohen Commission's report.

(From the floor: To whom? The Government!)

...Israel is not the only country in the world where special defense secrets are known solely by the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense and the persons directly involved....We members of the Government knew over the years that there were such secrets, and we never demanded that the Prime Minister bring them before us. We knew that certain things could not be brought even before the Government.

(From the floor: Lavon says that the security reason is used even when there is no need for it.)

I am not Lavon's spokesman. I am now expressing my opinion. I do not know what the Government will decide regarding revealing the secret material at the Cabinet meeting. I assume that the Government can decide by a majority that it wants to see the material, and it can be assumed that the Prime Minister will comply with that. I do not know what the Government will decide, but I feel obliged to say that in my view those secrets should not be brought to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee....

...The evidence which has been brought before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee to date has included material concerning various other affairs. This is known as "background." My sense of judgment tells me that there is no benefit in dealing with the background of

five and a half years ago, what the relations were between various people, what this or the other one said, etc....Moreover...although the members of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee need not necessarily be influenced by the fact that they are members of certain parties...they should prefer not to be tested....

...I would like to conclude by saying that with regard to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, the conclusions of the Cohen Commission and the opinion of the Attorney-General have been published. This blunts the edge of the demand to do justice to the former Minister of Defense, MK Pinhas Lavon....This being so, and if certain secrets should not be brought before any member of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, if the members of the Committee cannot be expected to be completely objective regarding the "background," if it is agreed that with regard to the administration of the Ministry of Defense and the IDF the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is entitled to conduct a thorough investigation, and if the Government is currently involved in vigorous discussions of how to complete the treatment of certain aspects of the Affair, let us act accordingly. I think that the general public will heave a sigh of relief when the debate in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee ends and the Government is enabled to determine the arrangements for completing the clarification of this affair.

...

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, I feel it incumbent upon me to inform the House that, to my regret, I am unable to reply to the debate today, and I will do so next Monday. All I will say now is that my reply will be like my review. I see no logic, fairness or necessity in including a single word in either the review or the reply about what is known as the Affair. Two state institutions, the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and the Government, are dealing with that.

Anyone who wishes to continue stirring up muddy waters may do as he likes. The time will come when I will speak about the "new Dreyfus trial," and those who issue calumnies now will be judged by the nation's conscience and consciousness.

In my reply on Monday I will confine myself to referring only to those problems and issues which concern my review or have been raised by the speakers, as well as the disgusting suspicion that the IDF is not subject to civilian authority.

...

(The motion proposed by the Coalition parties that the Knesset takes note of the Prime Minister's review was adopted.)

The Lavon Affair

Sitting 180 of the Fourth Knesset

23 November 1960 (4 Kislev 5721)

Questions and Answers

The Accusations Levelled by Mr. P. Lavon Against Persons in the Defense Network

On 2 November 1960, MK S.Z. Abramov asked the Minister of Defense:

On 17 October 1960, *Davar* published a special interview with Mr. P. Lavon in which he said the following, amongst other things: "If there are people in the defense network today, and some people say there are dozens, who are accomplishing one sacred mission—the dissemination of rumors and gossip, the encouragement of journalists to influence certain circles—the question which has to be asked is: is this their job? Is it for this that they are being paid by the state?"

Since no denial of this grave accusation has appeared in the aforementioned paper or any other journal, I would like to know:

1. Is the above accusation correct?
2. If so, what does the Minister of Defense intend to do in order to amend the situation and ensure that it does not recur?
3. If the above accusation is not correct, and the statements are merely a libel against the defense network, what steps does the Minister of Defense intend to take against its disseminator?

The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense:

1. Elsewhere the person cited has made even more serious accusations, claiming that dozens of lieutenant colonels, majors and officials of the Ministry of Defense work day and night to disseminate rumors and gossip in this affair. When that person was asked to give the names of the people involved he said: "I am not prepared to name names." Consequently, I do not regard those accusations as having any basis or deriving from any responsible approach.

2. The employees of the Ministry of Defense are among the most devoted and loyal civil servants, because they know that they are serving the nation's highest needs. If someone will come to me with a specific accusation against a given person or persons among those employees, I will investigate it fully, just as I do with the IDF.

3. I asked the Attorney-General whether someone making this sort of claim should be charged with libel. The Attorney-General told me that if there is no specific individual against whom the libel is directed, the matter can be regarded solely as bringing persons into disrepute. He also said that a new law regarding slander should be promulgated by the Knesset, "to put an end to the prevailing licentiousness in belittling the good name and honor of the population."

The Statement Made in the Cabinet Meeting by the Minister of Agriculture, M. Dayan, Regarding Mr. P. Lavon's Testimony before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee

Introduction

The Coalition majority in the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee prevailed, and it was decided to cease parliamentary deliberations on the Affair and ask the Cabinet to deal with it and reach its conclusions. The Cabinet established a seven-man Ministerial Committee, including representatives of all the Coalition parties, which concluded unanimously, in December 1960, that Lavon should be exonerated of the accusation of having given "the order." By a majority vote, the Cabinet accepted the decision of the Ministerial Committee. Ben-Gurion objected to this and, finding himself in the minority, decided to take a leave of absence.

In the course of the Cabinet deliberations Moshe Dayan had made a statement which was widely publicized by the Israel Broadcasting Service.

Sitting 205 of the Fourth Knesset

3 January 1961 (15 Teveth 5721)

The Speaker, K. Luz: We now proceed to MK Shofman's motion for the agenda: the Minister of Agriculture's accusations in the Cabinet meeting of 1 January 1961 and their official publication by the radio and the press.

J. Shofman (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...we propose that the Knesset debate the Minister of Agriculture's accusations against Mr. Lavon in the Cabinet meeting of January 1, and their publication by the Israel Broadcasting Service.

Making those accusations at such a belated stage, months after Mr. Lavon gave evidence before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, while criticizing that evidence, requires an explanation. We really ought to hear the Minister of Agriculture's explanation as to why this statement was delayed and why he did not respond immediately to Mr. Lavon's testimony. In connection with the Affair, delayed reaction has become a serious weapon, particularly in the hands of the Minister of Agriculture's friends.

The question is, is this all the man...who was Chief of Staff at the time of "the mishap" has to say on this subject? Perhaps he has further—and more interesting—details to impart, because he himself said that the accusations, which he made at such a late stage, do not refer to "the mishap" itself but to other incidents, also of a tragic nature. We would like to hear more from him about "the mishap" itself.

There has, however, been a furore over the Minister of Agriculture's statement at the Cabinet meeting. The Israel Broadcasting Service, which was once described by an official Government spokesman as a governmental, not a national, instrument, gave the Minister of Agriculture's statement unprecedented publicity, equal to that of the Prime Minister's speech. The speech was quoted in four news broadcasts that day...in the name of the Government spokesman. From the first three the listeners could conclude that the Minister of Agriculture's disclosures, accusing Mr. Lavon of not telling the truth, referred to "the mishap" and the question of "who gave the order." Only in the last broadcast was this corrected and it was made clear that the disclosures referred to other incidents.

Such distortions by the Israel Broadcasting Service are very grave. They are designed to worsen the atmosphere in the country, using McCarthyist methods. They are intended to create an atmosphere of moral lynch. This is a disgrace to the Israel Broadcasting Service and the entire country. Is the Service an instrument for disseminating information or a weapon in the Prime Minister's hands for beating his adversary?

We have no illusions that had such distortions been employed against a member of our party no one from Mapai would have ascended the Knesset podium and condemned them. Nevertheless, we regard it as our moral duty to condemn the unjust hounding of a citizen, a Knesset Member, by the machinery of the state, the Government spokesman and the Israel Broadcasting Service, although we have no reason to feel any personal sympathy for Mr. Lavon, who attacked our party unrestrainedly during the election campaign for the Fourth Knesset, when none other than Mr. Ben-Gurion praised him publicly for his statements.

We cannot ignore the background to this incident, namely, the strange situation within the Government. The members of the Govern-

ment are currently playing at being "piqued" with one another, as if they were schoolchildren....

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Shofman, you have deviated from the subject of your motion for the agenda. You must speak about the Minister of Agriculture's accusations.

J. Shofman (Herut): I am describing the background of the events. The Prime Minister is "piqued," writes a letter of resignation, then puts it in his drawer; the Foreign Minister is "piqued," writes a letter of resignation, then puts it in her drawer; it is not yet known whether the Minister of Commerce and Industry has written a letter and put it in his drawer, but he is talking out loud about resigning. At any rate, the Prime Minister does not participate in the Cabinet meetings and he has no deputy....We are informed that the Minister of Finance is acting Minister of Religion...and the question remains, what of the less important post of the Minister of Defense? Or does Mr. Ben-Gurion's pique apply solely to being Prime Minister and Minister of Religion? And what is he piqued about?

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Shofman, this does not concern your motion for the agenda. You proposed a motion about a different subject, and it is about that that you must speak.

J. Shofman (Herut): I am describing the background to what happened. From Mr. Ben-Gurion we have heard sermons about the Government's collective responsibility. I would like to know whether his current behavior is an example of this collective responsibility, or does this apply only when the Government agrees with the Prime Minister?...The resignation of the Prime Minister and this Government will not cause us sleepless nights, but the country is degraded when its Government plays childish games of being piqued.

We therefore propose that the Knesset discuss the "tricks" of the Government spokesman and the Israel Broadcasting Service; what is particularly needed is an inquiry into who gave the order to the Government spokesman to publicize a statement made at a secret Cabinet meeting in the Israel Broadcasting Service and the press.

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I will not refer to the goods smuggled in here by MK Shofman, nor to what he has discovered by nosing around in various drawers; I will refer to the proposal for the agenda.

The statement made by the Minister of Agriculture at the Cabinet meeting of 1 January was submitted to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee today, following a Government decision on the subject. As to the official publication of what the Minister of Agriculture said, I must first of all distinguish between what was published and what was per-

mitted to be published. For this purpose allow me to quote from one of the newspapers...:

The Minister of Agriculture, Moshe Dayan, who was Chief of Staff during the said period, apprised the Cabinet of documents which confuted the evidence given by Pinhas Lavon before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee regarding two specific incidents which occurred while Moshe Dayan was Chief of Staff. At the time Pinhas Lavon had cited those two incidents—one as an action undertaken without an order and the other as an action which went beyond the order given. Since Pinhas Lavon's testimony before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee was included in the material upon which the Ministerial Committee relied, and since Moshe Dayan had not had an opportunity to bring his version before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee (which, it will be recalled, froze its treatment of "the mishap" before his turn to give evidence had come) or the Ministerial Committee (which, as is known, did not hear witnesses), he said what he had to say now in the Cabinet meeting, and the Cabinet empowered the Minister of Justice, Mr. Pinhas Rosen, who was chairman of the seven-man Ministerial Committee, to bring the matter before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, to which he was about to give a report on the conclusions of the Ministerial Committee which had been approved by the Cabinet at its previous meeting. The Secretary to the Cabinet, who gave the information regarding Minister Dayan's statement in response to questions from journalists, stressed in his reply to another question that the examples did not refer to what was known as "the mishap," and confuting them did not alter the facts of "the mishap."

That is what is written in the newspaper.

Y. Bader (Herut): Which newspaper?

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: *Al Hamishmar*. It is the most accurate in this case.

The members of the House know that of late a great deal of publicity has been given by the press to the discussions of "the mishap" which have taken place in the Cabinet, and that as the result of disjointed and unreliable items of information...statements made by Ministers have been reported inaccurately...The Secretary to the Cabinet, who is authorized...to make statements and give explanations to the public regarding Cabinet decisions which are publishable, was authorized to give an explanation to the press concerning what the Minister of Agriculture had said in the Cabinet meeting, and this explanation reflected what was actually said.

As to the way in which the subject was broadcast by the Israel Broadcasting Service, I received the following explanation, which I find satisfactory, from the Director of the IBS: "The information about the Cabinet meeting at which the Minister of Agriculture spoke was published by the Israel Broadcasting Service in all its evening newscasts. Items from the Cabinet meetings are always published on Sundays in every evening newscast, and there was nothing new in the fact that they were broadcast again last Sunday."

The official announcement from the Cabinet meeting was published at 5 p.m. in the version in which it was submitted. That is the Israel Broadcasting Service's practice regarding that newscast, which is short and informal, without being preceded by a summary of the news. At 7 and 9 the item was expanded by the addition of the explanation given by the Secretary to the Cabinet. This read: "The Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Moshe Dayan, laid before the Cabinet today documents confuting the testimony given by MK Pinhas Lavon before the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee...The documents relate to two incidents which occurred when Mr. Moshe Dayan was Chief of Staff of the IDF. The Cabinet decided that the Minister of Justice, Mr. Rosen, should bring the Minister of Agriculture's statement before the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee when he reports to it on the Cabinet's treatment of "the mishap." This is what was broadcast. Nothing was said or hinted to the effect that the documents brought by the Minister of Agriculture referred to "the mishap." Nevertheless, it was remarked that the listeners could interpret the item mistakenly...and that it was advisable to stress explicitly that the documents did not concern "the mishap" and did not alter the conclusions of the seven-man Committee. As a result of this remark, that point was stressed in the second sentence of the 11 p.m. newscast.

Another subject which aroused doubts was the fact that the Israel Broadcasting Service began the newscast with this item. Taking note of the items before the news editors of the IBS that evening (this is what the IBS says), there were two possibilities: to start with the item regarding the replacement of the Chief of Staff or with the item on the Cabinet meeting. That day the IBS had mentioned the replacement of the Chief of Staff in the newscasts and news summaries since 6 a.m. The item about the Cabinet was fresh...That was the overruling consideration. Within the item on the Cabinet the IBS placed the subject of the documents brought by the Minister of Agriculture before the other details of the meeting. The reason for this was that the other details had already been discussed that day in the press and there was nothing new in them for the listeners. On the other hand, the item about the documents was new, and in the news novelty is all-important.

It should also be noted...that the IBS has refrained from publishing rumors or facts on this subject which have not been checked. Moreover,

it published the decisions of the seven-man Committee, after these were brought before the Cabinet meeting, in its newscasts. This is all I have to say regarding the thoughts, claims and demands which have been raised. I propose that we remove the motion from the agenda.

...
The Speaker, K. Luz: We will now vote on MK Shofman's proposal that we debate the topic in the plenum.

The Vote

Those in favor	24
Those against	45

(The proposal is not adopted.)

Y. Bader's Speech on the Affair

Introduction

Despite Ben-Gurion's desperate efforts, the Lavon Affair had not only become public property, it had become all-pervasive. Dr. Yohanan Bader, perennial Herut (subsequently Gahal and Likud) spokesman on economic affairs, seized the occasion of his annual speech in the budget debate to express his views on the subject. His position as political opponent and at the same time personal friend of Lavon's, with whom he shared a common origin and background, lends poignancy to his speech.

Sitting 212 of the Fourth Knesset

16 January 1961 (28 Teveth 5721)

Y. Bader (Herut): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, this is the thirteenth time I have been charged with speaking on the state's annual budget. But the problem confronting the nation is a special one. Can one speak of the budget today, and adhere to the principle of "business as usual?" Can one remain silent and refrain from mentioning events which have occurred and are occurring in the country and which undoubtedly are of fundamental importance for the entire network of the Government and the economy?

I thought that there was no absolute distinction between economics and public morality. Adam Smith was professor of Moral Philosophy. In his day, as well as afterwards, national economics were a part of that field. A few days ago I found the following passage in a book by Anatole France which helped me to decide: "We feel very sorry for those economists who argue about the price of furniture in a burning building." Is the regime merely burning? Worse than that, it is disintegrating, in the gravest circumstances. Of course, when this Government and the present regime demands a budget we must discuss that subject, but in speaking of the Affair the question is not "who gave the order?" or, more specifically and more logically, "did Mr. Pinhas Lavon give the order?"

Y. Yeshayahu-Sharabi (Mapai): We are holding a debate on the budget. (Shouts from the Mapai benches.)

Y. Bader (Herut): Don't get excited. I am speaking with more honesty than was to be found there, according to the press. (From the floor: Where is "there?")

Do you want a furore straightaway? You had better wait a while. I am not speaking as anyone's attorney. He would be a strange attorney who, throughout the Affair, did not meet with his client. With all my regard for MK Lavon—and I knew him when we both thought that differences between parties need not impair cooperation in attaining the Zionist vision—I will not forget that MK Lavon is the most serious adversary of my party and my movement. I met with him when he lay mortally ill, heart-sick because of the injustice done to him, and with all my respect for him—of which I am not ashamed—I cannot forget that he heads that privileged sector which constitutes the principal stumbling-block to the development of a free and healthy economy in this country. It was he who once again financed Mapai's elections with the money of the Federation of Labor, which comprises members of my party as well as of Mapai.

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Bader, you have accused MK Lavon of a crime or an offense—I do not know how to define it in legal terms. Do you stand behind that accusation?

Y. Bader (Herut): I heard that at the time from MK Rubin. He must have known what he was talking about since he is a member of the Federation of Labor. What I want to say is that this man is inordinately loyal to Mapai. He concealed "the mishap" from his colleagues in the Government in 1954, when it was his duty to reveal it to them. He did not bring it out into the open before the recent elections. Without a doubt, had he told the truth before the elections their outcome would have been totally different. But those are party considerations, and we would be in a bad way indeed if party considerations were to become the criterion of justice

and injustice, of truth and falsehood. We have not all agreed on that point, and the problem of the Affair exists.

The reason I am mentioning the Affair is that it is not an internal party matter, Mr. Eshkol; it is not Mr. Lavon's private concern. I am not the only one—and I hope that all my colleagues at least are as sensitive as I am—who is sensitive to injustice done to a person, but the problem is far more serious. What happened? The honor of the Army is mentioned. The Army is insulted, its honor is slighted if it is associated in any way with what is done in those closed bureaucratic offices. Under cover of the Army a conspiracy was hatched, someone was persuaded to give false testimony, people lied, forged documents and misled others in order to delude their Minister, the Government, the Knesset, the nation and all of us. And all that was done in order to bring down their Minister, in order to wrong him.

False testimony represents a grave threat to justice. Forging a document is an even graver threat. When people conspire to combine lies and forgery, that is the greatest threat. When that institution, very expertly, does all those things against its own Government, its own Minister, its Olshan-Dori Commission, does that not represent the gravest danger to democracy in the country? That danger threatens us all, all of us collectively and each one individually. And those things were done. That is the bitter truth. Anyone who says that those who reveal things about this Affair are like those who were involved in what was known as "l'Affaire," anyone who says that this is a military concern, injures the Army first of all.

The gravest danger today is that those serious deeds, those offenses, were not committed in 1954 and 1955. It is known that this year, immediately prior to the meeting of the seven-man Committee, those actions designed to mislead others by persuading people to give false testimony were undertaken. Someone retracted a statement they had made. That unfortunate young woman began to say things which were quite groundless. Were those things done at the instigation of the man who returned from Africa or the girl who came from Europe? Was no man's hand in this? That danger has not passed, it still exists. How can one speak of public trust in the state, even in those notebooks kept by honest young men? As regards the State Comptroller, I know that things are alright there. But how can the nation believe in your budget when something like that can happen in this country? But that is not all.

Let us talk about the history of this Affair, not about "the mishap," which is mentioned only in the headlines of the foreign press. We will not talk about it, about the names, here. It is true that according to the law one does not publish the names of minors, but senior officials are not minors, although this time a supposedly military secret was used to call the Affair "the Lavon Affair," to avoid calling it by its proper name, pil-

ing one injury on top of another. Although I will yet speak of names, I will now speak of the Affair.

In 1955 the entire affair was known to those in the know.

H. Landau (Herut): The main thing in the affair is the Affair. (Shouts.)

The Speaker, K. Luz: Knesset Members, the debate is a general one on the budget, within which framework Knesset Members may discuss anything which has happened in the country.

Y. Bader (Herut): In 1955, shortly after new appointments were made at the top echelon of the Ministry of Defense, it was known that there had been forgeries; there were firm grounds for believing that there had also been false testimony, it was known that extremely important documents had disappeared, and the subject was investigated. Why was nothing done then, when there was no problem of limitations, when it was possible to hold a trial or several trials? In 1957, less than three years later, a genuine trial could have been held, a legal investigation could have been conducted, before the time limit ended. The thing was kept secret, those in the know were not interested in a trial, in justice, in revealing the truth or in setting the record straight. After that there was what the newspapers called the Ben-David investigation.

It is interesting to note that someone who initiated investigations, always seeking reliable people for that purpose, was constantly obstructed. Why was he obstructed? I want to speak about that because it is a great thing in this country, the one ray of sunshine in this whole affair. It is because the power of the truth is so great that, honesty so deeply ingrained in a man's soul, even though he be flesh and blood and dependent on his superiors, it is something which is so deep within a Jewish heart, that all the calculations a man might make as to whether one person or another will be appointed will founder and be smashed on the rock of justice and truth. The Ben-David investigation bore fruit. What was done? The same as was done with the file of 1955 or the testimony of 1957, after which a verdict was handed down by three judges, not one.

Yes, gentlemen, happy are those who benefited from the fact that that verdict was kept secret, because had it been made public these pillars would have risen up against Mr. Ben-Gurion, who even then did not do justice to the man who had been hurt. But secrecy and justice do not go together. There was a verdict, and what did Mr. Ben-Gurion do? Mr. Ben-Gurion—and all honor to him—is a great statesman, a first-rate maneuverer, a man who is quite at home in the world of politics.

We remember the "Ata" affair, in which Mr. Muller asked Mr. Ben-Gurion to serve as arbitrator. Mr. Ben-Gurion encountered the opposition of the person who is his chief aide today, Mr. Almogi, who doubted whether the matter should be put in Mr. Ben-Gurion's hands. They talked and Mr. Almogi returned to his secretariat in Haifa,

telling them: Ben-Gurion has promised that if we agree that he should be the arbitrator, he will issue a verdict on the subject....

H. Lamdan (Mapai): Why are we being subjected to fairytales in the Knesset? This is an insult! Remember where you are!

Y. Bader (Herut): What happened next? The secretariat also contained people who were not members of Mapai and Muller found out. Mr. Rosen, who is sitting here, can continue the tale of how he phoned Mr. Ben-Gurion in consternation, how he was alarmed, how he was hurt, how Ben-Gurion said straightaway: I am withdrawing from any arbitration. From my point of view, from a lawyer's point of view, that is an extremely serious act. *Crimine ab uno disce omnes* (one offense indicates them all). For me, for a jurist, there is nothing graver. But in Mr. Ben-Gurion's defense I would like to say that he is a statesman, for him even arbitration is part of the political game, he saw nothing wrong in it, as he may have seen nothing wrong in making a political issue of the truth about the Affair, of justice for Lavon, of the problem of those officers, in accordance with his considerations, to which all respect is due. Young people, veterans, the Federation of Labor and the Prime Minister's Office are all important to him. He is a first-rate politician, a prime maneuverer, that is a justification, that is an explanation, that is the charge.

Let's go on. The Cohen Commission was appointed. What was not done so that the Cohen Commission would decide in accordance with what was expected and desired? First of all, Cohen. They thought that he would take a past dispute into account. Secondly, the officers. The Minister responsible for them announced immediately, not to the Cohen Commission but to journalists, what he thought about everything.

The Speaker, K. Luz: I must point out to you, MK Bader, that you are speaking of a Justice of the Supreme Court. You have said something which is very serious.

Y. Bader (Herut): All those considerations were misguided, because the Justice of the Supreme Court remained a Justice of the Supreme Court, an advocate of justice. And that justice was active, not merely passive. He overturned all those considerations. He not only examined the matter objectively, he did something else, with his renowned talent and acknowledged ability. He got the truth out of a lying witness. Mr. Speaker, after saying what the considerations were and noting the outcome which led to the disappointment, I hope, distinguished Mr. Luz, that you judge me not only as Speaker but also as Kadish Luz, and I think that I have not impugned the honor of a Justice of the Supreme Court, that I have not insulted the reputation of Mr. Haim Cohen. For that is the power of justice, that is the strength of the truth. That is the failure of people who hope that flesh and blood is weak even when it sits on the seat of justice.

After the conclusions of the Cohen Commission it was necessary to try something else, the Attorney-General. We all read the questions to the Attorney-General as well as his replies. I would like to say here that by fulfilling his duty and serving truth and justice the Attorney-General also disappointed the Prime Minister. We remember the question: did the Cohen Commission decide who gave the order? The Attorney-General replied quite simply: first, it did not decide, because that question had not been included in its jurisdictional competency. Secondly, and here we see a brave and honest man, the Attorney-General added: if anyone compared the Olshan-Dori Report with the conclusions of the Cohen Commission they could reach a clear conclusion on that point too. And so, the Attorney-General was a disappointment too.

But something even stranger happened. They took seven Ministers from six parties and formed a committee. When has it ever happened, Mr. Speaker, that the representatives of six parties have reached the same conclusion, unanimously, on such a complicated issue? They sat, discussed and examined the subject; they were people to whom political considerations were not alien. They were people who were dependent upon the parties. I would like to say something in praise of Minister Shitrit, and I ask him to remain in the Chamber a little longer. From an old judge I once heard the story of two tablets in the heavens: a black one upon which are inscribed all the mistakes made by human beings, particularly politicians, and one of white marble, upon which the just decisions based on soul-searching are inscribed in letters of gold. My dear Mr. Shitrit, perhaps one day you will bring a vote of no confidence upon yourself and your party, but your name and those of the other six Ministers on the committee will be engraved in letters of gold on that tablet of white marble, and no one can erase them.

A great miracle occurred here, and we should have recited a blessing over it. What happened? Ministers from six parties reached a unanimous conclusion. It is not surprising or disappointing. It continues the line of all the investigations and reports made until now. But it is precisely for that reason that Mr. Ben-Gurion was angry with the seven-man Committee.

Tacitus, who was a quiet, thoughtful man, wrote in one of the chapters which I read a few weeks ago: "*Sunt plerumque regum voluntates vehementes et inter se contrariae,*" (the emotions of rulers are often both stormy and mutually contradictory). What evil genius impelled a man who claims that he desires justice to arise against that committee and create a Government crisis which is both grave and ridiculous? What is he complaining of? Of what the seven-man Committee did, or of the fact that the Attorney-General took testimony abroad? I do not want to say again that there are also rays of light in this grave affair. I know that there are various ways of taking testimony. I know that it may have

been convenient for the Attorney-General—and not contrary to his obligation—to take testimony in Paris which would have led nowhere. And that would not have been in opposition to any formal obligation. But a man whose appointment we thought only a year ago was a political one, and from this podium I beg his forgiveness for not having rejected that view then, went there and took testimony. And now we can say that Israel has an Attorney-General. He brought us the last stone needed to construct the building of truth. And who would dare cast stones at the building of truth and harm it? Who would dare? Mr. Ben-Gurion dared.

I remember things. What didn't Mr. Ben-Gurion do in his political war against the truth? Secrets from military campaigns? They were disclosed in the statement he made to the press before he read it out at a meeting of his party. Secret minutes from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee? They were quoted in the simplest way. Is that an example to others? Collective responsibility? How often has Mr. Ben-Gurion spoken of collective responsibility here? Thus, a law about collective responsibility is rolling around on the table, and according to the spirit of that law the Government should have announced that Mr. Ben-Gurion had ceased to be Prime Minister—in accordance with his own law.

But that's the way it is. As Juvenalis said: "*Sic volo, sic iubeo, stat pro ratione, voluntas*" (that is what I want, that is what I command, and my will replaces common sense and justice). That is a very dangerous thing, gentlemen, but that is not yet the end of the danger.

The danger is even clearer in the behavior of an important political party. How often have we heard that in Herut there is a leadership cult. Dear me. Anyone who knows me and my friends knows how ridiculous it is to think that we, free men, would accept the rule of someone simply because he holds a certain position in the party. I quarrelled with Jabotinsky, and I allow myself to say—I hope the Speaker will not regard this as a slight to anyone—that there is no one in this building or the whole country who can measure up to Jabotinsky. I quarrelled with him. And what happened in Mapai?

When it transpired what the seven-man Committee, and afterwards the Government, had concluded, Mr. Ben-Gurion decided first of all to take a vacation. I don't know why he decided to do that. If a person is tired he should take a vacation. But what kind of vacation is it, with statements, conversations, dispensing legal advice to a senior officer, in opposition to the legal advice of his attorney, appearances at the Center, speeches of two and a half hours? Is that a vacation? That is pressure. That is a threat. Does the letter of resignation mean that he will resign or that others should? Worse still, that others should be dismissed? That is the responsibility of one man, of a leader, but how do his colleagues respond?

First of all, a cry goes forth: the party will disintegrate if he goes. Then comes another cry: the country will turn, it is a tragedy for the state, it is the end of the State of Israel, if he goes. This is followed by a revival campaign. Letters, cables, appearances, requests are organized by the party secretariat, which should be neutral. Then we hear that fifteen people will go on a hunger strike until he retracts his resignation. Soon they'll organize an internal curfew. All the measures of the organized Yishuv, which supposedly fought the British by hunger strikes and such, are being brought back in order to prevent the leader's resignation.

But there are even more serious things. We heard that we did not understand him, that we had hurt him. I read something stranger still: that we should go down on our knees and beg him to return. Is that the way free men speak? Is that how socialists and democrats speak? It is obvious that not everyone can be pleased with the solution.

There is something else. If one has to choose between the two, it is obvious that they will choose the other. Where is justice? Is that honesty, is that truth? Is that a decision? That is a party.

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): Do you, who threw stones at the Knesset, dare to speak?

Y. Bader (Herut): Listen, MK Ben-Israel, I won't give you my curriculum vitae; there are people who know how I fought against dangerous fascism in this country. There are people even here, in this part of the House, who know what stand I took and how I fought for each man's freedom of opinion.

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): We don't need to hear speeches about democracy from you.

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Ben-Israel, I call you to order.

Y. Bader (Herut): All I will say to you in reply is that I have learned from all my teachers.

A. Harzfeld (Mapai): Where is the proportion between the speech and the budget? Are we debating the budget or the Affair?

The Speaker, K. Luz: There is nothing about proportion in the procedural code. MK Harzfeld, I ask you not to oblige me to call you to order.

A. Harzfeld (Mapai): Is this respectful?

The Speaker, K. Luz: There is nothing about respect in the procedural code.

A. Harzfeld (Mapai): Self-respect. I think that you, MK Bader, are losing your self-respect, because this debate is on the budget and you have turned it all into the Affair, from start to finish.

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Harzfeld!

Y. Bader (Herut): With all due respect, MK Harzfeld, my view—and that of the Speaker, too, it would seem—is that I have not exceeded the bounds of what is permitted in this debate. I would like to tell you something else: when there is a leadership cult of this kind, when flesh and blood is idolized, and the call goes forth to fall to one's knees, in accordance with the ancient practice, one should also offer the idol a human sacrifice. That is your concern, gentlemen; I cannot interfere in that, nor can I oppose it. By all manner of committees, sub- and sub-sub-committees of various compositions, even by a decision of 250 people, or a majority of 250, you can decide that a certain man must go. You already did so once, with your colleague Moshe Sharett, and we were all ashamed.

But this involves another, greater danger. When a man becomes an idol to the extent that people are prepared to offer up a human sacrifice to him, the danger is greater. When there is a leadership cult there are other things that are done to the leader. For, from the *Jerusalem Post* to the *Ramat Gan News*, from Israel Shapira to Uri Zvi Greenberg, the demands as to what should be done have been expressed. We should recall what Mr. Ben-Gurion revealed once at the Mapai Center, and which, with his characteristic love of the truth, he denied afterwards in the Knesset, about those who were not fascists, about those who suggested that he seize power, about those who explained that this was the Sudanese, not the Iraqi system. Things fit together, gentlemen. And I appeal to anyone who has not yet bowed the knee, whether physically or spiritually, to join hands against this danger. Because the problem is that it is our duty on this subject particularly to defend democracy in Israel. And to those who slight democracy in Israel I issue the following warning:

Our network of Mandatory laws is bad, colonial and opposed to democracy and freedom. But this Knesset exists, and in it, fortunately, no party has the majority. All the parties bar one (and I am correct in saying that even many within that party) want freedom in the country. By virtue of that, our policemen are not rulers, officials are taught to serve the people, the Army is used for external purposes and the officers live in camps. This nation has become so accustomed to that that it attaches no importance to the Knesset's existence. Only in those circumstances can someone dare to say: "selected, not elected." What do they mean by "selected?"

I therefore warn those who should be warned that when this nation senses that there are those who would deprive it of its freedom it will rise up. It will not give in. This is not Sudan. It is not even Iraq.

M. Zar (Mapai): True. As was proved by the stone-throwing.

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): You have forgotten the cars in the suburbs of Tel Aviv, and how the leader appeared there. And you speak of a leadership cult!

Y. Bader (Herut): I see that you tend to bow the knee.

E. Raziell-Na'or (Herut): And what happened in the Hatikva Quarter? Why are you speaking of suburbs and cars, MK Ben-Israel?

I. Bar-Yehuda (Ahdut-Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion): Is this the socialist competition between leaders, I'd like to know?

...

Y. Bader (Herut): To come back to the Affair. You can confuse people, exert pressure, buy votes, exploit positions of power and obtain mandates. In the economy such measures do not work. There you need trust. And following the events of the last few months, the disgrace of disclosing secrets, of smashing justice, of demolishing collective responsibility, of issuing public denunciations, of creating an idol and a leader and bowing the knee, trust has vanished. When the stock is broken it may be possible to push a few screws and nails into the wood, paint and lacquer it and it will look like new. But the stock of Mapai will never be whole again, it is broken, no one trusts you.

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): Your record is not new either.

Y. Bader (Herut): No one trusts you, not even within Mapai. And in that situation, first of all the person who is guilty of all the terrible things which have been revealed, the Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, must go. Do not go down on your knees, do not entreat him, do not give in to his threats, let him go, it will benefit the entire country, and even Mapai.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, this regime must go too. And the sooner it goes, the better it will be for the nation....

Sinking of the Immigrant Ship Off the Coast of Morocco

Introduction

In the late 1950s the exodus of Jews from Arab countries was coming to an end. The trickle which still continued, in utmost secrecy, was subjected to ever-increasing difficulties—which only rarely came to public notice.

Sitting 214 of the Fourth Knesset

18 January 1961 (1 Shevat 5721)

The Speaker, I. J. Greenberg: The Foreign Minister will make a statement on behalf of the Government.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, we are still shocked by the terrible disaster in which more than forty of our brethren—men, women and children—lost their lives, when the S.S. Price sank last Tuesday in the area of the Moroccan coast. We weep for the precious victims, who risked their lives to go from slavery to freedom, who yearned for a safe haven, and were lost at sea. Another link has been added to the tragic chain of attempts by Jews to find a way to their homeland.

The Moroccan authorities bear a heavy responsibility for the tragedy. A regime of persecution and discrimination brings its Jewish citizens to a situation of despair and frustration. The basic civil rights which are accorded to everyone are arbitrarily taken away from the Jews of Morocco, in contravention of that country's official undertaking upon receiving independence and being accepted into the U.N. Freedom of entry and departure does not exist for Jews. Phone and telegraph links between the Jews there and their families in Israel have been severed by the Moroccan Government. The Jewish schools are suppressed. Jewish families live in constant fear of arrests and attacks, kidnappings and torture. There is an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty, both physical and emotional, among the 250,000 Jews of Morocco, and it is hardly surprising that they seek to flee for their lives and join their relatives in Israel. They are fleeing in full knowledge of the dangers which await them, but the Moroccan authorities have left them no alternative. These forty-two Jews were victims of their desire for their most basic right, the right to leave and immigrate to Israel. This right is regarded as elementary in every enlightened country.

On behalf of the Government of Israel, I hereby express our deep concern and pain at the disaster and our participation in the grief of the bereaved families. Together we must put our shoulders to the wheel and extend every possible help to Moroccan Jewry in its struggle for its basic human rights. I appeal to the nations of the world to take note of the arbitrary laws governing Moroccan Jewry; I hope that it will find loyal allies in its just struggle, and that the gates of Morocco may be opened to those who wish to leave it. I note with satisfaction the positive response the terrible tragedy has received in the statements made by leading world figures as well as in the press.

We ask the Moroccan Government to remember and honor its commitments and not to be led astray by elements whose sole aim is hatred and destruction.

Mr. Speaker, for obvious reasons I ask the members of the House to forego their right to a debate in the plenum on this issue, and to agree to transfer it to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

...

(The proposal to transfer the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is adopted unanimously.)

Courts (Offenses Punishable by Death) Law, 5721-1961

Introduction

The enormity of Eichmann's crimes, the possibility that, for the first time in the history of Israel, the death penalty might be applied, and the worldwide attention focused on the forthcoming trial occasioned several amendments to various laws. The principal ones follow below.

Sitting 214 of the Fourth Knesset

18 January 1961 (1 Shevat 5721)

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I have the honor of submitting to the Knesset for the first reading the Courts (Offenses Punishable by Death) Law, 5721-1961.

In addition to the typed explanation, I would like to give the Knesset a more detailed, though brief, elucidation. As the members of the House know, the death penalty for murder was abolished in 1953 and was replaced by life imprisonment. At that time the Knesset apparently regarded the debate on the death penalty, which remained on our law books and which had to be brought before the civil (as opposed to the military) courts, as something devoid of daily practical significance, and when we passed the Courts Law in 1955 we did not create a separate judicial framework for those crimes, determining that they should be decided in the District Courts in their regular composition.

The Knesset acted differently with regard to another judicial framework within which the death penalty can be imposed for a considerable number of extremely grave crimes. I am referring to the Military Justice Law, 1955. Paragraph 197 of the law determines that crimes of that kind shall be brought before a special court which has a special president and special summoning procedures.

Now that we have given our attention to these offenses, we find that they should have a special judicial framework in the civil courts too. It seems to us that the President of the Court should be a Supreme Court Judge, namely, a member of the highest judicial echelon. Since we are dealing with life and death, the trial should be tried already at the initial stage by one of the nine jurists whose membership on the Supreme Court ensures the highest level of judgment. The appointment of the other two members of the court will remain in the hands of the President of the District Court within whose jurisdiction the trial is conducted.

Since the law was first brought before the Knesset several things have been written about it in the papers. Some people claim that we are seeking to establish a special judicial framework prior to the Eichmann trial and that we intend to displace the President of the Jerusalem District Court. I must admit that the Eichmann trial has made us aware of a problem, for the first time since the Courts Law was passed in 1955, regarding an indictment involving the death penalty. We see nothing wrong in the fact that an immediate problem gives rise to thought and the desire to make amendments and improvements. There is no benefit in the fact that legislation takes place in a vacuum, without being related to practical, concrete problems. Nor is there anything wrong if the legislative process has a direct influence on a specific instance. The question is, however, whether the legislation injures someone's existing rights, and whether its object is to restrict, harm and impede. No one can claim that placing the Eichmann trial in the hands of a Supreme Court Judge will harm this defendant's existing rights to be tried by a group of judges headed by the President of the District Court, or that it tends to make his situation more difficult.

As I have already said, the other two members of the court will be appointed by the President of the District Court, who may, under the existing law, appoint himself, judges from the courts in his district or even judges from another district....If the President of the Jerusalem District Court, within whose district the indictment against Eichmann will be made, is appointed, he will have that authority; I assume that he will want to consider whether he should appoint himself to the bench, in view of the facts regarding Adolf Eichmann which he determined while judging a different case. But, according to the proposal, this matter will remain to be decided by the court....

The other aspects of the bill concern procedural matters. We will soon be bringing before the Knesset the Criminal Justice Law, in which we propose relieving judges of the need to keep the record themselves. This causes considerable difficulties and sometimes even almost insuperable problems. We have taken the opportunity presented to us to propose this in the present law, regarding the offences involved.

I would like to add, with regard to civil claims, that we still have a relic from Ottoman law, according to which someone who has been injured by a criminal act can join the criminal prosecutor as a civil prosecutor. He "jumps on the bandwagon" of the general prosecution, as it were, and in certain cases has the right to cross-examine witnesses and plead his case. For some time there have been serious doubts among us as to whether there is room for this in our legal system. After all, an injured party may always sue someone who has caused him damage. We have no doubt, however, that at least as regards serious offenses which carry the death penalty the events should not be linked and private individuals should not be allowed to intervene in the trial, where it is in-

cumbent upon the prosecution to prove such a grave crime and upon the defendant to fight for his life. Consequently, we have proposed cancelling civil prosecution in the course of criminal trials as regards offenses with which the proposal before you deals. I ask you to transfer the bill to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee.

E. Meridor (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I would like to commend the elegance with which the Minister of Justice presented the bill before us, but in my humble opinion that elegance is neither convincing nor sufficient.

In Paragraph 2 of the law the Government proposes that we determine special instructions regarding the composition of the District Court when it judges offenses punishable by death. No reason for this is given other than that...this institution of the Court for Serious Offenses existed in Israel prior to 1948....At that time the Provisional Council of state, which was busy with a great many important matters...saw fit...to cancel that institution, which had been set up by the Mandatory authorities because of their reluctance to rely on the "native" judges....

In his verbal explanation, the Minister of Justice added the reason that the death penalty had meanwhile been abolished and we have now reconsidered and reached our decision. With all due respect, I think one may say that that is not a valid reason. I hope that the Minister of Justice will not be offended if I say that this is just an excuse. The real reason is that the Government does not want the President of the Jerusalem District Court to serve as President of the Court in this trial. If laws are sometimes proposed so that a certain person or society may benefit...what we have before us now is a law which will be to the detriment of a certain person.

We issue a severe admonition that this cannot be allowed, that if a certain judge appears to the Government to be unfit to judge a certain case the Government can, with the Knesset's help, prevent him from serving in his permanent capacity under the existing law. There is rule of law in this country. The law determines that the composition of the District Court shall be determined by its President, and it is unacceptable that we should indirectly prevent a judge from fulfilling his constitutional function as determined by the law of the land.

...We cannot rid ourselves of the impression that this bill has been submitted for the purpose of this trial and not because of general considerations or as a result of thoughts inspired by the Eichmann trial. This could lead us onto a very dangerous path. If under the existing law a certain judge in Haifa or Tel Aviv should sit in a given case which is of public importance, the Government can ask the Knesset...to change the law so that a judge it dislikes will be ineligible and the composition of the court may be altered....I think that we are proud of the fact that the composition of the courts has been determined once and for all by the

law, and cannot be changed on an ad hoc basis for the purpose of one trial or another.

J. Kushnir (Mapam): Don't you rely on the Supreme Court Judge?

S. Yunchman (Herut): He relies on the District Court Judge too, and that's what matters.

E. Meridor (Herut): Bringing this bill before us today, a few weeks or months before the trial against Eichmann begins, constitutes an expression of lack of confidence in the judgment of the President of the Jerusalem District Court....We are all proud of the fact that our judges dispense justice to the nation, that they show no favor and that everyone is equal in their eyes....We trust them.

Under the current law, the President of the District Court is entitled to decide on the composition of the bench. As the Minister said, the President of the Jerusalem District Court will decide whether to sit on the bench or not....If he decides that he may preside over the court, that is what he will do....What the Minister of Justice is proposing to us today is that we deprive him of the right to make that decision....That is the practical significance of the bill before us....There is no justification for this. It insults the respect and trust of the entire public in the judges of the country and in the President of the District Court in this specific trial.

It has been claimed, and the Minister of Justice also said this, that the President of the District Court is ineligible because he expressed an opinion or reached a certain decision regarding Eichmann in a previous trial known as the Kaestner trial....It is a general rule that every judge must decide solely on the basis of the evidence submitted to him, apart from information which constitutes "Judicial Notice," which is not relevant here. Obviously, the ideal situation is when the judge has never seen the defendant before, has not heard of his existence, does not know who he is and sees him for the first time when the trial begins. This ideal situation does not often occur, and certainly cannot obtain regarding a man whose name is infamous throughout the world....

...For the purposes of the trial a judge must rid himself of all his preconceptions and judge solely on the basis of the evidence before him....Any judge who feels unable to do this, for whatever reason, must disqualify himself from sitting on the bench in that particular case....I am sure that the judges who will try Eichmann will do so on the basis of the evidence brought before them, and we all trust the Prosecutor-General to do his duty in this matter, even though there is no judge who does not have some opinion about Eichmann, no matter what the composition of the bench.

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: How many judges have published their opinion about Eichmann?

E. Meridor (Herut): ...With regard to the topic we are currently discussing, namely, the absence of bias, there is no difference if a judge has published his opinion in a verdict or not. It is the fact that he is prejudiced which matters, not the publication of his views, and it is that which makes him ineligible to sit on the bench. It is not the formal aspect which is decisive here...this is something which concerns the very essence of the thing....

H. Tzadok (Mapai): Justice must also be seen to be done.

E. Meridor (Herut): ...We are all sure that every judge in Israel...will be able to sit on any trial, including that of Eichmann, even if he has a certain personal opinion or has expressed a specific view. And if he feels that he is prejudiced, we are confident that he will disqualify himself....But the bill before us proposes that we deprive him of the right to make that decision for himself....

...MK Tzadok has said, or meant to say, that justice must also be seen to be done. There is no need to remind me of this....That phrase is very important...but it must be interpreted thus: first of all, justice must be done. That is the rule. It must also be seen to be done. Who should see it?...Is there anyone in the country...in the entire civilized world, who can claim that the...Jews have not dispensed justice to Eichmann?...

Gentlemen...when the Government proposed that we alter the Lawyers' Order so that Eichmann could retain a lawyer from abroad, it grieved us that we had to change the laws of the State of Israel for that man. All of us—Coalition and Opposition—understood that there was no alternative....After that, the Government decided to pay for Eichmann's defense. We accepted that unhappily. I'm sure that the Government was not happy about it either....What else must the Knesset do for that man's trial? Must it rearrange judicial procedures and pass a special law to change the composition of the bench? How far must we go? There will always be anti-semites who will make accusations against us....No honest man will see anything wrong in the fact that under the current law the judge determines who sits on the bench. Even if we wish to present ourselves as the most righteous among the righteous, we do not have to amend the law in the way proposed....There is no need for it. It is quite superfluous, and the matter must be left to the judgment of the judge whose authority it is to decide on the composition of the bench, and we must not cast aspersions or hint at a lack of confidence in him.

...The Government is not proposing that the President of the District Court will be ineligible to sit on the bench in this trial....It is proposing that he may do so if he regards himself as fit, but he will not preside over the court. This is totally illogical, in my humble opinion. It means that the Government also proposes leaving the decision as to whether to include himself in the composition of the bench or not in the hands of the

President of the District Court. If that is so, why should he not preside over the court?...Why should we show him disrespect?...

I ask the Knesset not to change the existing law. The Court for Serious Offenses was abolished in 1948, there is no need to revive it, and certainly not for a special instance. Let me also say to the Minister and all those who are concerned about what the world will say that...the fewer special laws passed and additional motions proposed, the better.

...The Government proposes that we refrain from combining civil suits with criminal trials. Whatever our opinion may be about that institution, I think that now is not the time to change it. First of all, there are many judiciary systems throughout the world which have that institution, and have a civil prosecutor in criminal cases and even in cases punishable by death. It may be good or bad, but I do not think that this is the right moment to bar private individuals from participating in this trial. Their role in the trial is limited, and they may cross-examine only within a very restricted sphere. Why should not this great and historic trial be wider than is customary, and a few private individuals also be involved? There is no danger that thousands of people will sue. That is not the way things go....We will discuss whether this law should be abolished some other time, and not in connection with the impending Eichmann trial.

I propose that with regard to those two paragraphs the Knesset reject the Government's request and refuse to accept these amendments.

...

M. Nurock (National Religious Party): Distinguished House, we are usually against the death penalty, but when it comes to bringing Nazis and their collaborators to justice we have made an exception and have decided that their crimes should be punishable by death. I had the privilege of sponsoring the Nazi and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law in 1949. In these matters we go according to what the prophet Samuel said to Agog the Amalekite: "As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women."

The eyes of all Israel and the whole civilized world are turned to the trial of the Nazi oppressor. Israel's law courts are noted for their justice, honesty and truth, we are proud of them, and the distinguished Minister of Justice symbolizes them. Our law courts are the guarantee that this trial will be conducted fairly, without taking feelings of vengeance into consideration. The blood of our brethren cries out to us from the ground. There is not one family who has not lost someone. With German precision they killed one-third of our nation, six million persons, including one million and two hundred thousand sweet Jewish children—our future and our hope—who could have brought honor to our nation and all mankind. Historical, sacred communities were destroyed, together with cultural, religious, economic and philanthropic enterprises. The thousand bright years of European Jewry ended and we seem to hear the

blood of our brethren calling to us from the ground: Earth, do not cover me, so that the coming generations may know the murderous deeds of those ravenous beasts in human form. This trial must show the Nazis' evil deeds to the world and place the other war criminals on trial.

To our regret, Nazi war criminals are still free in countries all over the world, and some countries regard them as so-called political emigres. In the past I gave the distinguished Minister of Justice a long list of Nazis, which I received—not necessarily from Jews—in Scandinavia....From this podium we congratulate our courageous brethren who risked their lives and captured this Nazi villain....Others would have lynched him, but we Jews...observe the law.

I regret the fact that an Israeli lawyer will defend the tyrant. A German attorney could have been given the assistance of a Ministry of Justice official as regards Israel's legal system. This is in bad taste. In human history it has never yet occurred that someone volunteered to plead on behalf of the man who murdered his parents, children, brothers and sisters.

With regard to the Statute of Limitation, even the so-called "good" Germans are trying to bypass it....During the conference of the International in Haifa I asked...the head of the German Socialists, Ullenhauer, to extend the period of the law's applicability. I told him that this was the first time I had addressed a German and I had to overcome my anxiety....To my regret, the Bundestag took account only of some of our requests.

We must be on our guard and demand that those nations which still have some spark of conscience help us bring war criminals to trial. I hope that the trial in the holy city of Jerusalem will contribute to this, and "Let him be known among the heathen in our sight by the revenging of the blood of thy servants which is shed."

J. Kushnir (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, it would be better if we refrained from discussing the personal problem of the President of the District Court.

S. Yunchman (Herut): That's the main point here.

J. Kushnir (Mapam): I think that MK Meridor was ill-advised to do this, refusing to understand those things which are not rumors but are as clear to him as they are to us: no judge, whether of the Supreme Court or any other court...sits on the bench if there is even the slightest doubt of bias. MK Meridor, who is a jurist...must know this. I do not wish to follow his lead and deal with a personal matter concerning the President of the District Court. We do neither him nor ourselves any honor by doing so. The critics, and particularly the members from Herut...whether unhappily or not, voted for things which a great part of the nation regards with apprehension....They also agreed to alter the Lawyers' Order.

(Shouts from the Herut benches.)

You abstained when there was a motion for the agenda, and you are not retiring types who do not know how to submit questions or motions for the agenda if you have a clear position. Nor did you oppose changing the Lawyers' Order, even though unsigned articles on this subject appeared in your newspaper, and in effect you thereby supported the idea that an Israeli lawyer should act for the defense in the Eichmann trial.

All this was done because we were told that the eyes of the world were upon us; that we were in the spotlight of the world, which demanded an international trial, which demanded that we relinquish our right to judge, as well as various other things which we could not accept. That is why it is surprising that just on this subject—and the Minister of Justice said that the Eichmann trial was the reason for the bill before the Knesset—when there could be various kinds of storms, motions of no confidence, suspicions and doubts, you express doubts as to whether the composition of the bench should be such that there can be no doubts about it.

...I told MK Meridor that he appeared to be indirectly...expressing no confidence in the Supreme Court Judge who will sit on the bench in that trial. Our judges are very precious to us, we all guard their independence, and there is no need to throw phrases around in the Knesset in order to call this into question. Although the Eichmann trial is the reason for this, do we act favorably towards every person accused of an offense punishable by death by placing his trial in the hands of a Supreme Court Judge? That should be the criterion. That is why we think we should accept this bill....

I am not so happy about another amendment...namely, that all the judges should be appointed by the President of the Supreme Court, rather than that the bench should consist of the President of the Supreme Court and two District Court judges....The selection of the District Court judges should be left to the body which appoints those judges...because we must have the best and strongest bench possible, so that nothing can be said against it....

What we intend in this trial is to paint a large, historical picture of the suffering, pain and blood of the Jewish people. The Eichmann trial has also occasioned this bill, as well as the proposal to separate civil suits from criminal trials in cases concerning the Jewish people. I am not sure...that this will not prevent Jews from claiming damages from Germany. If I am forced to choose between enabling Jews to claim damages and taking other considerations into account I will opt for the former, and I will not be concerned by the fact that this wounds Germany's honor. I propose to the Minister of Justice that we examine this aspect carefully....

There are other paragraphs in the bill which arouse no opposition. I regret that the Nazi criminal Eichmann has been the occasion for introducing long-needed improvements in the law courts, such as a short-

hand reporter, etc. I also think that it was inaccurate to say that the Court for Serious Offenses was abolished because it reflected a lack of trust in the "native" judges, and that we seek to reinstate it...I think that is not true. Even during the time of the British there was a court which judged serious offenses in which the President of the District Court, who was a British judge, participated. One cannot say that there was a lack of trust in the British judge. There is no need, especially not by a jurist, to present inaccurate information...The reason was not the lack of trust in the "native" judges, because that bench included another British judge in addition to the first one.

I propose, therefore, that we accept this bill and pass it on to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, as the Minister of Justice proposes....

J. Serlin (General Zionists): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the thing I feared has come about...This Government, which flutters between extinction and miserable existence, is afflicted with a disease which I might call "affairia." Two days ago the skies cleared a little and we seemed to have emerged from the affair of the Affair and entered the affair of the respite. But it only appeared to us that there had been a change. And it seems that what was left by the Affair will be finished off by the respite, and what will be left by the respite will be completed by this bill.

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: There will be no Affair here.

J. Serlin (General Zionists): Don't be so sure....

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: Yes, some people can make an Affair out of anything.

J. Serlin (General Zionists): Mr. Minister of Justice, you have already heard mention here today of personal matters and material justice, and of justice which should be seen to be done. Who needed all that?

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: Justice.

J. Serlin (General Zionists): ...I oppose this bill because it injures our regular judicial system by potentially establishing a precedent regarding the composition of a special court for a special trial...What this bill is asking the Knesset to do is to deal with the composition of the bench as regards a certain trial. I am not afraid of the Eichmann trial, I am afraid of a precedent....

In 1950 we passed the Nazi and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law. Was that a regular law? Its object was to try those wild beasts who remained after Hitler's jungle. I assume that no Minister of Justice, as well as many of us here, imagined that we would ever capture the archvillain from that jungle. That is why we were satisfied with a material law and did not determine who would try those beasts of prey.

What seems to be self-evident is that we need a special court and a special law. It is not a law against speculation, it is not a special emergency law. It is a law which comes after years of slaughter, pillage, burning, stoning and every possible kind of death inflicted upon the Jewish people. But a vacuum remained in that law regarding who would try those beasts when they fell into our hands. The Nazi and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law should be amended to include a paragraph pertaining to the special court, or tribunal. That is its natural place, not in our general body of laws.

...I propose, therefore, that the Knesset return the bill to the Government, and that the law cover the establishment of a special tribunal to try Nazis and their collaborators, because, as I have said before, that is its natural place.

N. Nir-Rafalkes (Ahdut Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, this bill is submitted in connection with the Eichmann trial. The words "Eichmann trial" are imprecise, in my view, because...Eichmann is the personification of the regime which murdered six million of our brethren. This is not the Eichmann trial, then...but the Jewish people's trial of the Nazis and the anti-semites throughout the generations. It is not the trial of one person; that man is the excuse for this trial, and the trial is an historic one—the one and only one in thousands of years, and perhaps for thousands of years to come. If this is so, why should we not create special conditions for this trial...?

S. Yulichman (Herut): So that we won't have an "affair of the judges" after the "affair of the rabbis."

N. Nir-Rafalkes (Ahdut Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion): There are other affairs than the Affair; there have been many affairs. Such things are not fatal. We will find the solution to the affairs...but I still maintain that we must create a special framework and conditions for what is an historically unique trial.

I go even further than this bill and say that even as far as the world is concerned we are doing no harm to this person upon whom our trial focuses. We are saying that we want our best judges to sit on the bench in this trial...and these are our Supreme Court Judges. I claim that all the three judges in this trial should be drawn from among the Supreme Court Judges. The question of what will happen should there be an appeal does not worry me. There are other such instances in our laws...but this should not deter us from taking the course we have to take. This greatest court in the land should be created for the greatest trial in our history, and that is why I think its bench should consist of three Supreme Court Judges.

Moreover, there is no reason why, using the pretext of the Eichmann trial, we should suddenly change our criminal law. Should our judges be granted the benefit of a court recorder just because of the Eichmann

trial...? Should this trial be given equal status with other trials...? Why can we not say openly that this is a special trial, which should have a special tribunal and special procedure? If there is a need to change our criminal law, we will do so in due course.

Incidentally, I doubt whether civil suits should be removed from all trials for offenses punishable by death. In this trial, this should be the case. This also applies to the paragraph which says that if the defendant has pleaded guilty evidence may nevertheless be heard; I have no doubt that this law should include this instruction, because we are not concerned solely with this defendant, we are interested in all the facts surrounding him....

Consequently, because I feel that a special tribunal should be established for this unique and historic trial...I propose that we transfer the bill to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, but try to amend it there in the spirit of what I have said.

M. Sneh (Maki): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...I maintain that in this instance there is a danger of bias. Why should we change our jurisdictional procedures? We are about to reestablish the institution of a special court, which existed under British colonial law as a substitute for trial by jury....If we are setting up a special Court for Serious Offenses, let it be based on a jury consisting of seventy-one Israeli citizens, paralleling the number of members in the Sanhedrin!...

The Government fears that Israeli justice will not be trusted. When Eichmann was captured officials in Washington, London and Paris arrogantly suggested that the trial be held under international auspices. We rejected that, quite rightly....It is Israel's honor and right to judge the man who murdered the Jewish people. We have no need of any imprimatur from others....This bill is designed specifically to release Dr. Benjamin Halevy, the President of the Jerusalem District Court, from something concerning his jurisdiction under the existing law. Why? Is it because he has an interest in this trial? Is there any judge in Israel who does not have an interest in this trial? Every person in Israel has an interest in this trial, and every judge is eligible to sit on the bench....Why not him, then? Because he handed down a verdict in the Kaestner trial? That verdict will go down as one of the finest in Israel's history. That verdict is written in the nation's blood, not in ink. It is a distinction for Dr. Benjamin Halevy. I have never met the man; I do not know him; I know nothing about him; all I know is that that verdict made my heart sing.

Why should we harm him? Why should we exclude him? Because some Nazi in disguise, the attorney of the archmurderer, may propose that we disqualify that judge? Is that why we must disqualify him first? Where is the justice in this? The nations of the world should stand respectfully before Israeli justice in this trial. Will this incur the disapproval of the Bonn Government? Of Gluebke, who remains free merely

by chance? He was Eichmann's associate, after all, he publicized the racist Nuremberg Laws which formed the basis for the slaughter, and now he sits among the Ministers in the Cabinet headed by Adenauer, with whom Israel's Chief Minister says he has relations of trust and friendship. That's what it's all about....

...There is no need to make a special provision to prevent civil suits being filed. Let them be filed! Let Jews come from Israel and abroad. One of the previous speakers said that not many people will come. Why not? Let them all come. Let the Jewish people judge, let the law of Israel judge, let the pleas of the Jews strengthen the prosecution.

What I am about to do is not customary, but this matter is not customary. The Central Committee of the Israel Communist Party received a letter from...the ruling Socialist Unity Party of East Germany, which says that Jewish citizens, Nazi victims, have asked a lawyer...to appear on their behalf in the Eichmann trial. On 2 November 1960 the lawyer asked Minister of Justice Rosen for an interview, so that his court appearance would be in accordance with Israel's law. He received no reply, and the...Socialist Unity Party has asked us to ask Israel's Minister of Justice to receive him. Otherwise...Eichmann's attorney will receive all the help, and even a fee, from the Government of Israel, while the representative of the Jewish victims does not even get an interview with a Minister in Israel to consult him about his appearance.

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: Let the victims first receive something from East Germany.

M. Sneh (Maki): The question is...: why am I reading this letter from this podium rather than applying directly to the Minister of Justice? On 27 November 1960 I submitted a parliamentary question to the Minister of Justice....After all, a representative of the East German Government has stated that they have material against Eichmann which they are ready to place at the disposal of Israeli justice. I asked whether the Government of Israel had replied to them, and if it had not, was it prepared to. I have not received an answer to my question, although almost two months have passed and according to the rules of procedure an answer to a parliamentary question should be given within three weeks....That is why I felt I had to take this opportunity to present my question again regarding the civil claims of the East German Jews.

I would like to say that the political trend of the Government, which is evident with regard to this trial, works against us. The Government is playing havoc with the nation's emotions. Paying the fee of the villain's attorney is one such phenomenon, and what the Prime Minister said to the reporter for the *New York Times*: "We are not concerned with punishing Eichmann, because there is no penalty in the world to fit his crimes; we do not care what the verdict will be," is neither just nor true with regard to the nation's feelings.

We propose that the bill be returned to the Government, so that it may bring a new bill before the Knesset without the two paragraphs I have criticized.

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, to my great regret the debate on this bill has been sidetracked onto personal lines...and this has appeared in the newspapers. We adopted a different approach on this bill than is customary: we consulted both the Opposition and the Coalition. That is a splendid method, which we have learned from another country. But there it is not the practice for such matters to find their way into the newspapers. Perhaps we should learn from this bitter experience....I said what I said out of deep respect for the judge who has been mentioned here.

By proposing that the trial be presided over by a Supreme Court Judge I meant to give it the maximum importance. I am not so interested in what public opinion says, but I am interested in what jurists throughout the world say, those of them who are our friends and not our foes....I would like to propose to MK Meridor, for whom I have the greatest respect, that we translate his speech into English together with some excerpts from that verdict, and ask accredited jurists who are our friends what they think of it.

I have every confidence in the distinguished judge whom I mentioned, I think that he will weigh the matter up himself, as is his privilege. He may include himself in the composition of the bench, or not. I know what I would do in his place, but that must be irrelevant as far as he is concerned. I have every confidence in him.

As I said before, if we proposed that a Supreme Court Judge should preside over this trial we did so in order to give this trial the greatest importance. MK Meridor, you may be sure that if this trial were to be conducted in Tel Aviv or Haifa I would make the very same proposal.... According to the bill, the President of the District Court may appoint another judge from the Jerusalem District Court, apart from including himself in the composition of the bench, which could paralyze the work of the court for several months.

It was obvious to us that we had to obtain reinforcements from other District Courts. I repeat that it is advisable that this trial, which will attract the attention of world jurists...should be in the hands of a Supreme Court Judge. MK Nir proposes that three Supreme Court Judges should sit on this trial. I think that this suggestion is impractical. We have considered it.

MK Serlin, if I understood him correctly, suggests that we should do what this bill proposes, but within the framework of the Nazi and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law. If that is what he suggests, I do not know why he proposes that we return the bill to the Government, since this suggestion can be discussed in the Committee. We did in fact consider doing this; it has its pros and cons. I am prepared to consider it,

although I do not favor it. But I do not think that that is a reason to return the bill to the Government....

I am not impressed by MK Meridor's contention that in 1948 we abolished the Court for Serious Offenses. At that time we abolished a great number of institutions we inherited from the British. We may have overdone matters somewhat. We were right in most of the things we did, but we also overdid things occasionally. In my view, with regard to capital offenses, we should revive the Court for Serious Offenses. That is one of the reasons why I do not wish to link this law to a specific instance. But that is for us to decide in the Committee.

I cannot reply here to all the points raised in the debate....I am not impressed by MK Sneh's pathos, which sounds false to me....We are interested in the opinion of world jurists, but we are not prepared to grovel before anyone....MK Sneh is right in what he says about his parliamentary question. I apologize to him. I do not usually delay answering such questions, but this requires consulting various Ministries. I assure him that he will have an answer. I propose that we vote on the proposal to transfer the bill to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee.

The Speaker, I.J. Greenberg: We will now vote on the two proposals:

(The proposal to return the bill to the Government is defeated.)

(The proposal to transfer the bill to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee is adopted.)

The Lavon Affair (Dayan's Speech)

Introduction

The Affair was gathering momentum. The senior officer, whose truthfulness and reliability had been called into question by the Cohen Commission, was obliged to resign from the Army. Ben-Gurion advised him to turn to the courts to obtain rehabilitation, but the officer's attorney informed the Minister of Justice that his client had no interest in pursuing the matter any further.

Meanwhile, Ben-Gurion threatened to resign because of what he felt was lack of support from his own party. Party members from all walks of life asked him to refrain from doing so. On 12 January 1961 the Central Committee of the Labor Party, Mapai, discussed the Affair. Ben-Gurion and Lavon addressed the Committee, giving dramatic speeches. While expressing full confidence in Ben-Gurion, the party decided to establish another committee. Contrary to constitutional practice, the President of the State met with that committee in order to try and bring about a reconciliation within his party, but to no avail.

Sitting 217 of the Fourth Knesset

24 January 1961 (7 Shevat 5721)

The Budget Law, 1961

M. Dayan (Mapai): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I have asked for the floor not as a member of the cabinet, not even as Minister of Agriculture, although in that capacity I have several comments to make about the budget, and from time to time I find myself at loggerheads with the Minister of Finance on that score. I have asked for the floor as a member of the Mapai party group...because I wish to reply to contentions raised by certain Knesset members—spokesmen of their parties—about “Mapai's improper parliamentary democracy.”

I do not disapprove of a clarification of that kind here and now, nor do I...disapprove of the right of individuals and party representatives—various members of the public—to interfere in Mapai's internal affairs, particularly since I know that a large proportion of that public, while not being members of Mapai, voted for Mapai, and obviously has every right to give it advice and even to demand that the party in which it has placed its trust—and it is the party which actually runs the country—to reconsider its course. I accept that and I hope that Mapai will listen to

what is said, because both at present and in the future a party of this kind must be close to the general public.

Of course I do not disapprove of discussing this in the Knesset...because a budget debate is a general debate, enabling all the government's actions to be discussed and criticized. I only assume that the debate on this subject in the Knesset should deal solely with that part which concerns the Knesset, namely, the presence or absence of parliamentary democracy....Despite the fact that those party spokesmen who dealt with this issue from this podium did not restrict themselves to this sphere, I regard it as my right and duty to do so....

Four party groups united to defend democracy....Whether we start on the left or the right, there is very little difference between their view of the situation. MK Sneh claims: “A military-political group headed by Ben-Gurion is gaining control of Israel”...and “That man is making a mockery of Israel's binding parliamentary democracy, using it as a disguise for tyranny.” MK Sneh even has some advice to give us as to how to fight tyranny: the tyrant is aggressive when one is afraid of him, he is cowardly when one displays resistance....

MK Joseph Sapir also thinks the situation is extremely grave, and says: “What has caused this devastating phenomenon in the life of our state? Gentlemen...in my view we have reached the end of the road, because we have reached a situation in the Knesset where a party which is afflicted with megalomania, which has become insane as a result of being in power, runs the country.” MK Bader claims: “Is the regime burning? Worse than that, it is disintegrating....”

So we have “tyranny,” “megalomania,” “a party driven insane by power,” “the regime is burning,” “the regime is disintegrating....” The question is, in my view, what has Mapai actually done within the framework of parliamentary democracy vis-à-vis what the other parties offer and what they are doing.

To the best of my knowledge, very little has actually been said regarding the lack of democracy in Mapai's actions in the parliamentary sphere. One contention refers to the government's collective responsibility. It was MK Bader, I think, who spoke mockingly about a bill regarding collective responsibility rolling around somewhere....

Y. Bader (Herut): I said that.

M. Dayan (Mapai): As a member of the government, I have greater respect for that bill. It is not rolling around, it exists, and collective responsibility actually exists. The bill is not rolling around. As a Knesset Member, I suggest that you refrain from using such terms about a bill which is being debated by the Knesset. It is neither respectful nor fair...although it is your right to perceive matters thus.

This government, including myself, regards collective responsibility as something which exists, and when certain members of the gov-

ernment—and I am not entitled to speak on behalf of the Prime Minister, although I can follow his actions in this respect—opposed government decisions, they did not think that they had any alternative but to resign from the government or accept what had been decided....

In what way do you find that parliamentary democracy has been ignored? In the fact that a decision was made with which the Prime Minister disagreed and that he accepted the view of the majority? What is wrong with that?

I would like to mention in passing—though only here and now—the famous manifesto signed by distinguished persons—without inverted commas—and especially its first, and perhaps main, paragraph (incidentally, the entire manifesto speaks against “Ben-Gurion’s associates,” not against Ben-Gurion himself), which calls on all those who fear for democracy to fight the attempt to change the decision of the seven-man Ministerial Committee.

I am a member of the cabinet, and I have not heard anywhere in the government of any proposal to change the decision of that Committee. If mention is made of “Ben-Gurion’s associates,” they doubtless belong to Mapai, and if such a proposal exists it must be made in either the government or the Mapai Secretariat, i.e., a proposal must be made there in order to oblige the Mapai representatives in the government to raise it. In neither of those two institutions...was it proposed that we alter that decision. Some people disagreed with it—as I did and still do—but then one has the choice between remaining in the government or accepting the decision. If people accepted the decision I do not see any improper parliamentary procedure.

...As to placing the senior officer on trial...that does not contradict the decisions and conclusions of the seven-man Committee....I do not think that any member of that Committee, having reached its decisions, would have recommended that, had there been an appropriate law, the senior officer should not have been tried. There is a difficulty in this, however, since there is no appropriate law on our books. The question has been raised in various forums...as to why the senior officer is not placed on trial...There is no law which enables this to be done....

To the best of my knowledge and to the extent that I have followed the parliamentary steps of Mapai, the Prime Minister, the members of the cabinet and the members of the party, these were the contentions, and I do not see that there has been anything amiss. But that is not the point.

The most serious question is: what proposals are the members of those party groups making? There have been two proposals: MK Sapir has suggested that we set up a new government now, within the present composition of the Knesset. He claims that we have come to the end of the road, and that the time has come for all the parties, apart from the party which is grounded because of its 27 years of rule, to unite for one sacred aim, i.e., to establish an alternative government which will inaugurate

new elections and a Knesset which will be able to guarantee “stable democratic rule.”

That is an appropriate suggestion. It was made on January 16. Why does MK Sapir not form an alternative government? If he does not, it is not because there is something wrong with democracy or with parliamentarism or because Mapai has tyrannically gained control and will not permit this, it is because the public does not put its trust in him. He does not have sufficient Knesset Members who want to join that government. What is wrong is not something in Mapai or in democracy but in the fact that there was no response to the call “Follow me to save liberalism,” and trust was not placed in MK Sapir to form a government.

The second proposal, which is also appropriate in parliamentary terms, is to hold general elections. By all means. Two people supported that proposal, one directly and the other indirectly. Although MK Bader did not make that proposal he knows what would happen if elections were held. I am really surprised that, being so certain as to what the results of the elections would be, MK Bader does not propose elections. Because, in referring to the Affair...he said: “Of course, if Lavon had told the truth before the elections, the election results would have been quite different.” By all means, MK Bader, we can hold elections, Mapai does not have 61 Knesset Members. Any day, at any time, 61 Knesset Members can decide to hold elections, and there will be elections. It is not tyranny which prevents that. And now that the Affair is known, and you are so sure that the election results would have been different, no one can stop you from holding elections. If 61 people vote in favor of holding elections, elections will be held....

MK Sapir’s party decided officially on January 12 that: “New elections to the Knesset should be held, in view of the developments in the country around the Affair.” But MK Sapir did not bring this proposal before the Knesset....What is stopping Knesset Members who regard the current regime as “tyrannical,” “disintegrating” and “driven insane by power,” and all the public knows this, and when the Affair is known, what is stopping them from holding elections?

The only two direct parliamentary steps which can be taken when there is frank criticism of the ruling party are: to change the government or to hold elections. Those four parties are not proposing that we take either of those two steps.

I understand MK Sneh, who does not regard the solution to tyranny as changing the government through elections. There is a tyrannical regime, control by a military group; you undoubtedly wish to change that regime, but you undoubtedly do not think that elections are the way to do this, otherwise you would have suggested this. But what is stopping other Knesset Members, who do still think that elections are the way to change the government, from proposing that we hold elections?...If we hold elections, the voice of the Israeli public will be heard. Although MK

Bader holds a certain view, if I understood him correctly, as to what goes on within Mapai, because he said: "...In this Knesset, thank God, no party has a majority. And all the parties, except for one (and I would be correct in saying, even many within that one), want freedom in this country."

If that one party is Mapai, namely, that all the parties in the country and the Knesset, except for Mapai, want freedom...and even in Mapai there are members who want freedom, he continues by saying: "I therefore warn those who should be warned:"—I hope that I am one of those warned—"when this nation senses that an attempt is being made to deprive it of its freedom, it will insist on its rights. It will not succumb. This is not Sudan, it is not even Iraq." Thank you for the information.

If we go to the nation and suggest that elections be held, and the nation makes its calculations, and all Israel's inhabitants vote in a democratic parliamentary regime, and they know about the Affair, but they are also aware of the problems the country faces, and the residents of Beersheba, the workers of Haifa and Tel Aviv, will have to vote, in whom will they put their trust and in whose hands will they place control so that the country may be run in accordance with their problems and interests? Who has a chance to develop the Negev, with one Prime Minister or another? According to the clarifications made within Mapai—and it is no secret that within Mapai there are differences of opinion on both basic and superficial issues—neither from those who are on the other side, nor from those who disagree with Ben-Gurion have I heard a proposal that there should be a government headed by someone other than Ben-Gurion. Not even from those who disagree with him most vehemently, whether in the party secretariat or in the party's Central Committee, and I can assume that if a party conference were to be held, it would not be proposed there either. To the extent that Mapai, with the differences of opinion which prevail within it just now, would have to express an opinion as to who is currently the most fitted to head the government and the party, and maintain the present regime—it has discussed this, voted and decided—it has placed its confidence in Ben-Gurion. But there is nothing to stop this being brought before the general public. And if Mapai has to face elections, it will do so. That is the parliamentary way. But that course is not being taken. I presume that that is because people are not so sure that the public will not place its trust in the current government, even though it is "tyrannical," "disintegrating" and "driven insane by power," and regarding which the Affair is now general knowledge....Thus, the parties which make these claims but do not even propose that action be taken on them are in effect seeking to change Israel's regime by amending subsection (C) of section 7 of the Budget Law—which may be parliamentary but is preposterous.

Motion of No-Confidence by Herut and General Zionists

Introduction

The disarray in the Labor Party, reflected in the conduct of the Cabinet, was chosen by the two main Opposition parties as an issue on which a motion of no confidence should be submitted. In his opening speech, the representative of Herut no longer spoke of the Lavon Affair but of the Ben-Gurion Affair.

Sitting 220 of the Fourth Knesset

30 January 1961 (13 Shevat 5721)

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the object of the motion of no confidence which is before the Knesset is to give a parliamentary imprimatur to the fact that there is a mutual lack of confidence within the government.

This lack of confidence has been expressed by the Prime Minister and his ministers in a form, spirit and language which a member of the Opposition would not venture to use, fearing that the Speaker would condemn it as being unparliamentary. But he expressed his lack of confidence in the clearest way, in cabinet meetings, in statements to the press and in his address to his party's central committee. He also said something about all the ministers, except for himself and those who abstained from voting on the conclusions of the seven-man committee, which has not been said in this House, describing them as showing bias, contributing to the miscarriage of justice and failing to speak the whole truth. He obviously felt immediately that it is difficult to digest so serious a three-fold accusation as that, decided to retract and redigest and withdrew the accusation about "bias," although he left the other two. That they swallowed.

By expressing no confidence in his ministers, the Prime Minister has also declared a sit-down strike. In retaliation to this act by their Prime Minister, the ministers submitted their resignation. At the same time, however, they appeared to be declaring a sit-down strike. Despite the fact that their resignations have been submitted, they have not been put to the vote or implemented in any practical way. The government's resignation was initiated by the President of the State, at that special and unprecedented meeting in which he tried to reconcile the Prime Minister and his ministers. After that meeting, which was held at the

President's residence, the resignations were submitted once again, but it is no secret that they were resubmitted only at last week's cabinet meeting.

The lack of confidence exists. That is why the Knesset is asked to give parliamentary approval, thereby encouraging and helping a government which does not know how to get out of this mess. It must be told that a mutual lack of confidence means that the government resigns.

The other object of the proposal of no confidence, if it is passed, is to create the parliamentary conditions enabling a new government to be formed, taking into account the existing parliamentary forces in the Knesset, or by holding new elections for the Knesset, at the earliest possible opportunity....

Why do we need new elections? I think that that is easy to explain today. There is a new face in the mirror of the ruling party, Mapai, and its leaders, not in my eyes, but as far as it and the public is concerned. It has been revealed in a way which was unknown to itself, to its members and to the general public. I repeat, not in my eyes. In my view, not everything has yet been revealed. In my view, Mapai's true old-new face has not yet been shown. It is true that one of the intellectuals cried out bitterly: "Our nakedness has been exposed." But I say, not completely, only in part; not all of it, only some of it; not all the veils have been removed, only one of them has, and that not completely; and only from one affair, which has not yet come to an end. Not everything has been revealed of Mapai's new face; there are still secret files; there is still the file of the machinations; there are still the tapes; there are still notes; there are still photographs which were amassed diligently by the mechanisms, one man against the other. And once, as the phrase goes, things get to be too much for one or another of them, those secret files will be revealed. And then—and perhaps only then—will the full, clear picture of what is known as Mapai be revealed in all its glory.

One of the ministers was angry in the Knesset last week. He knows what Mapai looks like to the public, and he tried to do some plastic surgery to the party's face in his address, saying that he was speaking not as a minister or as a member of the government but as a Knesset Member. I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating him for his maiden speech as a Knesset Member, because if I am not mistaken, that was Mr. Dayan's first speech as a member of this House. He spoke here straightaway as a minister, in accordance with the best tradition of Greek democracy, thanks to the elders of Greece. He sought to defend what he called "Mapai's parliamentary democracy," causing me to wonder why he was rushing in at an open door.

We have many complaints to make about the Mapai party group and its policy in the Knesset. We have serious reservations about some of its members, but we have never accused it of those attempts or charged it with having done those things for which Mapai is currently being at-

tacked. If there is a threat to democracy in Israel, it is not because of the Mapai party group in the Knesset; it is because of the Mapai party group outside the Knesset. No one has accused MK Harzfeld of having given the order; no one has said that MK Guri planned a "putsch" (on the contrary, let him try and he'll see what MK Bader does to him). No one has claimed that MK Idelson whispered in Ben-Gurion's ear about "neo-fascist" plans during that period of 1954, when he was a citizen living at Sde Boker. No one accused the Knesset's typewriter and duplicating machine of having helped to forge letters or that false evidence was prepared here. All that was done, but by whom, MK Dayan? Why this eagerness to defend the members of the Mapai party group in the Knesset?

To date we have heard Mr. Dayan in this House as a minister; last week we heard him as a Knesset Member for the Mapai party group. But we have not heard him in the Knesset or the Knesset Committee as the former Chief of Staff. What surprised us throughout the period of the various and varied investigations concerning the Affair is the fact that Mr. Dayan did not appear in any institution, and above all not in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, to say what he had to say, make his contribution, give his explanation, submit his clarification, regarding what happened when he was Israel's Chief of Staff, regarding what he did then. He should have defended or examined his subordinates. We did not hear anything, MK Dayan. You know everything as Minister of Agriculture, as a Member of Knesset, but you know nothing as Chief of Staff. You know that MK Lavon appeared voluntarily before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee; the man who was Prime Minister at the time, MK Sharett, appeared of his own free will and his desire to serve the truth, to give as many answers as he could; MK Peres appeared before the Committee at his own initiative; even the Prime Minister appeared before it. You did not appear before it, Mr. Dayan. Why? Do you, the person who was Chief of Staff at the time, not know about the Affair?

(From the floor: He appeared.)

Not before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

(From the floor: He has appeared now in the plenum.)

I am glad that he has appeared now. I think that Mr. Dayan should answer the questions I am asking publicly, not as someone who is a minister today and not as a Knesset Member for the Mapai party group, but as the person who was Israel's Chief of Staff. His phrase thanking MK Bader for the information that the deed was done along the lines of actions undertaken in Sudan, not Iraq, was also extremely strange. You are wrong, MK Dayan; what MK Bader said was a conclusion, and you should thank Mr. Ben-Gurion for the information. It was he who said that "It was proposed to him that the deed be done in the spirit of what was done in Sudan, not Iraq." MK Dayan's generosity in saying that even people who are not members of Mapai may discuss the Affair is

stranger still. After all, there are people who are not members of Mapai who voted for it. Excuse me, Mr. Dayan, but MK Lavon was accused not as secretary of the Federation of Labor or as a member of the Mapai Secretariat; he was accused as a minister, as Israel's Minister of Defense. The "mishap" was made not by Solel Boneh, but by the IDF. The forgeries and lying were perpetrated not by officials in Mapai's Secretariat, but by senior officers. That does not belong to Mapai; that belongs to us, to each and every one of us. That is why your politeness in giving others the right to examine and interfere in this is quite superfluous.

Kindly answer me, Mapai Knesset Members: you say that you wish to depose Lavon—which is not my concern—not because of the Affair, not because of the "mishap," but because of the Lavon Affair of 1960. Tell me, please: if one should depose someone who in your view has harmed the party, what should be done to someone who has harmed the country—if not to propose that we express no confidence in him, at the least? Are you aware of the damage caused to Israel by the Ben-Gurion Affair of 1960? Do you know in what light Israel appears in the world press, in friendly newspapers like *Le Monde*, the *New York Times*, the *Herald Tribune*? Do you know how he presented Israel's government to the world? In all my years in the Opposition I have never reached a fraction of the accusations, and certainly not the mud-slinging, against the government of Israel as the Prime Minister did in the Ben-Gurion Affair of 1960.

What should we do to him? Express our confidence in him? Go down on our knees? Conduct revival meetings? Is that your conclusion regarding the man who caused such damage? I am not going into the party aspect now, but what should be done to someone who has damaged and is damaging the state? It is strange, I am really amazed sometimes in my quest to understand the workings of the mind of that man, Ben-Gurion. A person gives an interview to a foreign journalist and also says things from the Knesset podium to the effect that he is prepared to meet with Nasser at any time and in any place, but on no account and under no circumstances will he consent to be in the spiritual or physical presence of Lavon. What is this? Where will this kind of thing take us?

I am bitter not because I am defending MK Lavon. We have an account to settle with him. In this House, if there was anyone, apart from Mr. Ben-Gurion, who has always clashed with Herut, it was MK Lavon. But when I hear those things, they remind me of the deep schisms of the past....The Prime Minister will have to give a great many more explanations to questions which concern all Israel's citizens, not Mapai alone. On 2 October 1960 the Prime Minister informed the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee...: "I had no basis for accusing Lavon of anything while he was Minister of Defense." Then, suddenly, "machinations," two instances in which the Chief of Staff saved the country

from disaster, additional revelations. Will you allow this matter to spread in this way?

Mr. Speaker, regretfully I am obliged to say that, regardless of what the result of the vote will be, and I think that it is known in advance, if the procedural code allowed no confidence to be expressed in the Government without the Government falling I would receive 80 percent of all the votes—

The Minister of Agriculture, M. Dayan: A profound thought.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): There are those who have no confidence in the Government, yet still vote for it—that is an even more profound thought. What I want to say is that even if confidence is expressed by a show of hands—and there is no other way, I acknowledge that—I do not think that the conditions will be created for what the Minister of Justice calls the proper running of the Government. How can a government in this moral state deal with the problems confronting the country? How can this Government arouse the trust of the people? How can this Government attract capital? How can this Government regain the confidence of the younger generation? How can this Government ensure that the IDF is pure and purified, that it stands and will stand above everything? This is a Government which for several months has accused itself of everything which we hear today as an echo coming from the public.

David Hacohen (Mapai): You'll soon see the majority which supports this Government.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): I see the majority which supports it in the Mapai Secretariat. I know how the hands will be raised, I'll see that soon, but I said what I had to say knowing what I would see. Mr. Speaker, I propose that we put the motion of no confidence in the Government to the vote.

E. Rimalt (General Zionists): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, this Government...appears to be acting as usual. It holds weekly meetings and discusses current events, although since a certain date it has stopped dealing with matters of import in a rapidly-changing world. The Cabinet Secretary even publishes statements after the meetings, as usual....But is the Government really as usual? Is it the same Government after seven of its Ministers have chosen, from the wide range of colorful expressions, that formula of forgiving conciliation which they thought enabled them to forgive and forget the hard and hurtful words hurled at them by the great unknown, namely, the Prime Minister, who left his office and did not tell his colleagues when he would be back? He is silent. He takes his daily walk, and is silent. He reads books on philosophy, and is silent. The members of the Cabinet and the Coalition politicians are obliged to gather crumbs of information, asides made at table, slips of the tongue, private conversations, as reported by his military aide, in the most customary, simple and democratic way. Very

soon, if we use our imaginations, we will be able to see the Ministers chasing after the Prime Minister's entourage...in order to hear a hint as to what is happening...They will interpret his utterances with signs and wonders, as a divine voice issuing forth from the heights of his splendid isolation to the party-political vale of tears.

It has been said here twice that there is no crisis, but it is interesting that something which does not exist occupies most of the Ministers so fully; there is no crisis, but there certainly is running around, compromises and formulae. Meanwhile a great many things are happening in the world, and regular work is paralyzed. The non-existent crisis is a full-time job for many—as the Minister of Finance will testify. Another interesting point is that the party functionaries are deeply involved in an engrossing social game: a collective quiz. Will he return or not? When will he return? How will he return? On what conditions? What should we do to get him to return?

(From the Herut benches: Everyone will have to prostrate themselves.)

But the crisis continues. It has been ended on the sphere in which it did not really exist, the governmental-Coalition-parliamentary sphere, but its roots and reasons do not derive from the Government, they derive from Mapai, from what is happening in and around it. After the Prime Minister decided to stop regarding the conclusions of the seven-man committee as a matter of conscience on which no compromise or concession was possible, and conceded at the conciliation party at the President's residence, the crisis was transferred from the governmental sphere to the one where it belongs, the internal Mapai sphere.

This Government, which decided that there was no crisis, is not the master of its fate. It will not decide whether to continue existing or not, not even today in the Knesset. Only naive people think that when the majority rejects the motion of no confidence—and the majority will close ranks, despite the deep differences in foreign, domestic and economic policy, on the issues of wages, society and religion—the Government has been saved and will exist. It is not in Jerusalem that its fate will be sealed but in the hall where the Mapai Central Committee meets. Because the decision will be made on the basis of what the Mapai Central Committee decides about the future of Mr. Lavon. As if the majority in the Coalition, those of you who expressed confidence in the Prime Minister and the Government six months ago, made a specific condition that there must be harmony between the Prime Minister and his colleague in the party who is the Secretary of the Federation of Labor. Another condition is that if the idyll and mutual tolerance were to be infringed, the Prime Minister would be entitled to penalize the Government and punish it by taking an unlimited vacation until matters within his party were settled.

Who thinks about "the mishap," about the events of 1954-55, today? Who still thinks about the other half of the truth regarding which the Prime Minister accused the seven-man ministerial committee of having been prevented by incorrect considerations from understanding in full? Today everyone thinks about only one thing: will he be rejected? Will he be condemned? Straightaway? In another three months? That is what the fate of the Government hangs on, and the public knows it, the Knesset Members know it, the Government itself knows it.

We do not wish to exaggerate in describing the situation regarding democracy in Israel. We do not seek to make a mountain out of a mole-hill. But there are matters which give rise to grave concern. Mapai is a minority in the Knesset and the nation, not from today, but it rules. It is minority rule. It began many years ago, and the minority can rule with the help of partners who have managed to warm themselves at the glow of the overflowing body....

Mapai has not acted like another movement has. It has not published the engaging, poetic slogan that it has been chosen to rule. But all its deeds, behavior, arrogance, all its consecration of the means, have proved that it regards itself as having been chosen to rule by Divine Providence. Mapai is able to rule only with a very limited, united summit, providing a basis for rule by one person, and if that basis is removed, if there is a rift at the top and the sole leading personality threatens to resign, what happens? Then there is confusion and amazement, helplessness, senses grow dim, sense is lost and there is a great deal of running around. By what right does Mapai demand authority in the country if it proves that without its sole ruler—whatever and however great his qualities may be, and we have never denied Mr. Ben-Gurion's qualities, although we have not ignored the negative aspects of his leadership either—it is helpless.

MK Almogi who, as his party's elections organizer and Secretary-General, is a specialist in organizing panic in the country, announced a few days ago that without Mr. Ben-Gurion everything in the country would collapse. I do not know if he will deny this...but as a Jew, as a Zionist, as a citizen of the state, I do not believe—regardless of all his qualities and rights—that the state's existence depends on one man, whoever he may be, but I do believe Mr. Almogi in that his party is devoid of power and the ability to rule without its sole ruler. That situation must necessarily lead to the cult of leadership by a single personality.

Our political climate generates a public atmosphere which does not really favor the preservation and cultivation of democracy. Defense matters are precious and sacred to us all. But what has happened? A network of security "taboos" is developed and exploited. They cover and conceal a great many things which have no connection with defense or security. A member of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee

must not ask why a senior army officer resigned—those were administrative, personal and emotional matters.

Another habit which is not very democratic and has unsavory connotations is that retroactively, after dozens of years, terrible characteristics are discovered in our leaders. For many years Mr. Lavon was a leader of Mapai, a Minister in the Government, and many years later all his negative qualities are discovered. If all the time he was distinguished by these attributes, but no one cared to reveal them because they did not disturb anyone...what kind of party retains leaders with such characteristics...? And if Mapai was unaware of all the aspects of his personality, discovering them only at the meeting of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee in October or August 1960, what kind of party does not know its leaders and discovers their true nature only after 30 years?...I also heard that MK Galili was guilty of a breach of discipline 12 years ago and that he incited IDF officers to disobey orders. Who is next in line?

MK Dayan was the first to jump into the fray of the information campaign to defend his party and its good name. Like a doughty knight he jumped up, flaunting before the Opposition the outdated argumentation from the arsenal of weapons from the previous elections. What do you want? Elections? Why don't you propose a law that we hold elections? Then we'll see. He added that we may not be proposing elections because we are not so sure that the voter will not indicate his confidence in the present Government. I thank MK Dayan for the information that in elections to the Knesset one votes for the Government, I thought one voted for parties. It is possible that in his modesty and humility MK Dayan was referring to Mapai as the present Government.

MK Dayan, we have submitted and will submit a proposal that elections be held. Let us shake hands, you and your party, and undertake to hold fair elections. If you are sure that the public which expressed confidence in you and your party a year and a half ago will do so again, why should you contort yourself to sidestep the issue? Let's accept the challenge. We and Mapai constitute the majority in this House. Let us agree on elections.

But you will not agree to elections...You know and your party understands that all those who said yes to Mr. Ben-Gurion and Mr. Lavon...think otherwise today. You managed to bring intellectuals, poets and professors from laboratories and studies to caution and protest. You did even more: you brought our students out of their apathy. When the intellectuals and professors signed the Mapai manifesto they were the teachers of the generation; today they are idlers and unseeing playboys.

I will not argue with Mr. Dayan's disputativeness. In no institution did he hear of any attempt to annul the conclusions of the seven-man committee. I will not examine the acuity of his political hearing. But the

entire crisis in the Government until the party at the President's residence, all the threats of resignation and the statements by the Ministers, were only because the Prime Minister doubted the ability and maturity of seven of his colleagues, claiming that they were incapable of examining the entire truth and getting to the bottom of the first or second half. The whole fuss was because there was an attempt to ignore the issue and skip the conclusions.

...We waited until last week to express no confidence because we wanted to give the Government a chance to explain matters honorably, logically and democratically, putting a genuine end to the crisis in every sphere. Today the Prime Minister should have sat here with his colleagues, or...the Government should have drawn its conclusions and resigned. But this was not done. The conclusion of the crisis is merely an illusion. The focal point of the crisis has been shifted from the Government to the institutions of Mapai.

Is it possible now to express confidence in this Government? The majority in the Knesset may still be able to do so, but how can the public have confidence in a government which cannot determine its destiny, which has placed its fate in the hands of others, which does not know if it has a head or not, and if it has not, whether this is permanent or temporary. It does not know this itself. Its entire public and moral basis has been undermined.

We do not think that this Government is worthy and able to enjoy the public's trust. We did not have any confidence in this Government when it was formed. But today many think as we do. A government which does not know what will become of it, which waits for the next meeting of the Mapai Central Committee to decide its fate, which witnessed the near resignation of seven of its members, not to mention the letters of resignation written by many of its members, cannot enjoy the confidence of the public.

Mr. Speaker, we are fulfilling a public and parliamentary duty by proposing no confidence in this Government, whose public and moral basis has long been undermined.

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I can understand that the Opposition...is in a hurry. But I am certain of two points. Firstly, Mr. Ben-Eliezer himself...said that he was sure that...the majority in the Knesset would vote against his proposal. Second, I am sure that the vast majority of the public will express its negative attitude to the party in whose name MK Ben-Eliezer spoke if we were to compete again. The day will doubtless come, sooner or later, when this happens. The proposers of the motion mentioned two kinds of reasons. One concerns the Government, the other the dispute with Mapai. I do not think it appropriate for me to argue here on behalf of Mapai with the parties whose representatives spoke. I will say only that since certain things were said about the distant past, when I heard MK Ben-

Eliezer I remembered something from long ago, I remembered the pathos about the Zionist Shekel at the Zionist Congress.

...It also reminded me of more recent events, the stone-throwing in the Knesset. When people make accusations about the blemishes in Mapai, I cannot help remembering the past. You cannot expect me only to give you compliments and speak kindly. I know that there are unpleasant things, disagreeable memories. But if we are on that subject it is important to know why those people get so excited....Let us remember the wonderfully pure and democratic act of that party whose slogan is "Break the Labor Party in Israel and its Union."

E. Raziell-Na'or (Herut): What else do you have in your "storeroom."

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: Just imagine, MK Raziell-Na'or, I have various things. If you ask, I'll mention some other items when the time comes. I do not think that this is the time to empty the entire "storeroom," but the time will come....As to the national-governmental reasons...there is no truth in the assertion that the Prime Minister, as the person proposing the motion claimed, has expressed no confidence in the Government and the Ministers.

Y. Bader (Herut): According to what you said, that is a half-truth. Why is the Government here without its leader?

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: MK Bader, sometimes you don't even say half the truth. There is no truth in the assertion that the Prime Minister has expressed no confidence in the Government. Expressing no confidence is easily and simply done. The members of the Government were aware of the fact that the Prime Minister disagreed with certain steps which we members of the Government decided to take in the wake of the Affair. He had reservations about that course. The Government decided and took that course. The Ministers made their decision, and that is valid.

The sole judges in that matter, whether they were given confidence or not, whether their honor was wounded or not, must be those who were wounded, the Ministers and the Government. The fact is that the Ministers discussed the subject and reached their decision. There is no truth in the statement that the Government discussed the Ministers' letters of resignation. As to the disagreement with Mapai, I hope that the appropriate time and place will come for dealing with this....

MK Rimalt...spoke very loftily, apparently reminding himself of a certain affair. I was reminded of the verse: And Herut, or the General Zionists, asked why does the Prime Minister tarry in returning from his vacation? MK Rimalt doubtless knows how to finish the verse. And he proposes this to the Knesset! Please do not be in such a hurry!

The nation is able to choose its course. When the time comes, when it is appropriate and necessary to hold elections, for the benefit of the na-

tion and the state, elections will be held. I can assure you on behalf of Mapai...that it is not so dangerous to embark upon elections in dark and difficult times and to contend with the great and awesome power of the General Zionists. It is not so difficult. We still remember our history and the state's situation and development. How can one forget that and speak so haughtily here?

Were it not for the fact that we think that at this time the country should deal with more important subjects than an election campaign which will continue for months, we would go out and fight.

Y. Bader (Herut): MK Dayan thinks differently.

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: Mr. Dayan shares my view. If there are elections, we will compete. I do not wish to speak as a member of Mapai from this podium, I seek to respond as a member of the Government to the motion of no confidence.

Nothing has happened. The Government is apprised of all the major events which take place in the world and concern Israel. Both the Government and the Prime Minister know this. I have already said that when a Minister is on vacation in Israel (as the Prime Minister is now), the connection between him and his Ministry, and his colleagues...does not end. Thus, MK Rimalt can rest assured that matters are known....The Government is functioning quite normally. I therefore propose that we reject the motion of no confidence in the Government.

The Speaker, K. Luz: In accordance with the decision of the House Committee, instead of a debate, representatives of the party groups will submit statements. I give the floor to MK Rubin.

H. Rubin (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...as a party, Mapam is a member of the Coalition Government headed by Mr. David Ben-Gurion and will vote against the motion of no confidence brought before the Knesset by Herut and the General Zionists. Mapam cannot conceal...its concern at the fact that there are forces within us which threaten the democratic development of political life in Israel. These anti-democratic tendencies are expressed in various ways.

S. Yunichman (Herut): Are you referring to the General Zionists and Herut?

H. Rubin (Mapam): I repeat, these anti-democratic tendencies are expressed in various ways, including...the desire to deprive the Labor Organization...of its independent, working-class and constructive character...as well as the desire to maintain the Military Government, to impair the authority and status of the Knesset committees, to "free" the Government of parliament's control and the plan to make a minority in the nation the majority in the Knesset by a perverted electoral system

based on regional elections. The plan to put an end to the political career of the Secretary of the Federation of Labor, after his acquittal, is the gravest expression of the anti-democratic tendencies of the Coalition Government.

The developments of the past few months have created genuine anxiety regarding the future of Israeli democracy in the hearts of wide sections of the public. Workers and youngsters, intellectuals and students have been shaken, and all the "revival campaigns" could not conceal this....At present there is a reluctance on the national level to challenge the Government's legitimate and just decisions on what is known as the Lavon Affair, thereby assuring the existence of the Coalition Government.

Emphasizing its desire for true cooperation and its share of the burden of responsibility within the framework of the Government, Mapam will continue its struggle among the public, in the Knesset and in the Government to ensure the democratic character of the state and its regime.

I. Galili (Ahdut Ha'Avodah-Po'alei Zion): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members...my party group will vote against the motion of no confidence...because we congratulate the Government for bringing the truth out into the open, defending the honor of the IDF by revealing the guilt of individuals, which is not that of the entire IDF, and protecting our democratic way of life from an attempt to deprive the Government of its authority and reliability.

The Government of Israel has brought out into the open a truth which was buried for six years, has exonerated a man who was wrongly accused and had been a victim of anti-democratic personal rivalry. Anyone who thinks that the Government erred in bringing the truth into the open will naturally propose a vote of no confidence. But anyone who thinks, as I do, that the Government's decisions are legitimate and correct...will naturally vote against the motion of no confidence.

Y. Bader (Herut): He's attacking Mr. Ben-Gurion.

I. Galili (Ahdut Ha'Avodah-Po'alei Zion): When the Government's decisions were published on 25 December 1960, its authority and reliability were challenged. Had the Government and the Israeli public succumbed to that challenge the results would have been dangerous, undermining the foundations of our democratic life and obscuring the truth. But the Government of Israel was not deterred by that challenge, even though it confronted a serious crisis within Mapai. The entire Government upheld its decisions, reconfirming the fact that they were binding on all the Ministers, including the Prime Minister. Had the Government recoiled from the pressure of that challenge we would have had to express no confidence in it....

...Recent events have given Israel a moral and public shock. I permit myself to say that the Government of Israel stands firm and will stand firm not only by virtue of its Ministers...but also because of the public revival among its adherents...both the simple laborers and the intellectuals, whose natural instinct roused them up against the danger of the obscuration of the truth and the undermining of our democratic way of life.

Y. Bader (Herut): By whom?

I. Galili (Ahdut Ha'Avodah-Po'alei Zion): That revival is very dear to us....The recent events have strengthened the nation's faith in the IDF....No party, party group or individual is entitled to identify itself with the IDF and cast doubts on the loyalty of others....It is dastardly to project the guilt of isolated individuals onto the entire IDF...and I am glad that no such thing has been done in Israel till this day.

...We have recently witnessed a sad and very depressing phenomenon. After a person was acquitted of a trumped-up charge he was persecuted. On the surface, this does not belong in the Knesset, but the people's elected representatives sit here, and we therefore permit ourselves to say...to those who would depose the Secretary of the Federation of Labor: Desist! Do not cultivate in the nation the notion that the Secretary of the Federation of Labor cannot be someone who has been acquitted....Desist, lest you promote cowardice and submissiveness in the nation.

Recent events have revealed that if someone fights for justice in Israel and is prepared to endanger himself to do so, there is a response from the nation and the truth will eventually emerge. This affair could be the beginning of a decline, but it can also signify a change. Let us convert it into a purifying and cleansing crisis.

We therefore reject the motion of no confidence and call upon the Government to return to its constructive agenda, realizing that this combination of forces in Israel's Government, more than any other, can lead the country to its goals and defend its democracy.

I. Harari (Progressives): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, in a democracy there must be a government between elections. Taking note of the forces within this Knesset and the range of views represented in it, our party group maintains that the best government under the present circumstances is the current one. That is why we helped to form it, gave it our confidence and will continue to give it our confidence.

It cannot be denied, however, that things have happened in the country....It is known that a Coalition Government means a continual struggle and constant concessions for a common goal. That is why we have done everything possible to maintain this Government....

The Minister of Justice was never wounded by what the Prime Minister said. In a public struggle anyone may say what he thinks of some-

one else. The struggle was not because someone was offended, it was because of differences of opinion. The Minister of Justice said that because of the differences of opinion the Government ought to resign, but that was another point on which there were different views, and after the Prime Minister sent a letter in which he more or less apologized—

J. Shofman (Herut): Less rather than more.

I. Harari (Progressives): Views may differ, but he apologized and said that he accepted the struggle and the Government's decision. One must make an effort...since a Government is necessary, to ensure that it continues to function.

We do not conceal our concern, however. The Minister of Agriculture, who appeared here as MK Dayan, told us, and this is at present the only official announcement I have heard in the Knesset from Mapai, that there is no need to be concerned for democracy. I do not know what leads him to draw this conclusion and whether intellectuals are a good criterion or not. But something brought them out of their lairs after all. I have noticed something else, however...namely, that nowadays one has to be brave in order to say what one thinks. This was not always the case...and that causes concern to my party group regarding the future of democracy.

This may not be a party matter, and we will try to interfere as little as possible, but when we hear that the truth can be uncovered only by a legal Commission of Inquiry, and when this...becomes an Investigatory Commission and then a Central Committee of three hundred members...it becomes too reminiscent of the French Constituent Assembly, where the majority decided who was guilty and who was innocent, who would be executed and who would live, and, as you know, Danton, Robespierre and others were all executed by the decision of the majority. But that is not our concern, it merely alarms us regarding democracy.

MK Dayan's question regarding the alternative is a valid one. None of the other parties...can form a government, and we will therefore vote for this Government...Mapai cannot form a government on its own either, and since the establishment of the state it has never been able to do so. Despite the differences between us, and because of the views we share, we have participated in forming Israel's Government.

There are limits, however...and it is our duty to suggest that you abandon the Affair. Stop looking back in anticipation of future struggles. We warn you that we are doing our utmost to ensure that the Government is stable and functions in an orderly fashion, because the country has higher concerns than what happened in 1954....If these matters are not settled, we will be unable to express our confidence in the Government, although today we will.

I.M. Lewin (Aguda): Distinguished Knesset, our party group has not proposed a motion expressing lack of confidence in the present Gov-

ernment because we are not convinced that this is the time for motions which have no chance of being adopted. The Coalition parties have dragged the entire country into a terrible whirlpool, with its accompanying dangers. The current debate adds another layer to the general confusion. We do not wish to rub salt into anyone's wounds...and therefore have not proposed no confidence, but we oppose the present Government on principle, and since the motion has been proposed, we feel we must vote for it....

We have no confidence in the Government. Since the day it was formed we saw that it lacked unity and harmony. Recent events have proved that we were right. We have before us a Government of opposing viewpoints in which the various members despise one another and vilify one another in public. I am sure that most of the public in Israel is asking itself how this Government can continue running the country.

We have known inter-party strife in the past, but what we are currently witnessing is unrestrained intra-party discord, each man fighting the other. This comes at a time when we have not succeeded in solving completely any of the major problems confronting us. At a time when we are surrounded by enemies on all sides, we few are splitting while our many enemies are uniting. This comes at a time when immense forces support our enemies while the support of our friends grows weaker from day to day.

When the Affair was just beginning we said here that there were two things which have distinguished our country since its establishment—its stable democratic regime and its upright Army....But now we have disappointed all our friends throughout the world, unwittingly helping those who seek to make propaganda against us....How happy those who hate us are made by the Levantine phenomena of our internal dissension and political machinations....World Jewry is unable to comprehend what has happened to us....

...Under these conditions, how can we have confidence in the Government?...The Prime Minister claims that half the members of the Government reached biased conclusions, involving the distortion of justice and half-truths, and those people remain in the Government after a pretty phrase has supposedly restored their lost honor to them. What kind of government is it when the Prime Minister is on vacation and no one knows how and when he will return? I believe I am expressing the will of most of the public when I say that this kind of Government should not continue in office....We agree that the Knesset should be dissolved and new elections held.

...I am no judge and cannot say who is right in the Affair....We Jews who are faithful to our ancient heritage have been taught that one has to struggle to attain the truth. Believing Jews are taught self-restraint and moderation....Even if someone is in the right, that does not entitle him to destroy the whole world in attempting to prove this. On the

other hand, the Affair could have been prevented by settling matters in a fair and just way....

I am not one to rub salt in people's wounds, but I would like to ask Mapai, which is currently contending with deep internal conflicts, why it sought to destroy other parties...such as Agudat Israel, for example...? Now the leaders of Mapai are experiencing what we felt nine months ago, when they lured some of our members away from us....We are also in the midst of another "affair," namely, the slight to the Rabbinate....None of the assurances which were given us regarding the passing of laws to end violations of religious law in Israel have been kept....The religious status quo has been emptied of all content...and religious Jews ask themselves daily why the state is being destroyed because of the honor of flesh and blood, while the honor of Almighty God is disregarded utterly....

Mapai has known crises in the past and has managed to overcome them, but now it seems to be at a dead end. If you ask me how it has happened that the largest party in the country has come to such a pass I will say...that it is because no...Jewish organization can last if it distorts the nation's soul, and because there is no fear of God here, because we have forgotten what we are and what our lives should be and have forgotten...the original Jewish idea....If there is no central, unifying idea, and there are no ideals, the vacuum is filled by interests, money, luxuries, class and undue respect for flesh and blood....It is only by returning to our ancient sources and faith that we will overcome all obstacles, with God's help....I have only touched upon the matters which justify our vote in favor of the motion of no confidence.

M. Sneh (Maki): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, although the Knesset will doubtless reject the motion of no confidence...the public's lack of confidence in the Government is evident everywhere. Everyone knows that even within the Government, the Prime Minister no longer has a majority....The public base upon which Ben-Gurion's rule has rested all the years has vanished. This has been proved less by the speeches of the Opposition than by those of Ben-Gurion's colleagues. They could defend the Government only by attacking the Prime Minister, although without mentioning his name. They could explain their continued presence in the Government only by placing the entire Government in opposition to the Prime Minister.

...MK Rubin spoke in Mapam's name about the danger to democracy. He did not say where that danger comes from, but in his newspaper MK Ya'ari wrote about Ben-Gurion's associates: "They are doing everything to undermine the democratic regime and bring about total control by the individual and his supporters." And yet you remain in that Government.

MK Galili went further...expressing confidence in the Government because it rejected Ben-Gurion's ultimatum. Does that mean you are in

favor of a government without Ben-Gurion? That is something new even for the Opposition....The Zionist religious parties have chosen not to speak here, although in their newspaper they have written that the Affair is not yet over, and they have praised "the nation's condemnation of political excommunications." The Progressives have announced that they "nonetheless" support the Government. Do all these votes add up to confidence in the Government? Neither the public nor the members of the Coalition in the Knesset have confidence in the Government. The hands are still those of the Coalition, but the voice is that of the Opposition.

What has been revealed here...is not the shame of Mapai as a whole but the rottenness of Ben-Gurion's rule. Not only have criminal military escapades...been undertaken, not only has there been lying, perjury and forgery...there has also been a deliberate attempt by the Prime Minister to cover up for the person who erred and was convicted, as well as an attempt to punish someone who was not guilty and for six years was wrongly considered to be guilty...his sole "crime" having been to dare to fight to prove his innocence and condemn the escapade, the lies and the forgeries....No one attacked the IDF, neither Lavon nor anyone else. Only the person who defended forgers harmed the IDF. I must add...that we Communists have no connection with MK Lavon, nor do we owe him any gratitude.

D. Hacohen (Mapai): You do, you do—

M. Sneh (Maki): What are you saying, MK Hacohen? Do you think that everything which is wrong has to be said out loud? Maki proposed no confidence in Lavon as Minister of Defense three weeks before he went. Our party was the only one in the Federation of Labor which voted against his election as Secretary this year....We oppose his ideological line and he opposes ours. But under the circumstances, Lavon's dismissal would constitute the imposition of a decadent dictatorship on Israel, the Federation of Labor, the working class and public life. That is why anyone who cares for and is concerned about the future of democracy in Israel must oppose this deed....

We must think ahead and ask what has caused this attempt to gain hegemony, together with a group of associates, this endeavor to make a mockery of the democratic way of life, and this assiduous attempt at changing the electoral system? Because they are needed by a regime which intends to act in opposition to the nation's interests and desires....Ben-Gurion's regime is one which takes from the poor rather than the rich, which gives to the rich rather than the poor, which distorts the true meaning of defense...and which links Israel with regimes which are oppressive rather than those which liberate nations....This regime does not have the confidence of the people. That is why Ben-Gurion must go....This will help Israel to emerge from its international isolation and bring

peace nearer....Ben-Gurion must go, for the sake of peace, national unity, independence, neutrality, socialist progress and democracy.... Today's vote will decide nothing.

The Speaker, K. Luz: We will now vote on the motion proposed by Herut and the General Zionists to express no confidence in the Government.

The Vote

Those in favor of the motion of no confidence	26
Those against	77

(The motion is not adopted.)

Resignation of the Government

Introduction

Even though his Government had won the motion of no confidence by an overwhelming majority, Ben-Gurion submitted his resignation as Prime Minister to the President. According to law, the Prime Minister's resignation involves the resignation of the entire Cabinet. Once again, the Minister of Finance, Levi Eshkol, was selected to inform the Knesset of Ben-Gurion's decision.

Sitting 223 of the Fourth Knesset

1 February 1961 (15 Shevat 5721)

The Speaker, B. Idelson: Before proceeding to the motions for the agenda, we will hear the statement regarding the Government's resignation. I ask the Minister of Finance to come forward.

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I have the honor of making a statement on behalf of the Government. The Prime Minister submitted his resignation at yesterday's Cabinet meeting. As you know, the resignation of the Prime Minister means the resignation of the entire Cabinet. The President was informed of the resignation last night. In accordance with the Transition Law, 1949...this Government will remain in office and its members will continue to discharge their duties, within the framework of Coalitionary discipline, until a new Government is formed.

Y. Bader (Herut): I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, who is appearing instead of the Prime Minister...whether the Government agrees that the Knesset should debate this important statement?

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: No, sir. The Government considers a debate both pointless and tasteless.

Prime Minister's Application to the Supreme Court Judge Regarding the Meaning of "Bias"

Introduction

In an attempt to pacify Ben-Gurion, the Central Committee of Mapai voted on 5 February 1961, by a majority of 159 to 96, to depose Lavon from his post as Secretary-General of the Federation of Labor. Lavon submitted his resignation. On the same day a Mapai delegation proposed to the President that Ben-Gurion be entrusted with the task of forming a new Government. Whilst consultations between potential Coalition partners were being conducted, the Knesset was continually concerned with the Affair in various ways, one of them being illustrated below.

Sitting 239 of the Fourth Knesset

27 February 1961 (11 Adar 5721)

Questions and Answers

On 25 January 1961 MK M.B. Nissim asked the Minister of Justice:

On 17 January 1961 Mr. David Giladi wrote in *Ma'ariv*: "Yesterday Mr. Ben-Gurion met with Supreme Court Judge H. Cohen and asked him for his opinion as to whether the terms he had used ('perversion of justice, bias, half-truths') were as harsh and offensive as the Minister of Justice and the ministers on the seven-man committee had interpreted them to be. Mr. Cohen noted that at least one term—"bias"—indicated an unjust attitude a priori, and that the other two phrases could not be regarded as 'complimentary' either."

I would be grateful if the Minister could answer the following questions:

1. Has the Minister checked the veracity of the report?
2. Does the Minister not regard this as involving a judge in the Government's political crisis?
3. Are Ministers entitled to apply officially or privately to judges and ask for their legal, public or personal opinions for political or other purposes?
4. Must judges respond to Ministers' requests, if such are directed to them, to provide the aforementioned opinion? If not, should judges respond to such requests?

5. Does the Minister not regard this as a deviation from the principle of the separation of powers and the obscuration of the judicial function of the members of the Judiciary?

The Minister of Justice, P. Rosen:

I received the following information from the judge to whom the question was referred:

"Mr. David Ben-Gurion asked me in my personal, not my judicial, capacity about the true and original meaning of the term 'bias.' I gave him an oral answer on the spot, but he asked me to examine the matter and write a studied answer. The following day I wrote to him, telling him what I had said the previous day, though adding several Biblical references.

If a consultation of that kind can be called a consultation, it was a linguistic, not a judicial, one. Mr. Ben-Gurion did not think of requesting or obtaining political advice."

I assume that the distinguished questioner will agree with me that there is no basis for his concern regarding "involving a judge in the Government's political crisis," to use his phrase. The other questions do not arise, in consequence.

Security Procedures in the Ministry of Defense

Introduction

Ben-Gurion failed in his attempt to form a Coalition, and so informed the President. Since no other Member of the Knesset could be found who had a chance of putting together a viable Government, the President informed the Speaker of the House of the failure of his attempts, and the Knesset decided accordingly (13 March 1961) on new elections, to be held on 15 August 1961.

A few weeks later, on 28 March 1961, Dr. Israel Baer, a retired senior Army officer who continued to work for the Ministry of Defense and had access to classified documents, was taken into custody on charges of espionage.

Sitting 274 of the Fourth Knesset

17 May 1961 (2 Sivan 5721)

The Speaker, K. Luz: The Knesset will now proceed to motions for the agenda. I give the floor to MK Altman for a motion for the agenda on the subject of security procedures in the Ministry of Defense.

A. Altman (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, first of all I would like to say that although we are on the eve of elections and there are always party-political disagreements between us, it is not party or electoral considerations which have led my colleagues and myself to place this issue on the Knesset's agenda, but our genuine concern...for Israel's security.

A few weeks ago the public was suddenly told that Dr. Israel Baer had been arrested on suspicion of espionage. I do not recall an event which astonished and shocked the public as that did. Had it not been for the great trial currently being conducted in this city, and upon which the public's attention is justifiably focused, that issue would still be rocking the nation....This man has been described as "having known everything." The court will judge and decide....But the Knesset must clarify what happened, and how that man could have reached a high defense position with access to the most secret material...We must examine whether this was a case of negligence, what was the background and what were the reasons. Perhaps other surprises await us, heaven forbid. For quite some time now certain elements in the Government and the defense establishment have been accused of allowing secrets to leak via newspapers or books...and even Baer published secret material. I

am referring to the fact that people whose position does not give them access to confidential sources have published articles and even books because through favoritism they have been given confidential material.

The situation is very serious. A Great Power is fighting us in various ways and by various methods, apart from open warfare; it condemns us, incites others against us, gives large quantities of first-rate weapons to our enemies, supports them unconditionally at the U.N. and elsewhere, maintains a fifth column or columns in Israel, both open and undercover, and maintains various committees which arouse the minority within Israel against us.

I regard this as a matter of timing by the foreign Power. It was interested in having Baer's espionage, which had been going on for a long time, discovered at this particular moment, perhaps because we are currently having political and security problems, and also after trust was undermined by the Lavon Affair....That may be why it sought to strike another blow at us, further undermining morale within the country, or perhaps in order to ruin our foreign relations with parties abroad which were still friendly to us. We have learned...that, by virtue of his position in Israel, Dr. Baer had contact with various elements abroad....

This must be discussed in the Knesset because many subjects are being concealed from the public. For example, why has the name of the Power for which he spied not been published...? Why has the name of the person who was Baer's contact not been published, and why is he not declared persona non grata, as is customary in other countries? This is very important....I do not think this behavior is justified, and I reject the explanation that this has been done in our best interests. That should also be discussed. The public thinks that anyone who has helped our enemy in political and military terms can also hand over information, and that is why it is so shocked....

There are many reasons why a debate should be held....As a result of the Lavon Affair...trust in the ruling party and in those people responsible for the security of the state has been undermined....Many people claim that Mapai exploits defense matters for electoral and party purposes....We think that the situation is very grave and that public complacency and disparagement should be dispelled. We are acting patriotically by bringing the subject up here....This is something which is above party differences, and we fear for the fate of the country....The state's vital interests are above the sensitivity of the Government, the party and the individuals and Ministers responsible for what happened. The Knesset must discuss all this and draw its conclusions....A commission must be appointed to investigate the subject...so that there should be no recurrence in the future....The good of the state requires that my proposal should not be removed from the agenda because it is sub judice, or because a Ministerial Committee will be appointed....I know

that many people wish to save democracy in Israel, but it is more important to save the state.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, I would like to say in the previous speaker's praise that he spoke with a little more fairness and responsibility than others in his party and than his newspaper, which published an article which I did not read but whose headline I saw, and this was: "Dr. D. Ben-Gurion, Dr. I. Baer, Dr. K. Fuchs" (Dr. Fuchs being the atom bomb spy discovered in England). I am ready to believe that the speaker is not motivated by party considerations, but I do not think that this applies to his party and its newspapers....

...The public's shock also derives to a great extent from the fact that someone has been suspected of espionage....What is really shocking, however, is the tissue of lies and fabrications which certain parties and newspapers have deliberately built even before the matter has been brought to court. And one of those lies is that the person suspected of espionage was Defense Advisor to the Ministry of Defense, and that he knew everything.

I would like to say that I did not suspect Israel Baer of being a spy until I heard this from the Security Service. Israel Baer was never my Defense Advisor...my regular defense advisors are the IDF's General Staff. They are the only ones I consult, and I do not always accept their advice....On those matters I do not even consult my colleagues in the party....This man was never a member of the General Staff, and therefore was not one of my advisors. I assume that those people who spread that calumny knew it to be untrue, but used it for...election purposes.

...I know that the entire Israeli public is concerned for the country's security...and even if an article was published irresponsibly or by some oversight...the public is not unduly shocked....The public's concern for the country's defense is indicated by the fact that there are very few deserters, and when the reserves are called up there is almost one hundred percent response, and they do their jobs well and gladly. I have seen them, under adverse conditions, in heat and dust, in the mountains and the desert. They do their job with enthusiasm and dedication. They are the nation.

Had Dr. Altman said that he was not making a political issue of this I would have believed him. But when he says "we" I have to doubt that, because I know in whose name he is speaking....There are two issues here: first, a certain person is suspected of having engaged in espionage. That is a matter for the court, and neither the Knesset nor any other institution has the right to serve as a substitute for the court. Israel's courts have proved themselves capable of being trusted...as they have now done on a world level with the Eichmann trial....

Secondly...there is the problem of the procedures within the Ministries, and particularly the sensitive ones, especially the Ministry of

Defense, regarding the acceptance of employees. To the best of my knowledge, all possible precautions are taken. From the experience of large and more experienced democratic countries...we know that even they cannot prevent spies penetrating into the most sensitive places, even more so than those into which Dr. Israel Baer penetrated, if it transpires that the accusations against him are correct.

What was more serious for America and England during the Second World War and immediately after it than the manufacture of the atom bomb? And even there spies were discovered among the leading scientists. That does not mean that we must not reexamine whether the security procedures of all our Ministries require amendment.

The Government has appointed a Ministerial Committee to reexamine security procedures. I can assure MK Dr. Altman that no member of the Government opposed this reexamination. If a fault is revealed, it were best examined, although the Government has heard at length about all the steps which are taken....I do not accept the speaker's contention that we do not disclose the names of the countries for which spies work. I know that in certain countries this is the custom, but our position is unlike that of those countries, and that is why we cannot reveal the name of countries for which espionage is undertaken, even when we know who the person is with whom the spy negotiated. We have weighty reasons for doing so....

The Ministerial Committee...has begun examining the procedures adopted in the Ministries....I am sure that once it has finished its work it will submit a report to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. I see no benefit...in discussing this subject in the Knesset, and I suggest that we remove Dr. Altman's proposal from the agenda....

H. Rubin (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, I propose that in accordance with the Knesset's procedural code, we transfer...MK Altman's proposal to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. This is justified by recent events...such as Dr. Baer's arrest on suspicion of espionage....I do not wish to repeat what others have said...but we all know that the public has been shocked, and that this shock derives not only from Dr. Baer's arrest but also from information published in recent months. Articles have appeared in the newspapers indicating that their authors were apprised of confidential matters. These authors included Dr. Baer. These things shocked us even before Dr. Baer was arrested. They shocked us because we saw that confidential subjects were reaching even the press, via various channels.

It would be good, therefore, if the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee were to deal with the subject known as "Security Procedures in the Ministry of Defense." I concur with the view expressed here by the Prime Minister that we should not deal with matters which are sub judice. I think the way the matter was phrased by MK Altman enables the

Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee to tackle the issue productively.

I wish to avoid any argument on the issue at present...and refrain from expressing my views on what the other two speakers have said. I will only say that in my view my proposal is beneficial, assuring that this very grave subject is dealt with appropriately.

The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, D. Ben-Gurion: The last speaker said something which could mislead the Knesset, even though that may not have been his intention. It is not true that in accordance with the Knesset's procedural code the subject should be transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. Naturally, the Knesset may transfer anything to any committee, and may even set up a special committee, but saying "in accordance with the Knesset's procedural code" could be misleading, MK Rubin.

I do not know why MK Rubin used this subject to say things which have no connection with what is on the agenda...and I am therefore not required to reply to them....He forgot or ignored what I said about the Knesset being unable...to take the place of the court...and also disregarded the fact that the issue of security arrangements in the Ministries is being examined by a Ministerial Committee...which will eventually submit a report on its findings....There is therefore no rhyme or reason for MK Rubin's proposal, and I repeat my proposal that MK Altman's motion be removed from the agenda.

The Speaker, K. Luz: We will now vote.

The Vote

The proposal to debate the matter in the Knesset plenum is defeated.

Those in favor of transferring the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee	33
Those against	46

(The proposal is defeated.)

Israel-Diaspora Relations

Introduction

The relations between Jews in the diaspora and the State of Israel are of crucial importance to both and have been discussed at many levels. A fundamental exchange of letters between Ben-Gurion and the President of the American Jewish community dating from 1950 was published in 1961 and led to a debate in the Knesset.

Sitting 274 of the Fourth Knesset

17 May 1961 (2 Sivan 5721)

The Speaker, K. Luz: We now proceed to MK Rimalt's motion for the agenda regarding the joint declaration made by the Prime Minister and Mr. J. Blaustein of the U.S.A.

P. Bernstein (Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, it was, I think, on the night of May 1 that I found on my desk a surprising document which had been issued by the Government Press Office. It was a joint declaration by the Prime Minister, Mr. Ben-Gurion, and Mr. Blaustein. I confess that I had either forgotten or never known that a declaration of this kind was issued ten years ago.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Eleven years ago.

P. Bernstein (Liberals): But what is interesting about that joint declaration is that the partnership existed only on paper...because there was a declaration made by Mr. Ben-Gurion and one made by Mr. Blaustein. Mr. Blaustein said a great many things for which I cannot imagine that Mr. Ben-Gurion would care to take responsibility.

The surprise is first of all because the declaration comes just when the Zionist Executive is meeting...and secondly there is not only an agreement but even a law which grants the Zionist Organization special status vis-à-vis the Government of Israel. It could have been assumed that declarations of this kind would not have been issued without a prior discussion, at the least, in that joint body.

Thirdly, I admit that I heard this only post factum, at present Mr. Blaustein is only the Honorary President of an organization in the U.S. of which someone else is President. There is a body among American Jewry known as "The Presidents Club," which is a collective of the

leaders of Jewish organizations. It is considered to be representative and to speak on behalf of U.S. Jewry....

I must admit that I was surprised by the content of the declarations. But why this was timed to coincide with the meeting of the Zionist Executive, and a day or two after Mr. Ben-Gurion published an article against the Zionist Organization in *Davar*, is not clear to me.

...Mr. Ben-Gurion merely declared that the Government, or we, would refrain from interfering in the politics of American Jewry, and that we acknowledged their freedom to decide to immigrate to Israel, or not.... Luckily, all Mr. Ben-Gurion's admonitions to the Zionist Organization to make immigration to Israel mandatory have been fruitless.... Mr. Blaustein's declaration, particularly that of ten years ago, upon which the new one was based, contains many things for which I do not think anyone here, and certainly not the Government or Mr. Ben-Gurion, would care to accept responsibility. Mr. Blaustein declares that the Jews of America are merely of the Mosaic persuasion, and that nothing else links them or distinguishes them from other Americans. The declaration also states that nothing may be said or done to impair American Jewry's sense of security, and that American Jews vehemently oppose their existence in the U.S. being called exile.

But we, and I think this includes the Prime Minister, speak of the diaspora, namely, countries in which Jews live in exile. I think that no small part of Zionist thinking, of which I am sure Mr. Ben-Gurion approves, is based on the assumption that Jews in the diaspora are in exile.... What, then, is the meaning of Mr. Blaustein's declaration, which may be separate from that of Mr. Ben-Gurion but is still known as the joint declaration...? What value does it have? Is it needed in order to pacify American Jewry, and assure them that no one has any doubts as to their Americanness...? I think that, considering the confusion which exists in a great many minds on these subjects we should devote a special debate to this subject.

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Bar-Yehuda has a motion for the agenda on the same subject.

I. Bar-Yehuda (Ahdut Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I have asked for the full version of the Ben-Gurion—Blaustein Agreement, but have been unable to obtain it...and I am therefore obliged to speak here only with what the Government Press Office has published.... What lies before me may not be complete, but it is certainly authentic.

The document contains one item which is very interesting and true. It says that the matter arose "because...Mr. Ben-Gurion permits himself to express opinions...which are his rather than those of Israel's Government." That is true.... What I would like to know, however, is who issued this document and what is it? I have heard that Mr.

Blaustein is an attorney. If he is not, he undoubtedly understands something about drawing up documents. I also know that the Prime Minister has studied law and regards himself as being au fait with the interpretation of the state's basic laws....

...But for some unknown reason this document is defined in three different ways. In one place we read that this was simply a conversation. Mr. Blaustein came to Israel in order to talk to the Prime Minister.... Elsewhere we are told that the entire document is a "joint declaration." And in various other places the term "agreement" is used. Do you hear? An agreement between Mr. Blaustein, someone of whom nothing is known, except by Mr. Ben-Gurion, and the State of Israel. I still remember how many years of work...went into drawing up an agreement with the World Zionist Organization which could be approved. But here they sat, talked, and hey presto, produced an agreement, although this was followed by a statement saying: "Mr. Ben-Gurion in particular took it upon himself to do everything possible to ensure that this agreement will be observed in letter and spirit in the future, and to draw the attention of the members of the Government and other responsible Government officials to his hope that the letter and spirit of this agreement will be observed in full." I suppose that the Ministers will pay no attention to this, regarding it merely as yet another hitch. An inconvenient hitch, but one which concerns Ben-Gurion alone. But he is not a private person, he is our Prime Minister. In these circumstances a private hitch can also cause considerable political damage.

Mr. Ben-Gurion has informed Mr. Blaustein: "We, the citizens of Israel...have no aspiration or intention of interfering in any way with the affairs of the Jewish communities abroad." By what right does he commit himself in the name of "the citizens of Israel," and by what right does he make Mr. Blaustein the head of the Jewish communities in America...? He was not, is not and, I hope, will not be such. Suddenly, by intervention from here, he is made the spokesman for U.S. Jewry, and the Prime Minister of Israel signs an "agreement" with him and gives him publicity. We have already had a stern response from the representatives of many communities and large Jewish organizations in America...constituting the vast majority of organized U.S. Jewry. As for the Zionist Organization...this constitutes a continuation of the disregard for it and the search for a way to harm it publicly and weaken it, come what may. The Zionist Organization in America and the world is not as strong as we want and need it to be, and must be strengthened. Instead, it is constantly being attacked, not only on the level of prestige. An attempt is being made to make it look ridiculous, even in its association with Israel.

I do not wish to repeat what has already been said.... In the document which the Prime Minister signed Mr. Blaustein takes the liberty of addressing us, the State of Israel, and saying: "It is our duty, in a spirit of

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true friendship, to issue a warning to Israel and its leaders."...This deeply wounding, both internally and externally. It would seem that Jews of Israel must be taught that when someone with an attitude which is hostile to everything we have done in order to establish the State of Israel speaks, everything he says must be given approval. Now that the state has been established even Blaustein is not opposed to it any more and that is important, and we hope he will continue in this vein. Or perhaps we to understand that where a fighting anti-Zionist organization is concerned, the more anti-Zionist it is, the more acceptable and important it is, and it should be placed even above those demands which were the basis of Mr. Ben-Gurion's opposition to the Zionist Organization?... Mr. Ben-Gurion asked how the Zionist Organization could call itself Zionist if all its members did not immigrate to Israel, but we may not give advice about immigrating to the Jews of the diaspora according to "agreement." At the same time, however, Mr. Blaustein allows him to say, supposedly in the name of U.S. Jewry, that "In view of their influence and power, Jewish communities, and particularly U.S. Jewry, may offer advice, cooperation and help." Only we, as Jews, as the Zionist Organization, as the State of Israel, may not offer advice to Jewry. I say that we must offer advice. We cannot issue orders. Our laws are not binding upon them in the sense that if one of them does not act according to them and comes to Israel as a visitor we will bring him to trial. That will not happen, thank goodness. But we will do more. If we offer advice, we will make demands, we will educate.

In this respect the "Joint Declaration" constitutes a pinnacle of legislation against immigration and the development of the State of Israel, of which immigration is the basis. This declaration is signed, and it does not matter just now if it is an agreement between two private individuals or just a friendly chat or something else, by the man who is currently serving as Prime Minister and who states that he will obligate the Ministers to act in accordance with it.

It is important, therefore, to say to the Ministers from this podium that they do not act in accordance with this hostile document. Our laws are not binding and they do not allow us—even if we wanted to—to determine how we should act in the various corners of the world. But because of our historical undertaking, which we are continuing, it is our duty to demand, demand and implore that the entire diaspora participates in the continuation of our enterprise.

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Talmi has a motion for the agenda on the same subject....

E. Talmi (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I have signed the joint declaration and have concluded that on April 23 we witness a drama in the political arena. The dramatis personae: Mr. David Ben-Gurion and Mr. I. Blaustein; the place: the State of Israel; the time:

ing of the Zionist Executive; the roles: Mr. Ben-Gurion as Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Blaustein—I quote from the declaration—as "the representative of important circles in America with which he is closely connected," in other words, a private person. There is also the dramatic conflict: misunderstandings, doubts, statements which undermine the clarification of eleven years ago; there is also, of course, a happy ending: both sides will do everything possible" to remove that conflict. But for Mr. Ben-Gurion it is specified that he in particular has undertaken to do everything possible to ensure... "that the agreement will be observed in the future, and to bring to the attention of the Government"—which was consulted...as well as "responsible Government officials—his hope is that the letter and spirit (of the agreement) will be observed in full." Is this democratic? Mr. Ben-Gurion, as Prime Minister, sat with the Honorary Presidents of one of the Jewish organizations of one of the countries of exile—in other words, with a private person—and indeed an undertaking to instruct the Government—

Bar-Yehuda (Ahdut Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion): ...The document says America must not be referred to as "a country of exile."

Talmi (Mapam): I know. That is why I stressed the term....What Blaustein undertook to do is not clear. Together with the previous speakers, I express my surprise at the fact that Mr. Ben-Gurion signed the document.

Why did Mr. Ben-Gurion accept that role? He justifies himself by a statement in which he admits that the dramatic conflict, i.e., the misunderstanding, derives from the fact that "he had expressed views which were his own personal ones rather than those of the Government of Israel."...That really is a touching confession....But if Mr. Ben-Gurion as an individual does not respect his colleagues in the Government, if he does not respect them as a signatory, how can he expect them to respect this agreement...? The Prime Minister took the right to speak in his private capacity...and did not consult the Government before doing. In my view, this declaration constitutes another link in the continuous chain of the Prime Minister's assault on democracy, by signing the Government on questions of internal and foreign policy security....

The declaration also states that everything—the spirit of friendship, the frankness and the spirit of the agreement—shall be as it was. I say that this is not so, because things have changed. In 1952, two years after the agreement, the Knesset passed a law regarding the status of the Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency. This law, which is fairly modest, stated, amongst other things: "The State of Israel extends the participation of all Jews, as individuals and groups, in the running of the country and their help in mass immigration to it, requiring it as necessary for all Jewish communities to unite for this pur-

pose." The law also states: "The State of Israel expects efforts to be made by the World Zionist Organization to attain this unity." The law was signed by David Ben-Gurion and Joseph Sprinzak....

The Zionist Organization operated on the basis of that law for nine years, initiating and creating Jewish representations in the U.S. It justified the Israel Government's expectations and established a "Presidents Club," comprising 16 Zionist Jewish organizations in the U.S. and 15 others, headed by a representative of B'nai B'rith, a non-Zionist organization.

There is another, exceptional, organization, which refuses to acknowledge the general representation. Moreover, the declaration issued by the person speaking on behalf of that organization indicates that it does not recognize the unity of the Jewish people; and that is what our Prime Minister signed. That organization is entitled to keep itself apart...but in that sense its position has changed since 1950.

...In these new circumstances the meaning of the agreement has also changed. Mr. Blaustein is entitled to act as he wishes, but Mr. Ben-Gurion is not entitled to sign an old agreement under new circumstances without consulting his Government. In 1950 that agreement did not run counter to the law of the land, because that law did not exist. In 1961 it does. That law is not binding on Mr. Blaustein, but it is on Mr. Ben-Gurion.

...We must be patient. The Jewish people is still on its way, still at the beginning of its way, still continuing its wanderings, whether it admits that or not. We seek to hasten the end and bring the majority of our nation to Israel, and that is why every Jew anywhere is potentially a citizen of Israel as far as we are concerned—including Mr. Blaustein. For us, by virtue of the Law of Return and the law regarding the status of the Zionist Organization, every Jew carries the baton of Israeli citizenship in his knapsack.

The State of Israel may accelerate the process by its very existence...but it also creates a sense of security, that everything is normal. That law was timely. Because the State of Israel cannot operate outside its borders the Zionist Organization was granted legal status....It is regrettable to see that in 1961 the Prime Minister of Israel grants favorable treatment to a small, non-representative organization which acts contrary to that law....And I ask, where are you going, Mr. Ben-Gurion? Once you said: "From a class to a nation." Does the path lead now from a nation to "certain circles," with which Mr. Blaustein is not officially connected but has "close ties"?

The only explanation I could find for the urgency with which the agreement was renewed was the meeting of the Zionist Executive, and this could be interpreted as provocation....We therefore propose that a debate be held on this declaration.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Gentlemen, I will say outright that I do not oppose a debate. If a debate is held I will have something to say about the desecration of the concept of Zionism and its historic content....As to what has been said here, the last speaker merely repeated what MK Bar-Yehuda said, with some artistic dramatization....She added, however, that there had been an assault on democracy. This comes from someone who does not believe in democracy in principle, regarding it as...reformism and a travesty of revolutionary socialism based on the dictatorship of the Communist party....

The first speaker noted, correctly...that the association was one which had been sealed in blood. There were two declarations, one issued by myself and the other by Mr. Blaustein. I know as well as the three speakers...that Mr. Blaustein does not represent U.S. Jewry. It is not the first time I have spoken on various topics with Jews in America....I met that man eleven years ago, and I know that he is not a Zionist. Even those U.S. Jews who are called Zionists in America are not Zionists in my eyes. I know, however, that the organization which Mr. Blaustein represents has as much political influence as B'nai B'rith....The declarations which he and I issued eleven years ago were not identical, though they had much in common...but they cannot be termed "an agreement...."

I told him that we welcomed him as a representative of U.S. Jewry, which had supported us materially and morally in our enterprise...that we were proud of our recently-won independence and our endeavors to build a just society for Jews everywhere...that we regretted the misunderstandings which had cropped up regarding Israel's relations with U.S. Jewry...that we regarded that Jewry's primary allegiance as being to the U.S...and that Israel spoke only on behalf of its own citizens and had no intention of interfering in the affairs of Jewish communities abroad, holding in high esteem U.S. Jewry's ability to develop its own cultural and economic life...that we rejoiced in the deep and reburgeoning interest of U.S. Jewry in our undertaking here, the success of which depended to a great extent on the power and support of the great Jewish community of America...that we would like to see U.S. Jews coming here to live and share in our work, since we needed their technological training, their unparalleled experience, their spirit, initiative, courage and knowledge...but that the decision to immigrate or not was for each American Jew to make for himself...and that, knowing U.S. Jewry, I was convinced that it would long continue to make a great contribution to our endeavor. There is no reason for me to retract a single word of what I said then.

MK Talmi claimed that that was good then but the law regarding the status of the Zionist Organization which was passed by the Knesset in 1952 has changed the situation. There is nothing in that law which contradicts...what I said to Mr. Blaustein in 1950, and which I said on vari-

ous occasions to other Jewish bodies in America, including Zionist ones, who do not wish to regard America as exile and who regard themselves as part of the American nation....

...I do not question MK Talmi's undoubted dramatic talents, but I do query her juridical ability if she found something in the law regarding the status of the Zionist Organization which runs counter to what I said in 1950.

E. Talmi (Mapam): It prohibits negotiations with an organization—

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Just a minute, let me speak, I'm coming to that. Section 1 of the Law reads: "The State of Israel regards itself as the creation of the entire Jewish people, and its gates are open, in accordance with its laws, to every Jew who wishes to immigrate to Israel." It would be a mistake...for MK Talmi to confuse that with the Law of Return, which I regard as Israel's basic constitution...and the basis of its existence....It may not be formally regarded as a constitution, but more than anything else it expresses Israel's special and unique nature.

...Section 5 of that law, upon which MK Talmi hung her argument, states that the Jewish nation should be united and that the ingathering of the exiles is the prime mission of the State of Israel. In recent years, regrettably, this does not appear to have been the main object of the Zionist Organization....If U.S. Jewry regards itself as first and foremost American...it cannot describe itself as "Zionist." For sixty years that word had a revolutionary meaning, signifying the concentration of the Jewish nation in this country. And anyone who says Zionism is "helping Israel," as the American Jews have expressed it, is mistaken....

...The law regarding the status of the Jewish Agency obliges the Zionist Organization to attain the unity of the Jewish people...but it cannot force its members to immigrate to Israel....Nevertheless, Jews all over the world are united in their desire to help Israel....

Mr. Bernstein considered the timing to be bad. It just so happened that that gentleman's visit coincided with the meeting of the Zionist Executive, and what I said to him eleven years ago was known, and was said with the backing of the entire Government....Our guest said that the statements made by members of the Government and others who visited America had aroused concern among U.S. Jewry....He asked me if what I had said then—and which the Government has never opposed—was still in effect. I said that it was....

...I know that there is a Presidents Club in America. It does not represent all U.S. Jewry either, Mr. Bernstein. The tragedy is that not all U.S. Jewry is organized, and no one can speak in its name. Anyone who claims to do so may mislead people who are not familiar with U.S. Jewry. But I do know U.S. Jewry, not only from the time when I was

obliged to live there for three years, but from frequent visits, and I know that no one can speak in its name.

American Jews—even American Zionists—are divided in their views....Leaders can speak only in the names of the organizations or groups or people they represent. It is not true, Mr. Bar-Yehuda, that I have claimed that Mr. Blaustein or anyone else speaks in the name of U.S. Jewry, and...Mr. Blaustein has himself said that he does not....

But they are Jews. They have some value. They may not immigrate, but neither do the Zionists. They may speak only English, but so do the Zionists. The Jewish organization in America which concerns itself with Jewish education is B'nai B'rith, and I esteem it very highly, and I wish the Zionists would do likewise....Orthodox Jewry does this anyway, and there is no doubt that Orthodox Jewry in the diaspora is a bastion of Judaism.

M.B. Nissim (Liberals): In Israel too.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Well, there are differences of opinion on that score. I know of Jews in Israel who are not Orthodox and are no less Jewish than you, Mr. Nissim, and they have nothing to learn from your Judaism. But abroad, that is true....

...If Zionism has content, and that is the return to Zion—I am a Zionist. If Zionism means living in Israel and building it—I am a Zionist. But now that is not what it means. It has been said that we cannot compel people to immigrate to Israel. One person cannot compel another, but he can compel himself....It has also been claimed that the Zionist Organization is being weakened....There was a time when the Zionist Organization was very, very small, numbering only a few thousand members, but it was strong because it had a revolutionary idea, which Herzl expressed as "Zionism is the Jewish people in the making." Today the Zionist Organization rejects that idea...it does not demand that its members immigrate to Israel....The revolutionary idea has been dissipated and the Zionist Organization—first and foremost in America—denies it....

...The American Jews regard themselves as Americans...while the Jews of Russia and Poland never identified with those countries....And when speakers come to America and warn of pogroms, that is something which U.S. Jews do not like to hear. The only force which can draw them here is our pioneering enterprise. As long as there is no movement of, or commitment to, personal immigration the Zionist Organization does not have the right to call itself Zionist. That is my firm belief, and always has been. Before the state was established one could not demand that every Zionist immigrate to Israel, because the gates were closed. Now there is the Law of Return and Israel's gates are open to every Jew. The exit gates are not open in every country, though in

most they are, and the majority of diaspora Jewry lives in the U.S. today.

M. Begin (Herut): The agreement with Blaustein says that the allegiance of American Jews is to their country.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Their political allegiance. Are we entitled to impose laws upon them?

M. Begin (Herut): Of course not.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: That was the agreement, that was the declaration, and this is the truth. The State of Israel speaks in the name of those people who live here but not in the name of those who do not....Because of the crucial importance of this issue, I would like the Knesset to hold a debate on it.

...

The Speaker, K. Luz: ...After the Prime Minister's statement I do not think that there is any need to vote. There is a joint proposal that the subject be debated by the Knesset. How this will be achieved, given the short time remaining to the Knesset, I do not yet know, but the Praesidium will discuss this.

D. Hacoheh (Mapai): I suggest that we vote nonetheless.

The Speaker, K. Luz: I accept MK Hacoheh's suggestion and put the proposal to hold a debate on this subject to the vote.

(The proposal is adopted.)

FIFTH KNESSET 1961-1965

Israel's Vote at the U.N. Regarding Sanctions Against South Africa

Introduction

The perennial subject of apartheid was again discussed by the U.N. General Assembly in 1961, at a time when the winds of change in Africa, the wave of decolonization, was reaching its peak. Israel was pursuing a course of establishing friendly relations with the newly independent countries, and this was crowned with considerable success. In the Political Committee, together with most of the Third World, Israel voted for sanctions and condemnation. The Israeli dilemma between considerations of moral principle and collective Jewish self-interest, on the one hand, and the constraints imposed by the existence of a large, exposed Jewish community in South Africa which might be held to ransom for Israel's conduct, and by past demonstrations of friendship from the South African Government, on the other, is well illustrated in the mini-debate which follows.

Sitting 34 of the Fifth Knesset

27 November 1961 (19 Kislev 5722)

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Ben-Eliezer has tabled a motion for the agenda on the vote by Israel's delegation to the U.N. in favor of imposing sanctions on South Africa.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, our proposal to discuss the vote by Israel's U.N. delegation in favor of sanctions against South Africa, a country with which Israel maintains friendly relations, was submitted the day after the vote. Meanwhile, the stance adopted by Israel has led to a reaction from the Prime Minister of South Africa, requiring a counterreaction from every free individual in Israel and the world.

The Prime Minister of South Africa should have known that since the establishment of the State of Israel Jews are not and will not be hostages anywhere. The State of Israel is independent in its decisions and sovereign in its actions. Any attempt to place responsibility for Israel's sovereign actions on one group of Jews or another constitutes a grave violation of human rights and severely impairs the relations between countries. What would the world look like, what would be the relations between countries and the fate of various minorities living in different countries, Greeks, Dutchmen, Irishmen, Italians and others,

if they were regarded as hostages for the actions of their countries of origin? Not only the State of Israel will know how to preserve its sovereignty, the Jewish communities wherever they live will know how to defend and preserve their rights as citizens of those countries.

While we categorically reject the approach of the South African Prime Minister as it was expressed in the letter sent in his name, we feel it is our duty, with regard to the interests of the state, to propose that the subject be discussed by the Knesset.

In its struggle to throw off the yoke of a foreign ruler, the Jewish nation and its youth encouraged and set an example for the liberation of the peoples of Africa. Our worldview leads us to reject unconditionally any regime or policy which represses nations or discriminates against races, religions and beliefs. Israel has contributed and will contribute in the future to every activity intended to end the repression of and discrimination against peoples and groups, in accordance with its principles, strength and ability. But Israel is not like any other nation which has fought for and achieved national liberation. Its struggle for national survival continues. It is still engaged in a war which has been imposed upon it by its neighbors. That is why it is Israel's first task to keep those friends who have demonstrated their friendship during the difficult stages of our struggle to survive....While we welcome the attempt to acquire new friends, we must remember that this cannot be done at the expense of...countries whose friendship has been proven during the thirteen years of our existence. Denying friends is a negative policy which could be dangerous. We have ourselves been victims of that policy on more than one occasion. In our struggle for independence and security, Israel has been unjustly condemned several times in U.N. resolutions, and was even the first country slated to have sanctions imposed on it. Very few countries supported us at that testing time. The imposition of sanctions is the nearest thing to declaring war on a country, short of sending troops against it. It places a country under siege, isolates it completely and could lead to bloodshed. Consequently, Israel must be especially careful in voting on resolutions of this kind...and must make sure that no other course is open....

Israel's delegation voted in favor of imposing sanctions on South Africa together with the Arab countries which have imposed sanctions on Israel for the last thirteen years without eliciting any reaction from the U.N. or any attempt to end acts of hostility against us. Israel's delegation did this while the countries with which it voted declare that they maintain a state of belligerency with us....Our delegation voted to impose sanctions on a friendly country, to end racial discrimination there, together with countries whose regimes are based on racial discrimination...slavery...and a disregard for human rights....Such countries as...Saudi Arabia, Egypt and others do not seem to us to be partners in this campaign, and we should have voted against it.

Those countries, with which we voted, are still attempting to organize a front in order to reimpose sanctions on Israel. Our delegation's vote constitutes a serious precedent, which we should have avoided creating. Israel had and has various ways of expressing its fundamental opposition to racial discrimination in any country. In this particular case our delegation could have found itself in any one of the three camps: the bloc of countries which voted in favor of imposing sanctions on South Africa, the dozens of freedom-loving countries which voted against the resolutions or the countries which abstained, including countries known for their internal freedom, such as Uruguay and Mexico. Israel chose the first camp, which included countries based on discrimination and countries whose avowed objective is to destroy Israel.

...The vote took place in the U.N.'s Political Committee. The issue will come up again in the plenum of the Assembly. The object of the debate which we propose holding in the Knesset is to bring about a change in Israel's position prior to the vote in the plenum and to abstain on the vote. This would not be the first time the vote in the plenum differed from that in a committee. Many countries have done so in the past when it became clear to them that an injustice had to be righted; and this injustice should be righted.

Mr. Speaker, I request that the Knesset debate the subject.

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Lorincz has a motion for the agenda on the same topic.

S. Lorincz (Aguda): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, my party group proposes that the Knesset discuss our delegation's vote at the U.N. on the subject of South Africa, in order to clarify our stand as regards both this particular matter and future votes on the subject....

I would like to make it clear that we oppose racial discrimination. I am sure that there is no other nation in the world which has suffered as much from racial discrimination as the Jews, ranging from the first Hebrew who was thrown into the fiery furnace by Nimrod to the six million of our brethren who were burned by the Nazi madmen in the ovens of Maidanek and Auschwitz in our day.

Our holy Law opposes racist laws of any kind...."And God made man in His own image" refers to every man, without exception....

It is also evident that we desire true friendship with the nations of Africa and Asia. We are close to them geographically and practically. We are all young countries and share many problems. Strengthening the ties between us will benefit us all. We are also aware of their justified sensitivity to racial discrimination, and of the fact that the Arab countries will grasp any opportunity to turn this against us.

But despite all this, the...vote by Israel's delegation is unjustified and contradicts several of our principles. First of all, it contradicts the Government's principle...of maintaining friendly relations with all

countries, regardless of their internal regime. Without that important and wise principle we would be unable to have friendly relations with many countries. We wish to make peace with all the countries of the region, including those which engage in the slave trade and sever the hands of thieves. How, then, can we understand a vote in favor of imposing sanctions and cutting off diplomatic relations when these concern a friendly country which has stood by us in difficult times?...That is gross ingratitude. How can we vote against discrimination in South Africa when one of the members of the U.N. advocates not only discrimination when it comes to Israel, but even total annihilation?

...Israel must take pains to refrain from harming the Jewish communities of the diaspora. Without going into the problem of dual loyalties and citizenship, something which in my view does not exist at all, it is obvious that there is a strong tie between the Jews of Israel and the diaspora. Just as we demand that the Jews of the world—without violating the laws of the countries where they live—should consider us and act on behalf of Israel, we must also consider them, and we cannot ignore consequences when determining our policy on international issues.

We are a special nation also by virtue of the fact that only 15 percent of us live in our land, while 85 percent are still scattered throughout the world....That is why we must be particularly sensitive to the fact that decisions we make on international issues could be harmful to a given Jewish community. Naturally, we are not justifying the fact that the way Israel votes affects the Jews of the diaspora. That is an unacceptable approach, which derives from racism, and I would like to take this opportunity to dissociate myself from what the South African Prime Minister said, if that was what was published.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: He has dissociated himself from it.

S. Lorincz (Aguda): In effect, we must take reality into consideration, whether it is just or no. We must explain our special position to the peoples of Africa, even though this is not easy to do....Our friendship can extend to providing guidance and technical aid, even to loaning experts, although they are scarce here, but not to endangering our Jewish brethren in the diaspora.

Our clear view on the subject of racism was reflected in our vote condemning it, and if that is not enough there will be no end to the thing, because there will always be extremist proposals which we will be unable to support, and we will fall between two stools. We have already gone further than the other democratic countries like England, the U.S.A. and the Scandinavian countries, we have gone further even than India, whose great leader Gandhi was first thrown into prison in South Africa, when he led civil unrest there....Is it not fitting that the Knesset debate our vote at the U.N., particularly in view of our special interests...?

"Speech is silver, but silence is golden," the proverb goes....Resolutions passed by a U.N. committee or even the U.N. Assembly have no power to change anything. Only resolutions of the Security Council are binding, and this resolution cannot be passed there because certain of the Great Powers which oppose it have the veto. The nations of Africa must realize that even if one should make an effort and make sacrifices in practical matters, we should not be expected to do so simply as a demonstration. We must accept the fact that we are a special people, with our own special problems, and we do not have to take a stand on every international issue.

Our conclusion is that it would have been better—and it will be better when the subject comes before the Assembly—to abstain, both in this specific instance and in general when subjects of this kind come up. A diplomatic trick does not outweigh the risk that a Jewish community in the diaspora might be harmed. This...is a weighty subject which should be debated by the Knesset....

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, Knesset members...I think that in what they said the previous two speakers ignored Israel's moral heritage, the needs of our people in the diaspora and our international position.

For thousands of years we have experienced racial discrimination, and we cannot be impartial to a regime which adheres to this policy in such an extremist way that it is liable to be a stumbling-block to those who advocate it.

We acknowledged the courage of the Boers in South Africa when they fought for their freedom against the British, the mightiest power in the world at that time, and we will never forget the great moral and political help accorded to us by one of South Africa's greatest statesmen, General Smuts, at the end of the First World War. We will not show ingratitude to his heirs, and I am sure that were General Smuts alive today he would be strongly opposed to the discriminatory policy of his country. He would undoubtedly have realized that, apart from the moral reasons, the new reality of Africa—the liberation of all the nations which were subject to colonial rule for dozens or hundreds of years—endangers a country which maintains a policy of racial discrimination.

We are convinced that that regime threatens the people of South Africa itself, and that the U.N. Assembly had to raise its voice against that discrimination. We would not have been true to ourselves, our moral heritage and our international position had we not joined the U.N. Assembly's protest.

...Our Law tells us: "God created man in His own image," and I am sure that neither of the previous speakers believe that God—who has no corporeal substance or verisimilitude—is white or black or brown, or that a person's color determines his worth, honor, rights or status.

Our Law also tells us: "If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt."

The House is doubtless aware of the story of the Negro woman whom Moses took as a wife and of whom Miriam disapproved, for which she was immediately punished. "And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman." "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow." "And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee." "And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days."

It is true that most of us are white; but we have suffered from the white man perhaps more than any non-white nation. Until fourteen years ago nobody cared what we thought about international relations, since for two thousand years we had not been an independent nation. But now we are a nation with equal rights and obligations in the family of independent nations. We do not delude ourselves that the United Nations really is a united forum of nations, that its Charter is actually binding on its members and that the Assembly always acts in accordance with the Charter.

We know that among those who voted for the resolution were countries which violate the U.N. Charter themselves, flagrantly disregarding the binding resolutions of the Security Council as well as the recommendations of the Assembly....The closure of the Suez Canal to Israeli shipping, in opposition to the Security Council's resolution, the boycott of Israel by the Arab countries and their refusal to recognize our existence, constitute a blatant, continued and ugly violation of the U.N. Charter. The slave trade which is still conducted in one of the Arab countries which is a member of the U.N., the capture of African Moslem pilgrims to Mecca and their sale in the slave market of Saudi Arabia, are a blot not only on that country's record. But Saudi Arabia's crimes do not justify South Africa's policy of discrimination; Israel's representatives at the U.N. would have been denying our moral heritage if they had failed to raise their voices against the regime of racial discrimination, which is harmful and perhaps even dangerous for...the South African people itself, and I have no doubt that among that nation there are people of conscience who oppose that regime with all their moral strength.

Israel's delegation refrained from voting to expel South Africa from the U.N., but we would have been denying both the moral imperative of Judaism and Israel's essential interests in the diaspora had we failed to join all our friends from five continents in voting for the condemnation which was accepted by the U.N. Assembly. The nation which rules

South Africa is part of the Dutch nation, sharing a common origin, race, religion and language, yet the Dutch Government voted for the condemnation. Could Israel, which has known so much suffering, discrimination and racism...remain indifferent to the unfortunate regime of discrimination in South Africa?

Israel speaks only on behalf of its inhabitants, but it does not... ignore the fate of our brethren in other countries, and we cannot give opportunities to enemies who seek to restrict the rights, position, freedom and human dignity of the Jews in various countries.

The State of Israel cannot and must not disregard the feelings of its friends in Africa, Asia and elsewhere, who would not have understood Israel's failure to join this protest.

Those were the three considerations governing our delegation's vote at the U.N.

In this quarrelsome world it is difficult to take any step which has the approval of the whole world. Our nation does not hate any other nation and we desire peaceful relations with all countries, regardless of their internal regimes. That does not mean, however, that we can or should remain indifferent to an unhappy regime of discrimination which harms those who discriminate as much as those who are discriminated against.

During the brief period of its existence, the State of Israel has gained the friendship of several countries not only in Europe, Oceania and America, but also in Asia and Africa. We may be disappointed by one friend or another every now and again, but that friendship is a valuable international asset.

Our social, cultural and economic creativity as well as our moral and pioneering image, has given poor, young, little Israel a place of honor in several old and wealthy countries and in poor, young ones too, and we must do our utmost to preserve this precious international asset. I am sure that the best and most upright of the South African nation will understand this and respect us for what we did at the U.N. Assembly, and even those among them who do not agree will realize, I hope, that it was our conscience, not any hatred for the South African nation, which led us to vote as we did. On behalf of the Government, I propose that we remove the resolutions of Herut and Aguda from the agenda.

E. Rimalt (Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, my party group proposes that we transfer the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which will discuss it and sum it up.

We do not think that it should be discussed by the Knesset plenum because of the complexity of principles, relations and problems involved, and because the subject has already been discussed in depth, albeit without reaching a formal conclusion, by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee....There are many aspects to the issue: the moral-humanitarian, the political-Israeli and the tragic-Jewish.

Every one of us is outraged by a regime which discriminates between people because of the color of their skin or their race. Who has suffered as we have for hundreds of years because of attitudes based on origin, religion, nationality, the color of one's skin, the shape of one's nose, the curl of one's hair, etc? As a Jew and as a man, each one of us is outraged by it, but what is before us is not a single, individual problem. There are other aspects too. There is the need to consider a friendly country as well as the tragic fate of a Jewish community which unfortunately is not yet aware of the tragic nature of its situation and has not yet chosen the only course open to it to live a full Jewish life.

Opinions were divided in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. That is no secret, for it has already been published. Half the members of the Committee thought that there was no need to support every extremist resolution, not that there was no need to condemn apartheid or that there was no need to say what we had to say. I hope the Prime Minister will forgive me if I say that if our failure to support every extremist resolution proves our so-called "indifference," we should have voted for every single resolution proposed against South Africa, and the Prime Minister himself said that our delegation was instructed not to vote for certain proposals. Thus, our failure to support extremist proposals does not prove that we are indifferent, etc.

I propose, therefore, that we transfer the conclusion of the debate to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. There is no problem of whether we do or do not agree with racial discrimination; there are no differences of opinion between us on that point. Opinions are divided solely on whether we should always support the most extreme resolutions.

The Speaker, K. Luz: We will now vote on the three proposals before us....

(The proposal to debate the subject is defeated.)

(The proposal to remove the subject from the agenda is adopted.)

(The proposal to transfer the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is defeated.)

Press Reports of Israeli Weapons in Possession of the Portuguese Army

Introduction

In spite of increasing opposition at home and abroad, and the increasing material and human cost, Portugal held out against decolonization, claiming that its African colonies were in fact and in law parts of its own metropolitan territories. With Portugal becoming the last remaining symbol of colonialism, it was only natural that those inside and outside Israel interested in identifying Israel's Government with colonial powers, and others influenced by them, attempted to establish a link between the two.

Sitting 38 of the Fifth Knesset

29 November 1961 (21 Kislev 5722)

The Speaker, N. Nir-Rafalkes: We now proceed to MK Wilenska's motion for the agenda on press reports of Israeli weapons in the hands of the Portuguese army.

E. Wilenska (Maki): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...not long ago an Israeli journalist visited Lisbon, where he met with the Director of the Portuguese Ministry of Aviation....From the account which appeared in *Ha'Olam Hazeh* on 15 November 1961 we learn that the spokesman of the Portuguese General Staff confirmed that Israeli Uzi guns are now used by the Portuguese army and that Portugal purchased Dakota planes in Israel which it used for transporting soldiers and bombs.

The journal of the Portuguese Air Force...reports large attacks by Portuguese land and air forces and published a photograph of Portuguese soldiers holding Israeli submachine guns....The Israeli press has also reported that the Belgian factory known as F.N...was licensed by Israel to manufacture the Uzi several years ago, and that it was from there that the arms apparently reached Portugal.

It is not for nothing that public opinion in our country has been astir. This is a political, not a commercial issue; it concerns Israel's place in the great historical struggle of the nations of Africa to throw off the yoke of imperialism. Ever-wider circles within our country oppose the dangerous line of the ruling groups, which are supporting repressive colonialism. The awakening of Israeli public opinion against sending Israeli weapons...to Portugal began immediately after the first report of

this affair in the world press. As you know, at the end of May this year the...London *Observer* reported that according to German diplomatic sources Israeli Uzis had been sold to Portugal via Germany.

On June 6 the representatives of five parties in the Knesset...asked that the subject of the sales of arms to Portugal be discussed. These five parties included two which were in the Government at that time—Ahdut Ha'Avoda and Mapam. Despite the fact that they were in the Government, or perhaps because of it, they were not confident that the Minister of Defense was keeping the Cabinet fully informed of everything he did. Moreover, they complained in public of the fact that the Minister of Defense and a group of his associates were taking serious political steps without informing the Knesset or even the Cabinet.

On June 6 MK Bar-Yehuda said...amongst other things: "In a deft and...potentially dangerous act...the Deputy Defense Minister graciously informed the representatives of the press that the matter was quite normal and natural, and that Germany...was entitled to sell our Uzi and the other weapons it purchased from Israel to whomever it pleased. On whose behalf did he make that statement?...The Minister of Defense? The Acting Minister of Defense? Or the inner Cabinet, namely, those persons close to the Ministry of Defense who occasionally conceal their actions from the Government?" MK Bar-Yehuda asked.

What do these things mean? They mean that the representative of a Coalition party decided that within the Cabinet there is an "inner Cabinet," and that a group of people close to the Minister of Defense undertake very serious actions behind the back of the Knesset and even of the Cabinet.

In his reply of June 6, the acting Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, said: "There is no paragraph in the sales contract which forbids the purchasing country to sell the arms to anyone else. And you all," Mr. Eshkol accused MK Bar-Yehuda, "participated in the Government in various forms when that matter was being dealt with." When Mr. Eshkol was asked...to speak out clearly he replied: "The Government was not shocked...because it did not notice that there was general outrage anywhere, other than among those persons who submitted a motion for the agenda."

It is quite typical that the reaction by five party groups in the Knesset was not regarded by the ruling circles as a serious reason for an immediate investigation and a clear statement on the subject in the Knesset.

On November 16 this year *Ha'aretz* reported that Defense Ministry circles had admitted that the Israeli submachine gun manufactured under an Israeli license by the F.N. factory in Belgium had reached the Portuguese army. These circles noted that Israel had restricted the sales of arms to Arab countries and certain other countries, but that Portugal, which is waging a murderous war in Angola, was not one of them.

...The issue is not the absence of a paragraph in the arms sales contract with Germany which forbids the purchasing country to sell the arms to someone else. The issue is the political position of the ruling circles in Israel, which sell arms to the neo-Nazi army in Bonn and support the colonialists who suppress the peoples of North Africa.

A great struggle against the imperialist conqueror and for freedom and independence is currently being conducted in Angola. The Portuguese army is prosecuting campaigns of murder and destruction there, killing hundreds of thousands of men, women and children and destroying hundreds of villages. Portugal constitutes part of the colonialist system which is crumbling beneath the blows struck by nations struggling for independence. The colonialist system is one of robbery and murder, it arouses world public opinion...and has no future or chance. Its days are numbered, it is condemned to annihilation by history. The reports of attempts by Israeli circles to link our country with those who suppress other nations...arouse opposition among the public, which understands the harmful, anti-national nature of this step.

In view of the fact that for the second time party groups in the Knesset are demanding that the subject be debated, a statement was issued at the meeting of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday to the effect that the Government had taken the necessary steps to ensure that Israeli arms would not be transferred in future to that country by a third party. The phrasing of the statement makes it clear that the responsible persons in the Ministry of Defense had concealed the truth from the public when they denied the report which appeared in the *London Observer* in the summer. Even yesterday's statement by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee indicates that there is certainly cause to discuss the question of the transfer of arms to Portugal by a third party in the past and the present, as well as all the other aspects of the issue.

The efforts made by the Minister of Defense and his colleagues to calm matters were intended to obscure the grave political aspect of the fact that Israeli arms had been sold to Portugal by the third party, and also that Israeli arms had been sold to that third party, namely, vengeance-bound German militarism.

The statement issued yesterday on this issue by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is not enough. It conceals more than it reveals. The question which is the focus of the public debate is a purely political one, one which has caused a furore among many circles of Israeli and world public opinion, and one which certainly justifies a debate in the Knesset.

We cannot accept the efforts made by the Minister of Defense and his associates to prevent the Knesset from discussing this important political subject. Even the members of the Coalition entertain serious suspicions that the Ministry of Defense has acted independently in the past and may do so in the future.

...The Knesset sometimes devotes many hours to debating subjects of lesser significance....It is therefore unacceptable that an issue as weighty as repeated reports in the press of Israeli weapons being in the hands of the Portuguese colonialists should not be debated...in accordance with the wishes and interests of the nation.

We therefore propose that the Knesset discuss the use of Israeli arms by the Portuguese army in Angola, since our country's essential national interest lies in solidarity with the peoples of Africa which are struggling for independence and in ending all aid to repressive colonialist elements.

The Speaker, N. Nir-Rafalkes: MK Bentov has a motion for the agenda on a similar subject: guaranteeing that arms sold by Israel do not reach a third party....

M. Bentov (Mapam): Distinguished Knesset, the proposal which I have the honor of submitting is that the Knesset debate the issue of guaranteeing that weapons sold by Israel do not, unbeknownst to us, reach a third party. This is an extremely delicate matter....The sales of arms to other countries concerns their defense, not ours. There are two aspects which concern us:

First, trading in arms is altogether an extremely dangerous area, causing greater harm than good in the final event, and the best thing would be if we were to abandon it completely. Secondly, Israel's policy—and this is undoubtedly supported by the entire House—is to build a bridge of friendship with the awakening nations of Asia and Africa... without relinquishing our friendship with other countries, and the Government has resolved not to sell arms to countries which seek to maintain colonialist regimes.

I think that the whole House is extremely sensitive to any indication of a deviation from those appropriate rules. In recent years there has been a certain maturing of our policy towards the countries of Africa and Asia. Some years ago those who molded our policy still thought that maintaining friendship with and extending aid to those countries was one thing, and the way we voted at the U.N. was another. Only one year ago anyone who raised the question of our stance at the U.N. regarding South Africa's racist policy was told that we must not injure the position of the Jewish community there. Meanwhile, however, it has become apparent that there is another important Jewish community, the two million Jews of Israel, whose position in Africa and Asia could be gravely injured if we voted incorrectly at the U.N. It is a good thing that we began to understand that friendship, aid and foreign policy at the U.N. are interconnected, and that we began to draw the right conclusions from this, as in the case of South Africa.

It transpires that it is impossible to separate foreign policy from arms sales, even if those among us who are in charge of the manufac-

ture of weapons evince an understandable ambition to balance the budget and earn dollars. But those easy dollars can cause us serious problems, and we have experienced several grave incidents which MK Bar-Yehuda defined six months ago as...“thoughtless failures” and “the continued violation of Cabinet decisions.” No little embarrassment was caused us last May when the London *Observer* reported that Israeli weapons had reached Portugal via Germany and were being used to repress the revolt in Angola.

David Hacoheh (Mapai): Do you have to believe everything you read?

M. Bentov (Mapam): Regrettably, despite all the denials....

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: If you're quoting the *Observer*, that paper spoke of “Sten guns,” not “arms.”

M. Bentov (Mapam): Let me finish. Regrettably, despite all the denials and despite the fact that almost the entire House...prayed that the report would be disproven, the subject has remained with us till today. We were all greatly distressed by the news, but instead of arranging a thorough investigation of the accusations...the Government gave a series of unabashed explanations and denials, which merely increased the distress. I do not understand the Government's fear of a public inquiry, as is customary in any democratic country, and its contention that conducting an inquiry involves imputing blame. The reverse is true: by its fear of an inquiry, the Government is drawing suspicion to itself, even though it may be blameless, and then its denials carry less weight.

It is clear by now that one important foreign source from which the Uzis might have reached Angola is blocked by its explicit commitment to Israel not to transfer the Uzis to a third party without our agreement, and that agreement was not given. It has not been proven, however, that there are no other indirect foreign sources via which the Uzis could have reached a third party, unbeknownst to us, simply because that commitment was not given in every transaction.

In that Knesset debate MK Bar-Yehuda pointed to another, extremely dangerous aspect of that state of affairs. He said: “Now we are told that whatever happens, there is a restriction regarding the sales of arms to Arabs. That is absurd, because if the Germans and the other countries may sell the arms to whomever they want, this means that via an intermediate country those weapons could reach countries which claim officially to be at war with us.”

The acting Prime Minister of the time also made a commitment in his reply. He said: “Israel has sold arms to foreign countries...on the assumption that they will not be transferred to a third party. It can be said that an appropriate paragraph should be inserted and ways found, and we will think about it.” Meanwhile, six months have passed and it seems that we are still “thinking about it,” but there is still no assurance

that a paragraph of that kind will be found in all our contracts dealing with arms sales.

We have learned by now, I think, that the absence of a paragraph of this kind and the fact that the Government refrains from taking vigorous action to ensure that it is included in contracts add further obstacles to those which exist anyway. That is why it is important that the Knesset discuss this forthwith, or at least...charge the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee with discussing it.

...

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, MK Wilenska, as usual, quoted half truths and rumors from all kinds of places. I will not deal with all of them, and will focus on only one. She quoted only the second half of yesterday's decision of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee....

E. Wilenska (Maki): That's the characteristic part.

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: It is characteristic, but I understand your distaste for dealing with the past, because that is what the first part deals with....The conclusion of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee reads: "The Committee heard from the Deputy Defense Minister that the Government has not supplied any arms, either directly or indirectly, to the Portuguese Government."...And since MK Wilenska spoke on behalf of five or six party groups, I want to set her mind at ease.

E. Wilenska (Maki): Then there were five.

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: Then there were five; now there isn't even one. Are you prepared to change your mind? Why should you cite what the party groups thought then when you could cite what they think now?

Very rarely have so many inaccuracies been introduced into a subject as damaging to Israel as Angola....The *Observer* published a very brief item containing three rumors. One of them was that Russia had sent ships full of Negroes to help the rebels in Angola. Do you believe that, MK Wilenska? The second was that "Sten guns" from Israel had reached Angola. Since the Israeli press tends to use a rather free kind of translation, however, the Stens became Uzis in a certain paper....The lie worked right from the start, and I know that there are party groups which prefer conformity to verity....

...Three questions arise with regard to arms supplies. The first, and main, one is: what is Israel's policy regarding supplying weapons to countries which are fighting to secure their colonial rule, such as Portugal? After all, the main point of holding a Knesset debate is to discuss policy, not false rumors. Israel's policy on this subject is both clear and open. The Government of Israel has announced in public, in accor-

dance with the Cabinet's decision of 16 July 1961, that "Weapons will not be sold to a country fighting to secure its colonial rule." The acting Prime Minister, Mr. Levi Eshkol, brought this Cabinet decision to the attention of the Knesset at the time, and I think that it gained the unanimous support of the House.

The second question is: has the Government of Israel done all it can to ensure that arms manufactured by Israel do not directly or indirectly reach countries which are waging wars of that kind? At first an attempt was made to create the general impression that, against its will and its policy, Israel had supplied arms to countries whose colonialist policy we condemn. To my great joy, those rumors died a natural death....Recently, however, new rumors have been spread to the effect that Belgian-manufactured Uzi submachine guns have reached Angola. I would like to make two points on this subject.

Since the establishment of the state we have had good relations with the F.N. factory. Much of the IDF's light arms are manufactured there. We know that company to be serious and responsible, as do most of the countries which have dealings with it.

We have restricted agreements with that factory regarding the exchange of information, and that fact has also been brought to the attention of both the Government, MK Bentov, by the Ministerial Committee, and the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. Information is exchanged regarding the manufacture of parts of the automatic rifle made in Israel and of the Belgian Uzi. In accordance with those agreements, each side must consult the other regarding supplies to a third party. Indeed, in May, June and July F.N. asked us for permission to supply Uzi submachine guns to the Portuguese army, after we had rejected a direct request from Portugal. Our reply to F.N. was in the negative, of course, and at the conclusion of the negotiations the Ministry of Defense sent the factory the following letter, dated 1 July 1961.

M. Bentov (Mapam): Why weren't we informed?

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: There was a Ministerial Committee in which your colleague, MK Barzilai, participated. He heard the details. He should have informed you.

M. Bentov (Mapam): We were not informed of that letter.

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: Of our refusal? Well, I'll read the letter out to you:

"With reference to your letter regarding the sale of Uzi submachine guns manufactured by your factory to Portugal, we hereby inform you that—in accordance with the Government of Israel's policy—the Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly opposes supplying the above weapons to Portugal. This opposition derives from Israel's policy. Israel does not wish to supply arms to areas of international tension or to colonialist

countries which are fighting against national freedom movements. We hereby appeal to you, therefore, to act in accordance with paragraph 7 of our contract." (Paragraph 7 is the one requiring consultation.)

The F.N. factory assured us that the Uzis had not been supplied to Portugal...and our experience has proved that the factory's word can be trusted. It made a public statement to that effect and also informed the Foreign Ministry.

...The third question is: how does it happen that parties and newspapers which should...make it clear that the Government of Israel has adopted a clear and firm stand as regards colonialist wars, attempt to spread the false rumor that we are acting against ourselves and our policy? Should the Government of Israel be the subject of an inquiry on this subject, MK Bentov, or should the combined motivation of certain other people...to bring the Government of Israel's policy into disrepute, thereby serving hostile elements, be investigated?

I am glad that, following the clarification in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday, Herut decided to withdraw its motion for the agenda on this subject. I note with satisfaction Mapam's decision to change the subject of its motion for the agenda. As for the stubbornness of the Communist representative in leaving the subject—

M. Sneh (Maki): She couldn't change anything, she wasn't in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: And rightly so. She could read the papers. You believe the *Observer*. Why don't you believe what is written in *Ha'aretz* and *Davar* for once?

As for the stubbornness of the Communist representative in leaving the subject on the agenda, one can neither be glad or sad, one can only propose that it be removed from the agenda....

...With regard to MK Bentov's proposal...I would not like to settle past accounts, nor is there any need to do so but, MK Bentov, you were too quick to believe rumors which were damaging to Israel in the past, and still are today. After examining the subject, even your party group concluded that the motion should be changed. I fail to understand how you can persist in believing false rumors about the Government of Israel and at the same time change the motion. Either you believe something or you don't.

J. Hazan (Mapam): What he said was that there was a danger.

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: That's not what he said.

J. Hazan (Mapam): Did he get a chance to read the letter?

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: I summoned MK Bentov and told him that this issue occupied us constantly....What disturbs us is the fact that within Israel there are hostile forces which do not wish to dis-

tinguish between a genuine inquiry and slanders put about by the enemy. You should not mix those things up, MK Bentov.

M. Bentov (Mapam): You acted in an unclear way on this subject in the beginning.

The Deputy Defense Minister, S. Peres: Whereas you acted in a very clear way; but yesterday you could have ended all that clarity, after everyone had agreed.

Regarding the more serious part of MK Bentov's speech, namely, the problem of guaranteeing that weapons are not transferred to a third party, I would like to say that the Ministerial Committee of the previous Government, which also included a Mapam Minister...studied the subject in depth....Although the Government decided to take steps to ensure that this policy was implemented, it must be remembered that our influence in the world is limited, especially as regards the distribution of international power, as reflected in arms supplies. There is no doubt that the Uzi submachine gun is one of the best light arms of its kind...but the outcome of wars is not decided by submachine guns—except in Arab countries—and the major balance of international power focuses on warplanes, tanks, cannon, submarines, etc., which are more valuable and more easily controlled.

The best way to guarantee that Israeli weapons sold to one country are not transferred to another without our assent is by including a paragraph in the sales contract. After all, international relations are based on contracts...and there is no point signing them with countries which do not adhere to them or parts of them.

Whenever countries sign contracts they take care to ensure that these do not contradict any previous ones they have signed or any passage in their constitutions. There are countries which are linked by specific agreements regarding arms supplies, or whose constitutions do not permit them to accept restricting clauses which seem important to the country supplying the arms. That is why the Cabinet decided that a paragraph restricting arms sales to a third party should be included in the arms sales contract...and if for the reasons given above this cannot be done, the ban on transferring arms should be ensured through an exchange of letters, or by making a statement regarding Israel's principles on arms sales to the purchasing country, as we did with the F.N. factory.

...I am happy to note that since the Cabinet decision on this subject the countries purchasing arms from us have agreed to include a paragraph restricting their transfer to a third party in the contract, and that our appeals to make this restriction apply to past transactions have also been accepted.

Israel does not operate in a vacuum. It would be a mistake for us to impose an embargo on ourselves....I propose that we remove the proposal from the agenda.

The Speaker, S. Ben-Meir: We will now vote on the various motions.

(MK E. Wilenska's proposal that the Knesset discuss press reports of the Portuguese army's possession of Israeli weapons in Angola is defeated.)

(MK Bentov's proposal that the Knesset discuss guaranteeing that arms sold by Israel do not reach a third party is defeated.)

Israel and the Common Market

Introduction

Ever since the signing of the Treaty of Rome, the question of Israel's relations with the European Economic Community—the Common Market—was discussed by the Ministries concerned, but no serious public debate ensued. The problem was first raised formally in the Knesset at the end of 1961. By asking the Minister of Commerce and Industry to reply, the Government indicated that it viewed the matter primarily from an economic perspective.

Sitting 48 of the Fifth Knesset

13 December 1961 (6 Teveth 5722)

The Speaker, K. Luz: I give the floor to MK Sneh, who has a motion for the agenda on Israel's association with the West European Market.

M. Sneh (Maki): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the House should debate this subject because it is of the utmost importance. It affects every aspect of our life, both economic and otherwise....It concerns Israel's international position; it is discussed by the various Ministries; it is the subject of parliamentary questions...and the Knesset has not yet discussed its policy on it. Thus, even those whose minds are already made up, whether pro or con, should unite and advocate debating the topic here.

...We are told that the fact that Israel is not in the European Common Market will harm our citrus exports. There is something in that, but we must not forget...that citrus fruit constitutes a decreasing proportion of our exports, while the proportion of industrial goods is increasing. Israel's industrial exports will suffer if we are linked to the Common Market, because Israel will be unable to compete with the developed industrial countries of the West European Market.

...We have heard that that competition could lead to a reduction in wages...and that will not be the only result of our association with the Common Market....Once the customs barriers between us and the Common Market countries come down...Israel will be flooded with industrial imports...stunting our industrial growth. Thus, it is obvious that the outcome of our association with the Common Market will be negative in the extreme.

...There is also no doubt that the removal of customs tariffs will greatly diminish the Treasury's income....To compensate itself it will

impose a purchase tax on goods, and this will lead to price rises, reducing the individual's purchasing power and eventually leading to a reduction in the production of goods for local consumption. Export difficulties, the restriction of industrial manufacture for export markets and the reduction of production for the local market because of increased prices will ensue.

...The newspapers report that the economic Ministries are not enthusiastic about the Common Market. There is political enthusiasm at the Foreign Ministry, however....We are told that Israel's foreign trade will suffer if we do not associate ourselves with the Common Market. I disagree.

D. Hacohen (Mapai): There's a difference between that association and what you're saying.

M. Sneh (Maki): I know, and that's why I stress: any form of association, not only joining the Common Market.

We are told that approximately 29 percent of our exports and imports link us with the Common Market countries....29 percent of our imports amounts to \$145,000,000 a year, while 29 percent of our exports amounts to \$62,000,000. This means that our overall balance with those countries is negative for us and positive for them....What are we afraid of, then? We have the weapon with which to withstand them when they implement the Treaty of Rome. We do not depend on them. Their exports are not so dependent on us, it is true, but our opening position is a good one. Whatever happens, they sell us more than we sell them. I know that their exports to us include goods purchased with reparations money, which will soon come to an end, but they will be replaced by regular commercial imports from West Germany.

...Thus, we have a counter-weapon....We have no need to be afraid....Won't we be able to buy those goods elsewhere?...Why should we stand like a beggar at the gate? It is within our power to gradually find alternative sources for goods, based on trade agreements, on a balanced exchange of goods, and to reduce our trade deficit in the process. We are not bound to them.

E. Shostak (Herut): Do you really fail to understand that that is not the problem with regard to our citrus exports?

M. Sneh (Maki): I haven't finished yet, have I? I say that we can manage without them. Let them shut themselves up in their Market, let them build as many walls around themselves as they like, neither Israel nor its foreign trade will be destroyed. We have an alternative, we are not dependent on them. Although it is called the European Common Market, it is split and divided. It does not encompass all Europe. There is another part of Europe apart from West Europe. And there are other continents.

The decisive consideration is, however, the political one. Israel's Foreign Ministry is enthusiastic about the Common Market. The studies undertaken by the Ministries of Finance and Commerce and Industry have not produced such encouraging results....For me the Foreign Ministry's enthusiasm is another reason against joining or associating ourselves with the Common Market. For that Market is not merely an economic framework....We read that those six countries are currently discussing a political and military agreement...and intend to form a united bloc against the Communist Bloc in Europe....

The Swedish Prime Minister is reported to have said: "The Swedish Government is convinced that it is not in our country's interests to identify with the declared political intentions of the six members of the Common Market, whether by official membership or by signing the Treaty of Rome, and that in this it has the full support of the public (in Sweden)."....Even neutral Sweden is presented with an ultimatum to toe the line politically, or be unable to join economically. Britain was placed in a similar position, and Israel would undoubtedly have to make a similar choice. It may be that members will not wish Israel to join, for other reasons....But Israel's application, the effort it has made to join the Common Market over the last few years, and in the last year in particular, does us harm....The Minister of Commerce and Industry has said...that the question of joining the Common Market is political, not economic....That is why I say we must stay out....

I propose that this subject be debated by the plenum, not a committee, because it is an important political issue...and the Knesset must react to the Government's declared policy....

...

P. Bernstein (Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...it really is surprising that the House has not yet debated the Common Market, which has occupied the Government and its Ministries since the Treaty of Rome.

On two occasions I have participated in the Council of Europe...where the problems of the Market were discussed, also in connection with us. My impression was then that Government sources were preventing us from even attempting to join....Things changed afterwards, it seems, though I do not know at whose instigation....

We have gained the impression that Israel sought to join the Common Market even before ascertaining whether England would do so or not. In my view, the debate should not focus solely on the economic aspects....

...What may be particularly interesting is not only the Government's attitude in seeking to join the European Market even though we are not part of Europe, but why our requests have been rejected....

I think, therefore, that the time has come. The British Parliament debated the matter at great length, and matters almost reached a gov-

ernment crisis. We in Israel draw our information from the newspapers, even though this is a topic which should occupy the Knesset at least as much as the Government.

I hope that the Minister of Commerce and Industry, who is replying for the Government, will not propose transferring the subject to a committee. It certainly should be discussed by the Knesset plenum. No great political dangers are involved, and I think a debate is necessary and useful.

The Minister of Commerce and Industry, P. Sapir: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I agree with what MK Sneh said at the beginning of his speech, namely, that the matter is a weighty one. Our foreign trade is growing each year, too rapidly in one direction, regrettably, and at a certain speed in the other.

Our trade, which was \$400 million in 1955 (\$300 million imports and \$90 million exports), rose to \$800 million (\$550 million imports and \$240 million exports) this year.

M. Begin (Herut): That means that the deficit grew too.

The Minister of Commerce and Industry, P. Sapir: The figures have been published.

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: The population grew too.

The Minister of Commerce and Industry, P. Sapir: In 1965 it will grow to one billion and \$150 million (\$700 million on one side and \$450 million on the other). In order to answer your question as to whether the deficit grew too, one has to analyze the population figures, what their growth was, what we purchased, whether we purchased more food, more raw materials or more equipment, ships, generators, etc. But that is not the subject right now.

MK Sneh, we trade with seventy-eight countries in all five continents...including Romania, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia....

Last week we joined GATT...of which Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia are also members. I regard this as a step which is of great practical significance, namely, as regards customs tariffs, non-discrimination agreements, etc. It undoubtedly is also of political value....

...I do not think that we have said that we sought membership of the Common Market....Even if it was prepared to accept us today, we would not be able to meet its conditions, which is nothing to be ashamed of. Greece was accepted as an associate member under conditions which differed from those of the full members....

We have said, say now and will say—and not as a beggar at the gate, MK Sneh—that we seek not to be discriminated against by the actual creation of the Common Market. The figures you quoted were correct for once, and in 1960, of \$500 million worth of imports, we bought

\$120 million from the countries of the Common Market; and if England joins, that will bring the figure up to \$200 million, approximately 40 per cent. When I participate in discussions I say that that is our best bargaining card to ensure that we are not discriminated against. Our purchasing power can be an important factor in negotiations for selling our products. Trade experts say: there are no one-way streets in commerce....We say that to friendly countries, without this necessarily being connected with the Common Market....We seek an appropriate arrangement with those with whom we trade, and we do not wish to be discriminated against. We wish to buy and sell, not only to buy.

The reports in the papers, which MK Sneh attempted to repeat, that this involves a conflict of interests between agriculture and industry, are inaccurate....It is true that the citrus growers attach great importance to this association....Since the establishment of the state citrus exports have doubled, while industrial exports have increased eighteenfold. When our industrial exports were very limited this was not significant for industry, but today it is, and the absence of discrimination is equally important for agriculture and industry....The only demand we make on...those countries is mutuality in trade. The arrangement can follow the pattern set by Greece, or take any other form....But we cannot tolerate a situation in which we will buy but cannot sell our products under the same conditions....

...Because of the importance of the subject, I propose that it be transferred to the appropriate committee...namely, the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. Its members will have to study the subject in depth...after which it will be possible to discuss it in the plenum. I therefore propose that we transfer the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

B. Avniel (Herut): Some people think that the Economics Committee should discuss the subject. I therefore propose that we transfer it to the House Committee, which will decide which Committee is appropriate.

The Speaker, K. Luz: ...We will now vote on the two proposals.

(The proposal to debate the subject in the plenum is defeated.)

(The proposal to transfer the subject to a committee which will be decided on by the House Committee is adopted.)

Vote by Israel's Delegation to the U.N. on the Refugee Problem

Introduction

Following the War of Independence of 1948, the problem of the Arab refugees from Palestine became a recurring item on the agenda of the U.N. General Assembly. Arguments, speeches and resolutions were repeated year after year, attracting little attention from the public elsewhere or in Israel. Only rarely did Israel's vote at the U.N. occasion a Knesset debate.

Sitting 68 of the Fifth Knesset

10 January 1962 (5 Shevat 5722)

The Speaker, J. Serlin: There are three motions for the agenda on the same subject. I give the floor to MK Meridor for his motion on the Knesset's decision regarding the refugee problem and the way Israel's delegation at the U.N. voted on this subject....

J. Meridor (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, after the last elections, when the Fifth Knesset began its work...the Herut party group in the Knesset initiated a debate on the Arab refugee problem. We did this because of the obfuscation surrounding the problem ever since the meeting between the Prime Minister of Israel and Mr. Kennedy, the President of the U.S., and because no one in Israel, apart from Mr. Ben-Gurion, knew what was discussed. The impression gained after President Kennedy sent a letter to the Arab leaders was that the Prime Minister had undertaken to allow a certain number of refugees back into Israel.

In that debate, which was held on 6 November 1961, the Knesset resolved, almost unanimously, with only Mapam and Maki dissenting, that "the Arab refugees should not be allowed back into Israel, and the only solution to their problem is for them to be settled in the Arab countries."

That resolution was quite unequivocal, therefore. But the Israeli public was surprised by the fact that Israel's representatives at the U.N. voted for an American proposal...which can be interpreted as mentioning the possibility of returning the Arab refugees to Israel. That is the way the Arabs interpret it, although they are the only ones who do. But the very fact that Israel's representatives voted in favor of that resolution could be interpreted as meaning...that it contradicts the Knesset's

decision. Certain party groups in the Knesset think that our delegation's vote at the U.N. brought Israel nearer to their view, which favors allowing a large number of refugees back into Israel.

Thus, the problem is quite serious, and we regard our delegation's vote as a deviation...from the Knesset's decision. I think that this is an issue of principle. I do not think that any official delegation of any kind, in any international forum...is entitled to vote in opposition to the spirit of the Knesset's decisions. In this respect the Knesset is the Legislature...and its decisions are legally binding.

I know why...we voted as we did....We have been told that we did not want to be isolated, together with the Arabs and the Eastern Bloc, and abstain on that vote. I disagree. There is no shame in abstaining, or even voting against a resolution, if it opposes Israel's interests, or can be interpreted as such....

I would like to take this opportunity of quoting something which appeared in the London *Times* about ten days ago....As the House knows, doubts about the fate of the U.N. are entertained by several of its members, principally Britain and the U.S. The British Foreign Minister, Lord Home, stated that in his view the U.N. had acted erroneously in sending armed forces to Katanga. He spoke openly of the need to reform the procedure governing the U.N....The *Times* journalist who reported Lord Home's speech asked the U.S.S.R. representative, Mr. Zorin, for his opinion. His reply is very interesting. He said, quite simply: "Britain abstained on the first resolution on the Congo which was passed by the Security Council; it did not vote against it. Consequently, it is morally bound by the decision of the majority to implement the resolution."

The same journalist asked the Ethiopian representative for his opinion....He said: "If England had reservations about the resolution passed by the General Assembly on December 14 about granting independence to colonial countries, why did it not vote against this resolution? Instead of voting against it, it abstained." Thus, even abstention is interpreted by the world as signifying assent, in line with the ancient Talmudic dictum: silence signifies assent.

I think, therefore, that a serious mistake has been made, and it is our duty as the Opposition to ask the Knesset to set matters right. We naturally believe that if we are given the power to rule Israel we will run things better. That is our right. It is the Government's right to think that the Opposition is irresponsible and is incapable of implementing an appropriate policy. But until the day comes when we hold the reins in our hands...we must fulfill our role of serving as a "watchdog."

...The American resolution also says that the Conciliation Commission shall be charged with assessing the property belonging to the Arab refugees in Israel within a few months, and that the U.N. Secretary-General should set up the necessary machinery for this...so that

the U.N. can make its decision by 1 September 1962. In other words, we will shortly witness an invasion by U.N. experts and assessors, who will come to Jaffa and Jerusalem, Tiberias, Ramle and Lod, Safed and Acre, entering every house and assessing it, entering every kibbutz—including those of Mapam—and assessing it....

But we know that the Prime Minister has undertaken in effect—as he said from this podium during the debate prior to the Knesset's decision of 6 November 1961—that if the Arab countries demand compensation, Israel will submit its own bill for compensation for property which remained in the Arab countries, and the capitals in particular. Thus, we see that in the next few months the Conciliation Commission will send assessors here, but not to Baghdad, Damascus or Cairo.

We obviously cannot prevent the majority of U.N. members from passing resolutions. We cannot force the U.S. to vote as we would like it to. But for us to support that resolution is indefensible. The Knesset must therefore decide to hold a debate on this topic.

...

I. Barzilai (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I would like to start by welcoming the Foreign Minister back from her trip to the U.N., where she led the campaign on the refugee problem. I would like to congratulate her and our delegation at the U.N. on the action which averted one danger which threatened us and brought us an achievement.

The danger that was averted was that the demands of the Arab representatives, some of which denied Israel's sovereignty, would be accepted. Our achievement was that many countries...supported the proposal that there should be direct negotiations between us and the Arab countries, as a way to a peace settlement which would also resolve the refugee problem. It is regrettable that the four Powers, including France, did not support this important resolution, which seeks to solve disputes by peaceful means....I know that extensive lobbying and information campaigns were required to achieve the initiative proposing direct negotiations....For example, the African countries would probably not have voted for the proposal advocating direct negotiations had Israel taken the advice of those party groups in the Knesset which criticized our delegation to the U.N. or cast aspersions on our vote there against South African apartheid. I congratulate the Foreign Minister and her assistants, as well as our delegation to the U.N., on the efforts which led to the fact that thirty-four countries voted for direct negotiations between us and our neighbors.

To my regret, however...I must also express our surprise and dissatisfaction at the Government's unjust stand on the refugee problem, adopting one position for internal purposes and another for external ones, its vote in the Knesset being incongruent with its vote at the U.N. After struggling for and against various paragraphs of the resolution,

our delegation finally voted for the entire U.S. resolution, which seeks to resolve the refugee problem by resettling them and giving them appropriate compensation.

I assume that that paragraph does not enable the refugees to choose between the various possibilities. It determines, however, that in resolving the refugee problem three courses should be taken simultaneously, namely: a. returning them to their original places of residence; b. resettling them—which I hope means outside Israel...; c. giving appropriate compensation to those who do not return to Israel.

The passage concerning their return to their homes reads: "Those wishing to return to their homes should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date."...That date will presumably not be determined by the refugees, and certainly not by them alone. The passage regarding compensation reads: "Those choosing not to return will be compensated." The phrases "wishing to return" and "choosing not to return" are significant. The U.S. proposal demanded the implementation of Clause 11. I know that Israel's delegation expressed its reservations regarding Clause 11 in a separate vote and in a special explanation. In the final event, however, it voted for the U.S. resolution including that clause, which seeks to allow refugees who wish to do so to return to their homes and assures compensation to those choosing not to return.

The Foreign Minister voted for the U.S. proposal advocating the return of an unlimited number of refugees to their former homes, while she rejected our proposal in the Knesset to allow a limited number back as a contribution to a permanent solution to the refugee problem, although most of the refugees will be resettled in the Arab countries....

Although the U.S. proposal does not leave the decision in the hands of the refugees, it allows for some of them to be repatriated. That is the resolution for which our delegation voted at the U.N. The burning question is...what is the Government's position on this thorny issue? Can it hold two different views, one for internal consumption and another for external purposes?...Is it possible to agree with both President Kennedy, as we were informed was the case after the Prime Minister's visit to the U.S., and with MK Begin and his party group, whose slogan is "not one refugee"?

Z. Aranne (Mapai): On what did the Prime Minister and Kennedy agree?

I. Barzilai (Mapam): *Davar* and *Hapoel Hatza'ir* reported that the Prime Minister had agreed to absorb a certain number of refugees, under given conditions.

Z. Aranne (Mapai): No one said that. The Prime Minister did not say that.

I. Barzilai (Mapam): The Prime Minister neither confirmed nor denied it. Be that as it may, you undoubtedly reached an agreement with Herut...since you voted together with it in the Knesset.

How long can you play this double game, branding us as compromisers, as being ready to open Israel's gates to a flood of refugees, even though you know how much our proposals take the needs of peace, development and immigration into account? Or did you encounter the wall of world public opinion outside, panic and vote for a resolution which you had rejected at home?

The Foreign Minister stated in the Knesset that Shukeiry will rely on the fact that there is in Israel a "Zionist, pioneering party which favors settlement and security, which has every good quality, and even advocates returning the refugees." That did not happen, of course, and Shukeiry did not rely on us, nor could he do so, for our proposal means death for his wild and aggressive propaganda.

...If all that was at stake was the...vote at the U.N. we would not devote so much attention to it. To our regret, however, the problem of the refugees still remains unsolved and still constitutes an effective weapon in the hands of the Arab rulers....This being so, we must consider what course to take, particularly in view of the fact that thirty-four countries voted in favor of direct peace negotiations between us and our neighbors and the settlement of the refugee problem.

I think that this time the House is united in appreciating the fact that many countries voted in favor of direct peace negotiations between us and our neighbors...though in the past various party groups, including Herut, have suggested abandoning the idea of direct negotiations because of the absence of any response from the other side. Should we really regret the fact that such a proposal was made at the U.N., despite the fact that it did not obtain a majority and there was no response from the other side?

During a previous Knesset debate the Foreign Minister stated that since the proposal to absorb 100,000 refugees had been rejected, we were prepared to conduct negotiations on "solving the refugee problem in the Arab countries." Madam, the proposal raised at the U.N. that there should be direct negotiations between us and our neighbors...is not... "solving the refugee problem in the Arab countries."...The U.N. resolution speaks of peace negotiations which will include the refugee problem. It mentioned...direct negotiations and a proposal which could involve the return of a certain number of refugees to Israel from among those who "wish" or "choose" to return.

Nasser and U Nu issued a joint statement. We do not have the full text...but it cannot be assumed that it is any better than U Nu's statement at the Belgrade Conference. Although that statement dissociated itself from Nasser's attacks on us, it also recognized the right of the refugees to return to their homes. It will be remembered that the Prime Minister

sent U Nu a cable expressing his gratitude for his stand at the Belgrade Conference. At best, U Nu repeated in Cairo the statement he had made in Belgrade, and all this not long after our Prime Minister's visit to Rangoon. The attitude of our good friend Burma to resolving the refugee problem requires an explanation and serious meditation....As long as the choice is between the U.N. proposal for direct negotiations and the Knesset resolution to solve the problem of the refugees by settling them in the Arab countries, I fear that Burma and many other countries will prefer the U.N. proposal.

...The third possibility, which...takes both the political and the human aspects of the problem into account...is our proposal...which determines the proportion between the refugees who are resettled in Arab countries (we said: the overwhelming majority) and those who return to their homes (we said: a fixed number to which we agree), and the conditions under which the plan will be implemented (we said: within the framework of peace negotiations). The Government of Israel should adopt this proposal. At any rate, it should take one stand or another and maintain it both internally and externally....

I. Harari (Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, although our motions for the agenda are identical, I do not concur with the arguments of the previous speakers. We think that the way our delegation voted on the refugee problem was a mistake which, to our regret, overshadowed the great achievements of the Foreign Minister and the delegation up until that point....We regard the support of thirty-four countries from all over the world for our proposal...as being a significant political success. We appreciate the efforts invested...in thwarting the two amendments proposed by the Arab countries, which obtained a majority in the committee but were defeated in the plenum...but this does not prevent us from condemning the vote in favor of the U.S. resolution.

This is, in effect, a repetition of all the resolutions...passed by the U.N., one after the other, year after year, with small additions which are never in our favor....One of the reasons we should not have voted for that resolution is that we have always voted against similar ones in the past....What is the point of supporting a resolution which was originally passed in 1949, when the circumstances were different and it was still possible to think in terms of allowing the refugees to return to their homes?...No one imagined then that our neighbors would maintain a state of war with us till 1962....Are we interested in strengthening those resolutions passed in 1949, before the great population shift in Israel, in the course of which some 500,000 immigrants from Arab countries came and settled in Israel...?

There is another, weightier reason, however...namely, that we have no interest in supporting a resolution with which we are not and never have been satisfied....In the world in which we live, where an attempt is always made to appease those who are dissatisfied, what should the U.S.

do when Israel supports its resolution...while other countries are dissatisfied? Whom should it appease...Israel which voted for its resolution, or those countries which are vexed and voted against it?

We foresaw this during the discussion on the no less dangerous resolution, which was supported by thirty-four countries, advocating direct peace negotiations between us and the Arab countries. The U.S. did not vote for that resolution...because it knew that the Arab countries were displeased with it....Why didn't friendly France vote for that resolution? Countries which participate in the Conciliation Commission do not vote for direct negotiations, do not vote for peace between us and the Arab countries. That is their job, after all; that is why they participate in the Conciliation Commission. But in order to maintain their objectivity they are unable to vote for peace...and direct negotiations between us and the Arab countries....Why? Because the Arab countries do not want it....Neither the U.S. nor France nor the other countries had to seek a way of conciliating Israel, because it is satisfied, it voted for the U.S. resolution. Their task was to conciliate those countries which were not satisfied.

We have been told that in our speeches at the U.N. we expressed our reservations regarding the formulation of the resolution. The Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee decided...that there is no reason to interpret our vote at the U.N. as signifying our agreement with the resolution. First one votes for a resolution, then the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee decides that this cannot be interpreted as signifying agreement with that resolution. It would have been far simpler not to have voted....I do not agree with MK Barzilai that Section 11 is the focus of the argument. The point is that every year an attempt is made to get the sides to compromise or advance, and if we always agree to the U.S. proposals...our position will gradually be eroded.

I would like to add that we are grateful to the U.S. delegation... which helped us defeat the two amendments proposed by the Arab countries. But does the U.S. delegation deserve a prize for failing to support the proposal regarding direct peace negotiations...between us and the Arab countries? Should we lightly pass over such actions, even when they are undertaken by friends? True friendship means being able to tell someone when they have done wrong. We should tell the U.S. and French delegations quite frankly...that we are surprised at their failure to support the resolution...calling for direct peace negotiations between us and the Arab countries.

I think that our delegation should not have voted for the U.S. resolution. Nothing would have happened if it had abstained. It could even have voted against it...but it should have demonstrated our displeasure. Despite all our successes at the last Assembly...that last step was a mistake. I think that this should be said from this podium, and that the subject should be debated.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, I think that even an objective person listening to the three previous speakers...would realize that they were not expressing any genuine, deeply-felt anger at a great injustice or a grave mistake or action which was taken in contravention of the Knesset's decisions....

I accept what MK Meridor said. He said: we are the Opposition, and therefore we must criticize; that is our job. I understand that. That was the most intelligible thing he said. But even an Opposition whose task it is to criticize must, for its own good...stick to the facts....It is not legitimate to ignore facts in certain circumstances. A person thinks that he can talk about something with great pathos, because that subject is vital for the state's survival, but he does not bother...to read the documents pertaining to that subject. I find that difficult to understand....It is worse when a certain error has already been pointed out to those who made it once, and yet they continue as if nothing had happened. I am unable to comprehend that. Is it the Opposition's task to deliberately ignore the facts...? I imagine that it is possible to be a very effective Opposition, to fulfill its critical task to the fullest extent, without ignoring the facts so blatantly, when they have been made abundantly clear only twenty-four hours previously. This also applies to MK Barzilai, to some extent.

On behalf of the members of the delegation and myself, I thank those Knesset Members who had a good word to say about the delegation's work at the Assembly....I would like to tell the Knesset that my colleagues at the Foreign Ministry, whether they remained here at the Ministry, shared in the great work elsewhere or participated in the delegation, have almost forgotten the joy of the successes, since we are already planning the struggle which, I regret to say, we will face next year. There is no point in arguing or criticizing if...one is not prepared to recognize what the problem is, i.e., what the Arabs want.

The Arabs do not want to solve the refugee problem. Had they wanted to do so, the problem would have been solved long ago. They want something else. To what end have their efforts been directed during the thirteen years of our existence, especially in recent years, when the face of the U.N. changed...? The Arabs saw that they had a golden opportunity to achieve what they had been unable to achieve as long as the U.N. existed in its old form....The speeches made by the Arabs, from Nasser to Shukeiry, constituted direct appeals to the new countries at the U.N. to save the day. They were told that they, who had only recently attained independence from imperialism and colonialism, should aid in destroying Israel, which was an imperialist entity....That design of the Arabs failed...but that is not the end of the matter....

The fact is that for ten years it was very rare to hear anyone speaking at the Assembly about the need to solve the problem by peaceful means and to recognize the fact of Israel's existence. Since 1952 it has

not happened that several countries have been united in saying that that was the only solution. Even in 1952 that resolution was not passed, despite the vigorous support of the U.S....This is the first time since 1952 that sixteen countries from all over the world, including an important group of new countries, have submitted a proposal of that kind. This is where I cannot understand MK Barzilai. I cannot understand why he is not happy with that proposal for direct negotiations and peace....He claims that it lacks something, and he is probably referring to the passage in the Mapam platform regarding the solution of the refugee problem. I did not think that it was Israel's task to explain that to the countries of Africa and Latin America....He wants the proposal to specify what will be discussed during the negotiations....I would not dream of doing that, and neither, do I think, would MK Barzilai were it not for the fact that he is in Opposition....After all, U.N. resolutions by themselves do not solve problems....Problems are solved when the sides involved agree to solve them....

When our Arab neighbors reach the stage of agreeing to sit down and talk about peace with us, and accept the fact of our existence...we will make proposals regarding a solution to the refugee problem. But there is no place for other proposals in the resolution calling on Israel and the Arabs to conduct negotiations as two parties which recognize one another....

...What right does anyone have to interpret the way others vote? MK Barzilai interprets the vote of the African nations, saying that on one occasion they voted for peace and on another for the return of the refugees. Where do you get that from?

I. Barzilai (Mapam): It's written down.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: How do you know that that is how they interpret it?

I. Barzilai (Mapam): They don't interpret it, they vote on what is written.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: I've heard that three times. By what right do you interpret what they voted for and why? Why aren't you prepared to accept their explanation, according to their speeches, as regards both the refugees and Clause 11?...Do you have the right to interpret how the representative of the Ivory Coast voted and what he thought as he did so? They are not so timid; they said what they had to say simply, clearly and courageously. If they had thought that the refugees should have been returned to Israel, they would have said so.

Apparently in order to enhance the importance of the Opposition's role, MK Meridor appended the Eastern Bloc to the Arab Bloc which voted against Clause 11. I don't know why. I cannot boast that it was our influence which led them to vote one way or another. We asked the Rus-

sian delegation to vote for that proposal, which does not contain a single word against an Arab country, and does not even say that Israel is right....The official policy of the U.S.S.R. is the solution of all international problems through peaceful negotiations...but to my regret we could not persuade them to vote for that proposal....

T. Toubi (Maki): How can you convince anyone when every day you say "not one refugee," as the Knesset decided in accordance with the Prime Minister's proposal?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Mr. Speaker, if the correct term to describe what was just said is unparliamentary, I think it would not be wrong to say that what MK Toubi said is untrue. He knows that, as does the entire House....

M. Sneh (Maki): Perhaps the Foreign Minister could explain why France and the U.S. did not vote for the resolution, since she has explained why the U.S.S.R. did not....

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: I must tell MK Meridor that the Eastern Bloc did not vote with the Arabs on this clause, and I do not know why. I am not saying that it voted for us or against us. I don't have a clue. But it abstained. The Arab countries, Spain, Mauritania and Somalia voted against that section.

MK Meridor said that silence signifies assent. That is true. But the fact is that we were not silent. What Israel's delegation has said over the years at the U.N. about Clause 11 could fill books. But we do not rely on the fact that we spoke out against Clause 11, not to mention Clauses 5 and 6, a year ago and three years ago and five years ago. This year, too, a great part of what Mr. Comay and I said was devoted to Clause 11 and our stand on the refugee problem....Our position that the refugees would have to be settled in the Arab countries was also made clear during the Knesset debate. I said that in my speech. I did not hide anything. I also said what I said in the Knesset, because there was someone at the U.N. who spoke with the same amount of veracity as MK Toubi has now. The Jordanian representative simply took the *Jerusalem Post* and read out: The Foreign Minister said "not one refugee." He simply distorted things. And what we heard just now was a distortion.

T. Toubi (Maki): ...The House is constantly being told that we will not take back a single refugee.

E. Wilenska (Maki): It's in the *Knesset Record*.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: In the Knesset debate I said that the position of Israel's Government had never been "not one refugee." I said that in the Knesset debate, and I'm saying it now too. I also said it at the Assembly, because such a position is untenable....Whatever govern-

ment is in power, I presume that all Israel's governments will act logically and will not take the position of "not one refugee."...

When the U.S. proposal was brought before the committee we voted against it because the two Arab amendments had been appended to it. For them it was important that those amendments should be accepted, and for us that they should be defeated. One of them concerned property. What do the Arabs mean when they speak of property in Israel, as Shukeiry and his colleagues do? Are they concerned about the refugees and their property? They wanted to prove one thing. What would never be demanded from another country can be demanded of Israel because Israel, they claim, is not a sovereign state. At any rate, its sovereignty is not comparable to that of other countries. Consequently, a trustee has to be appointed by the U.N. to supervise matters and collect the income from the abandoned property, not for the refugees but in order to prove that Israel's sovereignty is unlike that of other countries. They said that openly. That amendment was accepted by the committee.

The second amendment concerned changing the composition of the Conciliation Commission...and determining that the President of the Assembly should have the objective authority to appoint the new Conciliation Commission. We all know who the President of the Assembly is this year. When the two amendments obtained a majority in the committee and the U.S. proposal came up for the vote, we obviously voted against it.

At the Assembly, before the vote on the U.S. proposal...Mr. Comay explained again why we opposed Clause 11. We did not know then that they would vote separately on that clause. When that section was put to the vote we abstained....Anyone who knows what we said about Section 11 in the committee and the various Assemblies, and heard our reservations and explanations before the vote and our abstention, can on no account interpret the position of the Israel Government as they have attempted to do....

M. Begin (Herut): Why did we vote for it in the plenum?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: We voted for the comprehensive resolution, which contains all manner of things. It refers to the UNWRA budget, the continuation of Johnson's activity, and other things.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): What is in that general resolution that benefits Israel?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: I hope from the bottom of my heart that when the day comes—I don't know when—and you are Foreign Minister, that you return from every Assembly with a quiverful of resolutions benefiting Israel and never have to combat resolutions against Israel.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): I thank you for your kind wishes.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Do you think that I wish you that just out of the goodness of my heart? No, it is because when the Foreign Minister, whoever he may be, brings resolutions which are only in Israel's favor, that will indicate that Israel has reached a safe haven.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Would you mind answering the question anyway?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: ...I think that for many years to come still...Israel's Foreign Ministers will have to deal not only with resolutions favorable to Israel at the U.N. but, unfortunately, will have to invest most of their efforts and energy in averting resolutions against us.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Nevertheless, would you please answer the question as to why we voted for the resolution?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: First of all, to answer or not to answer, that is my right. Secondly, why don't you wait patiently? Maybe I'll get around to answering, after all.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): I'll wait gladly, especially after your good wishes.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: I think that we gained important achievements for Israel in that all the plots were foiled this time. I am by no means convinced that that will always be the case in future.

When we entered into a serious and difficult struggle at the Assembly—and for the new countries it was very serious—with a bloc of countries...we did so as one bloc, and to the best of my understanding we should not have split off from the ten countries which went with us, particularly since it never entered my head that even a Knesset Member from the Opposition would interpret our vote in this way. No one at the U.N. interpreted it thus. I think that a united stand, from beginning to end, is an important political element benefiting Israel and not the Arabs. It is strange, but if that resolution and our vote on it benefited the Arabs so much, why did they all vote against it? I will tell you why. Because they knew that we did not accept Clause 11, and it is on no account to be interpreted as MK Barzilai and other Members of the House have done. They know that this is not a matter of "free choice," and the clause does not give them the right to choose whether to return or not. According to Clause 11 it is Israel which will decide if, when, who and on what conditions. They know that Clause 11 does not make things easy for us, but it contains a condition—they have to want to live in peace. That is what Clause 11 says. Why was that forgotten? Wherefore this eagerness to interpret Clause 11 the way the Arabs do? Realizing that this was not the case, they voted against it.

A. Altman (Herut): Even the optimal interpretation does not accord with the Knesset decision.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Regarding property, MK Meridor, a resolution was passed in 1950 charging the Conciliation Commission with assessing the abandoned property in Israel. It did not occur to me that there was a Knesset Member for whom this was a secret and who would be surprised by the fact that the U.S. resolution contained a clause about the assessment of property. They have been doing that for years. And if you haven't noticed, it can't be all that bad. The situation might be difficult when they reach a conclusion and we will have to discuss matters with them. But there is nothing new in the assessment of property or in Israel's avowed readiness to pay compensation (as well as demanding compensation).

This time the Assembly said that the matter had been dragging on since 1950, that the committee should conclude the assessment in 1962 and if the bureaucratic machinery required help, the Secretary-General should see that it was provided. On the basis of that they say that there will be a proliferation of officials in Israel. You aren't even aware that the officials exist in Israel and yet you speak of a "proliferation of officials"! And what will they do? They will do something...which was decided on in 1950, and which we do not oppose, because we are telling the truth when we say that we will pay compensation.

Now, why does our vote at the Assembly not contradict the Knesset's decision? Because whenever we spoke, whether when we expressed our reservations and abstention on Clause 11 or in our statement that we regarded the solution to the refugee problem as being solely in the Arab countries—and we quoted the Knesset decision there so that the matter would be quite clear—no one...could interpret our vote at the Assembly as meaning that Israel had changed its position on the refugee problem. That being so, and since the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee discussed this subject at two meetings, I propose that we remove the motion from the agenda.

The Speaker, J. Serlin: Knesset Members, we will now vote.

The Vote

Those in favor of holding a debate on the subject 25

Those in favor of removing the motion from the agenda 37

(The proposal to remove the motion from the agenda is adopted.)

M. Sneh (Maki): I have the honor of submitting a statement on behalf of the Communist party group.

We abstained because we reject not only the Government's attitude on the refugee problem but also the critical approach of the party groups which spoke here today against the tactics of Israel's delegation at the recent U.N. Assembly.

Two months ago, prior to the U.N. debate, you were all—except Maki—united in denying the right of the refugees to return or receive compensation, as they chose....But when the moment of truth came at the U.N. Assembly, the Israeli delegation voted for the U.S. resolution which affirmed the right of the Arab refugees to return, in accordance with the U.N. resolution of 1948. No amount of clever propaganda can change the fact that Israel's delegation voted against its own position, against the Government's policy and against the Knesset's decision.

Why? Because Israel's official policy cannot withstand the test of international reality. Only one day before the vote in the Assembly, when the same U.S. proposal—with two supposedly "pro-Arab" amendments—came before the committee, Israel voted against it, but stood alone against 74 votes in favor of it. Your policy isolates Israel from the rest of the world, and even those 16 countries which tried to submit a proposal which had been coordinated with the Israel delegation voted for the refugees' right to return....Your attitude of voting one way at home and another abroad...is both incorrect and devoid of political realism, and you cannot adhere to it to the end....

Here, in Israel, you attack and condemn Maki, which opposes your stance. There, in the international arena, you have to abandon your policy. Otherwise no country which you regard as friendly—neither the U.S. nor France, neither the Brazzaville Bloc nor Holland—will agree to the line taken here by the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister.

You can see for yourselves: the self-same policy which isolated Maki in the Knesset two months ago...isolated Israel at the U.N. The solution is not, as the Foreign Minister is reported as having said, to vote tactically, disregarding principles. It is to change Israel's policy fundamentally, basing it on the assumption that the rights of Jews and Arabs are not mutually contradictory, and that we will achieve our rights only if we recognize those of the Arabs.

Recognizing the right of the Arab refugees is the key to obtaining Arab recognition of Israel's right as well as to negotiations on a peace settlement. The Foreign Minister claims that she did not say "not one refugee"...That is true. In the previous debate she said that the Government of Israel's declared policy is "solving the refugee problem in the Arab countries," not "not one refugee," and that "Israel cannot bring refugees back," neither through free choice nor in a limited and agreed number, as Mapam proposed....If the solution to the problem lies in the Arab countries that means that Israel cannot take a single refugee back....We all seek to assure Israel's rights...its freedom of navigation in the Suez Canal and the Red Sea Straits, the abolition of the Arab

economic boycott, the division of the water from shared rivers, permanent security along permanent borders and good neighborly relations with our neighbors. All this can be achieved only by a mutual agreement...and that is possible only if we recognize the rights of the refugees and the legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arab people. The question is not who will repudiate whose rights, the Arabs or us....It is how to accommodate the just rights of the two nations for which Palestine, through historical developments, is the shared homeland, as two sons of the same mother.

Consequently, the policy proposed by the Israel Communist Party is the most wise, correct and far-sighted one, which assures our future and our security. The day will come when the Knesset will accept that policy, and the sooner the better.

Reparations for Austrian Jews who were Victims of Nazi Persecution

Introduction

Years after the Reparations Agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany had been signed by Israel, Austria persisted in its obstinate refusal to acknowledge responsibility vis-à-vis former Austrian Jews for the crimes committed against them. Austria claimed to have been the victim of Nazi policy, and disclaimed any share in its implementation. Arguments based on the important roles played by Austrians or former Austrians, like Eichmann and Hitler himself, at every phase of the Nazi regime, and the enthusiastic reception accorded to Hitler at the time of the Anschluss in 1938 by the Austrian authorities and vast segments of the Austrian people, fell on deaf ears.

Sitting 83 of the Fifth Knesset

31 January 1962 (26 Shevat 5722)

The Speaker, I. Yeshayahu-Sharabi: ...MK Zimmerman has a motion for the agenda on reparations for victims of Nazism who were living in the Austrian part of the Third Reich during the Holocaust.

Z. Zimmerman (Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, since the debate in the Fourth Knesset on reparations for Austrian Jews, eight months have been added to the twenty-two years which have passed since the Jews of Austria, the first to suffer from Nazi persecution, were robbed, and it is seventeen years since the Third Reich was crushed. There has been no change, however, regarding reparations for the victims of Nazism who were living in the Austrian part of the Third Reich during the years of the Holocaust.

I will not describe once again all the suffering, discrimination, persecution and plunder suffered by our brethren from Austria, that splendid Jewish community which played such an important role in the spiritual and political revival of our nation....In replying to the proposal I brought before the Fourth Knesset, and after agreeing in principle about reparations for Austrian Jewry, the Minister of Finance said that he did not understand what I wanted from the Knesset and the Government....I will try to answer that now....

I would like the Knesset to take note of the injustice being done to the twenty thousand Jews from Austria living among us today, and not necessarily of the injustice done to all Austrian Jewry twenty-two years ago....My impression is, however, that many of the Members of the House, including the Minister of Finance and the Government, have

not paid sufficient attention to the lot of the Jews of Austria living in Israel today....

The situation today, in accordance with legislation passed by the Austrian parliament not long ago, after Austria had undertaken in the peace treaty of 1955 with the four occupying Powers to introduce appropriate legislation to compensate the victims of Nazism, is that those Austrian Jews who are currently living in Israel will receive only 5 percent or 6 percent of the reparations they would have received had they been granted reparations directly by the Bonn Government, as other Nazi victims, particularly former residents of Germany, have.

...It should be noted that, in accordance with the peace treaty with the four occupying Powers, which was signed on 15 May 1955, Germany... transferred a great deal of property to Austria. Everything which Nazi Germany had invested in the Austrian economy remained in the hands of the Austrians. All the property which was stolen from the Jews remained in Austria....On the basis of that separate peace treaty with Austria, Germany amended its basic reparations law of 1953 in 1956... to exclude Austrian Jews...from among those entitled to receive reparations...leaving them to the tender mercies of the Austrian Government....

The greatest injustice is that done to Austrian Jews who are disabled, a group of between 120 and 150 persons. The injustice lies in the fact that in 1952, after reaching an agreement with Germany, which had not made an exception of Austrian Jewry, Israel's Government undertook to pay reparations to the disabled in Israel, and after Germany amended its law in 1956 and eliminated Austrian Jews from among those entitled to receive personal reparations from it...Israel introduced legislation in 1957 regarding disabled persons who were the victims of Nazi persecution, and included in it the famous paragraph stating that only those persons who were entitled to receive reparations as disabled persons from Germany would be recognized as eligible to receive reparations in Israel. Thus, Austrian Jews who are disabled are entitled to receive reparations from neither Germany, Austria nor Israel, despite the fact that the Government of Israel waived those persons' demands on Germany and undertook that commitment upon itself....

...In order to keep my speech as short as possible, I will refrain from citing all the material I have amassed....But in reply to the Minister of Finance's question as to what I want of the Government, I will say first what I do not want. I do not want to criticize, although there is room for criticism of what was done in the past. I would like to focus on the future, and on what the Government of Israel can and should do....

It is the Government's duty to put the injustice right and exert its influence in Germany, so that the amendment to the German reparations law, which discriminates against Austrian Jews...and is based on an agreement between Germany and Austria, as well as on a prior agree-

ment between Germany and Israel...is annulled. It should also act so that the Austrian reparations laws regarding citizens of Israel are adequate, as was promised....Austria should not get rich by virtue of that injustice. The Government can act in this matter on the basis of the Luxembourg Agreement....

...There is a legal basis for Israel's intervention to correct this injustice. I hope that the Government...will take the appropriate steps towards this end....I propose that we debate this subject, so that it may be explored in full and the ways to the desired solution examined.

The Minister of Finance, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the problem is a painful one, and if it were possible to solve it by discussing it I would advocate doing so by day and by night....The situation is that the negotiations with the Austrian Government regarding paying personal reparations were conducted by an important and highly-placed person, an experienced negotiator, namely, Dr. Nahum Goldmann....I am sure that he did not miss any opportunity as chairman of the Jewish Claims Committee. The problem raised here has also preoccupied the Government of Israel, and it naturally discussed it with the Government of Austria and acted wherever it was possible to negotiate. The Government acted both orally and in writing, demanding that the problem of personal reparations be settled on the basis of the same criterion as that of the German reparations law.

Each person will have to judge for himself what the status and ability of a committee of that kind, or of a country—and Israel in particular—is in a situation of that nature. Despite all our efforts and our endeavors to exert pressure and intervene as far as possible, we reached the settlement with the Austrian Government which unfortunately cannot be regarded as satisfactory, even after an agreement was reached with the German and Austrian Governments regarding the payment of a global sum by Germany to Austria.

I fully concur with those who suffer and demand reparations, and with...MK Zimmerman, but I can do little more than repeat my original question: what can we do that we have not done to date...? I would not be opposed were the matter to come before a committee. He will doubtless agree with me that a committee should deal with it. Every possible proposal can be raised there, and we can examine what—if any—weapons there are in our arsenal which have not yet been used.

I propose, therefore, and I see that MK Zimmerman is nodding his head, that the subject be transferred to an appropriate committee, I don't know which, possibly the Finance Committee.

The Speaker, I. Yeshayahu-Sharabi: I see that the person who proposed the motion agrees with the Minister's suggestion. We will now vote.

(The proposal to transfer the subject to a committee to be determined by the House Committee is adopted.)

Disappearance of Yossele Schumacher

Introduction

Rarely has any internal family conflict between the parents and grandparents of a child, culminating in that child's abduction, developed into a major issue, which divided the nation and even took on international proportions, as did the "Yossele Affair." It brought to light once more the rift between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews in Israel, and revealed the potential for a *kulturkampf* (culture struggle). On the other hand, it united the entire Knesset in an appeal to return the boy to his parents.

Police efforts to locate the child having failed, in spite of the unanimous appeal of the Knesset, Israel's Secret Service, was given the unprecedented mission. It did ultimately locate the boy, in an Orthodox neighborhood in Brooklyn, and returned him to Israel, with the consent of the U.S. authorities.

Sitting 121 of the Fifth Knesset

3 April 1962 (29 Adar 5722)

The Minister of Police, B.S. Shitrit: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, in 1957 Alter and Ida Schumacher immigrated to Israel from the U.S.S.R. and, because of initial difficulties in finding work and accommodation, gave their children, Joseph and Zena, to Mrs. Schumacher's father, Nahman Starkes, to be educated. They asked the grandfather to return the children to them once their economic situation had improved and they had found a permanent home.

At the start of the 1959 school year they asked for the children to be returned to them. The daughter, Zena, was returned, but the grandfather...refused to return the son, Joseph, claiming that the parents intended to return to Russia, in which case the child would be lost to Judaism. The grandfather refused to disclose the whereabouts of the child, maintaining that his action was in accordance with Jewish law and that certain rabbinical authorities supported him....

The parents resorted to legal proceedings, and when these were of no avail the police conducted an exhaustive search for the boy, but were unable to find him....Addressing the Knesset in response to motions for the agenda in March 1962...I stressed the extensive activities undertaken by the police, including conducting 400 searches and questioning 440 informers and 852 other persons. That work is still continuing. I also noted the difficulties we are encountering—a group which is completely sealed off and hard-hearted, evincing an unparalleled disre-

gard for a mother's feelings and an unprecedented indifference to the appeal which has gone forth from the general public, and all this supposedly to uphold religion....We have reason to believe that by now the child is no longer in Israel.

...We have instigated proceedings in a certain country to have a certain person who, we believe, is connected with the child's disappearance, extradited to Israel. We hope to bring him to trial, together with the other people who hid Yossele Schumacher by a certain method, moving him from one place to another....

I propose that we transfer the subject to the Internal Affairs Committee, and that the call go forth from the Knesset to all those who can help the police in its mission of returning the boy to his parents that they should do so in accordance with the commandment to honor one's father and mother as well as with the love of parents for their child, good citizenship and the unity of the Jewish nation.

...

E. Talmi (Mapam): Distinguished Speaker and House...my object in speaking here today is to unite the Knesset in calling for Yossele Schumacher to be restored to his parents immediately, and in condemning anyone who knows of the child's whereabouts and fails to help the police to trace the boy, thereby acting against the law of the land as well as against human and Jewish ethics. I want it to be clear that all the party groups are united...and that no one here condones the kidnaping.

I would also like to ask the Minister of Police a few questions....On 8 June 1960 you assured the Knesset that Yossele Schumacher had not been smuggled out of the country....A year and nine months passed...and in March this year you said that there was reason to assume—and you hoped that this was the case—that the child was not here....How did it happen that...despite the police's efforts to find the boy he was spirited out of the country, together with his kidnapers?

...The police had the power to stop any attempt to get the child out of the country then...and there is really only one route, westward, the other directions leading to enemy territory where no one comes or goes, other than terrorists, people who are lost or fools. The remaining route can be covered either by sea or by air. Did you place policemen at the air and sea ports...?

I ask how it happened that a criminal and a child misled you, your watchfulness and your skills—and vanished. After all, general sympathy or hostility is of no avail at the ports as it is in Mea Shearim, for example....You are offended if anyone says that the police were negligent, and I have never said that. But if there was no negligence...were the police instructed by other elements? Why wasn't a generous reward offered to encourage the seekers...? Why did the Israel Broadcasting Service's Yiddish program refuse to broadcast the simple appeal made by the boy's mother for her son to be returned to her...?

That is why I ask whether the police were perhaps acting on certain instructions. Why did they treat Rabbi Mendelson as they did...? The replies given by the boy's grandfather to the court...indicate that he is a scheming person who misuses his position, not a kind, well-meaning old man, as some have tried to represent him. He refused to disclose the boy's whereabouts to the court, although it was patently evident that he knew where the child was...Then, when he was released in order to find the child, his efforts to locate him were clearly just a facade...Why did the Minister not mention this, even though that man is the force behind this whole affair...?

...I do not doubt that what the Minister said is the truth, I just doubt that it is the whole truth....

...I would like to ask the Minister of Religion...why, in a newspaper interview, he defined this fell deed as "something which began as an attempt to enhance religion and ended in sacrilege"? When was there anything in this which enhances religion? Two years ago, when the judges described it as "a foul crime"? What was there in this which enhances religion? And precisely when did the sacrilege begin...?

...Is there one law in Israel or not? I know there are those among us whose allegiance is to a different law....But a basic element of law is that both sides have to be heard, and the boy's parents were not heard by the venerable rabbi who gave his approval to the attempt to prevent the child being taken out of the country by his parents....That approval was granted on the basis of an unfounded rumor which another rabbi read in a paper....I recognize the validity of only one law in this country, but I call on all those who acknowledge rabbinical law to check the validity of such a one-sided approach....Apart from anything else, that approval by no means sanctions kidnaping in order to prevent the child leaving the country....And in the final event, the child was both torn from his parents and spirited out of the country....

Thus, there is no reason to accede to their blackmail. They must be made to stand trial for their offenses and to take the full punishment the law imposes....For if we do not do this, what guarantee will any mother have that her child will not be kidnaped, and the abductors will go unpunished? We demanded the extradition of Mr. Shalom Starkes....He sought to pander to the Gentiles and asked the court in London to hand down a decision—which in this case is a precedent, and a political, anti-Israel one, to boot—that Jerusalem is not part of Israel and that therefore he cannot be extradited to here. And this was said by an Orthodox Jew who doubtless mentions Jerusalem in his daily prayers. An Orthodox Jew seeks to wrest Jerusalem away from the Jewish people! And for someone like that a pardon is demanded!...And should he be extradited merely to be pardoned...?

Knesset Members, this is an untenable situation. Justice is indivisible. One law must apply to everyone. We, as Knesset Members, will do

everything to ensure that our law is humane, just and appropriate for a democratic country in the twentieth century; and we will all live according to it. We need one law, otherwise once again we will witness the strange spectacle of a Minister defining as "the enhancing of religion" something which the courts have described as a foul crime. The day will come—soon, I hope—when Yossele Schumacher will be returned. I propose that the Knesset unite in the appeal with which I opened my speech.

...
The Minister of Religion, Z. Warhaftig: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members...I would first like to make it clear that every child belongs to his parents, and every day, hour or minute that someone holds him against his parents' wishes becomes a criminal matter....For me there is something more important in this, it is sacrilege....I also think, however, that basic rules of religious tolerance and cultural relations between all sections of the public in Israel also require that we understand this affair. I have said in the past that something which was originally undertaken in order to enhance religion has become sacrilege, and I still adhere to that view....

I think that this affair is the product of a Jewish tragedy which has few parallels even in our tragic history. It is the tragedy of Russian Jewry, of three and a half million Jews who are imprisoned in a huge country, who wish to live as Jews and whose Judaism is being repressed. We are about to celebrate the festival of Passover, but those Jews may well sit down on the first night of the festival and weep because they have no unleavened bread. When we sit down to our Pesach meal we should make that our chief concern—

E. Wilenska (Maki): What does that have to do with this affair?

The Minister of Religion, Z. Warhaftig:—that as we celebrate Passover here, that afflicted Jewish community is unable to do so, interrupting thousands of years of tradition....

E. Wilenska (Maki): But this is not to the point....

The Minister of Religion, Z. Warhaftig: ...I am simply stating facts, namely, that in that mighty state there is no room for Judaism and a Jewish spiritual movement, while on the other hand those Jews are hermetically sealed off, being allowed neither to leave nor to live as Jews. It is against this tragic background that the action of Mr. Starkes must be understood....He and others like him suffered deprivation and imprisonment in Russia because they broke the law and taught Judaism to Jewish children....In the final event, he was allowed to leave Russia, together with his family, and it is against that background that his action must be understood—and forgiven—

E. Wilenska (Maki): And condoned?

The Minister of Justice, Z. Warhaftig: No, not condoned, forgiven....Be that as it may, after Mr. Starkes had been through so much, and his grandson had been placed in his charge by his daughter and son-in-law, he heard that the family intended returning to that same country where the child would be unable to receive a Jewish education....

I repeat that something which began as an act to enhance religion has become sacrilege. I appeal once again to all those who have any knowledge of the child's whereabouts...in the name of religion...to return the child at once, even if this involves facing trial and possible punishment. Enhancing religion requires courage. Let them prove their courage and say that they held on to the child because they wanted to ensure that he was brought up as a Jew, that they are returning him now and are prepared to stand trial....I also maintain that the full penalty the law allows for crimes of this kind should not be imposed...for the sake of national unity....

A.J. Greenberg (National Religious Party): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset Members...there are certain matters which go beyond their specific content, and the case of Yossele is one of these. Although the affair itself is bad and loathsome, it is far worse outside its framework, in the public eye. It embodies all the elements of sacrilege and divisiveness. The Rabbi of Kotsk said: the results of war, the cruelty to which it leads, are worse than war itself. That is why this debate is worthwhile...since it may lead to Yossele being reunited with his parents....

But if someone wishes to make use of this unfortunate affair in order to settle accounts with Orthodox Jewry because a handful of extremist zealots appear to be involved in this, the debate will do more harm than good, causing fragmentation and dispute within the nation....We are not afraid of this debate. We will emerge victorious. We Orthodox Jews do not generally have any cause to be ashamed of our moral standards....

As for the issue itself, the outcome of the debate should be a Knesset decision or recommendation to a committee that everything possible should be done so that the child may speedily be returned to his parents. I will even go so far as to say that if this is not done by a date which the Knesset shall fix, a special law, the Yossele Law, should be passed, imposing serious penalties on anyone who is detaining the child, was involved in any way in hiding him or is concealing information which could help find him, if he is not returned by a given date....For those people have disregarded the rabbinical authorities, the law of the land and, above all, the parents' grief. Yes, heavy penalties should be imposed, that people may learn that Jewish children in Israel are not to be trifled with.

For the general benefit, however, the authorities should announce that those involved in this shameful case will be pardoned if they coop-

erate by the given date....This distressing matter, which is bringing us into bad light with the whole world, must come to an end....Forgive me if I introduce some levity into the debate. I hear that the first question the American astronaut Glenn asked upon returning to earth was: Where is Yossele?

There is no logical explanation for continuing to conceal the child. Even the most extremist persons have dissociated themselves from this affair. According to recent press reports, even the persons concerned would like to return the child, but are afraid of the long prison sentences they will receive. However detrimental to the due process of law issuing a pardon may be, the continuation of the present situation will be even more harmful. Who can guarantee that it will not continue for years? What else remains to be done to find the boy?...Meanwhile, divisiveness is growing. There are those who are interested in fighting Orthodox Jewry. Bearded Jews are asked in the street: where is Yossele?... This could cause an atmosphere of hostility...which is something we do not want....The papers report the Minister of Police as saying that the police force is resolved to bring all those involved in the affair to trial. If he said this, it is a serious error on his part, and I do not believe that this is the Government's position.

If we sincerely wish to spare the parents further suffering and prevent sacrilege and fragmentation, we must all help to bring this sorry affair to an end, and the only way to do this is by issuing a pardon....

I.M. Lewin (Aguda): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, for several years a spiritual war has been waged on the Jewish way of life. The conflict became fiercer after the establishment of the state. We are now being confronted with the question: do we wish this to become a civil war or not?...It is difficult to speak and be heard in the poisoned atmosphere of today, with its flood of hatred, incitement and prejudice. I will try, nevertheless.

The complex struggle between the Starkes and Schumacher families is one of the various strange events which have occurred in the state. The grandfather did not kidnap the child originally, but was charged by the parents with bringing him up. At a later stage he concealed him, claiming that the parents intended returning to Russia. He said that the father had signed the infamous petition to Voroshilov describing life in Israel as hell on earth. The entire Israeli public supported the grandfather then....The mother had her elderly father put in jail, and has been cut off from her son, whose return she demands, for several years now.

This affair should be regarded, first and foremost, as a great family tragedy. Presumably, had not so many people meddled in it the child would have been returned. At the beginning of the affair it seems that certain individuals helped the elderly grandfather, and this still ap-

pears to be the case. The situation is that the boy's whereabouts are not known. Those are the facts, and those facts serve as the basis for wild incitement, for accusing the entire organized Orthodox community, the rabbis and the religious leaders, of conspiring to kidnap the child....

This approach to the Orthodox community indicates how vast the distance is between us, how little the character of observant Jewry is known. There are even those who mention the kidnaping of a child under the auspices of the Pope in 1858 and compare the two instances, only this time the guilty party is the entire Orthodox community. The people who cite that case add that then, at least, there was one courageous priest who condemned the kidnaping, while no Orthodox Jew has done so in this case. Cries of "Yossele" are hurled at Orthodox Jews in the streets, the name of our community is blackened and hatred is fanned to a dangerous degree....

Are we not witnessing a form of the shameful anti-semitism which we have known everywhere in the world throughout our history? When one Jew, or group of Jews, did something, the entire community was accused, even if the original accusation was false.... This is a veritable blood libel... against the entire Orthodox community. We are told to condemn the deed... to shout as one man: we do not kidnap children.

This is an unprecedented affront. Why should not all those on the other side say the same thing? In the diaspora, at times of pressure, the rabbis would all have to assemble in the synagogue and swear that Jews had no need of Christian blood. Is not all this similar?

Why are we silent? We have unfortunately... become accustomed to remaining silent on many issues... such as obliging immigrants to abandon their religious practices.... None of the secular parties has ever taken children; only the Orthodox community, led by the rabbis, has united to steal one child. Even political differences within Orthodox Jewry have been obscured for this purpose!

One can understand the grandfather, who is interested in what befalls his grandson, but one cannot expect the Orthodox community to be accountable for one child when thousands of children are removed from religion. Is that how you regard the struggle of the Orthodox community in the state?

... Maybe you should ask yourselves why you remain silent, rather than asking us? Since the establishment of the state a missionary network has been functioning here whose entire existence is based on abducting children and converting them to another religion. Have you ever raised your voices against that network? The Government takes no action to end that scandal, and all the years we were the only ones who protested against those wholesale abductions.... You have deprived our youngsters of their religious training and given them nothing in return.... Delinquency and licentiousness are increasing....

... You ask us why we did not raise our voice.... We are used to not being heard.... If those people who did this deed had asked us beforehand, we would have told them not to do it. But that does not seem to have deterred them. We say and have said... that the boy should be returned to his parents, because an action of this kind does nothing to help Orthodox Jewry.... Why, then, does all Orthodox Jewry come under attack? If people from other parties do wrong is the entire party attacked...? Why do you accuse us collectively and create an increasingly poisoned psychosis?

Orthodox Jewry wants the boy returned as quickly as possible, but I doubt... whether all those who shout really want this, for if they did they would have pressed for stopping the legal proceedings. It is true that those who have broken the law must be punished. The question is, however, what do we want? Possibly the persons who have concealed the child wish to return him but are afraid that he will tell where he has been and they will be imprisoned. If those who shout really care about the boy's mother—which I believe they do—why don't they put their pride in their pocket and say that the trial should be cancelled?...

But possibly some of those who clamor do not want the child to be returned, using the affair as a pretext... to heighten hatred, to bring the name of Orthodox Jewry into a bad light and to perpetuate the poisoned psychosis which has gripped the masses. It may be that in your subconscious you know that your battle is lost; you see the emptiness, the lack of any ideological basis, and you know that the truth will triumph, that Orthodox Jewry is growing stronger, that secularism is devoid of any ideological content while Orthodoxy is not, and that is why you wish to strike us. You have lighted upon Yossele as a way of doing this. If that is so, we have to tell you that we will endure that too. We have suffered so much from the Gentiles, we will be able to cope with what the Jews have in store for us too.... In the final event our youngsters will grow even more resilient, and you will eventually realize that.

... Allow me to conclude by appealing to you not to stretch the cord too tight, for if it breaks you will regret it. It is already difficult to repair the damage caused by this affair, but later on it will be even more difficult. Cease the incitement before it is too late.

...

J. Katz (Po'alei Aguda): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, today we are dealing with an affair which has rocked the Jewish inhabitants of the country, and it can be assumed that many of those abroad are also concerned by the disappearance of Yossele Schumacher.

I would like to say that there is no difference of opinion between us as to the need to restore the child to his parents, thereby ending this sad affair, but we cannot ignore the reasons which caused it in the first place. Many of those who are dealing with it seek to create the general impression that they are not involved, and consequently the way in

which the affair began must be revealed to the Knesset. At first, sympathy was created for old Rabbi Nahman Starkes, many papers writing understandingly about the struggle of the old man, who had suffered so much in Siberia...because of his desire to live as a Jew and emigrate to Israel, whose son had been killed there, and who adhered to a fierce belief in the eternal Jewish values....

...I do not want to open old wounds, because by now it is evident that Yossele's parents will remain in Israel; it is to be hoped that they even regret the thoughts they entertained once of returning to the U.S.S.R. But I have proof that they seriously considered that course....We rejoice at the fact that Yossele's parents have remained in our country, and we think that the boy should therefore be returned to them....

We must also react, however, to the wild, unrestrained incitement coming both from those who were indirectly involved in the affair and those who openly supported Rabbi Starkes' action and helped him, believing that they were doing a good deed. I pass no opinion as to that, being unqualified to do so. But I say that those who publish venomous and accusatory articles against all Orthodox Jewry, against the Jewry which builds and creates, which is the marrow, the content and the soul of the nation in Zion, must know that without Orthodox Jewry, which sacrifices itself for the sanctity and sacred essence of the country, matters would have deteriorated and who knows what would have become of us. Unfortunately, it is not only in articles but at meetings and on various occasions that this affair is mentioned, placing Orthodox Jewry in a false light, as if it is not helping to build the country, as if it is not educating a younger generation which will assure our survival, which will constitute the spiritual and national security of our country and its inhabitants.

I will not attack others here; I will not attack the younger generation or describe how it is deteriorating spiritually, with all the negative phenomena this involves. We will not condemn all those who are not Orthodox for that. But we will warn and ask: how is it that no one protested...when caricatures reminiscent of the worst periods in the diaspora were published in the newspapers, showing Orthodox Jews, rabbis, as abductors of children....Intellectuals and responsible people should stand up and call for this incitement to stop. We also see that we are being treated unfairly. When one Orthodox Jew or a small group errs all Orthodox Jewry is blamed....Only two weeks ago MK Barzilai and his colleagues ascended this podium and attacked us, accusing us of being draft-dodgers and deserters as well as of harassing the police....We condemn violence of every kind and rabbis and religious leaders have censured those Orthodox Jews who threw stones, even if they were attacked by the police first. There is no excuse for resorting to violence, but justice must be absolute. It cannot be that when a group of Orthodox Jews does wrong...all Orthodox Jewry is condemned, slan-

ders are levelled against us and we are told that we educate our children to evade their duty to the state.

I would like to tell the distinguished Minister of Police that it is regrettable that he also joined in this grave accusation at the time, even though he is well-acquainted with the public we represent....

In order to resolve the Yossele affair it is necessary to create the right atmosphere within the family itself, because despite everything that has been done and despite all the efforts there is still a rift within the family—and that is the tragedy. We must act and speak in such a way as to bring sons and fathers closer together, so that the child may be returned. We must recognize the situation, the reality, and be aware of what we want. Do we want the boy returned or the struggle to continue, with its atmosphere of acrimony and incitement? There is a question here of public interest as well as the boy's welfare. The boy's welfare requires that we find a way to pardon those who did something which they thought was right at the time but turns out to have had unacceptable results. It has led to trouble and suffering and brotherly strife, which must be prevented at all costs. The affair has a public aspect, both in Israel and the entire Jewish world. The welfare of the boy and his family require us to assure that those involved will be pardoned...so that it will be possible to return the boy.

We hope that the time when inciters placed all Orthodox Jewry...in the dock will not return. We appeal for that obstacle to be removed so that we may resume dealing with other matters, for the sake of the state, its existence, development and security. Let the affair be finished and let us forget what happened.

...
The Minister of Police, B.S. Shitrit: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, I did not expect...that this debate in the Knesset would turn into a dispute. I thought that various points of religious law might be discussed, but not that things would become so stormy. I asked the House to transfer the subject to the Internal Affairs Committee and that the call should go forth from the Knesset to anyone who is able to help the police in their efforts to return Yossele to his parents unconditionally...to do so, in accordance with the commandment to honor one's parents, as well as with the love of parents for their child, good citizenship and national unity.

...Despite the spirit of her opening words...MK Talmi launched into an attack on the police, asking all kinds of questions....To hear her one might think that the Israel police force was involved in the kidnaping, that it helped smuggle the boy out of the country, that it did nothing to close the ports....She even asked if the police had been instructed to act as they did....

The operation we staged was by no means easy, MK Talmi...The character of the person or persons with whom we had to contend are known....

Today we saw that...despite our differences...we are united in condemning what was done. A child was taken away from his parents, made to disappear, smuggled out of the country, attempts to find him were thwarted—but he must be returned to his parents. Instead of addressing that point, however, the members of the Knesset began attacking one another, as well as the police....

...The police did a great deal. They conducted innumerable searches, questioned over 800 persons and contacted some 400 informers, both unprecedented numbers....

...I said that what MK Talmi said could lead one to think—but I would like to put it on record that I do not believe that she thinks—the police are like that. She believes that we have a good police force, one we can all be proud of.

E. Wilenska (Maki): Outstanding.

The Minister of Police, B.S. Shitrit: Not in your opinion, perhaps. That is why I addressed MK Talmi, not you....Since all the Members of the Knesset are united in condemning the abduction of the child...the call should go forth from the Knesset and the discussion should continue in the Internal Affairs Committee....

The Speaker, I.S. Ben-Meir: We will now hear statements to conclude the debate. I give the floor to MK Govrin....

A. Govrin (Mapai): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, on behalf of the party groups of Mapai, Herut, the Liberals, the National Religious Party, Mapam, Ahdut-Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion, Po'alei Aguda, Cooperation and Amity and Progress and Development, I bring the following proposals before the Knesset:

1. The Knesset condemns the criminal act of the abduction and separation from his parents of Yossele Schumacher.
2. The Knesset takes note of the Minister of Police's statement regarding the efforts being made to restore the boy to his parents and calls for the intensification of those efforts.
3. The Knesset appeals to the public and each individual within it to do everything possible to ensure that the child is returned to his parents' home.
4. The Knesset transfers the continuation of the discussion to its Internal Affairs Committee.

E. Wilenska (Maki): ...Maki's proposal is as follows...:

1. The Knesset condemns the kidnaping of Yossele Schumacher as a despicable act of ruffianism, which was aided and abetted by certain sections of the extremist Orthodox population.
2. The Knesset notes that the police cannot be exonerated of its responsibility for failing to find the boy and return him to his parents.

3. The Knesset calls on the Government and every public body or any individual within whose power it is to help, to do everything they can to identify the kidnapers and those who concealed the boy, to bring them to trial and to release the boy from his captors' hands.

4. The Knesset charges the Internal Affairs Committee with continuing the treatment of the abduction in the spirit of the foregoing resolutions.

S. Lorincz (Aguda): ...In addition to the proposal read out here by MK Govrin, and for which we will vote, I would like to propose the following resolution:

The Knesset appeals to all those elements which used the tragic affair of Yossele's abduction to make collective accusations and to incite people against Orthodox Jewry to stop this as it could lead to internecine hatred.

The Speaker, I.S. Ben-Meir: We will now vote.

The Vote

Those in favor of the resolution proposed by MK Govrin	56
Those against	0
Abstentions	2

(The resolution is adopted.)

U.N. Security Council Resolution (Reprisal Against Syria)

Introduction

In the first months of 1962 the situation along the Israel-Syria border deteriorated, with intensified Syrian attacks on Israeli border settlements and Israeli fishermen on Lake Tiberias. On 16 March 1962 Israeli troops demolished a number of Syrian positions near the eastern shores of Lake Tiberias. On 9 April 1962 the Security Council censured Israel for this operation. At its sitting the following day, the Knesset resolved to reject the censure.

Sitting 126 of the Fifth Knesset

10 April 1962 (6 Nissan 5722)

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, this is not the first time that Israel has been compelled, not through any initiative of its own, to face a bitter controversy with world bodies which Israel esteems no less than any other nation—the United Nations Organization and the Government of the United States. The first occasion was immediately after the renewal of our independence fourteen years ago with the sanction of the United Nations and the support of the two leading Powers—the United States and the Soviet Union.

In deliberate defiance of the U.N. resolution and in violation of the main principles of the United Nations, five Arab states, four of them already members of the Organization, invaded the young State of Israel with the aim of destroying its people, and the United Nations did not lift a finger to prevent this attack; it did not even demand of the Arab armies that they withdraw to their own countries. Had it not been for the heroism of the IDF, the young Jewish state would have been wiped off the face of the earth.

Israel bore the Arab states no grudge. It willingly accepted the Security Council's demand of 16 November 1948, and signed Armistice Agreements with Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, the main aim of which was to bring about permanent peace in Palestine.

Thirteen years have passed since the signing of the Armistice Agreements, but the Arab Governments which signed them refused to fulfill the first, and from the point of view of U.N. principles the main, clause in the agreements, namely, the restoration of permanent peace in Palestine. Moreover, they publicly declare that their aim is to destroy

Israel; and the U.N. has done nothing all these years to demand that these countries comply with their obligations and cease to violate the principles of the Charter.

For years these nations have violated another of the main obligations and clauses of the Armistice Agreements, which is that "no aggressive action by the armed forces—on land, sea or air—of either party shall be undertaken, planned or threatened against the people or the armed forces of the other."

Once again, if Israel had not been able to defend itself with its own forces in accordance with Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, the lives of every citizen and resident of Israel would have remained in jeopardy from the incessant attacks of the Arab countries which signed the Armistice Agreements.

At the Third Sitting of the Third Knesset, on 2 January 1956, I gave full details of the acts of sabotage and murder committed by regular and irregular military gangs which, within a period of five years, inflicted 884 casualties on us....As I stated then, this guerrilla warfare on the part of the Arab countries did not attract sufficient world attention, since the attacks and murders were not carried out all at once, and the murder of single Israeli citizens two or three times a week was not regarded as a sensation by the world press and did not reach the headlines....

But it was the duty of the U.N. to prevent even isolated attacks, and it did not do so. Only our defensive action in the Sinai Campaign assured us of relative peace on the Egyptian and Jordanian borders.

Egypt continues to this day to violate the Security Council resolution on free passage through the Suez Canal, which was adopted unanimously in 1951 and again in 1956; and neither the Soviet Union, which preaches peace and loyalty to the U.N., nor Great Britain, which advises Israel to trust in the United Nations to preserve it, nor the U.S., which yesterday persuaded ten members of the U.N. to censure Israel for defending its rights to Lake Tiberias, has ever tried to censure Egypt for the flagrant and continuous violation of a Security Council Resolution. They have thus displayed—and on more than one occasion—a double standard which destroys the moral basis on which the U.N. is founded.

The U.N.—as laid down in Article 2 of its Charter—is founded on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members. The resolution adopted yesterday in the Security Council violates this principle. The representative of Egypt, which all along has scorned and violated Security Council decisions, set himself up as a judge over Israel. The resolution adopted yesterday by the Council was phrased in a manner which was insulting to Israel, and ignored the truth about the events of the past few weeks on Lake Tiberias—perhaps so as to meet with Egypt's approval and ensure that Egypt voted for it.

Israel regards this resolution, and the denial of the sovereign equality of all member-states displayed in yesterday's Security Council

decision, as seriously threatening the basic aim for which the U.N. was established as well as all the small nations which belong to it, whose honor and vital interests will be sacrificed to the needs of the Cold War.

In the statement and replies of the Chief of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, who was summoned to the Security Council, the traces of the Syrian attacks on March 8, 15, 16 and 20 on Israeli patrol boats on Lake Tiberias were covered up.

I must emphasize that the Syrian attacks did not begin in March of this year. Throughout the past six years Syrian regular and irregular forces on Israel's northeastern border have opened fire in four hundred and thirty-one cases on Israeli patrols moving within our borders and on Israeli settlements along the Syrian border: in the last two months of 1956—on eleven occasions; in 1957—on 125 occasions; in 1958—on 100 occasions; in 1959—on 50 occasions; in 1960—on 67 occasions; in 1961—on 52 occasions; and in the first three months of 1962—on 26 occasions.

During those six years these attacks have caused 122 Israeli casualties....

The Chairman of the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission has been in Damascus all this time, and it is hard to believe that his Syrian hosts informed him of these attacks. Nor did the Head of the U.N.T.S.O., General von Horn, see fit to report a single case in which the Syrians opened fire on Israel—whether it was firing at and shelling Israeli settlements or shots fired at Israeli fishermen and police patrol boats on Lake Tiberias.

The chief U.S. representative at the U.N., Mr. Adlai Stevenson, mentioned provocation and retaliation in his speech of March 28 at the Security Council, but he did not find it necessary to point out whence and from whom the "provocation" came. Nor did he feel obliged to designate Syrian attacks with machineguns and recoilless artillery as violations of the Armistice Agreement, being content to refer to them as anonymous provocation.

Israel cannot under any circumstances submit to Syrian violations of its sovereignty in Lake Tiberias, or to Syrian military attacks on Israeli fishermen or patrol boats on the Lake, which is entirely in Israel's sovereign territory; nor will it permit, under any conditions, any sabotage of its vital irrigation plans connected with Lake Tiberias.

Syria makes no attempt to hide its designs against Israel's territorial integrity and its very existence. The Syrian Premier, Mr. Dawalibi, declared on January 8, in his speech to the Constituent Assembly on the basic policy of his Government: "Syria's main problem is Palestine. As long as Palestine has not been restored to the Arabs as part of the free Arab life, as long as the Zionist specter has not been exorcized, as long as the parasitic State of Israel has not been annihilated, Syria regards itself as suffering a severe injury, which endangers its existence and that of the Arab nation."

Zahr e-Din, Commander-in-Chief of the Syrian army, who a week or two ago overthrew the Syrian Parliament, Dawalibi and his Government by military force, declared at the graduation ceremony of an officers' course at Latakia on January 13: "The Mediterranean Sea is Israel's nautical front with the Arabs. To strangle and destroy Israel, the Arabs must pluck out Israel's sea lung by means of a naval combat force, which will constitute a wall of steel in the sea and keep the air from this monstrous state." These words were repeated over Damascus Radio the same day.

The then-Syrian Premier, Izzat el-Nous, in an interview with a representative of the Arabic Department of the BBC said, as reported by the BBC in its Arabic broadcast on 2 November 1961: "The Government of Syria, like every other Arab Government, will continue to believe that its first sacred duty is to liberate Palestine from Zionism. If Israel tries to divert the Jordan, the entire Syrian army and every Syrian citizen will take up arms against it."

The Syrian leaders have no fear that the Security Council will censure them for violating Article 2 of the U.N. Charter, which states: "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state," since they can rely on the veto of one of the five members of the Security Council which has the power of veto and utilizes it from time to time.

The U.S. Government, which is not in the habit of using its veto, decided this time to draft a resolution censuring Israel which would gain the support of Egypt—which is now a member of the Security Council—and it therefore amended its original draft to meet the Egyptian Government's taste.

The British representative, who advised Israel to trust in the U.N. and not in the Israel Defense Forces, has apparently forgotten how his own Government behaved fourteen years ago, when an overwhelming majority at the U.N., including the U.S. and the Soviet Union, decided on the abolition of the British Mandate and the establishment of a Jewish state in part of Palestine. At that time his Government refused to comply with the decisions of the U.N. and cooperate with it, and British officers commanded one of the Arab armies which invaded the State of Israel and mercilessly shelled Jerusalem, the city which is sacred to the world's three major religions.

Five years ago, when we were engaged in the political effort that followed the Sinai Campaign, the President of the U.S. broadcast a statement on the Israeli-Egyptian conflict on 20 February 1957. He stressed, among other things, the obligation of the U.N. from then onwards to make greater efforts to ensure justice than it had done in the past. He was hinting at the double standard that was in force at the U.N. in con-

sidering disputes between Israel and its neighbors regarding violations of the Armistice Agreements and the principles of the Charter.

To our profound regret, we cannot say that this double standard has been abandoned in the treatment of such disputes by the U.N. This situation has been clearly expressed not only in the speeches of the Soviet representative, but also in those of the U.S. representative and in the terms of the Anglo-American resolution.

Israel remains loyal to the Armistice Agreements, not only because of its obligations to the U.N. and in obedience to moral considerations which constitute the essence of the concept of Judaism, but also because of its vital needs, on which depend the possibility of carrying out its historic aims, the ingathering of the exiles and the cultivation of the desert, which call for all Israel's physical and spiritual resources.

But the Armistice Agreements are bilateral agreements, being equally binding on both Israel and its neighbors. Israel has not played any part, and will not play any part, in the Cold War and its tactics; but it will not submit to the double standard adopted by the Security Council throughout the years in its deliberations on disputes between Israel and its neighbors.

Like all other members of the U.N., it will exercise its rights, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, to self-defense in any case of armed attack by one of its neighbors, as long as the Security Council does not take appropriate measures to maintain international peace and security.

Israel will not tolerate any attacks on fishermen on Lake Tiberias or on Israeli patrol boats on the Lake, which is entirely in Israel's sovereign territory. Israel will not tolerate any attack on settlements and citizens within its territory, and it will defend itself with all the means at its disposal should any of its neighbors violate the Armistice Agreements and endanger the peace and the lives of its citizens or encroach on its territorial integrity. As long as there is any danger of aggression by our neighbors Israel will continue to rely on the IDF, which has not failed us yet....

Israel will cooperate with the U.N. representatives when they act in accordance with the U.N. Charter and the Armistice Agreements. Israel will continue to comply with the principles of the Charter, including the provision that safeguards the sovereign equality of all member-states, and it will respect the sovereignty of its neighbors—provided reciprocity is observed.

Lake Tiberias is an inalienable part of the area of the sovereign State of Israel, and any encroachment on this sovereignty is an attack on Israel's very life.

We regard the resolution adopted yesterday by the Security Council as being based on a double standard, and constituting an encouragement to our neighbors—even if not so meant by those who drafted it—to

continue their attacks on Israel's citizens and its sovereign territory. This appeasement of Syrian aggression has not redounded to the honor of the U.N. or strengthened peace in our area.

I should like to note with profound appreciation the one country—France—which abstained from voting for this dubious resolution.

Finally, Israel will abstain from any violation of the Armistice Agreements and will comply strictly with their terms, but under no condition will it submit to violation of the Agreements by its neighbors; nor will it on any account waive its right to self-defense, which is reserved to every nation and safeguarded by the U.N. Charter.

H. Landau (Herut): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the demilitarized areas on the Israel-Syria border have again become a base for attacks upon us....This is not the first time this has happened....

To our regret, the Government has retreated in the demilitarized areas....We have allowed Syrian forces to enter them...build fortifications there...and even turn them into bases from which to attack us.

We must make it absolutely clear that the demilitarized zones are part of Israel's sovereign territory...within which we are restricted by Section 5 of the Armistice Agreement solely as regards maintaining troops—though not police—there....But the Government has accepted the fact that Syrian troops have entrenched themselves there....

...We have also retreated in the non-demilitarized area of Lake Tiberias, on the eastern shore of the Lake, to the north of Nukhayb.... We have made no effort to show that the area is ours de facto as well as de jure....

There is no doubt that these retrenchments encouraged the Syrians to launch attacks on us from time to time. It is true that there were some years of relative quiet in the area, but we erred in overlooking occasional fishing disputes...and this has worked against us....Now Israel's sovereign territory on Lake Tiberias has come under attack from the Syrians in the demilitarized zone which is also Israel's sovereign territory....But what difference does it make if the attack is directed at the Lake or Jerusalem or Tel Aviv?...The Syrians began firing upon us in early February, but we ignored that. Then they shelled our patrol boats on three occasions in March...their intention clearly being to undermine our sovereignty on Lake Tiberias and thwart our irrigation plans....

...What should Israel's position be in the face of this aggression...? Can we afford to retreat after every attack...? I think we took the only possible course, that of self-defense, which is open to every country under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter....We must prove to our assailants that we will not tolerate attacks upon us and our sovereignty....

From this podium I would like to express my gratitude...to our brave soldiers, who fought courageously...to defend Israel and its sovereignty

on Lake Tiberias....Precious blood was shed, but we had no choice.... We extend our condolences to the bereaved families....

Various reactions were heard in Israel to our action at Nukhayb. I do not intend arguing with Maki; there is no point disputing with His Master's Voice....But why does Mapam propose that we restrict our response simply because by chance the Syrian shells did not kill anyone...? How many Jews need to be killed for Israel to use its right to defend itself...? Do you propose that we resort to the U.N. and its Observers...?

I am sure that the entire nation prefers us to defend ourselves and refuse to retreat, even if this means that we are condemned, and that it rejects withdrawal and concessions, even if this leads to our being praised.

We repudiate yesterday's Security Council resolution. We do not accept it as a legal verdict....It is no secret that the U.N. has become the arena of political horse-trading, where facts, truth and justice are ignored. Although we are not happy to be condemned, let us not take condemnation too seriously; we can survive it....What we should take note of, however, is the fact that of the 11 members of the Council, 10 condemned us and only one—France—abstained.

Israel's policy-makers must take heed of this serious phenomenon, which accentuates Israel's political isolation in the international arena. Among the representatives of the whole world there was only one who supported us. All the others condemned us. I propose that those who formulate our foreign policy boast less of our supposed friends throughout the world, although I do not denigrate any new friendships, and examine what they really involve....

The position adopted by the U.S. in the Security Council was a bitter disappointment to us....I think the U.S. is playing a very dangerous...and short-sighted game....Its stand will not make our region more stable; it could have an incendiary effect, and at the very least encourage aggression against us....

I must also condemn the attitude of the U.S.S.R. in the Security Council...as blatant hypocrisy. Before Israel had responded to any of the Syrian attacks...Radio Moscow announced that Israel was firing at the Syrians....The Soviet representative even went so far as to say that if Israel were to undertake preemptive action he would recommend that sanctions be imposed on us....How does the U.S.S.R. interpret self-defense under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter? Does it apply to U.S. spy-planes flying over Soviet territory, but not to attacks involving bloodshed and the violation of sovereign territory?

This is merely part of the mosaic of Russia's behavior in the Middle East and its attitude to Israel and our people wherever they may be. We obviously reject this pharisaism and the ensuing "verdict" of the Security Council....The Chief of the U.N. Truce Supervision Organization,

General von Horn, has proven himself unfit to continue in his post by his failure to see...Syrian fortifications in Israel's sovereign territory at Nukhayb....General von Horn should disqualify himself before we are forced to declare him persona non grata....The Truce Supervision Headquarters has proven itself to be of no use to Israel, having failed to prevent anything at any time...Our defense lies in our hands...and we must reject attempts to impose additional U.N. supervision upon us....

We are glad that the Government has rejected the proposal that the U.N. should patrol Lake Tiberias. It should be made clear that the proposal to revive the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission will also be rejected....There is no point or value in it....Let them observe as much as they like from Syrian territory....Reports in the press indicate that Israel has expressed its willingness to allow U.N. Observers to expand their activities....We find this surprising and suggest that the Foreign Minister review this decision. It is not in our interests, and will further neither peace nor quiet.

The line taken by our representative at the U.N. on this subject is astonishing. He stated that Israel would cooperate with General von Horn provided Israeli sovereignty was recognized....I propose that we reject all the practical proposals made by the U.N....

Israel must defend itself whenever and wherever necessary....It must explain its rights and the justice of its cause to the world. It must increase the number of its political friends and deepen existing friendships. Above all, it must not retreat. I appeal to the Government to give the order for the immediate renewal of our patrols on Lake Tiberias. Any retreat is interpreted as weakness....The time has come to assert our sovereignty de facto as well as de jure.

I. Harari (Liberals): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, it happens sometimes that because of the multiplicity of debates, claims, decisions and resolutions the basic truths are overlooked. It seems to me that the undisputed basic truth is that ever since the establishment of the State of Israel no military action or act of retaliation has been undertaken without incitement from one of the neighboring countries, whether through firing, shelling, acts of murder or any other act of provocation. I do not think that anyone among us would dispute that point....That basic truth must be before anyone who discusses these problems...especially at the U.N....

That applies to this instance too....We must now examine the Security Council resolution quietly and calmly. It is not the first resolution which concerns Israel; it is not the first condemnation of Israel. There is no need to lose our heads over it. What we must do is examine it coolly and dispassionately.

...I believe that the majority in the Knesset condemns the U.N. resolution. The Security Council completely disregarded our right to self-defense...as well as our superhuman efforts to avoid harming the civil-

ian population....But we are familiar with the U.N. debates, which sometimes reach great heights, and sometimes descend to unparalleled depths. We also know who the members of the Security Council are. One of its eleven members is Egypt, which maintains a state of belligerency with Israel and for the past fourteen years has declared that its object is to destroy Israel. But the U.N. considers that country worthy to sit on the Security Council and decide on world affairs and Israel's fate....We are experienced in these matters, however, and this does not surprise us at all. We join the previous speaker in praising France's stand....

As for the U.S.A., we have not forgotten that in the debate on the refugees the U.S.A....did not vote for the proposal tabled by several Latin American and...African countries that there should be peace negotiations between us and the Arab countries....Despite the situation in which the U.N. condemns us...we have overcome obstacles, engaged in construction and acquired and maintained our independence...and we must continue to do all those things. I think that the House is agreed that it is only internal unity and the courage to withstand all those who oppose us which can keep and preserve us....

Our strength and the hope for our future lies in those youngsters who have given their lives for their country....We must emerge united from this debate today, having decided to reject the Security Council's resolution. We will not forego our right to defend ourselves; we will not relinquish our territory or our sovereignty; our neighbors know this; those who pass resolutions and condemn us from time to time know this; yet nonetheless, despite the condemnations and our isolation, they respect us. We must conclude this debate with a unanimous resolution to reject the Security Council's condemnation of us and to continue in the course we have taken till now.

M. Unna (National Religious Party): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the House is united today in its disappointment with and protest against the decision of the Security Council....The U.N. has failed utterly to constitute a factor which can bring peace and quiet to the region....The U.N. resolution is not based on a viewpoint—which may be opposed to our own—as to how to further peace, prevent border tensions and avert future problems. It is based on short-sighted political opportunism and delusions about the possible effects of its actions....

We are united in protesting against the flagrant disregard for the elementary justice upon which the U.N. is based. Although one cannot expect too much concern for justice in the world we live in, this time it has been flouted in the most shameful way. The shift in the position adopted by the U.S. is characteristic of this....In his opening words the U.S. representative indicated that there had been Syrian provocation...but there was no mention of this in the actual resolution, which became an instrument in the Cold War and the appeasement of the Arabs. We refuse to be the object of anyone's needs in the Cold

War...and we must tell the world, and first and foremost the U.S., that appeasement of aggressors has never yet brought peace and stability to the world; quite the contrary....

We commend France, not only because of its loyalty and friendship to Israel but also because it realized that the problems of the region cannot be solved by giving in to the Arabs. France is as interested in the region and in good relations with the Arabs as the U.S. is, but it apparently sees that firmness will eventually be more worthwhile than appeasement. The significance of France's attitude is as important for the world as it is for Israel. When other countries follow France's lead... the situation in the world will improve....

This is neither the time nor the place to discuss the full significance of the situation which led to the Security Council resolution....The situation must be examined closely, because just as we must not exaggerate the importance of those resolutions, neither must we underestimate them. We must study them and draw the appropriate political conclusions from them. We cannot allow ourselves to accept a situation in which we have only one friend in the world. We must also draw conclusions about the Chief of the U.N. Armistice Commission, whose false reports contributed to the resolution....What we must do now is express our unity...in standing firm against whatever conspiracy the world is hatching against us.

...

I. Barzilai (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, it is no secret that at the time we asked the Knesset to discuss the incidents on the northern border. Our purpose was twofold: a. that the Knesset should speak out before the Security Council; b. that internal conclusions should be drawn regarding the events on the northern border....We must speak out against the injustice of the Security Council's one-sided resolution....

The U.N. must be taught that Israel will not brook any violation of its sovereignty on its land or waterways or any attack upon its citizens. The Security Council should have warned Syria not to interfere with Israel's fishing and patrol boats on Lake Tiberias....Instead, it directed all its criticism against Israel...thereby disregarding elementary justice....

The representatives of both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. knew that they spoke falsely when they presented Israel, not Syria, as the aggressor....I trust that the whole Knesset, together with the entire Israeli nation, rejects this and rebels against it. This one-sided resolution would presumably not have been passed by the Security Council had it not been for the Cold War and the competition between the Blocs for the favor of the Arab rulers. The Knesset must declare that it is not prepared to let Israel be the price paid by the representatives of the various Powers to the Arab leaders for their support....

The Security Council resolution constitutes additional proof of the dangers threatening us if the tension between the Blocs is not relaxed and the Cold War is not replaced by a peaceful settlement between the Powers....We must examine, however, whether we did not facilitate the course of those who perpetrated the injustice. Did the assault on Nukhayb deter the aggressor, entrench our security and arouse world public opinion in our favor? Did we not present the Syrians with the argument against us...?

I know that people will say: what should we have done?...I would like to say that we will never relinquish our right to self-defense, but before attacking Nukhayb we should have done what we did after it. The harassment from the Syrians did not cease afterwards either....We should have gone to the Security Council ourselves, before Syria did and before we attacked Nukhayb....

It is true that after the one-sided conclusions of the Security Council we have no guarantee that even without the attack on Nukhayb the Council could have reached a just and objective conclusion, but we simply made matters easier for our enemies and isolated ourselves. What I am saying is directed against the political decision to attack Nukhayb, not against the IDF;...we have nothing but admiration for the soldiers' spirit of dedication and heroism, and we bow our heads at the fresh graves of those who fell there and extend our condolences to the bereaved families. We pray for the day when blood will not be shed on our borders, neither that of our sons nor that of our neighbors' sons. I believe that Israel will do all it can to prevent any conflagration in our region and on our borders.

...Since MK Landau found fault with my party's opinion...allow me to point out that the Herut newspaper also criticized the attack on Nukhayb...advocating action on a far larger scale than was undertaken. We reject war as a deterrent....Naturally, if someone makes war on us we will fight back, as we did in the War of Independence, but in our view we should do our utmost to prevent war....

Finally...recent events impel us to draw the following conclusions: a. the IDF should be strengthened and put on the alert...and the security of the border settlements...should be enhanced; b. we must constantly reiterate our willingness to make peace, our right to defend ourselves and our refusal to participate in the Cold War. Even after the injustice of the Security Council's decision...we will do all we can to prevent increased tension and any conflagration in the region.

...

E. Wilenska (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, the invasion by Israeli forces of Syrian territory on the Lake Tiberias front on 17 March, with the deployment of tanks and aircraft, constituted a military attack which was diametrically opposed to Israel's security and our people's desire for peace. After years of relative quiet on the borders, the

Government launched an attack which caused Israel grave harm in the Middle East and the international arena of the U.N. The condemnation of the attack by the Security Council constitutes an acknowledgement of the moral and political failure of the policy of violence and threats of the Ben-Gurion Government.

M. Begin (Herut): What nonsense.

E. Wilenska (Maki): ...It reflects the failure of Ben-Gurion's policy of depending on imperialist forces. Not one member of the Security Council supported the attack....Ben-Gurion's old friends, the U.S. and England, condemned it. Even France, which gained Ben-Gurion's gratitude, did not vote against the resolution, and its representative condemned the attack during the debate.

Israel wishes to resolve the problem of the division of the waters of the rivers. Did the military attack bring the solution nearer...? No. Israel wishes for peace with the Arab countries. Did the assault bring peace nearer? No....Israel wishes for friends in the international arena. Did the attack increase its friends? No....

By the attack the ruling circles injured Israel, as well as Syria, blackening its reputation, worsening its situation, heightening tension in the region and bringing about the condemnation of its irresponsible, anti-Israel policy in the highest international echelon of the U.N. An attack such as the one on Nukhayb is not a way of ending limited border incidents. It fans the flames instead of dampening them. It encourages hostile statements from certain Arab leaders instead of putting an end to them. The pain of the bereaved families is our pain. We stress that, for the lives of our sons and daughters, for Israel's future, we must adopt a new course, we must preserve peace.

The ruling circles are astonished at the condemnation of their policy by the Security Council. Wasn't that expected...? Wasn't the reaction of world public opinion to be predicted...? No international approval of force in resolving international disputes is to be expected today....Israel's Communist Party condemned the attack the day after it took place, warned against continuing with that course, and predicted that it would lead to Israel's isolation and condemnation by the U.N....We condemn the use of force because we fear for our country. We demand that violence and threats be renounced, because we want Israel to find its place in the Middle East....We denounce war as a solution because we love our nation and its productive labor. The system of retaliation and attack is tantamount to playing with fire; it creates hostility towards Israel, dishonors us and our position in the world, and bears within it the dangerous seed of conflagration and destruction.

The timing of the attack, after a long period of quiet, also proves the desire of the ruling circles to distract the attention of the toiling masses from their struggle against the new economic program....The day after

the attack the major capitalist newspaper called on the workers to abandon their demands for wage rises in view of the blood that had been shed. In this too, however, the new circles failed. They complained of the coolness with which the public received the news of the attack. In our view this reception reveals the public's growing awareness of the damaging and dangerous nature of the Government's policy....

Attempts to restrict democratic freedoms in order to stifle the public struggle to change Israeli policy will be of no avail. Opposition to...the Government's policy will increase, until this Government of attacks, "affairs" and the despoiling of the workers will be removed, to be replaced by one of peace and independence, which will protect the people's interests and liberties. A government which has brought such international opprobrium on our country must go....

The Government's failure to resolve the country's pressing problems, not to mention the various "affairs" which have rocked the nation...has proved that the militarist groups surrounding the Prime Minister advocate steps which do not have general support....Implied threats regarding the further use of force indicate that the lessons of the recent past have not been learned....The Foreign Minister's reply to the U.N. Secretary-General's letter regarding the nuclear arms race, in which she states that Israel supports the restriction of nuclear armaments but not their total abolition, arouses concern regarding preparations by the ruling circles for an intensification of the arms race and additional escapades....

In view of this situation, the appeal issued by public figures and scientists in Israel for the nuclear disarmament of the Middle East is of great importance....Out of a deep concern for the welfare of our nation, we caution against the propaganda and conspiracy of irresponsible... groups towards undertaking another action similar to the Sinai Campaign....We maintain that war is not the right course....Israel's interests require that peace be preserved on the borders....

The problem of the division of water from rivers shared by Israel and its neighbors can and must be solved by political...not military, means....Out of love for our people and our country, we call upon you to listen to the voice of reason, the voice of national responsibility....We condemn the military attack at Nukhayb and demand that the anti-national path of military escapades come to an end. The only way to resolve the Israel-Arab dispute is by an agreement based on mutual recognition of the national rights of both sides. Our nation wants to see the dispute settled, not intensified; our nation wants peace brought nearer, not driven further away. We therefore call on new forces within the nation to unite, so that Israel may choose a new path, ensuring its welfare and security.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Madam Chairman, distinguished Knesset, I will be brief as I have no intention of arguing with a party which, to the best of my knowledge, has nothing to do with Israel, its concerns, construction and defense....

...I must admit that I do not agree with some of the things said here about the gravity of what happened in the Security Council....I am sorry for the U.N. and for the Great Powers which were prepared to deny the plain truth....And I say, not out of disrespect for the U.N., that a resolution of this nature cannot harm us. I have always thought that it is possible...for nations to speak to one another outside the framework of the U.N. For small nations, at least theoretically, the U.N. is essential. But in its present form the U.N. cannot decide the fate of any country. It has not done so to date....In view of Israel's experience at the U.N. we cannot draw the conclusion that our fate hangs on the decisions of the Security Council or any other U.N. institution.

I suggest that we do not draw any conclusions from what happened at the Security Council about Israel's position in the world. It is not true that Israel is isolated and has only one friend, the French nation. France's friendship is all that has been said here, and more besides....But with all my unbounded admiration for France...I must repeat that it is not true that the whole world is against us. That is not the situation. Israel has many friends, including Powers which are not so small; but there are many small countries which, because they are not Great Powers, may find it easier to see things as they really are and judge matters rightly....Nor am I prepared to regard all those who voted as they did in the Security Council...as belonging in the camp of those who are not Israel's friends. There's no need to get upset. They erred grievously, and we can say that openly. Grave and just things have been said here. But is that the end of the world? It is not. But if someone comes and says that...because of what happened in the Security Council...we should be alarmed and entrust our defense to the U.N., my reply will be no, because that is a very serious thing. And if a suggestion of that kind came from the representative of a party whose concern for Israel's security cannot be denied, that is very serious, perhaps even more serious than what happened at the Security Council....

From the outset we have known that it is quite enough for us if we know that we are right. I am not saying that we have no need to explain the way we see things to the world; but essentially it is sufficient if MK Barzilai is convinced that we are right, in our life here, in defending our territory, in our insistence on our fishing rights and in our conviction that the life of no citizen of Israel is to be trifled with. I am not prepared to accept compliments about Israel's population being nice and good, while its sons are killed, it is deprived of its rights, its elementary rights to its waterways are violated, and it remains quiet and trusting, and when the Security Council comes and decides that we should not do

anything, that we should sit passively. There is a higher justice, there is a higher right, namely, that of the Jewish people to live in the State of Israel just like any other nation, even the great ones. To my great regret, the world being such as it is today, it is not enough if a nation has the right to live. It must be ready to defend that right; otherwise its existence is endangered. It must be ready to defend itself, to rely only on itself, not on others.

I would like to see one neutral country in the world which is nice and clean, and not involved in either Bloc; I would like to see one neutral country in the world which does not make sure that it has the wherewithal for defending itself, and is ready to use it when the need arises.

MK Barzilai...the story of the numerous, unprovoked Syrian attacks on our territory...and the inept handling of the matter by the Chief of the U.N. Armistice Commission, General von Horn, is known.... Everyone in the Security Council, including the Egyptian representative, knows that...Israel's basic policy is one of peace. Anyone who says otherwise is lying. I don't care where he sits, in the Security Council or somewhere nearer to us, he knows that he is lying. There can be no doubt that all those who participated in the Security Council, from General von Horn to the Syrian representative, knew that we had not started things.

MK Barzilai does not stop at doing the right thing—accusing the Syrians, the Chief of the U.N. Armistice Commission...the Powers—but goes on to blame us a little bit too. Why? For having established settlements in Galilee? For having fishermen? For wanting to protect the lives of the fishermen? Does anyone seriously think that one of our patrol boats really endangers anyone? As if it was not evident to all those sitting round the Security Council table that this was a preparation of the background for a more serious issue, that of the division of the water.

Mr. Comay concluded his speech by saying that he was entitled to say on behalf of his Government that we would observe the Armistice Agreement to the extent that the other side did. He also said that he would like to hear the same from the Syrian representative. The latter remained silent, and no one got up and told him to follow suit, neither before the vote nor after it....

MK Barzilai, we cannot escape our fate. It is our fate to want peace, to strive for peace, but to acknowledge the bitter truth that in order to attain peace we must be ready to defend our lives at any moment....MK Landau, I did not agree with what you said about our isolation, nor with the impression you created that the Government of Israel is so very acquiescent. It does not give in as easily as all that. It represents a nation which does not relinquish its rights.

But he also maligned our representative at the U.N. who, to the best of my knowledge, represented Israel with honor and ability....He told

the Security Council that no country is more interested in maintaining peace on its borders than Israel....In attaining this objective we seek the full cooperation of the U.N. Armistice Commission mechanism. We welcome any suggestion from the Chief of the Commission, we will give it our fullest attention, and if it seems useful and acceptable to us we will help to implement it. When I addressed the Council on April 5 I clarified how we see the relations between the Government of Israel and the U.N. mechanism regarding the implementation of the Armistice Agreement, namely, that the Chief of the Commission has no independent authority regarding the sovereign territory of either of the countries concerned, but is always free to make proposals or submit requests to their Governments.

That is our line. We want to cooperate and to keep the peace. Our position is that the U.N. representatives have no special authority here. They can make proposals. Insofar as these do not impair our sovereignty, we will always be a loyal partner in maintaining peace.

Finally...I join MK Barzilai's prayer for peace and quiet, that our sons and our neighbors' sons may live. The day will surely come when our sons and our neighbors' sons will cooperate. I even believe that we ourselves will see cooperation between us and our neighbors, but until then we have to make sure that we have friends, that we explain our case and that we realize that our security rests in our own hands. The sole judge of what endangers...Israel's security or not is the State of Israel and its Government...not the U.N. or any other institution....

That, simply and frankly, is the line which has determined Israel's policy from the very outset and still does today, and as long as there is no peace between us and our neighbors we have no other course.

M. Argov (Mapai): ...On behalf of the party groups of Mapai, Herut, the Liberals, the National Religious Party, Mapam, Ahdut Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion, Aguda, Po'alei Aguda, Cooperation and Amity, Progress and Development, I propose the following resolution...:

1. The Knesset categorically rejects the Security Council resolution of April 9 which evinces one-sidedness, completely ignores the frequent attacks on Israel by Syria's armed forces and constitutes an injustice which encourages aggression and endangers peace.

2. The State of Israel is surrounded by hostile countries which maintain a constant state of belligerency with it. The Knesset declares that Israel's right to self-defense is an inalienable sovereign right which is assured to every nation by the U.N. Charter.

3. Israel is loyal to the principles of the U.N. and will fulfill all the obligations deriving from them towards every country on a basis of reciprocity. It will not submit to aggression.

4. Israel will preserve its full sovereignty in principle and in practice, under all conditions, in all its territories and waters.

M. Sneh (Maki): ...On behalf of the Maki party group I submit the following proposal:

1. The Knesset declares that the attack on Nukhayb was not necessitated by national self-defense and the preservation of the country's security, but was an initiated act of aggression which increased tension on the borders, endangered peace in the region and harmed Israel's international position as reflected in the resolution condemning Israel which was passed unanimously by the Security Council. The Knesset condemns the Government for the damage it has caused Israel by its military attack on the Lake Tiberias front.

2. The Knesset requires the Government to preserve peace on the borders and refrain from military attacks, acts of retaliation and any act of aggression whatsoever.

3. The Knesset declares that the ruling policy of military escapades and serving the imperialist Powers is dangerous for Israel, and that the failure of the Nukhayb assault increases the urgent need for a shift in Israel's policy towards peace, neutrality and independence.

The Speaker, B. Idelson: We will now vote:

The Vote

Those in favor of MK M. Argov's proposal	76
Those against	3

(The proposal is adopted.)

(MK Sneh's proposal is not adopted.)

Motion of No-Confidence (Soblen Affair)

Introduction

Robert Soblen, a 61-year-old psychiatrist born in Lithuania, was convicted as a spy by a U.S. Federal Court. The trial coincided with that of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. The court had found him guilty of having provided secret information to Soviet agents over a period of twenty years. He was suffering from leukemia and doctors said that he might not live more than a year. Dr. Soblen insisted on his innocence, and appealed to the Supreme Court for an injunction to have his case reviewed. Pending the decision of the Supreme Court, he was released on \$100,000 bail. The Supreme Court turned down his request and he was ordered to begin serving his sentence towards the end of June 1962. However, on the day he was supposed to give himself up, he disappeared without a trace.

A few days later, on 28 June 1962, he arrived in Tel Aviv on an Air France plane from Montreal. He was travelling on a Canadian passport issued in the name of his older brother, Beras Gobel.

As soon as the U.S. authorities had traced Soblen, alias Gobel, Assistant Secretary of State Philipps Talbot asked Israel's Ambassador to Washington, Avraham Harman, to hand him over to the U.S. "on the basis of whatever part of Israel law will permit them to turn this man over to us." Meanwhile, Soblen had hired an attorney in Israel who asked for an immigrant visa to Israel on his behalf, under the Law of Return. It was disclosed that Soblen had visited what had then been Palestine in the 1930s, had been issued a permit to practice medicine and owned some property in the country. The spokesman of the Ministry of the Interior declared, however, that it was "unlikely that he will be allowed to stay under the Law of Return." On Thursday newspaper reports indicated that although the authority to approve or reject requests under the Law of Return was vested solely in the Minister of the Interior, in view of the ramifications of this particular case it would be discussed by the entire Cabinet in the course of its weekly meeting on Sunday. When the meeting convened, however, it was revealed that Dr. Soblen was no longer in the country, having left aboard an El Al plane en route for New York at seven o'clock that morning. The decision to expel Soblen had been taken by the Minister on Friday afternoon. The plane, which had been scheduled to leave on Saturday night, had been delayed because of "engine trouble." Because of an "oversight," for which the Inspector-General of Police was to take the rap, Soblen's attorney had not been informed of the decision.

Later that day news agencies reported from London that Soblen had tried to commit suicide while on the plane. Covered by a blanket, he had

slashed his wrists and stabbed his abdomen with a table knife. The British immigration authorities authorized Soblen's removal from the plane in order to receive urgent medical treatment.

The entire incident caused an uproar in Israel, as reflected in the motions of no confidence debated in the Knesset on July 11. As was his wont, Ben-Gurion himself replied to the motions, although formally they concerned one of his Cabinet colleagues. The Soblen affair dragged on for several months thereafter. His health having improved, and British courts at the highest levels having turned down his appeal against extradition to the U.S., the British authorities ordered El Al to accept Soblen for his journey to the U.S. On instructions from the Israel Government, El Al refused and, fearing retaliatory measures, suspended its flights to the U.K. The British Government thereupon rescinded its order, and arrangements were made to fly Dr. Soblen to the U.S. on an American plane. At the last moment Soblen succeeded in obtaining an overdose of sleeping pills, with which he poisoned himself on 6 September 1962. He died on 11 September 1962 without regaining consciousness. His ashes were flown to the U.S. for interment aboard an American plane.

Sitting 155 of the Fifth Knesset

11 July 1962 (9 Tammuz 5722)

I. Harari (Liberals): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...my party group has tabled a motion of no confidence in the Government because of its disregard for the rule of law. We know that the Knesset's procedural code entitles us to propose a great many motions of no confidence, and even to disrupt the Knesset's work to some extent. We also know that parliamentary fair play precludes us from submitting numerous motions of no confidence, and in effect all the Opposition party groups have refrained from submitting many motions of no confidence to date....If we are compelled to do so now, however, it is because we have been prevented from voicing our opinions in the Knesset, since the Presidium decided that the subject was not urgent and refused to approve my motion for the agenda. We have therefore been unable to discuss something which we regard as extremely important, grave and urgent....

We learn from the newspapers that Dr. Soblen was deported from Israel under Clause 13 of the Entry into Israel Law. According to this law, the Minister of the Interior signs an order authorizing the deportation of someone who has entered Israel illegally. This is an administrative order, and the minimum which can be expected is that the Knesset should be enabled to discuss steps of this kind. What institution can and

should supervise administrative steps if not the Knesset? Obviously the Government takes the final decision, given its majority in the House, but can administrative steps be taken without giving us the chance to question, clarify and discuss them? Surely not.

That administrative step authorizes the Government, via the Minister of the Interior, to issue a deportation order, after which a border control officer or policeman is entitled to deport the person or detain him in a place and manner to be designated by the Minister of the Interior, until he is removed or deported from Israel. As long as the person to be deported is in Israel he may be arrested or placed under supervision....The papers tell us that when Dr. Soblen was deported he was accompanied by a police physician....I was not aware of the fact that everyone who is deported from Israel is accompanied by a physician...or by anyone at all. Be that as it may, neither the spirit nor the letter of the law determines that someone should be supervised after being deported....We also learn from the press that Dr. Soblen was accompanied by another person, a U.S. detective....This gives rise to another mystery. Do U.S. detectives wait at points of entry into Israel for persons who are to be deported and are therefore in need of attendance? Or did that detective come specially for Dr. Soblen's deportation, because there was a problem of extradition? Nor do I know if that detective was armed or not, or if Dr. Soblen knew whether he was armed or not. But the deportation of persons under Clause 13 of the Entry into Israel Law...does not involve smuggling them into other countries, and certainly not those which seek their extradition. It happens every now and again that a country seeks to deport a person...and there is nowhere to send him because no country is prepared to accept him....There is a well-known case of a man who spent a whole year on a ship sailing from one port to another because no one would take him in.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: From what country?

I. Harari (Liberals): I think that he was Polish and was deported from Britain, which in the end took pity on him after he had been on board ship for a year, and took him in.

Sometimes people seek asylum in an embassy, which is extraterritorial. This right is held in very high regard by the Latin American countries, whose opinions and esteem we should take greater account of. A cardinal remained at the U.S. embassy in Budapest for three years, until the Hungarians agreed to let him leave. None of these things are simple. There is the right of deportation, of removing someone from one's territory, but this does not involve obliging the deported person to go to a certain country. The case before us is not merely one in which a person entered the country unlawfully, it is a special case in which the person was wanted in another country which had not watched him closely and had allowed him to escape...in a peculiar way, because it

thought that \$100,000 was worth more than keeping a close guard over a dangerous prisoner....He could have been sent to any country except the one which wanted him extradited. It is very strange, but if we had had an extradition agreement with the U.S...we would have been able to implement it and act in accordance with it. Because we do not have an extradition agreement, however, he was sent straight to the U.S., accompanied by a detective from that country...under Clause 13.

In Israel there are laws which have been passed by the Knesset. Clause 13 of the Entry into Israel Law gives us the right to deport anyone who enters Israel unlawfully, the penalty for this being three months' imprisonment or a fine of IL300 or both. This undoubtedly does not apply to criminals whose extradition is sought, and to whom the Extradition Law applies....The first clause of that law reads: "A person who is in Israel shall be extradited to another country only according to this Law." If the provisions of the law are observed, the person must be brought before a Regional Court after he has been sought by another country. We were not told that he was wanted or that any request had been submitted. It is the court which decides if he should be deported, and an appeal can be brought before the Supreme Court. The law determines that a person may be extradited only if he has been found guilty or has been indicted for a crime which is not of a political nature in a certain country.

Clause 10, paragraph 2, says that a person may not be extradited if "the request for extradition is made in order to accuse or punish him for an offense of a political nature, even though this does not appear to be the reason for which his extradition is requested." Even then he is not to be extradited, and all this must be done by the courts, in accordance with the law. We have nothing to be ashamed of in our courts, and who would have believed that while the Extradition Law existed Clause 13 could be used to deport criminals surreptitiously? I do not believe that those people will enter the country on legal visas, so that Clause 13 may always be used. When is the Extradition Law to be used, then? The Minister of the Interior can always issue an order against such people. I know that his arrival in Israel was extremely unpleasant and uncomfortable for us. I know—again from the papers—that there was pressure, if not from the U.S. then from our brethren in the U.S., but are we always to be responsible for everyone? He is part of U.S. Jewry, he is a product of it, we did not create Soblen.

(From the floor: Is U.S. Jewry responsible for Soblen?)

We are certainly not more responsible for him than U.S. Jewry is....

(Shouts from the floor.)

The Speaker, K. Luz: Kindly calm down.

I. Harari (Liberals): I ask you not only to calm down but to let me continue; I haven't got to the Law of Return yet, and that pertains to Jewry.

If we are told—again by the press—that we expelled him because of pressure from U.S. Jewry, I do not see what responsibility we have for him since he is an American Jew, not an Israeli. But we were told here yesterday, in reply to a parliamentary question, and I think we are all in agreement with that view, that we do not want all kinds of national or international criminals to obtain asylum in Israel by virtue of the Law of Return. And if we are all interested in this, we must change the Law of Return. In effect we altered the Law of Return in 1954 when we added the sentence: "An immigrant visa will not be granted to anyone with a criminal record who could endanger the public welfare." I am not pleading in court now, nor would I plead that a criminal record is not enough and that the aspect of threatening the public welfare should also be involved, but I doubt that Dr. Soblen, who has a criminal record, would have endangered the public welfare in Israel....

We get the strange impression that because Dr. Soblen is a Jew, because we have the Law of Return and because we do not want criminal elements to enter Israel under that law, we hastened to get rid of Dr. Soblen under a deportation order drawn up in accordance with Clause 13 of the Entry into Israel Law.

I recall that once, after the establishment of the state, I entered Morocco without a visa. I was in Casablanca, and after I had been there some days I went to Tangiers, wanting to continue to Spanish Morocco. I had a diplomatic passport and I asked for a visa to Spanish Morocco. In Tangiers I was told that in order to obtain such a visa the law required me to wait 11 days. I had no desire to remain in Tangiers for 11 days, and so I was introduced to the Spanish military attache there. He gave me a regular visiting card upon which a few words were written in Spanish. He told me that by means of that visiting card I could cross two borders: the one into Spanish Morocco and the one into Spain. And that is what I did....When I complained to him about having to wait 11 days for a visa...he cited a Spanish proverb to the effect that the law was not made for friends....

We want the law to apply to everyone in Israel, regardless of whether they are friends or not. We do not want administrative measures which bypass the law to be implemented in some cases and not in others....In our view, the worst aspect of this case is the speed with which the authorities acted, indicating their fear of Israel's courts....Dr. Soblen was deported at 7 a.m. on Sunday morning, before the courts were open, without telling Soblen himself, and without informing his attorney, who might have been able to take appropriate steps. And that is the greatest threat to all the inhabitants of the country. It poses the danger that the authorities can act not in accordance with the law and without giving people the chance to petition the courts. If the reply we are given is that Clause 13 was employed this time in order to deport a criminal—and there is no dispute as to the fact that he is a criminal—that is

no answer. Because even in accordance with Clause 13 it would have been possible to wait and defer the deportation. We are gravely concerned by the Government's disregard for the rule of law. This urgent matter must be brought before the Knesset...and the Liberal party group therefore proposes a vote of no confidence in the Government.

S. Mikunis (Maki): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the Government erred in handing Dr. Soblen over to his McCarthyist pursuers; it erred in subjugating Israel's independence and sovereignty to the rulers of the U.S., particularly since there is no extradition agreement between Israel and the U.S.; it erred in preferring dependence upon others to Israeli and international law—the Extradition Law of 1954 and the Law of Return; it erred in disregarding the judiciary, Israeli democracy and human rights; it erred in ignoring humanism and our nation's conscience and ethics, as well as Dr. Soblen's terminal disease; it erred in overlooking all levels of Israeli public opinion. In view of all this, the Communist party group proposes that the Knesset express its lack of confidence in the Ben-Gurion-Shapiro Government of ethical-political corruption, and that a new government, which will be faithful to Israel's independence, peace, honor, democracy and law, be established.

The horror which the nation felt when Dr. Soblen was handed over to the McCarthyist F.B.I., and the negative response this step aroused among world public opinion and even among democratic circles in the U.S., proves how remote the Ben-Gurion-Shapiro Government is from the healthy and appropriate feelings of the nation, and how alienated it is from the Israeli nation's sense of justice, as well as from the bases of human and Jewish morals....

The Prime Minister revealed himself to be the servant of those who are gripped by atomic hysteria in the U.S., and the Minister of the Interior showed that he was the tyrant Ben-Gurion's senior clerk. The Soblen affair demonstrated once again that tyranny continues in Israel....

All the excuses put forward by the Minister of the Interior in reply to MK Sneh's parliamentary questions about Dr. Soblen have been disproved, either by his attorney or by the former Attorney-General, as well as by other jurists. No clever maneuvering by the Prime Minister or the Minister of the Interior can obscure the fact that Dr. Soblen sought political asylum in our country under the Law of Return, and they dispatched him to the pit of despair on Washington's instructions.

By their actions, the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior presented our country as a police state, staining Israel's name. They trampled on Dr. Soblen's rights under both the Extradition Law and the Law of Return. As you know, the Extradition Law contains two basic conditions: a. the existence of a mutual extradition agreement with the pursuing country; b. the offense of which the person to be extradited is

accused must be included in the list specified in the law and must not be of a political nature. The first condition is not met because Israel does not have an extradition agreement with the U.S. The second condition is not met because the offense of which Dr. Soblen is accused by the "witch-hunting" F.B.I. is of a political nature....But it was the Prime Minister's open submission to the American dictate which decided matters, not our law.

Britain, whose Conservative Government is linked to the U.S. by NATO and an extradition treaty, and which has no Law of Return...decided that, after being deported from Israel, Dr. Soblen should be given the right to fight for asylum there. But the Ben-Gurion Government was panic-stricken by the sound of the U.S. reprimand, and deprived Dr. Soblen of the right to fight for any such right in Israel. Wickedness, stupidity and the despoilation of Israel's honor were combined here.

The repudiation of a legal study of the case, bypassing the magistrate's instruction to arrest him prior to clarification, the disregard for the Laws of Extradition and Return, as well as for the Government itself, not to mention the Knesset, is tyranny in the guise of democracy, instigated by the Prime Minister, Mr. Ben-Gurion. In this case he was aided by the Ministers of the Interior, Foreign Affairs and Justice....

With regard to another criminal, the swindler and rogue Janovici, who collaborated with the pro-Hitler Vichy government, the Government evinced patience and delicacy. The same applied to another criminal who escaped to Israel, namely, Marvin Gold. The Government was kinder to the butcher Eichmann than it was to Dr. Soblen.

The Prime Minister loves to sound off about "standing tall," but it has been proved on several occasions, and this time in particular, that he is the first to bend the knee to those from abroad who are more insistent, whether they belong to the American McCarthyist family or the German Hitlerist family. The Prime Minister likes to condemn "diaspora-thinking," but it has been proved on several occasions, and this time in particular, that he kowtows to those who hold the purse-strings, bends before those from abroad who stand firm, and displays petty haughtiness towards the nation....

The Minister of the Interior, Moshe Shapiro, aspires towards a state based on Jewish law, but it has been proved on several occasions, and this time in particular, that he maintains merely the husk, not the ethical nucleus, of Jewish law....The truth is that the Jewish law may be on your lips but your hands are stained by your deeds. The truth is that you have replaced the Jewish and human ethical precepts of Mosaic law with the so-called moral precepts of the enemies of peace and freedom, Kennedy and McCarthy, Adenauer and Gluebke.

In the U.S. elementary democratic liberties are trampled underfoot, Nazi racism and anti-semitism are rife, the Nazi party is permitted but

the Communist party is banned, and all progressive and democratic politicians and artists are hounded. Those who ordered the Government to hand Dr. Soblen over to them are currently committing the dastardly crime of conducting dozens of nuclear tests, against which mankind protests vehemently.

The crime of which Dr. Soblen was accused...has by no means been proven. Legal circles in the U.S. regard the trial as a show trial, rooted in the witch-hunt and hysteria of those crazed by the atom, of the commanders of the anti-Soviet and anti-Communist Cold War.

The Prime Minister and his minions in the Government did not recoil from obeying the base orders of the U.S. rulers, who themselves are sheltering known Nazi criminals....I would like to remind the House that when the Extradition Law was debated in the Knesset in July 1953 our party group expressed doubts as to whether it would be implemented in accordance with its letter and spirit. We warned you then that the Government of Israel could—despite the law and in contradiction to it—extradite people for political offenses. To our regret, we have been proven right. We foresaw what would happen because we were well-acquainted with the nature of the Ben-Gurionist rulers of Israel.

The proposal to express no confidence in the Government is intended to redeem Israel from its shame, defend our national honor, assure our independence and sovereignty, end the corruption of the regime, defend law and democracy and save Israel from the moral-political decline towards which it is being pushed by the Ben-Gurion-Shapiro Government.

The Communist party group proposes, on the basis of Israeli public opinion and human ethics, that the Knesset express no confidence in the Ben-Gurion Government. The Israeli nation undoubtedly deserves a different government, one which adheres to law and democracy and upholds peace and national independence.

M. Bentov (Mapam): Distinguished Knesset...our proposal to express no confidence in the Government derives from the fact that in its wisdom the Coalition has blocked any other way of clarifying the issue which has rocked large sections of the Israeli public.

The motive for our proposal is not primarily our concern for Dr. Soblen's personal fate, although the Jewish sense of mercy should not be alien to any of us, not even the religious Ministers. Dr. Soblen's rights on the basis of the Law of Return are not the main point either just now. If there are differences of opinion on this matter, no one other than the court is authorized to decide....

Nor do I wish to discuss the moral aspect of the problem now, i.e., whether a Jew convicted of espionage, as Dr. Soblen was, should be extradited, although I think the Government would have acted otherwise had Dr. Soblen escaped here after having been convicted of espionage for the U.S. in Cuba, for example. The public here would have reacted

differently, too, if an Egyptian Jew convicted in Cairo of spying for Israel had escaped to the U.S. and been extradited to Egypt...even if all due legal processes had been employed....

The main thing for me at this juncture is...that the Government of Israel should honor our laws. Even a government which we do not support is not absolved of respect for the law of the land. To my great regret, in this instance the Government of Israel violated a whole series of laws.

...Extradition, expulsion or the prevention of the application of the Law of Return are legal decisions which cannot be implemented without having recourse to the appropriate courts. No legitimate government would consider extraditing an escaped criminal without due legal process. Our Government could have learned about that not only from the lengthy procedure regarding the extradition of Shalom Starkes which has been going on for almost a year, but also from the resounding slap in the face we have just received with regard to Dr. Soblen, when Britain did what we failed to do, even though there is no Law of Return in Britain; furthermore, the U.S. did not send its ambassador to the British Prime Minister, did not threaten that "our friendship is in danger," but announced calmly that it was waiting for the outcome of the legal process.

The Government removed a prisoner from jail in contravention of a court order. No one—not even the Prime Minister—is entitled to annul a court order; only the court may do that. I think that technically the Government is guilty of conspiring to remove a prisoner from jail under false pretenses....No prisoner may be removed from jail without a court order.

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: That is not so.

M. Bentov (Mapam): You are not the only jurist in the country. In addition, Soblen was held incommunicado in order to prevent him—contrary to the law—from submitting a request in accordance with the Law of Return. He is entitled to submit a request. He was also prevented from meeting with his lawyer.

If his crime was having an invalid passport, he should have been charged with that offense before a court. No one other than a court may decide if a person is guilty of an offense or not. Soblen is not a civil servant upon whom administrative punishment may be imposed.

Soblen was extradited, not deported, although it can be said that the extradition...was disguised as a deportation....It constituted the illegal extradition of a political criminal to a country with which we have no extradition agreement. If the U.S. can get what it wants on a one-way basis, why should it sign an extradition agreement with us?

There is no doubt that the Government was fully aware of the fact that it was violating a series of laws. Had that not been the case it would

not have made an effort to conceal what it was doing, prevent a debate and hide the truth about the accompanying policemen. It would not have spread the news that the plane was bound solely for Athens and London, despite the fact that a ticket for New York had been purchased. Indeed, many people blushed for shame when the U.S. Government spokesman's announcement of an "arrangement" with Israel's Government was proven correct, while the Israel Government spokesman's denial was the opposite of the truth....

And so, there was an entire concatenation of deceptions in order to conceal the true nature of the Government's actions from the public. And that, apart from the affair of Dr. Soblen, is a very grave matter in itself. The person who appears to be formally responsible is the Minister of the Interior...though I regard his principal crime as having been unable to withstand the brainwashing he received....

The Minister of the Interior, H.M. Shapiro: What is brainwashing?

M. Bentov (Mapam): I read in the paper that you mentioned brainwashing....It is no secret that once again the Prime Minister was the moving spirit behind this new affair. Perhaps he will apprise us today of some of the reasons which motivated him—

(From the floor: Don't delude yourself.)

—if he wishes to address the issues, and does not choose, as is his wont, to deal with the critics themselves, and then go on to the Palmach, Altalena, Stalin, and so on. But we have heard that the unofficial motives were pressure from U.S. Jewry and pressure from the U.S. Government or its representatives. I do not know who those Jews were...but I fear that they did not include the representatives of the official Zionist institutions....I am afraid that they were the Jews who are potential candidates for Ben-Gurion's Zionist Organization. They are undoubtedly very wealthy. This is evinced by the respect their pressure was accorded by the Prime Minister's Office. They were not told—as is usually, and rightly, the case—to immigrate to Israel and then attempt to influence internal Israeli matters....The question is—how many millions must a Jew have to be accorded that privilege?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: There's no one like you for homing in on millionaires in the U.S.

I. Barzilai, (Mapam): For development.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: As an emissary of Hashomer Hatzair.

M. Bentov (Mapam): I never yet gave any millionaire the right to pressure me as to how to act in Israel....I never rejected Jewish millionaires, but they cannot tell us what to do as long as they are not here, and I agree with the Prime Minister on this point....

There is no doubt that there was pressure from the representatives of the U.S., because only after the U.S. ambassador's urgent visit to the Prime Minister did the latter begin frenetic activity to get Soblen out of the country immediately, without taking the laws and due legal process into consideration....Was the friendship between our two countries really threatened?...I want friendship with the U.S., just as I do with any other country, but will we attain friendship by violating our own laws? Is someone telling us that the end justifies the means? I dispute that. Who says that the friendship of the American people is in danger? Those State Department officials who have not yet discovered the Syrian trenches in Israeli demilitarized territory? Who always support the Arabs against us at the U.N? Do they "own" the American people's friendship for Israel?

I do not believe that by adhering to our laws we will forfeit America's friendship....It is by rigorous adherence to law and justice, despite pressure from U.S. officials...which will raise us in America's esteem....

I must admit that I am unable to understand Ben-Gurion, who has always preached to us about self-respect and national pride, who rebelled together with us against the image of the diaspora Jew standing with cap in hand before the representative of power, who always evinced admirable courage and did not flinch in the face of far more dangerous threats....It redounds to Ben-Gurion's credit that he did not succumb to those threats then...although others wanted to....

So what has happened to Ben-Gurion now? I know that he will try to prove that everything was done perfectly legally. But...our Prime Minister is known to have such strong and intense emotions that he cannot see the laws objectively. He is convinced, for example, that due legal process can be used against a man who cannot be charged with any offense under Israeli law. And when a dozen laws determine that legal process must be employed he suddenly fails to see the need for legal process.

But a country based on law cannot be run according to the Prime Minister's subjective viewpoint, however firmly he is convinced that his view is right. In a country based on law and justice it is the judges, not the Ministers, who interpret the law. It is the duty of Prime Ministers—even if they are completely convinced that they are right—to consult the court and put the opinion of the court above their own.

Ben-Gurion, the person who taught us that the State of Israel is a country based on law rather than religious law, now seeks to prove to us that we must be a country based on the sole considerations of one person. And whenever the existing laws disturb the Government or that one person they may be regarded as a nuisance which should be got rid of or circumvented...in order to attain the desired aim, as in the Soblen case.

Is this the non-Levantine approach offered to the Jewish nation? Is this the great light to the nations we are supposed to represent? It grieves me profoundly to see Ben-Gurion unnecessarily embroiling us all, the country and himself, above all, from time to time in affairs which are shocking, depressing and extremely destructive.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members...MK Bentov said...that he identifies with me when I tell U.S. Jewry that it has no right to interfere or give advice until they settle in Israel. I never have said, nor will say, that. I say the opposite. I always say that the State of Israel belongs to the whole Jewish people and yearns for the whole Jewish people. Every Jew has the right to state his opinion regarding the State of Israel....

Even when a Jew came from New York to conduct the Liberal Party's election campaign...I said that every Jew...has the right to interfere in Israel's elections. We don't have to do what they tell us to...but they have every right to do so. That American Jew expressed his appreciation of the fact that I had defended his right to participate in the Knesset election campaign.

It is true that...Jews living abroad do not have the right to pass laws and impose obligations upon us, because such things are mutual. We cannot impose obligations on them or pass laws....But every Jew has the right to express his opinion, because the State of Israel concerns every Jew. That is the essence and mission of the State of Israel.

...MK Harari complained that the Government disregarded the rule of law. I regret the fact that the speaker disregarded the rule of law, the rule of truth and the rule of the central idea of the state....

MK Harari apologized for proposing a motion of no confidence. In my view he has no need to apologize for doing something which is the right of anyone in Opposition....But the reason he gave—that the Presidium did not decide as he wished—was rather strange. Since when does the Knesset Presidium have to decide as MK Harari wishes?...And does the Government instruct the Presidium as to what to decide?

(Shouts from the Liberal benches: The majority decided.)

And should the minority decide instead of the majority?

Z. Zimmerman (Liberals): One doesn't always have to use the majority, especially not in matters of this nature.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Can one use the majority only when the Liberals are in it? At present I am arguing with jurists who are demanding that the law be honored. The law says that the majority, not the minority, decides. The majority does not need permission from the minority to decide....Naturally, it is my view that the majority in the Government cannot do as the court does....The Government is not the Judiciary. Only the court is entitled to decide by a majority, when judging between two people, which of them is right.

If the law authorizes the Knesset Presidium to decide what is urgent and what is not, it is the Presidium, not the Knesset majority, which decides. I am sure that MK Harari finds no fault with this....MK Harari is a lawyer, but this does not mean that I have to accept his opinion. Had it not been for the First World War I might have been a lawyer, but history willed otherwise, it seems. Since when does a lawyer decide what is permitted and what is forbidden? And so, Mr. Harari, the law is before me, and the law permits expulsion. At the most you can claim that the law is not a good one, and I know that there are laws in this country which are not good. The Elections Law, for example, is disastrous for the country, to my mind.

M. Begin (Herut): That's what we've been waiting for.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Keep on waiting.

M. Begin (Herut): We wait and are satisfied.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: I'm glad you are satisfied. But as long as the law exists each one of us must uphold it, even knowing its faults and the unfortunate results which will ensue....The Entry into Israel Law could be good and could be bad. I think it is good. But someone else could regard it as a bad law....There is also a way of changing it, by persuading the majority to accept one's opinion and annulling the bad law. That is quite legitimate. A law may be criticized, but as long as it exists it must be implemented. This also applies to Mr. Harari, even if something undertaken in accordance with that law is displeasing to him.

I have the law before me and it does not say—in contrast to what one might think from what Mr. Harari claimed—that the Minister of the Interior must apply to the court....There is no need for any legal process.

I. Harari (Liberals): I did not say that.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: I say that, as arising from what you said.

I. Harari (Liberals): You said that I was not telling the truth. So I am responding by saying that I did not say that.

The Speaker, K. Luz: The Prime Minister did not say that you were not telling the truth.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Anyone who proposes a motion of no confidence in the Government for disregarding the law must be very careful of the law, especially someone who should know the law because he is a lawyer, like Mr. Harari.

I. Harari (Liberals): I know it.

H. Rubin (Mapam): He's ruining your practice.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: The law regarding the Minister of the Interior's right to deport someone does not contain a single word or hint about the need to resort to due legal process beforehand. The law decided that this was a matter for implementation, which is in the hands of the Government.

M. Bentov (Mapam): Is there no appeal to the Supreme Court?

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: There is no appeal to the Supreme Court in the law. I am telling you what is in the law. You are permitted not to know what is in the law....But the law makes no mention of having to resort to due legal processes. The gentleman who came to Israel under false pretenses, on a forged passport, did not demand the right to enter the country on the basis of the Law of Return or express his desire to settle here. He broke the law of the land because he entered on a forged passport. Also, for some reason...he saw fit to destroy his passport. The law authorizes the Minister of the Interior to deport him, and it is in accordance with that law, and that law alone...that he deported him. He had no need of any legal process.

We have heard...what U.S. Jewry should do....In my view, the Jews of America, Russia and the whole world have the right to interfere in Israel's affairs; the Jews of Israel do not have the right to interfere in the affairs of American Jewry, except in Jewish affairs....

We have the Law of Return. I regret the fact that I have to explain the idea of Return and watch people who undoubtedly agree with that idea attempting to ignore it when they wish to attack the Government. Israel is unique in the world, to the best of my knowledge, in having passed that law. It had to pass that law, because if it had not it would not have been true to itself and to Jews throughout the world. According to the Law of Return it is not the Government of Israel nor the Knesset which grants Jews the right to immigrate to this country but the mere fact that they are Jews.

We regard the Law of Return...as embodying the idea that the ingathering of the exiles is the highest mission of the State of Israel. But the idea of the ingathering of the exiles is not so simple, because when we passed the Law of Return Israel had about 700,000 inhabitants...and we intended the Law of Return to apply to the millions—if there be such—who would want or need to immigrate to Israel. We knew that Israel's tiny population could not support immigration on that scale and that we would need the help of diaspora Jewry in the absorption of immigrants....This activity is scorned and termed "schnorring" (begging) and other such epithets....As a citizen of the state, a Jew and someone who regards the Law of Return as the prime objective of the state, I am proud of the fact that we have managed to involve world Jewry...in the

absorption of immigrants. We have also succeeded to some extent in clarifying to the world that Israel is not like other countries, being a country of immigration.

You all know that there are highs and lows in immigration. During the first four years there was an influx of immigration, then it slowed down considerably, followed by a change for the better. You know the reasons for that, and there is no need to go into them. We don't ring bells and send telegrams to the papers...when one or a thousand or five thousand Jews come to Israel. When do we ring the bells? When a Jewish criminal who has no feeling or respect for Israel, who never considered settling here, attempts to escape from justice by coming here.... That immediately gets into all the papers. And criminals think they can use that right and turn Israel into a haven for criminals....That is why the Entry into Israel Law, authorizing the Minister of the Interior to deport such persons, was passed.

I do not remember who the Minister of Interior was who first used that law to deport Greenwald, who was a Jewish criminal. He had embezzled money belonging to thousands of impecunious people, and when he was caught he came here thinking that Israel was a safe haven for criminals. The Minister of the Interior did well in using that section of the Entry into Israel Law which entitled him to deport someone who had entered the country in violation of the law....I think that that increased Anglo-Jewry's esteem for us, because I understand why British Jews are ashamed of their criminal. I know that a Gentile is not ashamed, because no one would castigate all Gentiles because one was a criminal....We in Israel can be proud of the fact that we do not care what the Gentiles say, but the Jews of the diaspora do care, and we cannot condemn them for that.

The Jews of the diaspora have no choice but to care what the Gentiles say about them, because they are at their mercy. The Jews of Britain breathed more easily when the State of Israel deported that criminal, who is still in jail....There were other cases, including one in which a criminal from another country managed to become a new immigrant; I do not want to mention his name since he succeeded and is living in Israel today.

Someone from the U.S. was accused of spying for a Communist country. We may scoff at U.S. Jewry for being ashamed of that person, but there is no truth in the assertion that they put pressure on us. No American Jew came to me, I did not read any American newspapers, nor did I receive any telegrams from America on that subject. But I can imagine the mood of American Jewry, and what they would have felt had Israel been revealed to be a haven for criminals....

I can understand that U.S. Jews were not happy that Soblen managed to get away, although I know of no pressure exerted by U.S. Jewry. An attempt was made here by Mr. Bentov to exonerate the Minister of the

Interior and make me responsible for the deportation. I am prepared to accept the responsibility, although the newspapers lied in reporting that pressure was put on the Minister of the Interior....

MK Bentov was inexact, or misinformed, when he claimed that pressure was exerted by the U.S. ambassador. The U.S. ambassador met with me twice, once to say goodbye before he left for the U.S. on vacation, and once to ask about Soblen. I told him that that was our affair, not his, and he left immediately. And although I consider the attitude of every country towards us...as long as I am in the Government I represent a sovereign country and I do not take orders from any country in the world. As an ordinary citizen in Israel—which I hope to be—I will insist that...we act on the basis of our own laws and consider what is good for Israel and the Jewish people, as well as world peace....

The Law of Return and the idea behind it do not mean only that a law enabling free immigration was passed. We are very interested... in the opinions of both world Jewry and the general public, because Israel is intended to be a haven for Jews who cannot or do not wish to remain where they are. That aim does not accord with Israel being a haven for criminals. I do not understand this defense by people who still call themselves Zionists of a criminal who deceived us when he entered the country on a forged passport, which he then destroyed...and did not even say that he was coming to settle here. He had doubtless heard of the Law of Return, he is an educated man, but he had no intention of settling here....

It has been said that U.S. Jewry was supposedly shocked and exerted pressure on Israel. I know of no pressure, but if U.S. Jewry was shocked, that is not to be sneezed at...because that Jewry has a share in Israel as a haven for immigrants, and certainly did not intend to build it as a haven for rogues and criminals. But even if U.S. Jewry was not shocked, anyone who is concerned about Israel's mission and the ingathering of the exiles should be shocked. Is there really no difference between a haven for immigrants and a haven for criminals? Why was the Entry into Israel Law passed two years after the Law of Return, enabling the Government to deport anyone who did not have a residence permit, so that the idea of Return would not be adulterated? The law bestows obligations as well as rights. The Government must prevent the distortion of the idea of immigration. And when a rogue enters unlawfully, it is our obligation to deport him.

J. Hazan (Mapam): The truth is that he was extradited.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: I regret the fact that you use the word "truth" in the same sense that Mr. Mikunis does.

J. Hazan (Mapam): I'm talking about reality, not the truth. In reality he was extradited.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: You are not telling the truth....The Minister of the Interior knows the truth, he knows Hebrew and he wrote down under what clauses the man was deported. He knows what the difference is between deportation and extradition....

(From the floor: What about the detectives?)

You seem to have detectives, I do not....I certainly did not know about detectives. Someone was deported, and was even given an Israeli passport...albeit for restricted use, and was deported in a plane bound for Athens and England. To the best of my knowledge, he has not got to America yet.

I. Barzilai (Mapam): You know why. If he hadn't tried to kill himself he would have been in America long ago, because of our extradition.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: In conclusion, I would like to tell those who proposed no confidence that this Government will continue to deport rogues who break the law and enter Israel on false pretenses, because it is the Government's task to preserve the absorption of immigrants and Israel's good name as a haven for immigrants, not criminals. That is our policy, and I very much regret the fact, MK Harari, that you completely forgot that in your lengthy speech.

That has been the policy of all the Governments, to the best of my knowledge, because the Law of Return was passed in 1950, and the Entry into Israel Law in 1952. Mapam was not in the Government then, but the party to which MK Harari belongs was...and I even think that a colleague of his proposed the law authorizing the Minister of the Interior to deport people, and failed to include a section requiring the Minister to have recourse to the courts. And that Minister of Justice was no less faithful to honesty and legality...than MK Harari.

I. Harari (Liberals): What about the Extradition Law of 1954?

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: To the best of my knowledge, there has never been an extradition. But why are you asking me about the Extradition Law? There are many more laws which are irrelevant to the subject in hand.

I. Harari (Liberals): It is very relevant.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: It may be relevant to your proposal of no confidence, for which you found strange and irrelevant reasons.

A distinction has to be made between the Law of Return and a haven for criminals. Criminals will be deported if they enter Israel. Anyone who has committed a crime and tries to hide in Israel will be deported without being brought to trial. The law does not require us to bring someone to trial, merely to deport him. If the law entitles the Minister of the Interior to do this, he is responsible before the law. It is our duty to ensure that criminals do not benefit by abusing Israel's laws....

If you wish to express your lack of confidence because we have upheld the purity of the Law of Return, maintained the Entry into Israel Law, ensured that the Jewish people regard Israel as a haven for immigrants and prevented Israel from being turned into a haven for rogues and criminals, do as you will. Establish a Government which will act on the basis of a different policy. I do not think that the Israeli nation will accept a Government of that kind.

I know of all the distortions which have appeared in the newspapers in the last few days, but we are used to that. A great many lies were printed. MK Harari may have fallen victim to those lies too. The policy this Government has implemented, and will implement as long as it has the support of the majority, is to be particular in the maintenance of the Law of Return out of esteem and sympathy for world Jewry and world public opinion, that they may know and understand what asylum in Israel means. Israel is a haven for Jews abroad who cannot or do not wish to remain where they are and want to come and settle in Israel; and they immediately become citizens of Israel, something which is, I believe, unparalleled in any other country. At the same time, however, there is the Deportation Law, and rogues and criminals who enter Israel deviously will be deported. We will not distort the character of the State of Israel, and we will continue to deport people of that kind without resorting to the courts, solely on the basis of the law.

That was and will remain our policy, and this motion of no confidence is a proposal to annul that. By its vote, the Knesset will show whether it endorses that attitude or whether it is prepared to turn our country into a haven for criminals.

The Speaker, K. Luz: The House Committee has decided that instead of a debate the party groups which did not propose no confidence will make statements. I give the floor to MK Begin....

M. Begin (Herut): Mr. Speaker...on Friday, July 29 of this year, after Dr. Soblen had been arrested on the basis of the warrant issued by a Justice of the Peace, the following passage appeared in one of the morning papers, *Haboker*: "One thing is clear. He is not wanted here. He must be sent back whence he came. He may appeal to the Supreme Court to seek protection under the Law of Return. But this homeland, against which he may even have spied at certain stages, certainly does not owe someone like Soblen anything except for handcuffs. His deportation may possibly serve as a warning to other villains and criminals in the world who may have wanted to follow him here."

Those are grave and dreadful words to write about someone who has already come before a court and is probably about to request its help. Such words could create the atmosphere that the Government needed to ignore the appropriate processes of the courts of the state, in which the principle of the supremacy of the juridical system prevails.

We did not join them, neither orally nor in writing...because we believe in the supremacy of the juridical system and trust the court....No one is entitled to prevent someone from applying to the courts, whoever he may be and whatever his crime. That atmosphere, however, does not justify what the Government did, namely, blocking the way to the courts for someone, thereby preventing him from appealing the deportation order before an authorized court. And it did so by force and by trickery.

The wisest of men wrote: "with good advice make war," and "for by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war." When your enemy seeks to destroy you, one must use trickery....But this Government must learn once and for all that deception is used only against an enemy, and neither the courts nor a lawyer...are the enemy. A government which respects the law and the courts must come before them uprightly, with a pure heart and clean hands. In this case the Government's hands were not clean....

On Friday afternoon, at a meeting between the Minister of the Interior, the Prime Minister, possibly another member of the Cabinet and advisers, it was decided to use the Entry into Israel Law to deport Dr. Soblen from Israel....It was incumbent upon the government to publish that decision. Of what was it ashamed? Of whom was it afraid?...But even if no public announcement was made...at least Dr. Soblen's lawyer should have been informed. Now the distinguished Minister of the Interior claims that no appeal was made to the Supreme Court; don't be so proud of it and cast the blame on the lawyer....The lawyer can claim that it did not occur to him that he would not be informed of the decision to deport his client.

The Minister of the Interior, H.M. Shapiro: Why did other lawyers do that?

M. Begin (Herut): I will answer that question immediately....As you know, Mr. Shapiro, I feel both respect and friendship for you, but I would like to ask whether, if someone forges someone else's signature and manages to obtain money that way, he is entitled to come before the court and plead: But I was successful! You concealed the fact from the lawyer that you were going to deport Dr. Soblen on Sunday morning. Why did you do that? So that he would not have time to appeal to the Supreme Court. How could he? From the outset he had said that he would wait for the Government's decision about a deportation order, and would then seek an injunction. Maybe that was a professional mistake.

...You complain because in England the lawyers appealed to the court. Perhaps the lawyers there are more agile. Is agility the subject here? Does a Government act on the basis of this or that lawyer's agility? Any person, any criminal, any rogue, whoever he may be, is entitled to ask the court for help. You decided to deport someone and you did not give him or his lawyer the chance to go to the court; that is the

truth. No one can deny that....You may have had reasons for preventing possible intervention by the court, but they cannot be convincing. Every man is entitled to appeal to the court.

The Prime Minister told us that in his youth he studied law, but history prevented him from continuing his studies. I do not know how long you studied, Mr. Ben-Gurion, but you should have managed to learn that every man must be given the chance to appeal to the court. There is a Deportation Law, an Extradition Law and many other laws. But a person must be given the right to appeal to the court, and it is the court which decides....Your Government cannot claim that Dr. Soblen's lawyer was not quick enough, because he could not have conceived that you would use trickery and force...in order to prevent him physically from obtaining an injunction. After that he went to the Supreme Court, which told him—rightly—that it had no other efficacious measures at its disposal.

It is no secret that there was some pressure. The Minister of the Interior said as much to the evening papers. There was some pressure, and you panicked....Of what were you afraid? He was in jail, he could have been given the chance to appeal to the court, which would have made its decision. Of what were you afraid? Why this panic? This is the most serious deed ever done as regards the supremacy of the juridical system. We are proud of our courts; we rely on our courts; why did you deprive someone of the chance to resort to them, after the decision to deport him but before its implementation?

We did not table a motion of no confidence on this subject. We are at least as cognizant of that parliamentary weapon...as the other Members of the House....Our reason was a crucial, national one, being essentially ethical, for we sought to avoid giving the impression to anyone, in any way...that we favored granting asylum to Dr. Soblen in the circumstances in which he came here.

...I will not go into the reasons for this...as Dr. Soblen is soon to stand trial, and before a foreign, not an Israeli, judge....And even from afar we must not say anything which may influence his fate. Many things have been said, by both the Prime Minister and the Opposition, which were unnecessary and harmful. Other Opposition parties have changed their minds about the motion of no confidence. It is not for me to say what their reasons were. We could not change our minds because of the decisive reason I have mentioned.

(MK J. Hazan shouts from the floor.)

I tell you that we did not change our minds. We demanded a debate on a motion for the agenda. I do not think that I said anything less acute than MK Bentov about the Government's offense, and I may even have spoken more sharply, because I feel it very deeply, both as someone who has studied law, but primarily as a man and a Jew. That was our only—and decisive—consideration, one which is moral and national. That is

why, in this instance, we did not table a motion of no confidence, and that is why we will not vote for the motions which have been tabled.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, MK Begin managed to chastise both those who proposed the motion of no confidence and the Government, as well as to agree with the Government without saying so, and to conclude by saying that he did not have time to explain this.

M. Begin (Herut): That's not true.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: We were told incorrectly that the juridical system is supreme in this country. No, Mr. Begin, this is a country based on law; in this country it is the law, not the court, which is supreme....According to the law, the Minister of the Interior had no need to resort to the courts before the deportation.

The law determines which matters are in the jurisdiction of the courts, the Knesset and the Government....In this country, as in most democratic countries, there is a division of labor. There is an institution which is authorized to judge matters which are in its jurisdiction. That is not the case everywhere in the world. In the U.S. the court is above the parliament. It is entitled to decide that a law passed by Congress is invalid because it contradicts the Constitution. But that is the case only in the U.S. Here it is the law, not the juridical system, which is supreme.

We all respect our legal system. I think that during the past year, with the Eichmann trial, the court raised esteem for the State of Israel and its juridical institutions. But the court is not the highest authority. In our state there are three supreme institutions which are independent of one another. There is a connection between the Government and the Knesset, and the Knesset both legislates and supervises the Government's actions. In its legal jurisdiction, however, the Government does not need to resort to the courts. The Government must act in accordance with the law. The Entry into Israel Law does not say that that the Minister of the Interior must allow a criminal who has entered the country illegally to appeal to the courts. There is no such thing in the law, Mr. Begin. It seems that you have not read the law.

There is no limitation in the law as regards the period of time, and it is possible to issue an order a month, a week or a day after a criminal enters the country. The law authorizes the Minister of the Interior to deport criminals of that kind from the country so that they may never return. I do not want to know whether Soblen's lawyer acted wisely or not. That is not my concern....I am concerned with the law, not with lawyers....The law applies to the Minister of the Interior, and he is the final arbiter. The Minister of the Interior acted on the basis of the Entry into Israel Law, not the Extradition Law....

There is absolutely no basis for the contention made here about the supremacy of the juridical system. The Entry into Israel Law does not

limit the Minister of the Interior. It speaks of deportation, not courts. It does not oblige the Minister of the Interior to apply to the courts and ask them whether to deport someone or not.

(Shouting in the chamber.)

P. Rosenne (Liberals): What does the Minister of Justice think about what you are saying?

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: I don't have to ask the Minister of Justice, Mr. Rosenne. One doesn't have to be a lawyer to understand what the law says. There is no law that says that only lawyers can understand what laws say. I read the law which you submitted to the Knesset and I signed it and understand what it says, and I also know what it does not say. It does not say that the Minister of the Interior must resort to the court in this matter....

The law does not limit the period within which the deportation order must be issued....According to the law, the Minister of the Interior may deport the criminal the moment he hears he has entered the country.

P. Rosenne (Liberals): This shows me that the Government did everything it could to prevent an appeal being submitted. Tomorrow I will propose an amendment to the law stating that a deportation order cannot be issued before ten days are up.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: By your proposal you endorse what I am saying.

(Shouting in the chamber.)

...Be that as it may, this law does not require the Minister of the Interior to go to the courts when he thinks someone should be deported. There is no such thing in the law. You are entitled to propose an amendment. That is your right. I do not know if it will be accepted. But today the amendment you desire is not in the law. The Minister of the Interior is not limited by time or proceedings. The only consideration is whether a person entered the country unlawfully and not under the Law of Return. That is what the law says, and the law is binding.

I reject what MK Begin said about the supremacy of the juridical system. It is the law which is supreme, and the law which is binding. The law has the last word.

E. Raziell-Na'or (Herut): The law can be changed. The system cannot.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: You can propose an amendment tomorrow, together with MK Rosenne. If the amendment gets a majority the law will be changed.

The Entry into Israel Law was passed after the Law of Return, not before it. If it had been passed before the Law of Return it could be claimed that the Law of Return had annulled it. But that is not the situa-

tion. The Law of Return was passed two years before the Entry into Israel Law which authorizes the Minister of the Interior to deport people.

I. Harari (Liberals): The Extradition Law was passed after both those laws.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Extradition is not the issue here. You can mention other laws which are totally irrelevant....Dr. Soblen was deported, not extradited. I know this to be a fact, and I do not cull my information from the newspapers or rumors....

This law was passed after the Law of Return, and I understand the idea behind it, though others may understand the idea differently. The law seeks to prevent the abuse of the Law of Return, so that the idea of the absorption of immigrants will not be made a mockery of, so that Israel may fulfill its mission as constituting a haven for immigrants who want to come here, and not be a refuge for criminals. That is why that law was passed, and that is why the Minister of the Interior is authorized to order the deportation of someone who was a criminal and wanted to find a haven here, without having to go to the courts. He does not need to resort to the courts, he is not limited in time, he is entitled to deport a man of that kind at any moment. And that is what the Minister of the Interior did.

S. Lorincz (Aguda): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...our party group has no confidence in the Government, and it will express this on this occasion too. One of the Prime Minister's favorite remarks is that Israel is a state based on law, not religious law. I will not attempt to argue with the Prime Minister and prove that the laws of the State of Israel should in the most natural way be the eternal laws of the Jewish people, our holy Law, which has been passed down from generation to generation every since we were the Chosen People....But even if Israel is, as the Prime Minister claims, a country based on law, the question arises as to whether the deportation and extradition of Dr. Soblen...was implemented in accordance with the law of the land? We maintain that in this respect the Government showed disregard for the law. It is difficult to resolve the problem of the interpretation of the law, as the Prime Minister attempted to do, from this podium in the course of a debate. The courts, not the legislature, are charged with interpreting the law....Why was the Government so quick to deport that person, at seven in the morning, without giving an authorized court the chance to interpret the law? Would the State of Israel have suffered if Dr. Soblen had breathed the air of Israel for another 12 or 14 hours?

...It would not have harmed us, the Jews of America or the world if we had acted as common sense dictates and had told Dr. Soblen that we were about to deport him. I think that we should have told him that we were about to deport him and that he had the right to appeal to the court. The state would not have suffered thereby. It would only have gained.

Because we would undoubtedly have been spared this debate—which will not end as soon as the vote is taken.

There is another law, which may not be on the law books but is also accepted by British law, namely, “doing the right thing.” Did the authorities do the right thing by Dr. Soblen? They certainly did not.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: What we did was to Israel's credit.

S. Lorincz (Aguda): The credit would have been double had we waited 24 hours.

It was not honest. There was trickery here. And that was not good for him, the Jewish people or the State of Israel. And for that one may express one's lack of confidence....

It is self-evident...that our party group bears no love for a spy, especially one working against a friendly country like the U.S., which has done a great deal for the State of Israel and the Jewish people. We also agree...that our country must not be a haven for criminals and villains. But I have no doubt that we could have done what we had to without disregarding the law and acting arbitrarily. No one could accuse Britain of harboring affection for a communist spy, or say that Britain does not have ties of close friendship with the U.S. But Britain also knows what the law is, what fair play is, and it did not hasten to violate someone's basic rights, as the Government of Israel did. And the U.S. Government accepts Britain's actions with understanding.

In our view, this is not the only failure of the Government of Israel. Regrettably, we can no longer give this Government credit when we consider the failures and errors of the recent past, all of which have been characterized by arbitrariness, the violation of elementary rights and complete lack of responsibility....

...The Government's failure in this matter is not coincidental, it is a link in the chain of arbitrariness and disregard for the law, and that is why we are forced to express our lack of confidence....

The Speaker, K. Luz: ...We will now vote.

The Vote

Those in favor of the motion of no confidence	28
Those against	53
Abstentions	15

(The motion of no confidence is defeated.)

Amendment of Transition Law on International Conventions

Introduction

The authority to sign and ratify international conventions has from the beginning been vested in the Cabinet, without any formal role for the Knesset. Should the Knesset be dissatisfied with a Government decision in this, as in any other regard, its only recourse would be to express no confidence in the Government. Should such a vote obtain a majority the Government of the day would have to go, but the international convention which had occasioned the vote would still be binding. Important international documents, such as the General Armistice Agreement of 1949, were not brought before the Knesset at all. Time after time amendments were tabled with the intention of giving the Knesset a greater role in this area, and each time they were rejected. However, in replying to Mr. Riftin's proposal on the subject, the Minister of Justice gave a solemn undertaking, in line with the Ponsonby rule adopted by the House of Commons in Great Britain and which subsequently became constitutional practice, that the Government would bring international conventions to the Knesset prior to their signature. This was implemented *inter alia* at the time of the signing of the peace treaty with Egypt many years later, in 1979.

Sitting 204 of the Fifth Knesset

9 January 1963 (13 Teveth 5723)

J. Riftin (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, Israel's Transition Law, which was passed in 1949, says, among other things: “The President of the state will sign conventions with other countries which have been ratified by the Knesset.” Nevertheless, the Knesset is not occupied to a very great extent with the ratification of such conventions. This may be explained in various ways. One could say that if they have not been ratified by the Knesset they do not have to be signed. At any rate, the issue is a well-known one, and many Knesset Members from all the party groups have dealt with it...The issue is on the public's agenda.

...It seems to me that the time has come to reinforce the moral validity of the agreements signed in Israel's name by according them the appropriate parliamentary ratification. My proposal is a modest one. It does not say that everything has to be brought before the Knesset plenum;

it is enough to bring most agreements before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee or any other appropriate committee...unless some of the Knesset Members, say, a third of the members of the Committee, demand that the convention be brought before the Knesset plenum.

Volume 12 of Conventions, for example...covers a variety of topics. An agreement which was signed in 1952 was published in 1961. It is true that this is not aesthetic, and even disrespectful, not only towards the Knesset. It refers to a mutual aid agreement in matters of defense with a tiny country—the U.S. I think that when that agreement was signed...it would have been nice if those Knesset Members who get enthusiastic about agreements of this kind could have raised their hands and voted for it, while those like myself who believe that it is against the country's best interests could have voted against it. Then everyone would have known that this was no secret document which was concealed between 1952 and 1961....Respect for international relations demands an arrangement of this kind.

There is another category which may have been published at the appropriate time, in 1961 or 1962, but should have been debated in the Knesset. If there were arrangements concerning atomic energy...the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee (or the Economics Committee if peace needs were concerned) should have been involved.

There are also a great many arrangements which should possibly have been given more formal validity. Many friendly agreements have been signed with Asian and African countries. I think it would have brought them honor if the Knesset had ratified them.

We have heard people say that they feel sorry for the Knesset, that they do not want to burden it with additional work. But there are two kinds of agreements. There are those which can be ratified virtually automatically. For example, on the basis of a clause in the Entry into Israel Law, the Minister of the Interior asks the Internal Affairs Committee to approve certain reciprocal arrangements concerning waiving entry permits on service and diplomatic passports. Every member of the Internal Affairs Committee can tell you that when the Government submits proposals of that kind there is a short lesson in geography in the Committee, people find out where the country is, people would like to visit those distant lands, and fifteen minutes later the resolution is passed unanimously. I think that there are a great many arrangements of that kind which can be ratified almost automatically in the course of the Knesset's regular work.

But it is inconceivable that problematic, controversial issues of foreign relations, which really require consideration not only by the Government but also by the parliament, should be ignored by the Knesset....

Since the issue is a very weighty one, I hope that the committee which will deal with this bill requiring that appropriate ways be found of obtaining parliament's ratification of international arrangements will

study the matter thoroughly....It may amend and improve the proposal. There is no doubt that the representatives of the Government, including the Foreign Ministry, will make an important contribution to the debate in the Committee, and when the proposal returns to the plenum for debate it will already have been through a collective discussion with the cooperation of the Government's representatives in the appropriate committee.

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, MK Riftin's proposal raises an important constitutional point, but the Government thinks that this does not conform with the division of labor between the various branches of the state, and could also place an unnecessary and unjustified burden on the proper administration of the country's affairs and its relations with other countries.

...In accordance with the prevailing law...the Government has the authority to sign international conventions, including international contracts and treaties. In this respect it makes no difference if the convention is one-sided or reciprocal. The Government may bestow that or any other authority on one or more of its Ministers.

On 8 March 1951 the Government decided to empower the Foreign Minister, or anyone appointed by him, to sign international agreements and conventions on behalf of the Government. On 31 May 1951 the Government decided that all international conventions should be brought before the Government for ratification after they have been signed.

M. Begin (Herut): According to international law, ratification is usually the task of parliament.

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: That is not so....This situation obtains in Israel and many other countries.

This decision applies solely to conventions which, in accordance with their provisions or international public law...must be ratified in addition to being signed in order to be binding. Whether a given convention needs to be ratified or not is a legal question which depends on the interpretation of each individual convention.

Conventions which have to be ratified by the Government in accordance with the aforementioned decision of 31 May 1951 are brought before the Government by the Ministries concerned. When the Government has decided to ratify a convention it authorizes the Foreign Minister to implement that decision. When the implementation of a convention requires a change in the law it is customary and desirable to delay ratifying the convention until the appropriate legislative procedures have been completed in the Knesset.

The Government may also bring a certain convention before the Knesset if it sees fit to do so because of its political or economic importance. This may be done through a statement to the Knesset before the

ratification of the convention by the Government or by proposing that the Knesset ratify it. If the Knesset has ratified a convention in accordance with a proposal, it requires the signature of the President, though this does not apply to conventions which have been ratified by the Government, even if a statement regarding them has been made to the Knesset.

In April 1949 the Government decided that "The Minister who shall sign conventions with foreign countries which have been ratified by the Knesset and signed by the President of the state is the Foreign Minister."

That sums up the situation to date. Thus, the authority to sign international conventions and agreements is totally in the hands of the Government. If it so desires, it may bring a convention before the Knesset and ask for its approval. Only then will the convention be signed...by the President of the state. But the Government does not have to take that course. It is entitled to sign any international convention on its own, and this is as binding on the state as any other executive action undertaken by the Government. The Knesset's supervision of the Government's action is no different with regard to international conventions than to any other action undertaken by the Government...

Only in one instance is the Government unable to act independently and requires the Knesset's cooperation, i.e., when the implementation of an international convention requires legislation in order to make it the binding law of the land. This does not restrict the Government's executive powers in any way, however. In those cases, too, it is the Government alone which signs international conventions, but in this case the Legislature, i.e., the Knesset, must act in addition to the executive, since it alone is authorized to promulgate the laws of the land.

MK Riftin proposes that we change that arrangement, and that the Knesset become a partner, whether through the plenum or a committee, in the process of signing conventions. In other words, he seeks to obscure the dividing line between executive and legislative activities. Instead of leaving the full parliamentary responsibility for signing conventions with the Government, he wants the Knesset committees, or the entire Knesset, to take the decisions and accept the responsibility for signing contracts, agreements or conventions with foreign countries.

This confusion of spheres and transfer of responsibility from one authority to another does not appeal to me. In my view, the existing situation is preferable to the arrangement MK Riftin proposes. Clear parliamentary responsibility by the Government is necessary and desirable in this area of government, as it is in others. The concentration of authority in the Government's hands assures quick and efficient treatment which cannot be obtained within the framework of the proposed arrangement, especially in matters of urgency, such as when the President or Minister of a foreign country is visiting Israel for a few

days and it is desirable and useful to sign international agreements with them immediately and on the spot, as has often happened recently.

It is true that there are countries where an arrangement similar to the one proposed by MK Riftin obtains. But I have two answers to that. First of all, one must examine whether the overall structure of the central powers in those countries is similar to ours....Secondly, our system is the same as that of many other countries which we regard as an example of good government...such as England and the British Commonwealth countries....Thus, our conclusion is that there is no need to introduce the basic changes proposed by MK Riftin, and I therefore suggest that his proposal be removed from the agenda, and I see that I have surprised you.

Nevertheless, the Government thinks that there is a possibility of apprising the Knesset Members of international conventions at earlier stages than is currently the case. I would like to stress that I am referring to the dissemination of information and giving Knesset Members the chance to study the agreement. Even in accordance with what I am about to say the authority and responsibility for signing conventions will be in the Government's hands in future too. But the Government agrees to bring the texts of conventions signed on behalf of the state before the Knesset—in addition to the conventions which are brought before the Knesset in any case because of the need to discuss the laws required for their implementation—if they deviate from routine agreements which have no special or little significance. The Government will usually do this before the formal ratification of those conventions.

This procedure...will apprise the Knesset Members of the conventions soon after they are signed, and generally before they are made binding by being ratified. In cases of agreements which do not require ratification but become binding upon being signed, the information will be given soon after the convention has been signed. A similar procedure will be instituted as regards international conventions involving several countries which Israel has joined or is about to join. I think that this plan will contribute to strengthening the Knesset's position in the sphere of international relations without disturbing the Government's work or obscuring its responsibility.

...I disagree with MK Riftin's claim that his proposal would reinforce the moral validity of conventions....I do not think that it can be said that a convention has no moral validity after the Government of Israel has agreed upon it. He can say that it is desirable that it should be discussed in a wider forum, but there is no need to say that it will grant moral validity which supposedly does not exist, or not to a sufficient extent, when the Government of Israel decides to sign an agreement or convention with another Government.

Nor do I think that there is any justification for saying that "the honor of international agreements requires an arrangement." Inter-

national agreements are accorded every honor by the existing system which, as I said, exists in many enlightened countries, and we have never heard complaints or accusations to the effect that this system, either here or elsewhere, does not accord sufficient honor to international agreements.

Formality is all well and good, but efficiency is more important. In my view, efficiency will be achieved if we continue with the current system....I therefore repeat my suggestion that we reject MK Riftin's proposal....

J. Riftin (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I really must praise the Minister of Justice. He can surprise us. I never imagined that the inertia of removing something from the agenda would be so powerful with regard to a proposal which is undoubtedly modest. It gives extensive powers to the Government or the Coalitionary majority within it; it empowers the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee primarily; it does not automatically transfer everything to the Knesset plenum. And I permit myself to say...that I think that when a proposal of this kind is brought before Israel's parliament...this may be of interest to both local and foreign elements, because this is customary in most countries.

...I would like to read out the concluding sentence of a study on this subject published by a Jerusalem university publishing house and based on an analysis of the situation in dozens of countries by Ms. Lapidot. It reads: "Our conclusion is that while the practice in Israel regarding international conventions does not negate international public law, it contains some deviation from the course accepted today in most countries, as well as contradicting Israel's Transition Law. The Knesset should be on its guard lest it lose its authority in the sphere of making agreements; it must demand that Clause 6 of the Transition Law be implemented so that it does not become a dead letter, as is the case in most countries."

I would like to ask the Minister of Justice whether...he does not think the subject at least worthy of study? Perhaps the information you have been given is wrong. Other experts on international law should be consulted....

M. Begin (Herut): Did you mention what is contained in the Transition Law and was ratified by the Knesset?

J. Riftin (Mapam): I did, MK Begin, at the beginning of my speech. When he mentioned separation here, the Minister of Justice thought that he was fighting for separation between the Legislature and the Executive. Sir, if everyone were to follow your example, the Minister of Finance might well claim that the Knesset should not be burdened with approving taxes and customs impositions, and that we should trust the Treasury....The Transition Law specifically mentions "Conventions

with other countries which have been ratified by the Knesset." What conventions have you brought before the Knesset for ratification? It does no honor to either the Transition Law or the international practice of most countries.

Forgive me, but it is funny to say that only matters which directly concern Israel's internal affairs should be brought before the Knesset. I told the Knesset about an agreement regarding entry permits. If someone should be allowed to enter Israel, that has to be approved in Israel. But if there is a military agreement which at a given moment can oblige the citizens of Israel to join some military escapade or war, doesn't that directly concern Israel's internal affairs? Don't international labor contracts directly affect Israel's labor laws?

M. Begin (Herut): Or extradition agreements.

J. Riftin (Mapam): We have experts on extradition even when there is no extradition agreement. That may not directly affect Israel's internal affairs. That is an exception, and that is why I refrained from mentioning it.

Be that as it may, to say that a subject which has been raised by members of all the party groups over the years should be removed from the agenda...exceeds all bounds, with all due respect for the present Government's democratic tendencies. The proposal to prevent its being reviewed by any of the Knesset's committees...does not bring honor to the State of Israel, the Knesset or Israel's relations with other countries. I suggest that the Minister of Justice refrain from hastening along the path which is that of a light-headed administration which dismisses the supreme authority of the nation—the Knesset....

The Speaker, I. Yeshayahu-Sharabi: We will now vote.

The Vote

Those in favor of MK Riftin's proposal 26

Those against 42

(The proposal is not adopted.)

Activities of German Scientists in Egypt

Introduction

Information received from various sources in the course of 1962 pointed to the presence in Egypt of a considerable number of German scientists and technicians, who were cooperating with Egypt in the development of medium-range rockets. It was rumored that their program also encompassed other types of warfare—bacteriological, chemical and possibly also nuclear. Isser Harel, Chief of the Mossad, Israel's intelligence agency, was convinced that the combination of Egypt seeking revenge for its defeat of 1956 with German scientific and technological skills constituted a mortal danger for Israel. He was able to convince the Foreign Minister, Golda Meir, who—without consulting the Prime Minister who was convalescing in Tiberias—made a statement to the Knesset with a strong anti-German tilt. The debate which followed resulted in a unanimous resolution by the Knesset.

Sitting 234 of the Fifth Knesset

20 March 1963 (24 Adar 5723)

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Distinguished Knesset, as you know, I summoned a meeting of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and informed it of the activities of German scientists and technicians in Egypt, as well as of the circumstances in which an Israeli national was arrested in Switzerland. A great deal of information was given to the Committee about the activities of those scientists and about the Israel Government's appeals to various parties on this subject. The Knesset undoubtedly does not expect me to give it this information here. The Israeli national was arrested under circumstances which, with all our respect and friendship for the Swiss nation and its Government, are incomprehensible to us.

For a long time the Egyptian ruler has sought to acquire sufficient power to enable him to achieve his declared aim of destroying the State of Israel, and for many years arms have streamed into Egypt. Of late a new factor has been involved—a group of German scientists and hundreds of technicians are helping to develop Egyptian rockets as well as weapons which are forbidden under international law, whose sole purpose is to destroy life. Egypt is attempting to attain these weapons, which other Powers are not prepared to supply, through a group of immoral scientists who are not only prepared to do Egypt's bidding but have even volunteered their services.

There is no doubt that the motives of this depraved group are money and a Nazi-inspired hatred of Jews and Israel. The close connection between Cairo and Nazism existed already in Hitler's time, and it is no secret that today Cairo is a haven for the principal Nazis.

We do not believe that this situation is approved by the Government of the German Federal Republic, but those scientists and technicians are its nationals and citizens. The German Government cannot remain indifferent to the fact that eighteen years after the fall of Hitler's regime, which caused the deaths of millions of Jews, the sons of that nation are working to destroy Israel, where the remnant of the Holocaust has found shelter.

Several Germans whose record is unblemished and who have expressed their rejection of the actions of the scientists and technicians in Egypt have told us of the legal difficulty of preventing German citizens from going to Egypt and doing this despicable work there. We say to the German Government and the German people, which recoils from Germany's Nazi past and seeks a new Germany, that we cannot accept that explanation. We are convinced that enlightened world public opinion is with us. We demand that the German Government stop the activities of those scientists, and if legislative or other measures are needed to achieve this, we demand that they be taken forthwith....

M. Begin (Herut): Mr. Speaker, on Sunday morning we demanded that a very urgent debate be held on this extremely grave subject....For six years Germany killed six million Jews, men women and children, a third of our nation. Had other nations suffered equivalent losses it would have been as if the Germans had killed 70 million Russians, 60 million Americans, 18 million Englishmen or 15 million Frenchmen. What would the attitude of those countries be to Germany if they had incurred such losses at its hands in this generation?...

Only a few years have passed since the smoke ceased to ascend from the German-manufactured furnaces...and the German factories ceased supplying the Zyklon-B gas with which Jewish children were murdered, yet members of that nation are again on a course bound for the destruction of the remaining handful of our people which escaped its bloodstained hands....

...There is no need to raise panic or alarm, as has been done by those self-same circles which chose to keep quiet about this grave affair for a long time even though the entire nation demanded...that it be brought into the open....The days have not yet passed when Jews had to fight for their lives, their honor and their freedom; but the days have passed forever when Jews could be destroyed wholesale. Anyone who attempts to do so will be destroyed themselves.

In the right proportion, what is the danger? Any weapons given to our enemies—who say quite openly that their aim is to annihilate us—endanger our future. But this danger cannot be compared with the spe-

cial danger of weapons which can be operated from afar and are intended to kill large numbers of people. It is a fact that the U.S.S.R. sinned against us in supplying our enemies with aggressive weapons. America sinned against us by supplying arms to our enemies in the east. But no country or nation has yet given our enemies rockets, gas or bacteria which can be operated from afar and are intended to inflict mass destruction.

Who is responsible for creating this danger? The Bonn Government claims with despicable hypocrisy that it can do nothing against its citizens who go to and from Egypt, bringing our enemies knowhow, equipment and training. If anyone in Israel joins in this claim, there is nothing more base. Germany is responsible for this terrible act of aggression against the surviving remnant of orphans and bereaved persons. We accuse Germany of playing a double game. It has given the Jewish state a fraction of a percentage, in money, of what it stole from the homes, businesses and bodies of our murdered brethren. In return for that money it obtained moral rehabilitation...from the benighted representatives of Israel.

On the other hand, because of its own selfish, impure motives, it is playing that game with our enemies, telling them: we gave the Jews money; we will give you other things. And it gives those things which most endanger our security and our existence. Some people think that that double game embodies an additional objective, namely, to build weapons abroad which Germany may not build on its own soil under the armistice agreements which followed the Second World War. No one can know if that theory is true, but it has a basis....

...On 12 November 1962 we initiated the debate on the subject in the Knesset. We did that as soon as we became aware of that terrible affair and its attendant dangers....Man's memory is short. I have no intention of repeating now what I said then...but will confine myself to one sentence: "We must remove those experts. We must demand their removal from the Government which is responsible for their being there as well as from the Powers, who also paid a heavy price in blood to stamp out the Nazi beast which continues to live in modern Germany."

We tried to prove to you, our distinguished opponents, that the German authorities could not be unaware of the activities of those criminal experts in Egypt. We proposed...acting to bring before the public what happened to Germany and to us in the generation of destruction. You rejected our analysis. You even scoffed at it. You did not accept our proposal. You even removed it from the agenda. We ask: why were you so quiet for so long? Our Government knew about the movements of those German experts. Why did you hush up their despicable activity in Egypt?

Today it is evident that not only did you keep quiet and silence others, the truth is, and it is my duty to my people to bring it into the open,

that you thoughtlessly and irresponsibly supplied the Germans with an alibi. Three weeks after the Knesset debate the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense accused a journalist...who asked him about this subject of having racist tendencies....He also said that the entire German nation and its Government could not be held responsible for the fact that there were Nazis in Egypt....

Today, Madam Foreign Minister, you appealed to the German Government, demanding that those experts be returned. You even appealed to the German masses who, you claim, recoil from their past—we have yet to see those masses. But only five months ago your leader said that the entire German people could not be held responsible for the activities of those experts. You gave Germany an alibi. Can there be a more serious offense against Israel's security?...We demand that you give us an account of this today. We also demand that you settle your own spiritual accounts. Members of the Knesset, members of the Government, our distinguished opponents, what have we come to and where are we going?

For ten years, since Germany began to pay the fraction of a percentage of what it stole, you have endeavored to endear yourselves to it and abase yourself before it. It is a paradox. You invite German experts on education, and Germany sends Nasser experts on death. You sew uniforms for the German army, and Germany sends knowhow about gases to be used against the Jewish people. You send our "Uzis" to Germany, and the Germans give our enemies bacteria. Please, at least now, weigh matters up. How long will you continue to grovel, abase yourself and seek their friendship—

(MK M. Argov interjects from the floor.)

—simply because the Germans gave us some money? You did not do those things beforehand. Beforehand you forbade citizens of Israel to go to Germany....There are things we can no longer do against those who murdered our people, but there are things we do not have to do....

Five months ago we proposed that we embark on a world-wide political campaign against that terrible phenomenon. You did not. We hoped that the whole Knesset would unite on our proposal. You rejected it. We will not do as you did. We will still support a proposal which is shared by almost the entire Knesset. For despite all the sins of the past, and beyond all differences of opinion, and regardless of the stance you have adopted during the last ten years and which led to the demoralization of the nation...our nation must be able to close ranks when confronting danger from outside. I hope that this night this House will issue a pronouncement to that effect....

E. Rimalt (Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, it is more than ten years since the reparations agreement was signed, and more than twenty since the great destruction of the Jewish people by the German Nazis and their henchmen began. For that campaign of destruction, which is unique in human history, the best German scientific

minds were recruited, extremely unconventional methods and equipment were mobilized in the sphere of mass-murder. Meanwhile the war has ended. Germany is divided. The Government of West Germany is headed by people who recoil from the dreadful nightmare of the past and what their people did. Germany has become a respectable Power in the European family of nations. The German leadership decided, reflecting the sense of guilt felt by many for the robbery and pillage of Jewish property, to give money to rehabilitate those who survived the Holocaust and help the State of Israel.

And now, twenty years later, German scientists—not emissaries or representatives of the Government, but German scientists and citizens—are working in laboratories to build weapons of mass destruction which are banned by international law. Once again they are manufacturing gases, bacteria and radioactive material intended to be used against Israel, against the population of the Jewish state. The association horrifies not only us. It should horrify the German public...it should horrify the world.

...There is a debate in Israel not as to whether...we can forget the Holocaust but...as to the lesson we should learn from it...We in the Liberal Party know that our generation established Israel's independence, but it is not inviolable to the constant dangers which threaten us....Our party has never advocated a policy of forgive and forget.... We did not acquit or absolve the German people, but nor can we ignore the fact that there is a new generation which is not guilty of the sins of the fathers....We cannot ignore the fact that the German public includes men of religion, intellectuals, political leaders whose past is clean, who were themselves victims of the Nazis, and who evince friendship and understanding...for the State of Israel. We did not think it right to avoid relations of any kind with the German people...and approved relations with the political leadership of modern Germany, to the extent that this would add a necessary layer to our security and existence.

Nazism still lives in Germany and Austria, as well as in other countries. But the most dangerous focal point of the spirit of Nazism, whose objective is to destroy us, is in Cairo. We do not wish to accuse the entire Egyptian nation, which wants and needs to improve its standard of living, its health, its economic and its cultural life. The leaders of that country are the heirs of the spirit of Nazism, of the desire to destroy the Jewish people. Like their predecessors, they do not conceal their intentions or their preparations...and rely on the indifference and uncomprehendingness of the world....

When it was discovered not long ago...that German scientists were building rockets in Egypt...the German Government claimed that there was no law in Germany which could prevent this situation....We were not pleased by this answer, though in parliamentary terms it was correct....But we were dissatisfied...because Israel is involved. If an en-

counter between Germans whose past is blameless and us is possible... we will have to make a supreme effort to overcome our emotions....And that reply did not take our emotions into consideration....

There is no room for any formalist contentions in connection with the arrest of the Israeli national. What is involved is the development of weapons which are forbidden under international law. Federal Germany is sensitive in its legislation to international agreements and treaties. There is no possibility of hiding behind a legalistic argument....We have not heard that the German public and authorities... have roused themselves and protested against the activities of their compatriots in Egypt.

Must we assume...that one can make a deal with one's conscience in Germany, on the one hand helping...the State of Israel, while on the other ignoring the preparation of means of destruction by members of the German nation?...It was in sixteenth century Germany that a Catholic priest rebelled against his superiors, claiming that it was impossible to purchase absolutions and pardons which would purify a person for past and future sins....

The Government did well by virtually at the last minute making its statement to the Knesset and not missing the opportunity. We do have various traditional points of disagreement with the Government regarding its stance on certain facts and incidents. The Members of the House read about them in the press before they are brought before the appropriate committee....Once the fact that German scientists were building those dreadful, forbidden weapons was known, was every political effort made? We have accepted channels for negotiating with the West German Government at the highest level....Was an efficient and energetic effort made to bring the gravity of the subject to the attention of heads of state there? I am not convinced that it was....

...In the past we of the Liberal Party...gave our casting vote in favor of establishing relations with the Germany of today...in the knowledge that those relations would benefit Israel in political and defense terms. We must add, however, that if those relations do not withstand tomorrow's test, if the West German authorities do not take effective and immediate steps to stop the aid given by its citizens in preparing the means to destroy the Jewish state, we will have to reassess our attitude to those relations.

Together with the entire House, the Liberal Party...appeals to all the international bodies as well as to those sections of the German public who desire a different Germany...to put an immediate end to all the channels of direct and indirect aid...to the criminal campaign whose center is in Egypt!

I. Barzilai (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the subject of this debate is extremely serious and, to our regret, not very new. For the last two months there have been reports in the Israeli and interna-

tional press of the involvement of German scientists in the development of rockets and weapons which are forbidden under international agreements....The Egyptian rulers were at a loss as to what kind of explosive matter to use in the rocket warheads, until the disciples of the Nazis offered their services and experience as well as the choice of gases, bacteriological, radiological and biological weapons. Let us Germans prepare the material, they said. We have all the knowledge of biological warfare at our fingertips....We even have practical research experience of its use during the Second World War....That weapon is relatively cheap and effective, and has the advantage of being difficult to trace to a human or natural source....

Swiss sources...report that German scientists and experts in Egypt are working on manufacturing one of the most terrible weapons ever devised by mankind—the famous “death rays.” Dozens of German scientists worked on this during Hitler's time, attaining only partial success, and are now trying to finish the job....There will be those in the world who will try to calm us by assuring us that the Germans are dealing solely with “pure” science, and that there is still a long way between research and practical implementation. But we must decline any such soothing advice. The Jewish people is tired of soothing advice. It has paid too high a price for listening to misleading counsel....The Jewish people must be...on its guard and even exaggerate the dangers it perceives, and also, in view of its tragic experience, dissuade others from accepting things calmly....

The German scientists in Egypt may be working for Germany as well as for Egypt....Does not the liberalism of the German authorities towards these activities of their citizens cast a shadow of grave suspicions over its intentions? Does not its excuse that the principles of democracy and freedom prevent it from restricting the activities of its citizens...smack of evasiveness and hypocrisy? The principles of democracy and freedom are being used to prepare the destruction of a nation...continuing the German nation's crime against the Jews....

I assume that the Government of Israel demanded that the German Government put a stop to the activity of the German scientists. But Germany did not do so. Even if we accept the German Government's feeble excuse that the principles of democracy and freedom prevent it from restricting the base activities of its citizens, it could at least have condemned them....Why does it not do that? If it does not do that, why do we not conclude that it is not totally against them? Why is there no public uproar in the “new and different” Germany...? Why are new laws not passed there or administrative action taken...?

The responsibility for the despicable activities of the German scientists in Egypt rests with the German Government, which neither prevents nor condemns them, as well as with the general public, which does not protest against them. It would be extremely shortsighted on the part

of the freedom- and peace-loving nations of the world to dismiss the danger inherent in this German activity to all mankind as well as the Jews. Thirty years ago, too, everything began with a threat to the Jews and ended with a general cataclysm....

The character of modern Germany must be exposed first and foremost by the entire Jewish nation, which was the first and most oppressed victim of Nazism, and by the State of Israel, which is destined to be the prime target against which the “achievements” of neo-Nazi science will be directed. We do not seek to press the differences of opinion between us and the Government...in our assessment of Germany. I hope that if the Prime Minister were with us today he would not oppose placing the responsibility for the fact that there are Nazis in Egypt on modern Germany...and would not consign what has passed to the past with his customary brusqueness....

In a few days we will commemorate the Holocaust and the ghetto revolts, in which we all have a share....We are not prepared to consign what has passed to the past. To our regret, the past has not passed, it still hovers above us. We must learn the lessons of the past, and not merely regard the Holocaust as a tragic station in the life of the nation....

If we regard modern Germany as a nation like all others, as “new and different,” without having any responsibility for its past of twenty years ago, will we have the strength to alert the world to the danger emanating from it? Only by making our moral and political stand against Germany, which was once and continues to be a focus of danger to world peace, which aids and abets the criminal activities of its citizens against us and against mankind, can we arouse the great forces which are capable of helping us in our efforts to end the...development of weapons of destruction.

A call must go forth from Israel's legislature to the nations of the world, alerting them and demanding that the German nation and its Government put an immediate stop to the work of its scientists...which was begun in the days of Auschwitz and Treblinka.

S. Mikunis (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...the Foreign Minister's statement about the activities of the West German scientists and technicians in Egypt gives rise to grave concern. The production of rockets, the development of chemical and bacteriological warheads and the experimentation with poisonous gases in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries, with the aid of thousands of West German scientists and with American funding, constitute a serious threat to peace in general and Israel's security in particular.

In its issue of March 19, the *Daily Telegraph* noted that for eight years Nazi immigrants have been building rockets in our region. The Government had remained silent till now, and may well have continued to do so had it not been for the incident of the Israeli national in Switzerland. The reason for this is, as is known, its fatuous cooperation

with the neo-Nazi leaders in Bonn. The fact that the Swiss police acted at the request of the West German authorities prevented the Government and the West German leaders from describing as "private" the activities of the German scientists. There is no doubt now as to the responsibility of the Adenauer-Gluebke Government for this base deed.

The Foreign Minister's statement comes as no surprise to those...who spoke out against the resurgence of German militarism and fascism, encouraged primarily by the U.S....That process has been accompanied by U.S. penetration of the countries of the Middle East, with the clear object of establishing bases in preparation for igniting a Third World War. Its aspiration to control nuclear weapons and its activities in encouraging the arms race in our region are an integral part of its preparation for a war of revenge and a nuclear Holocaust.

The Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister have declared time and again that "Germany of today is not the Germany of yesterday," in blatant contradiction to thousands of decisive facts, some of which were presented at the Eichmann trial. They declared that there were "relations of friendship and trust" between them and the Bonn Government....The sales of Israeli arms to the Bonn army, the sewing of uniforms and the provision of supplies to that army whose soldiers' hands are stained with the blood of millions of our people, "enhanced" the friendship between Ben-Gurion and Adenauer. Things reached such a pass that from this podium the Deputy Minister of Defense, S. Peres, declared that Germany will be a "haven on a rainy day" for Israel.

For years the Government has tried to convince the Israeli nation, which was shocked by your association with the rulers of West Germany, that that country was necessary for Israel's security. For years you have misled the people, claiming that in return for services to the Bonn rulers Israel would receive "something" very important for our defense which no other country would give us. And now the Foreign Minister...has discovered that the so-called friendship with Bonn is no friendship at all, that the argument concerning defense was merely a cover for the Government's association with West Germany, and that our security is no better now than it was. In addition, the vile actions of the West German scientists and military technicians endangers peace in general and Israel's security in particular.

On many occasions my party group has warned of the illusions the Government has cultivated about "help" from the Germany of Adenauer and Gluebke. We pointed to the dangers of West Germany's economic, political and military expansion into the Middle East, including Israel and the Arab countries....The Foreign Minister's statement and the reports in the world press accentuate the bankruptcy of the orientation towards militarist and neo-Nazi West Germany.

The attitude of the Prime Minister and his aides to the development and preparation of the conditions for obtaining "non-conventional"

weapons was presented to the nation as a way of attaining superiority over the Arabs, and the Egyptians in particular....We defined that attitude as an illusion and warned of the grave dangers this defense concept involved for our country. We warned of a non-conventional arms race, however great our superiority. We warned of disregarding the objective conditions which could not be in our favor in a race of this kind. All this has been borne out by the information on the activities in Egypt in this sphere....

The situation...requires us to review our actions carefully. Israel's national interest requires the Government to take the initiative to prevent any devastating non-conventional arms race between Israel and Egypt. The Government must take energetic political action in the international sphere to have our region declared a nuclear-free zone and to obtain international guarantees for this. We are sure that an initiative of this kind would gain widespread support everywhere....We have no doubt that our country would benefit from that, that its international standing would improve and that the chances of peace and security would increase....

The bitter and shameful experience of the cooperation between the Ben-Gurion and Adenauer Governments on the political, economic and military spheres, and the recent revelations under discussion here today, require us to draw one conclusion: we must sever our connection with the neo-Nazi rulers of West Germany. It is evident that...the problem of the West German scientists' vile deeds can be solved only by a vigorous struggle against German militarism and neo-Nazism, not by "individual treatment." It is in the interests of world peace and friendship, as well as of Israel's security.

...There is a greater need than ever today for a fundamental shift in Israel's policy towards peace, independence and neutrality; for an improvement in relations with the U.S.S.R.; for extricating our country from its deadlock and setting it on a new course leading to security and prosperity, freedom and a happy future....If the debate's concluding resolution included a condemnation of German militarism and a call to abandon "relations of trust and friendship" between the Governments of Israel and neo-Nazi Germany, as well as to rid the region of destructive weapons, we would have voted for it. Out of a sense of national responsibility and concern for our common national goal, however, we will not submit a separate proposal of our own....

S. Lorincz (Aguda): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, my party group is deeply shocked by the involvement of German scientists in the development of various kinds of destructive weapons in Egypt, their sole objective being to complete what the Fuhrer left unfinished—the destruction of the remnant of the Jewish people living in Zion. It does not surprise us that Hitler's pupils, the devil's disciples in the guise of men of science...are prepared to hire themselves and their knowledge out to the

Egyptian tyrant. We knew that many of the Nazi murderers still lived on, whether in Germany or elsewhere, but we believed, or perhaps we wanted to delude ourselves, that the German Government of today and the official leaders who condemn the crimes of the Nazis and seek ways of making reparations...would be more cognizant of the situation and would take greater care to avoid the possibility of another Jewish Holocaust being caused by Germans....

We seem to have made a very grave mistake. We erred when some of us thought that the reparations paid by the Germans were not a way of covering up for their past crimes. At the time Adenauer and other leaders were cited as saying that it was not their intention by paying reparations to cause what the German people had done to our people to be forgotten. The facts indicate quite the opposite. We have erred and been misled. The German Government...on the one hand offers reparations to Israel, while on the other provides German scientists who are preparing the Egyptian tyrant's final solution—the destruction of the nation in Israel, God forbid....

We must make it absolutely clear that all the reparations and compensation; all the statements of regret and condemnation by the German Government, do not atone for the death of a single Jewish child, and certainly not of a single Jew who is killed as a result of the actions of the German scientists in Egypt. And if the German Government thinks otherwise, if it thinks that it can balance blood with money, reparations to Israel with rockets, bacteria and gases to Egypt in order to destroy Israel, we must instantly cease accepting reparations, as a first step in the struggle against Germany. We do not accept the German Government's futile explanation about being unable to restrict its citizens' actions outside Germany. The German Government knows how to prevent scientists from working for communist countries, and if it wanted to stop the work of several hundred of its citizens in Egypt it could certainly find a way....How strange it is to hear the argument based on the freedom of the individual...does this also apply to depriving an entire nation of existence? Like all enlightened nations, the German Government of today rejects the defense plea of Nazi war criminals that they were merely acting on orders from their superiors. If that cannot apply to murders committed by the Nazis, how can the concept of the freedom of the individual apply to the murder planned by German scientists in Germany?

We must uphold the biblical precept of remembering what Amalek did to us....We must remember the cruelty of the Nazi Amalek....We must remind the German nation...not in order to seek revenge, but in order to stay alive and save our children and the entire world from a new Holocaust...since there are those who are already making plans and preparing the weapons for it....

Although there has never been a dearth of those who hated us and sought to destroy us, in recent years there have been only two people who have not concealed their wicked intentions of annihilating our people completely. The first was Hitler, the second is Nasser....When we see the diabolical combination of those two nations...we cannot remain silent and must do our utmost to break it. To the German people I say, you who have sinned so grievously in the murder of nations, in slaughtering six million of the Jewish people, should do everything in your power to prevent Germans from having anything whatsoever to do with a country which openly declares its intention of destroying the State of Israel.

To the Government of Switzerland we say, with all due respect for the laws and formal statutes of your model country, our traditional Jewish view teaches us that laws and statutes were not designed to protect those who would kill and destroy an entire nation....There is such a thing as the spirit, as well as the letter, of the law....Let us not forget that order, precision, discipline and other fine qualities played a considerable part in the destruction of six million of our people. The Swiss nation and Government did not do what it should have done to save Jews who knocked on your gates, begging for refuge from the Nazi satan. Then, too, you adhered rigidly to your formal Swiss laws, and the outcome was not to your credit, leading to the deaths of a great many men, women and children....I would like to believe that the Swiss people regrets the past. Beware of once again causing the deaths of those few who survived the Holocaust by your rigid adherence to formal statutes.

To the friendly nation of the U.S. we say, look at how Egypt spends the thousands of millions of dollars you allocate the Egyptian tyrant. Think about it, and perhaps you will come to the conclusion that funding the activities of German scientists and preparing non-conventional means of destruction is not exactly what the American taxpayer wants. We appeal to men of religion who have God in their hearts to be on their guard lest the terrible Holocaust of yesterday recur once again in our day. We call on scientists everywhere to act so that the reputation of their profession is not sullied....How can you remain silent when "scientist" becomes a synonym for satan, for angels of destruction, and when colleagues sell their knowledge to a tyrant who does not conceal his intention of destroying us utterly...?

We are glad that on this grave matter the entire Knesset is united, and that the resolution will be passed unanimously. Despite the gravity of the situation, we are far from being in despair. We trust in the Lord of Hosts, for the guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...it is no secret that there is an Opposition in this House...or that it utilizes the many opportunities it has to express its opposition to what the Government does....But I think that not only the members of the Coali-

tion were shocked to find that even in a debate of this kind MK Begin saw fit to speak as he did. I think that he himself will be shocked if he examines his speech and notes the disproportion and lack of good taste in it....I will not answer him because I have too much respect for the House when it is discussing something concerning the life of the nation and the state. No speeches can remove from my heart the feeling that almost the entire House is united when it comes to the security of our people and our state. I very much regret the fact that this was not observed at the beginning of the debate.

M. Argov (Mapai): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, on behalf of the party groups of Mapai, Herut, the Liberals, the National Religious Party, Mapam, Ahdut Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion, Aguda, Po'alei Aguda, Progress and Development and Cooperation and Amity, I submit the following proposal:

A. The Knesset resolves that the involvement of German scientists and experts in Egypt in the production of weapons of destruction to be used against Israel constitutes a grave threat to the security of Israel and its population.

B. The German people cannot absolve itself of responsibility for the continuation of this base deed. It is incumbent upon the German Government to stop this dangerous activity by its citizens forthwith, and to take all the necessary steps to prevent this cooperation with the Egyptian Government.

C. The Knesset appeals to enlightened world public opinion to exert its influence immediately to put a stop to this activity by German experts whose object is to threaten the existence of Israel, where the handful of our nation which survived the Nazi Holocaust has gathered.

The Speaker, K. Luz: We will now vote on the proposal submitted by MK Argov.

(The proposal is adopted.)

Prime Minister's Position and Resignation of Head of Security Services

Introduction

Shortly after the preceding debate took place, Isser Harel resigned from his post as Head of the Mossad. Although no official reason was given, it was generally assumed that differences of opinion with Ben-Gurion over the importance to be attached to the German scientists and the methods to be adopted in countering the threat were the root cause of his resignation. Ben-Gurion himself resigned as Prime Minister a few weeks later due to the serious clash of opinion with the Foreign Minister on this issue as well as the Lavon Affair, in both of which Ben-Gurion found himself in a minority vis-à-vis the stalwarts of his party. The subject continued to occupy public opinion and government, in both Israel and Germany. German leaders were practically unanimous in condemning the activities of their compatriots in Egypt, but differed as to whether legislative or administrative remedies could be applied. This led to a lack of action, which in turn gave rise to accusations of hypocrisy, both in Israel and elsewhere.

Special Sitting of the Fifth Knesset

7 April 1963 (13 Nissan 5723)

...

M. Begin (Herut): ...Mr. Speaker, in order to clarify the issues for which we have requested this special sitting it is necessary to submit documents, note facts and also pose questions.

The Prime Minister's Office has announced that he has read and approved the Foreign Minister's statement regarding the German scientists in Egypt. On March 30 the Foreign Minister said the following, among other things: "Recently another element has been added—a group of scientists and hundreds of German technicians are helping to develop offensive rockets in Egypt as well as weapons which are forbidden under international law and whose sole objective is to destroy living things." The Prime Minister approved that statement, according to the statement issued by his office.

Which weapons are forbidden under international law? There are two conventions on this subject: one signed at the Hague in 1899 and one signed at Geneva in 1925. Both of them primarily forbid the use of chemical weapons in times of war.

In parentheses, I should say that the Germans were the first to violate the Hague Convention, as they were the first to undertake research

with the object of manufacturing rockets for destructive purposes, as has been revealed in his book *Facing the Dictators* by Anthony Eden, the former Prime Minister of Britain....

But if the Foreign Minister announced, on behalf of the Government and with the knowledge of its Head, that the German experts in Egypt were also developing weapons which are forbidden under international law, why did his office state that the Government had no intention of issuing what is known as a White Paper? White Paper, Black Paper, Red Paper, the names and colors are immaterial. What we are talking about is documentation of a very serious accusation which has been made from this podium on behalf of the entire Government. If the Government does not have proof to support that accusation, it was frivolous to make it. If it does have proof, why does it not publish it? The failure to publish it is a grave offense. The entire world, to which we have appealed, has asked for proof of the accusations, has demanded a factual basis. Perhaps it is you, Mr. Ben-Gurion, who are responsible for this frivolity, or this grave offense, and not the head of the Security Services.

Another dilemma. On 30 November 1962 the Prime Minister told the newspaper editors: "Therefore I do not accept this anger at the fact that there are Nazis in Egypt, or that the German nation of today and the German state of today are responsible for this." Is that still your opinion today, Mr. Ben-Gurion?

On 20 March 1963 the Knesset resolved: "The German nation"—of today, according to you—"cannot absolve itself of responsibility for the continuation of that criminal activity, and it is incumbent upon the German Government"—of today, according to your definition—"to stop this dangerous activity immediately." Is that your opinion today? Or do you think that this resolution also involves half-truths or the distortion of justice, or even racism, God forbid? But those pronouncements of yours, Mr. Ben-Gurion, have been described as emanating from "recklessness, a very shallow sense of national responsibility, and a failure to consider national and international consequences, in the widest sense of the term." That definition of the Prime Minister of today was made by the former Prime Minister.

Are you prepared to abandon your opinion in view of the Knesset's resolution? Or are you prepared to break the Knesset's resolution in view of your opinion? Because meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, something has broken within Israel.

In her statement, the Foreign Minister said: we demand that the German Government put a stop to the activities of these scientists. The Knesset's decision read: we call on enlightened world public opinion to use the full weight of its influence to end this dangerous activity of the German experts. And meanwhile there has been news from Jerusalem. The *New York Times* reported: "After the Prime Minister returned to

Jerusalem the campaign (about the German scientists in Egypt) in the press and on the radio was immediately suppressed."

The *Times* of London wrote: "The pressure exerted by Israel on the Bonn Government through accusations that West German scientists are developing prohibited weapons for Egypt has been moderated since Mr. Ben-Gurion returned from his holiday. A reliable source reports that the Prime Minister has decided on dismissals. He was very dissatisfied with the way the matter was handled."

Le Monde wrote: "Mr. Ben-Gurion demanded that the press cease its campaign about the production of chemical and bacteriological weapons, which are forbidden by an international convention, by German experts in Egypt."

The *New Statesman* reported: "It is regrettable that Israel may have to redefine its position in order to make it clear that it does not consider Bonn responsible for the activity of the scientists, since it is feared that the impression might be gained in the world that this was 'an Israeli intrigue.'"

Knesset Members, it is my duty to ask: has the objective for which a worldwide information campaign was launched, in accordance with the views of the entire House, as well as those of the Government which you head and the party group you lead, already been attained? Has the German Government stopped the activity of its citizens in Egypt or is it seeking a loophole in the Federal Republic's constitution? The Bundestag appointed a committee to examine the possibility of applying German law to the scientists; a German diplomat has promised action, but has the order been issued, as the Knesset demanded, obliging those scientists to leave Egypt? Have they left? And if that objective has not been attained, where is the justification for the news we have heard from Jerusalem? Did it descend upon us from the skies? Has it been denied? Has it not been repeated?

Mr. Prime Minister, you have committed a grave offense against the security of the nation and the future of our children by the news which was disseminated throughout world public opinion, to which the Knesset had appealed to exert its influence immediately. That public opinion hears: perhaps the Bonn Government is not responsible; there is no proof of chemical and bacteriological weapons; we must relax the pressure; we must tone things down.

A third dilemma. The Head of the Security Services has been dismissed, excuse me, has resigned...has been made to resign—is Mr. Galili here? But his superior, the Prime Minister, said that he resigned because his political assessment was not accepted....I must say that I do not trust that declaration one little bit.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Do I need your trust?

M. Begin (Herut): I am convinced that not one word of it is true....The Head of the Security Services is no stranger to this House. I have also sat on the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and heard him speak; my colleagues have heard him...as have the members of other party groups. We are all, I am sure, prepared to attest that when he...is asked a question of a certain kind he invariably replies: that is a matter for political assessment, I do not deal with such things; my superior assesses the facts, I merely present them.

Suddenly we are told that the Head of the Security Services has his own political assessment. Why did this happen only at the height of the campaign against the German scientists in Egypt? There is no truth in this statement of yours, but there is danger. Naturally, if a senior civil servant has a political assessment which conflicts with that of the elected Government he should resign. But what is under discussion here is not resignation but the right to express a political assessment. You have struck a heavy blow to the basis of good government. No Head of the Security Services has any right to make political assessments, and you have created a precedent for those who will follow the person who has resigned.

The *Jewish Observer* reports that by having dismissed the Head of the Security Services, or having caused him to resign, Mr. Ben-Gurion has taken a step "to enhance democracy in Israel." Why? Because suddenly, Mr. Speaker, it transpires that the Security Services were not part of the state but above it somehow. The *Jewish Observer*—where is the Deputy Minister of Defense? Not here today—is a paper which is closely linked to what are known as the highest security echelons, some say the links are made of gold, and that paper contends now that the Security Services are above the state, are not part of it, and for ten or fourteen years we did not know that. Suddenly, the dismissal or resignation of the Head of the Security Services enhances democracy in Israel. Have the Security Services ever been libelled so terribly? And it came from your people. Why did the Head of the Security Services resign? If you approved of the campaign against the German scientists, the experts in mass destruction, residing in Egypt, you should have commended him. If you commended him, why did he resign? If he resigned, that means that you condemned him. If you condemned him, that means that you disapproved of the campaign. If you disapproved of it, why did you allow it to begin? Why did you allow it to develop? Where were you all that time? Abroad? On another planet? You were in Tiberias, a few hours' drive away from Jerusalem. You read newspapers, you could have used the phone. Why did you remain silent? Why did you not give an order to stop what you disapproved of immediately? Why do you place the responsibility on the Head of the Security Services?

Mr. Speaker, this is what is known as passing the buck, in this case from the political to the administrative echelon. This also involves

moral corruption. You, the members of the Government, and you, Mr. Prime Minister, are responsible for what has happened in the last fifteen days, not a senior official who is the Head of the Security Services. There are those who say that we have not yet seen the ultimate outcome of this action, but it has nevertheless achieved important results. Public opinion has been aroused; Germany is sensitive; President Kennedy has spoken; the Socialist International has expressed its views; various Jewish bodies have protested; very nice. If this action has had such important results, why didn't you take it six months or a year ago? For months you have known about the activity of those criminal scientists in Egypt. Every day is serious for the security of the state where their activity is concerned. You remained silent; you absolved and cleansed people, and now you talk of important results.

You came to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee; you were asked to explain the differences between the political assessments. You refrained from doing so. At last week's Cabinet meeting you did not say anything about it. That is why we read complaints about this in *Lamerhav* and *Hatzofeh*, the newspapers of the Ministers of Labor and the Interior, saying: we did not know; we do not understand. And you always speak in such grand terms about the Government's collective responsibility. How can there be collective responsibility without collective knowledge?

It is not for us to interfere in the relations between you. If you wish to slight the members of your Government, and they accept this, that is their concern. There is a serious constitutional problem, however. Do we have a parliamentary regime, in which the Government is collectively responsible to the house of representatives, or are weighty and fateful matters decided by the caprices of an individual? That is the constitutional issue confronting us. Thank God, due to pressure from the Opposition, Mr. Allon and Mr. Shapira will hear something of the reasons for the resignation of the Head of the Security Services. But where is the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which is a miniature Knesset? Its meetings are secret; its members are in charge of the security of the state. How can you withhold information from them? How can you withhold an explanation from them?...Are they not entitled to be apprised of a matter as grave and fateful as the source of the disagreement, what caused the shift, what led to the dangerous interpretations given in certain parts of the world to the resignation of the Head of the Security Services?

These, Mr. Speaker, are the national, security and moral issues on the agenda today. If the Knesset remains silent and refrains from speaking out on them, I shall wonder why.

Y. Harari (Liberals): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...this special sitting was called not in order to debate the Government's policy but to discuss the nature of our parliamentarism and the character of our

democracy. The Head of the Security Services has resigned, something which could happen in any country. We all knew him. He has fulfilled important functions within the Security Services for fifteen years, ever since the establishment of the state. Some of us knew him even before the establishment of the state. He has appeared before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, on behalf of his superior, i.e., the Prime Minister, to whom he was connected, and we were asked to trust his explanations. We also learned to admire him and to base our considerations on his....After having been nourished on his assessments of such serious issues for such a long time...if he has resigned, and we have no doubt that when there are differences of opinion between him and the Prime Minister it is he who must resign, the least one could expect is an explanation.

We do not belittle the burden carried by the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense and anyone holding those positions in Israel. But since the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee has discussed the country's gravest problems—as is its role, its right and its duty—we find it surprising that the Prime Minister told the Committee that he does not know what it is all about; that he has no idea why three party groups summoned a meeting of the Committee; and that he has virtually nothing to tell the Committee, which has withstood many tests, whose members are well-known throughout Israel and have been since before the establishment of the state, and who are trusted and respected by both the Coalition and the Opposition. Thus, we cannot accept the Prime Minister's attitude to the Committee which implies that it does not deserve any explanation....

Obviously, there are issues which cannot be discussed in the Knesset, and this applies here, too. The body known as the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee was established, in accordance with our parliamentary regime, so that such matters could be discussed there, and that has been its task for fifteen years. And when the public is anxious but knows that not everything can be published, it is comforted by the fact...that at least that Committee discusses them and is concerned about them, regardless of political affiliations....

It is true that we have always been convinced that the Executive, namely, the Government, should have full authority to act, but it should also be possible to change the Executive. In a well-ordered parliamentary regime a government may be overthrown, no confidence may be expressed in it, when it does not have the approval of the public. But as long as it rules it must have the power to implement things. At the same time, however, the Opposition must be fully apprised of everything, so that it may express its opinion on each issue.

The Executive, the Government, need not act as the Opposition suggests. It may ignore it, but it cannot omit to inform it of the root of the

problems. It is the Opposition's right and duty to attempt to influence and convince....

There are differences of opinion within the country on many issues, but there are also issues which unite us all, being of fateful importance for the entire country. Despite the differences of opinion, we can rely on all the strata and groups within the populace to treat those issues seriously. Sometimes the Opposition is apprised of things, sometimes not, and sometimes it is given marks for patriotism or is accused of not being patriotic—as if it needs to be told whether it is patriotic or not.

I said that public opinion relies on the fact that there is a Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, and we are not prepared to permit the public to continue thinking that on a certain issue, the one which has occasioned this special sitting, the Committee knows what happened, has discussed it and reached a conclusion, whether by a majority or not. We are not prepared to support that. We realize that the majority decides. This is a democratic regime. We understand that there must be order in the country, but we will not allow the Opposition to be kept completely in the dark about what is happening while the impression is created that it does know and has discussed it....

I read in the papers that the Coalition party groups—the Prime Minister's party group can take care of itself—have apparently been satisfied with talks. But in a well-ordered democracy it is not talks which decide things, whether they are personal talks or talks with the heads of the Coalition party groups, because it is the right of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which has been chosen by the Knesset, to be in the know. I do not know on whom the Prime Minister relies in his German policy, whether it is Ahdut Ha'Avoda's freedom to vote—I think the National Religious Party was also free to vote as it wished on this subject. But as I have already said, we will not let the public be deluded into thinking that the Committee knew, discussed and dealt with the subject.

I am not sure that this Knesset sitting has strengthened the State of Israel. I am not sure that it was inevitable. I can say...that if acceptable explanations had been given at the last meeting of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, none of the Opposition party groups would have called this sitting. The only reason we have done so is because of that meeting, which can be termed unfortunate, of the Committee. In my view, full responsibility for the fact that this sitting has been called rests upon the person who has not discharged his parliamentary obligation.

J. Hazan (Mapam): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...we were among those who called this special sitting of the Knesset because we have once again been confronted with a dangerous and shocking situation, in both the internal and international security spheres.

The Knesset—the supreme sovereign institution in Israel, to which not only the Government but even the Prime Minister is subject—was united in its resolution to condemn the criminal activity of the German

scientists in Egypt. It did not merely reach a general conclusion stating that the Knesset noted the Foreign Minister's statement. It passed an explicit resolution placing full responsibility for the German scientists' activity on the German nation and Government and demanding that they put a stop to it. It instructed our Government to act in accordance with that resolution, while arousing and shocking public opinion in Germany and throughout the world, until the German scientists left Egypt.

The campaign was under way. No one doubted the reliability of the evidence in our hands. The world press was shocked. Public opinion in Germany was beginning to be aroused too. The first, evasive, statement by the Bonn Government's spokesmen was followed by others which admitted the German Government's obligation to do something to stop the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction in Egypt with the aid of German scientists.

Suddenly this vital activity was stopped. We were shown up in front of world public opinion and embarrassed before the German public. The Head of the Security Services in Israel, who had stood at the center of the measures to reveal and foil the deeds of the German scientists in Egypt, was deposed. We were expected to believe that he had resigned because he had not accepted the Prime Minister's political assessment.

But the truth was that the Head of the Security Services had acted in accordance with the Knesset's decisions, which guided the Government's actions. The truth is that to this day the Prime Minister, out of stubbornness, has made no mention of those decisions. He violates them deliberately. Isn't that the reason for the resignation-dismissal?

Had he been faithful to the basis of democratic parliamentary rule, the Prime Minister could have chosen one of three possibilities: a. To accept the authority of the Knesset, even though he did not agree with its decisions; b. To try and change its decision by imposing his authority on the members of the Coalition and obliging them to choose between accepting his views or causing a Government crisis; c. To resign, since he was not prepared to take the first course and was not able to impose the second. But the Prime Minister chose a fourth course: he did not resign, he dismissed the Knesset; he did not accept its views above his own, he insulted its honor, rights and authority. Thus, he once again inflicted grave damage on the elementary bases of Israeli democracy.

What is worst of all, however, is the damage to Israel's security network.

The Prime Minister adheres to the view that the Germany of today has nothing whatsoever to do with the Germany of yesterday. He claims that it is a new Germany which has completely shaken off the crimes of its inhuman past. He has stated repeatedly that that past belongs solely to the past and that our concern is with the future. And out of that concern for Israel's future and the assumption that it is from there of all places

that our help will come in our hour of need, he is prepared to forget that terrible past and cause it to be forgotten, focusing on the illusion that the past has gone, never to return.

He recoils from any form of racism and he regards as racist even a hint that that dreadful past may not really be past. I, too, recoil from any form of racism. I also recoil from it when it is directed against the German people, which in our time murdered a third of our nation. I remember the greatness of that nation in the past and I know that that greatness is assured it in the future too. But is it racism when I see that its hands are still stained with the blood of our people, because hundreds and thousands and millions of people who shed that blood are still alive? They are still living and I do not know how many of them continue to dream of the resurrection of their Fuhrer and the completion of the work of destroying our people and other "inferior" races. I am sure that many of them have repented and are bowed under their burden of shame. I do not wish to blame the sons for the sins of the fathers. But the fathers are still alive and some of the sons have been corrupted by those parents, who are the lowest of the low. I cannot forget that that Germany is still the focal point of the greatest dangers to world peace, since a nation can be corrupted within a few years. Six years—that was the period Hitler needed to complete his diabolical work—can turn one of Europe's most cultured peoples into a nation of base murderers. But many years, perhaps generations, are needed to correct a nation's soul, and that time has not passed yet.

We do not owe that Germany anything. It owes us everything. We can and must always be suspicious of that Germany, and it must repeatedly prove that there is no cause for our suspicions. The first indication of the fact that it has repented in earnest must be its humble acceptance of our suspiciousness. A Germany which is insulted by the fact that we Jews, the generation which was murdered by it, suspect its citizens, its scientists, of helping to prepare weapons of mass destruction to be used against the surviving remnant in Israel, proves that it is still trapped within its dreadful Nazi tradition. That Germany, which repaid us through reparations a mere fraction of what was stolen from the Jews, and which cannot restore a single drop of blood to the severed arteries of our nation or wipe a solitary tear from the eyes of our afflicted people, must remove itself in fear and trembling from any place whence issues forth a threat to destroy our nation and cause fresh bloodshed. If it does not do so, if it vindicates itself, claiming that its laws do not enable it to take steps against its scientists and oblige them to stop their criminal activity in Egypt, that indicates that it is still subject to the rule of its murderous Nazi past. The Prime Minister ignores this, despite the fact that the Knesset has decided that this danger should not be ignored. He does not want to understand that by this attitude he is helping the neo-Nazi forces in Germany to entrench themselves. Even if a Germany of

scientists in Egypt. It did not merely reach a general conclusion stating that the Knesset noted the Foreign Minister's statement. It passed an explicit resolution placing full responsibility for the German scientists' activity on the German nation and Government and demanding that they put a stop to it. It instructed our Government to act in accordance with that resolution, while arousing and shocking public opinion in Germany and throughout the world, until the German scientists left Egypt.

The campaign was under way. No one doubted the reliability of the evidence in our hands. The world press was shocked. Public opinion in Germany was beginning to be aroused too. The first, evasive, statement by the Bonn Government's spokesmen was followed by others which admitted the German Government's obligation to do something to stop the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction in Egypt with the aid of German scientists.

Suddenly this vital activity was stopped. We were shown up in front of world public opinion and embarrassed before the German public. The Head of the Security Services in Israel, who had stood at the center of the measures to reveal and foil the deeds of the German scientists in Egypt, was deposed. We were expected to believe that he had resigned because he had not accepted the Prime Minister's political assessment.

But the truth was that the Head of the Security Services had acted in accordance with the Knesset's decisions, which guided the Government's actions. The truth is that to this day the Prime Minister, out of stubbornness, has made no mention of those decisions. He violates them deliberately. Isn't that the reason for the resignation-dismissal?

Had he been faithful to the basis of democratic parliamentary rule, the Prime Minister could have chosen one of three possibilities: a. To accept the authority of the Knesset, even though he did not agree with its decisions; b. To try and change its decision by imposing his authority on the members of the Coalition and obliging them to choose between accepting his views or causing a Government crisis; c. To resign, since he was not prepared to take the first course and was not able to impose the second. But the Prime Minister chose a fourth course: he did not resign, he dismissed the Knesset; he did not accept its views above his own, he insulted its honor, rights and authority. Thus, he once again inflicted grave damage on the elementary bases of Israeli democracy.

What is worst of all, however, is the damage to Israel's security network.

The Prime Minister adheres to the view that the Germany of today has nothing whatsoever to do with the Germany of yesterday. He claims that it is a new Germany which has completely shaken off the crimes of its inhuman past. He has stated repeatedly that that past belongs solely to the past and that our concern is with the future. And out of that concern for Israel's future and the assumption that it is from there of all places

that our help will come in our hour of need, he is prepared to forget that terrible past and cause it to be forgotten, focusing on the illusion that the past has gone, never to return.

He recoils from any form of racism and he regards as racist even a hint that that dreadful past may not really be past. I, too, recoil from any form of racism. I also recoil from it when it is directed against the German people, which in our time murdered a third of our nation. I remember the greatness of that nation in the past and I know that that greatness is assured it in the future too. But is it racism when I see that its hands are still stained with the blood of our people, because hundreds and thousands and millions of people who shed that blood are still alive? They are still living and I do not know how many of them continue to dream of the resurrection of their Fuhrer and the completion of the work of destroying our people and other "inferior" races. I am sure that many of them have repented and are bowed under their burden of shame. I do not wish to blame the sons for the sins of the fathers. But the fathers are still alive and some of the sons have been corrupted by those parents, who are the lowest of the low. I cannot forget that that Germany is still the focal point of the greatest dangers to world peace, since a nation can be corrupted within a few years. Six years—that was the period Hitler needed to complete his diabolical work—can turn one of Europe's most cultured peoples into a nation of base murderers. But many years, perhaps generations, are needed to correct a nation's soul, and that time has not passed yet.

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that nature helps us, when the time comes it will try to defray that debt from us by a sea of blood and tears. And that is what its scientists in Egypt are preparing. The Prime Minister has struck a blow at the campaign whose object was to get those scientists out of Egypt as well as serving as a purification test for all Germany.

That has already yielded its bitter fruit. The tone of the German press has changed. Once again the German authorities are stressing that they do not know how to bring their citizens back from Egypt. A German Minister recently visited Egypt in order to extend its Germany's generous financial aid in a demonstrative way. After all, the work of the German scientists, who say that they will be prepared to place their "humane" scientific achievements at Germany's disposal too, must also be funded. If there is any nation in the world which is entitled to ask itself whether it should maintain diplomatic relations with Germany, it is ours. But at present it is Germany which is doing that with regard to us. And its answer is in the negative. The Prime Minister's attitude encourages that dangerous development in Germany, which seeks to rid itself of all sense of guilt and responsibility towards us.

Some people claim that we will derive no benefit from managing to get the German scientists out of Egypt; others, perhaps more capable and less easily observed by us, will come in their stead. That is not so. No expert from any other country can be compared with those from Germany. They are the only ones among whom can be counted Hitler's loyal adherents. They came to Egypt not only to get rich or fulfill their scientific aspirations, but also to execute the will of their crazed master as regards the final solution of the Jewish question by destroying the State of Israel. A scientist from a different nation would encourage Nasser to wage war on us only if he were deranged. Any German scientist who has served in the Nazi army is suspect of being capable of taking any opportunity to do so. Any country which sends arms to Nasser, as long as he continues to threaten to destroy Israel, compounds injustice and violates international law. The Germany which helps Nasser, via its scientists, to manufacture weapons of mass destruction to be used against Israel, is committing an unpardonable crime.

This month marks the twentieth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Twenty years ago a handful of Jews faced the mighty Nazi machine of destruction in order to defend the honor of Jews and mankind. The flag of the Jewish nation flew proudly above the burning walls of the Warsaw Ghetto. The beacons of Massada once again illuminated the darkness of our lives. The generation of Elazar the son of Yair spoke to that of Mordecai Anielewicz. But the Warsaw Ghetto fighters did not engage in combat in order to "take their freedom to the grave."...They fought in order to bequeath us life, to warn us never again to leave things too late. After twenty years the Nazis in Egypt are

trying to close the circle again. We must face that reality unflinchingly. We are confident that we can defeat them. But we do not seek that battle. We seek the joy of building our lives, not the destruction of victors. We demand that the German scientists leave Egypt. That was the decision of this House, which is the official expression of the will of the people. By what right has the Prime Minister violated that decision and that will?

The campaign which was strengthened by the Knesset's decision has been dealt a severe blow by the Prime Minister. That is what led to the resignation-dismissal of the Head of the Security Services. The Knesset must be told the whole truth about it. It must discuss this entire development and draw conclusions which are binding on everyone, including the Prime Minister.

M. Sneh (Maki): ...Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, eighteen days ago, on March 20, the Knesset unanimously adopted a resolution placing responsibility for the criminal activity of the West German scientists in Egypt on the Government of the Federal German Republic...and calling on world public opinion to oppose it. Then the Prime Minister hastened to return from his vacation and step into the breach, not to implement the decision of the Knesset, but to perform three services for the West German Government. The first was causing the resignation of the Head of the Security Services because he was responsible for the Israeli reaction...to the German activity in Egypt. The Prime Minister sacrificed him as a scapegoat in order to appease the Bonn rulers. And even if we did not think so, the main thing is that that is what the West Germans think. That is what their papers wrote...the implication being that it is not they who should appease us for what they did to us in the past and are doing to us in the present, but the Prime Minister of Israel who should appease them....

The second service was when the Prime Minister announced that the documents proving the accuracy of the accusations raised by the Foreign Minister regarding the Nazi activity in Egypt would not be published. The Prime Minister agreed to publish the accusations, but not the proof, confronting the Government of Israel, the Knesset and the entire country with a situation in which statements are made but are not backed up by facts. He knows that this does not benefit Israel. It does benefit Bonn, however...because publication of that proof would have aroused world public opinion against the Bonn rulers.

...The third service was that the Prime Minister pressed every button on his desk to modify and suppress the campaign in the Israeli and world media...against the West German Government, in opposition to the decision of the Knesset. But in his oath of loyalty, as first among the Ministers, he swore to uphold the Knesset's decisions....He violated his obligation, and that is why he must go. I know that he will not go today.

The Government reached an agreement this morning. But I would like to say a few words about the background.

...You yourselves said that one cannot discuss security matters in the Knesset because of the Communists, that is why you formed the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee: but you do not reveal everything there either, because of the Opposition. You don't even tell the Cabinet everything, because it contains Ministers who are not members of Mapai. Nor do you reveal everything to the Mapai summit, because of Shimon Peres' rivals....

A newspaper affiliated with one of the members of the Coalition wrote: "Security matters are too important to be decided by an individual or a group of individuals." Now you have all made up; the Head of the Security Services will appear before a ministerial committee, together with his superior, and will tell you what you don't need to know. But that is not the main point either.

The Prime Minister's eager efforts to cleanse the unclean are neither new nor unexpected. He is the only Prime Minister in the world who has announced relations of trust and friendship with this German Government. It is true that this German Government has associates, accomplices, military allies, but no Prime Minister anywhere has declared his trust in this German Government—only you, Mr. Ben-Gurion. When protests were voiced from this podium and the depths of the nation against the strange and shameful association between the Government of Israel and that country, which follows in Hitler's footsteps and is governed by his henchmen...the Prime Minister's only answer was: it is in the interests of Israel's security. That is why he granted approval to "the Germany of today," that supposedly different Germany. That is why he depicted it from this podium as a regime of enlightenment bearing a great love for Israel and giving Israel the weapons we need for our security and which no other Power is prepared to give us....I do not wish to ascertain now whether this was self-delusion or delusion of others...but it is a lie. This has been revealed. They give weapons and aid to others in far greater quantities than they give us. But you concealed all that, and would have continued to do so had it not been for the arrest in Basle. After the conspiracy of silence was broken you hastened to impose silence, for the same reason. You no longer say that Germany gives weapons only to us, you say that it gives them to us too, and that is why it is advisable to hush the matter up. But there is no agreement on this matter, nor can there be. The campaign against the tricks of German militarism in general, and in Egypt in particular, could attain national unity and a unanimous Knesset resolution. But there will be no agreement to obscure the crimes of German militarism....

This nation has learned from its own experience, as well as that of others, that there is no give without take. You took reparations and you

gave approval for the rearmament of neo-Nazi Germany. You make arms deals with them and abandon the nation's soul and the country's security....The German Federal Republic sends arms to both sides of the Israel-Arab conflict, proving that it intends to help neither one side nor the other, only itself....In the foreign press we read that Egypt has undertaken to place the rocket bases the German scientists are building there at Bonn's disposal...and that the results of the research and experiments will also be made available to it. Militaristic Germany is establishing laboratories and bases for itself beyond its borders. What applies to Egypt applies to Israel too. Give and take. The Bonn Government is helping neither Egypt nor Israel. Renewed German militarism is casting its net over various areas throughout the world, including ours. And you, Ben-Gurion, are leading the nation to the abyss, because walking the tightrope of German militarism raises a wall of hatred between Israel and a billion human beings in the socialist countries. Tomorrow or the day after it can rouse what is known as the Western world against Israel. Because the Ben-Gurion-Adenauer link does not parallel the hot line which is to be set up between Khrushchev and Kennedy, but rather negates it, just as your stand against any initiative to make this region a nuclear-free zone negates it.

A policy of wholesale armament will not solve everything. There is no need to minimize the value of arms purchases to know that it is not the source of the arms which determines the trend of foreign policy but the contrary, the trend of foreign policy determines the sources of arms. Once the policy changes some sources will close while others will open. But do not present the mysterious, dubious and unacceptable acquisition of arms from Bonn as a justification for policy. Our national policy cannot be expressed in binding Israel to West Germany when it should be expressed in severing that shameful connection.

We trust our nation and know that it will never agree to be in one political or military camp with the murderers of millions of Jews, and against those who rescued millions of Jews. That is the focal point of the debate. As deep as our confidence in the nation is our lack of confidence in its ruler.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I do not intend to cast doubts on the good intentions of the first three speakers. But I doubt that what they said is correct and that they are helping the cause in whose name we are fighting. Surprising and unjustified things have been said here, but my freedom to speak is limited and I cannot argue with them. Arguing about various superfluous statements made here will not help the battle we are fighting now for a crucial aspect of our security. I will make only one remark to each of the first three speakers.

If the speaker from Herut and others believed that what he said was true and just he would not have concluded his patriotic speech with the

phrase "I shall wonder why," but as a loyal patriot he should have ended with a proposal to dismiss the entire Government, or at least the Prime Minister, as constituting a danger to Israel's security.

...I will not ask Mr. Yizhar Harari why for fourteen years we have not heard him talk in this way....He claims that I did not explain the resignation of the Head of the Security Services to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. My duty and ability is not to explain what other people's reasons are but to present only the facts which are known to me. I submitted the facts known to me to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee in full, as well as to my colleagues in the current Government. I will not say what I do not know, Mr. Harari, not even to set your mind, or other people's, at rest. I am also surprised by what happened....

To the Mapam representative, my friend Mr. Hazan, I would like to say that he should at least have noted, when speaking of Germany, that we are referring to West Germany, because he and his party sent a fervent (that's the word) greeting to East Germany. I understand that the speaker who followed him did indeed speak of West Germany. I was not aware of the fact that the other Germany had paid back everything it plundered from the Jewish people. I know that one Germany has acknowledged the German people's responsibility and paid something, while the other has not....I find it surprising that Mr. Hazan failed to recognize the fact that that was West Germany....

To my great regret, in recent weeks the local press has published falsehoods and distortions of the truth....Some of these, I presume, were the fruit of error, but others were obviously the outcome of malice and irresponsibility. When I met with the newspaper editors last Sunday I pointed out to them six erroneous news items in one of the evening papers of that day. It is hardly surprising that that irresponsible press sows panic and confusion among the public. One of the falsehoods was my supposed disapproval of the Foreign Minister's statement in the Knesset, after I had clearly informed the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, as well as the Government and the newspaper editors, that both I and the entire Government approved of the Foreign Minister's Knesset statement.

...Another newspaper created the false impression that I had written a letter answering a certain person's questions. How a newspaper—even an evening one—can do something so low is beyond me. I would like to point out that the man to whom the letter was supposedly written has for many years worked well and diligently in his field.

Our grave concern at the Egyptian ruler's design to destroy Israel and the help extended to him by German and other scientists and technicians should not cause us to lose our reason. What the Government has done and is doing since the debate and decision of the Knesset is not unsuccessful, to the best of my knowledge, though I have not yet been apprised of the final results.

I should add that Israel's security is based on two things: the deterrent power of the IDF and our international position. A responsible Opposition...should have refrained from saying things which could harm our international position. The issues raised here could be clarified—and are clarified—in a responsible fashion only in the...Cabinet's defense committee or in the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

I had two meetings with the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, one on 27 March 1963 to discuss all our security problems in general, and the other on 31 March 1963, at the initiative of several party groups, concerning the resignation of the Head of the Security Services. The discussion of both issues in the Committee has not yet been completed and will continue in full at a later date, to be determined by the Committee. In discussing our security problems I spoke on a very wide level, describing both the military and political aspects. I am sure that the Committee will discuss these extensively and may even touch on issues I have not mentioned. Consequently, there is no need to transfer anything to the Committee, because the issues are under discussion there, and will continue to be reviewed there fully and unrestrictedly. For obvious reasons it is not advisable that the discussion be held here in the Knesset, because some of the issues cannot be debated in public. I cannot remember if any of the four speakers proposed anything.

E. Wilenska (Maki): A debate was proposed.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: That's what I wanted to hear. The Government therefore moves that the proposals of the four speakers be removed from the agenda.

H. Landau (Herut): Mr. Speaker, if the Knesset does not approve the proposal to debate the subjects raised in the plenum, I move that the discussion be transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, and according to what he has just said, it would seem that the Prime Minister will not object to that. I think it is necessary, first and foremost, to set the record straight regarding the Prime Minister's statement. The Prime Minister does not appear to have thought that anyone would speak after him....

Knesset Members, I maintain, with the fullest responsibility, that the Prime Minister did not say a single word about the German scientists to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

M. Argov (Mapai): What is the proposal?

The Speaker, K. Luz: The proposal is that the matter be transferred to the Committee, and the speaker has five minutes in which to state his case.

H. Landau (Herut): I maintain that the Prime Minister did not report to the Committee about the German scientists, did not say one word about

them. At the last meeting, when the discussion shifted onto that subject, he said that he was not prepared to talk about it. He simply refused to speak.

I maintain that, contrary to what he said a moment ago, the Prime Minister did not submit any facts to the Committee about the resignation of the Head of the Security Services...apart from a sentence consisting of five words, which appeared in the press. No explanation of any kind was given. He simply refused...The Committee concluded its discussion of the subject and decided not to continue it, and what the Prime Minister just said was incorrect. The Committee decided that it would meet again only to hear summing-up proposals, but the debate itself has ended, sir, and you were present at the time. This "factual truth" indicates what credence we should give to other truths of yours.

Mr. Speaker, a debate in the plenum is necessary in effect. If it is not held here, however, I propose that it be held in the Committee, because...the reason why information about the activity and numbers of the German scientists in Egypt was withheld for six months not only from the public but also from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee must be clarified. I know that what we were told about Ben-Gal's arrest was known by the Prime Minister in October, and in November the Deputy Minister of Defense reported to the Committee. Woe to the information we received, and woe to the assessments we heard then in view of that information.

There is a reason for the deliberately false information and assessment we were given then. You did not say a single word about the full extent of the danger of the rockets. Information was given about the number of German scientists, who could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Now we discover that there are 400 German scientists and technicians in Egypt. We were not told then about attempts to manufacture gases, or chemical and biological materials; you kept quiet and hushed things up; you withheld information.

Minister of Defense, it is obvious why your Deputy submitted that false information, why that assessment—

M. Argov (Mapai): You're lying anyway.

M. Begin (Herut): It's you who are lying.

H. Landau (Herut): It all fits together.

M. Argov (Mapai): Not a single word of what he's saying is true.
(Shouting in the chamber.)

H. Landau (Herut): Mr. Speaker, that is the truth, the whole truth.

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Landau, your time is up.
(MK Argov shouts from the benches.)

The Speaker, K. Luz: MK Argov, I call you to order.

H. Landau (Herut): Of course, you did all this deliberately.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Ben-Gurion lied during the Holocaust.

...

The Speaker, K. Luz: Knesset Members, this does you no credit. MK Landau, you have finished.

H. Landau (Herut): I have no choice but to finish, although the interjections took up my time.

The Speaker, K. Luz: No, they did not take up your time. You had finished before they began.

...

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Landau erroneously assumed—or was deliberately misled—that I intended to be the last speaker. I knew—although I did not know who it would be—that someone would ascend the podium to speak. One does not have to be a genius to know that. But you forgot that I might also ascend the podium to refute what you said.

I addressed the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee before a special meeting of that Committee was called to discuss the resignation of the Head of the Security Services. A few days beforehand a meeting of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee was held, where I give what in my view was a full review of our security problems—both political and military—and also stated my opinions on subjects I do not talk about here, for which I have my reasons. I expected a heated discussion to ensue, but to my surprise after my address it was proposed that the discussion be deferred. The members of the Committee debated this, and I said: I am prepared to sit with you until six in the morning, because according to what I had seen in the newspapers and read in the Committee's minutes I knew that there was considerable tension, and I was astonished that after I had spoken they were prepared to wait. The majority voted in favor of deferring the debate until after Passover. I was quite taken aback, but that was their decision, and I was prepared to wait. At that meeting I spoke about all the problems associated with our security, whether directly or indirectly, to the best of my understanding—although I have heard here from Mr. Begin that I have no understanding of security matters. Nevertheless, I spoke to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee about our security problems, to the best of my understanding, and was very surprised that the discussion was deferred.

After that another meeting was called, at the request of two or three party groups, I don't quite recall which, I think the same ones whose representatives spoke here now, solely to discuss the resignation of the Head of the Security Services....It was not called to discuss security matters, because that discussion had been deferred and had been desig-

nated for a special meeting, and I told the Committee all I knew about the resignation. MK Landau, who spoke here about the man's dismissal, was deliberately saying an untruth. When MK Landau said here that I gave no explanation for the man's dismissal he was saying another deliberate untruth, for there was no dismissal.

I submitted only one fact, because that was all I knew. I have no cause to withhold that fact. I submitted it to the Government, to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and to the editors with whom I had a special meeting, and I assume that there was also someone there from your paper, Mr. Landau. I said that I had heard a certain political assessment from the Head of the Security Services which I had not accepted, upon which he had resigned. I could say no more than that because nothing more than that happened. Someone might invent more. I am incapable of invention. I can say only what I know. Mr. Harari told me then that it explains nothing. I told him that I was very sorry but I could not say what I did not know. It may not explain anything...I might also find that surprising, but I submitted the information to the Committee, at the meeting called solely to discuss the resignation. It is a distortion of the truth to say that the Head of the Security Services was dismissed. I submitted all the information I had and could submit no more than that, since I was ignorant of the rest, and that is what I am submitting now too.

The question was also asked why the Committee was not informed about the German scientists. Well, Mr. Landau is not in the seven-man committee. The Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee has a seven-man committee—

H. Landau (Herut): For what purpose?

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: But Mr. Landau heard in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that the seven-man committee, where his colleague, MK Meridor, I think, sits, was informed about that long since. I am not saying that it was informed in the same way as Mr. Landau will convey information about it. He doubtless knows more.

H. Landau (Herut): MK Argov, why are you silent now?

M. Argov (Mapai): Your colleague heard and knows.

The Speaker, K. Luz: Knesset Members, I will have to stop the sitting. Do your wild shouts add anything to clarifying the matter?

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): The Prime Minister is talking about a committee which is secret.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: I would like to tell MK Ben-Eliezer that the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is also secret.

(MK A. Ben-Eliezer shouts from the benches.)

I am speaking now, sir. You had the floor, and we do not yet have the regime here which some people dream of having. There is democracy here.

H. Landau (Herut): There is law and order here.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: The Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is secret. There may have been an instance in which it was not, but it should have been, and consequently what it knows is known only by 19 people, not by the entire nation. Only 19 people. The sole difference lies in the numbers, in one committee there are 7 people, in the other 19. But all the bodies are represented on each committee. The discussions of both are confidential. Everyone knows that. Mr. Meridor is not the entire seven-man committee, just as Mr. Landau is not the entire Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee...Just as Mr. Hazan is not the entire Knesset and cannot speak on behalf of the Knesset.

J. Hazan (Mapam): I spoke on behalf of the decision of the entire Knesset, not the Knesset itself.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: That is undoubtedly permissible, but I maintain that you speak solely as one of 120 Knesset Members, or at the most on behalf of 9 Knesset Members.

The subject was reported to the seven-man committee. That committee could have said immediately that the matter should be discussed by the other committee...I see no difference between the seven-man committee and the one of 19. In both discretion must be observed and neither may inform the leader of Herut what was said in them. What's the difference? Both are confidential...But Mr. Landau knows what that committee was told.

(MK Landau calls out from the benches.)

M. Argov (Mapai): Who says?

The Speaker, K. Luz: Would the members of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee please refrain from interrupting. Kindly clarify these matters in the Committee, not here.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: As I said, I do not yet know what will be the outcome of the action which is currently being undertaken, but it is not unsuccessful.

I announced that all the subjects would be discussed by two committees: a. The Cabinet Committee, which does not comprise the entire Cabinet either, although as far as I am concerned it could, but the Cabinet decided that it would be discussed by the Government's Defense Committee, which has five members and whose deliberations are also confidential. b. The Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which is to discuss two topics: the reason for the resignation. All it needs to do is

conclude its discussions on the basis of what I told it about the resignation, and I have nothing more to add to what I have said on that subject.

I was sorry to hear Mr. Harari speak in a way I have not heard him speak these fourteen years, namely, when he claims that something I have said does not explain the subject. But people change.

Y. Harari (Liberals): Did I ever speak differently, Prime Minister?

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: Yes.

I. Barzilai (Mapam): The Committee wants to know what the differences of opinion were.

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: I said before that there is no point discussing that here because the matter will be discussed by two committees where it will be possible to speak about everything.

There is another reason. If there is to be an attempt to transfer the discussion about the Prime Minister's position to the Committee, I would like to say something which should be clear to everyone: the Prime Minister has no position, the Government does.

M. Begin (Herut): The Government has not heard anything from you yet.

...

The Prime Minister, D. Ben-Gurion: I am sorry to have to say this, since I can and do assume that everyone knows this, but someone sees fit to pretend not to.

The Prime Minister does not adopt a position, nor does the Foreign Minister. As long as the Government has not determined its position there may be different attitudes....There is no ideological collectivity, neither between the three party groups of the Coalition nor even within my own party group. One member may think one way, and another another, but after the Government has decided on a given subject no position is taken by one Minister or another, whether he be the Prime Minister or not. It is the Government's stand which is binding.

(Shouting.)

There is collective responsibility, which principle you have accepted, but is there no difference between collective responsibility and ideological collectivity?

From the moment that there is a Government position the Prime Minister does not have one. There is only the Government's position. Consequently, what you are proposing is contrary to our laws. There is nothing to discuss, and you know this. The only thing that can be discussed is the Government's position, and that will be discussed in full by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. I assume that it will also discuss topics I have not touched on, and I have deliberately touched on subjects which leave room for debate, because I would like the issues

which are currently of interest...to be discussed. I am interested in a full clarification, and I am prepared to tell the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee everything I know, without fearing that this will harm our security or international position.

That is why I say that a debate on the Prime Minister's position is contrary to our laws. By doing so we are implying that there may be two positions: that of the Government and that of the Prime Minister.

That is why there is no point to MK Landau's proposal; it is contrary to our laws. There is only the Government's position, and only that can be discussed, not the Prime Minister's. The Government therefore moves that the proposal be removed from the agenda.

The Speaker, K. Luz: We will now vote.

The Vote

Those in favor of debating the subject in the plenum 47

Those against 67

Abstentions 4

(The proposal to debate the subject in the plenum is not adopted.)

Those in favor of transferring the debate to committee 47

Those against 67

Abstentions 4

(The proposal to transfer the subject to committee is not adopted.)

Making the Mediterranean a Nuclear-Free Zone

Introduction

All the Israel-Arab wars, both before and after 1967, have been conventional, but the specter of atomic warfare has always been in the background. Israel's consistent position has been that it would not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the Middle East theater; at the same time, Israel has refused to sign the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty Convention in its actual form, and has been unwilling to support initiatives from whatever source to denuclearize the Middle East or the Mediterranean basin. One occasion on which Israel's position was exposed came following the receipt of a Soviet note on the subject dated 20 May 1963.

Many years later, in 1981, Israel's delegation to the U.N. General Assembly presented a similar proposal. This was promptly turned down by a large number of Arab and other Third World countries, primarily on the grounds that negotiating with Israel would imply its recognition.

Sitting 258 of the Fifth Knesset

12 June 1963 (20 Sivan 5723)

The Speaker, I. Yeshayahu-Sharabi: We now proceed to MK Mikunis' motion for the agenda on the note from the U.S.S.R. about making the Mediterranean a nuclear-free zone.

S. Mikunis (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, my party group proposes that the Knesset debate the Soviet note to Israel of May 20 this year, and the Government's attitude to it, with the object of reaching a decision which fully supports the Soviet proposal to make the Mediterranean basin a nuclear-free zone, and obliges the Government to act accordingly.

The Soviet note, which was sent to the Governments of Israel and all the countries of the Mediterranean Basin, is of the utmost importance for reducing international tension, serving the interests of the security of our country and all the countries of the region, as well as world peace. Freeing the Mediterranean of nuclear weapons, as the U.S.S.R. Government proposes, could be a crucial stage in the struggle to ban nuclear rockets throughout the world, and for total disarmament.

The appearance of U.S. submarines armed with Polaris missiles in the Mediterranean Sea, in preparation for making it a nuclear rocket base and opening the way to nuclear arms for German militarists in accordance with the decisions made at the recent NATO meeting in Ottawa, increases the danger of a nuclear holocaust. This danger threatens Israel too. In these circumstances the U.S.S.R. proposes freeing the Mediterranean Basin of the nuclear nightmare, expressing its readiness to give firm guarantees, together with the U.S. and the Western Powers, that the Mediterranean will be regarded as being outside the sphere in which nuclear weapons will be used, should there be any warlike complications. That is why it is natural that the Soviet note aroused considerable interest in Israeli and world public opinion.

Knesset Members, all of us, across political boundaries, are anxious for the security of our country. Each one of us makes his own reckoning of the dangers threatening our security from the conventional arms race, and how much more so from the nuclear arms race in our region. Although the Soviet note deals primarily with freeing the Mediterranean of nuclear rockets, it also answers the problems of those who regard the principal problem as lying in conventional weapons. "Faithful to the principle of peace and peaceful coexistence," the note reads, "the U.S.S.R. has suggested on various occasions that weapons and armed forces in areas where the chances of clashes are particularly high should be reduced." As you will remember, the Western Powers have rejected Soviet proposals to cease all arms shipments to the countries of the Middle East....

What is most serious regarding the security of our country, however, is the fact that the Ben-Gurion Government has not responded to the Soviet proposals, using the excuse that first the arms "balance" between Israel and the Arab countries must be assured, meaning the continuation of the arms race and the constant violation of the "balance" by both sides.

We are convinced that accepting the Soviet proposals to rid the Mediterranean of nuclear weapons, with the support of Israel and the Arab countries, could constitute an important step towards enhancing our national security and thawing the deadlock in the Israel-Arab conflict, whose peaceful solution is so crucial for the security of both sides and the entire Middle East. We have no doubt that accepting the Soviet proposal will serve to improve relations between Israel and the mighty Soviet Power....

In view of those security and political considerations...the Government's reply to the Soviet note is extremely disappointing. What is typical in this reply is the failure to answer the central issue, the attempt to evade giving an unequivocal answer to the Soviet proposal....Had the Government taken its pronouncements about peace seriously, as it cites them in its reply to the U.S.S.R., it would not be difficult for it to express

its support for the Soviet proposal. The Government did not do that, however, because the Ben-Gurion-Peres circles reject the idea of ridding the region of nuclear weapons, under the cover of a currently unrealistic, "maximalist" proposal for general disarmament by Israel and the Arab countries.

D. Hacohen (Mapai): Why isn't that important for us? Why is that unrealistic?

S. Mikunis (Maki): You know that the Ben-Gurion-Peres circles reject the idea of making the area a nuclear-free zone under cover of a proposal which I maintain is unrealistic at this stage, and which you know is unrealistic.

The Government answered the U.S.S.R. as it did because the Ben-Gurion-Peres circles seek to obtain nuclear arms, linking our country to the NATO Powers, hoping for salvation "on a rainy day" from the West German leaders...and adhering to the foolhardy concept of a "military resolution" of the Israel-Arab conflict. There can be no congruence between that hopeless policy of despair and Israel's security.

In an unsuccessful attempt to obscure its evasiveness...the Government raised irrelevant questions, including a one-sided remark about the roots of the Israel-Arab conflict, as if the Ben-Gurion Government had no responsibility for it, and an unfounded attempt to place the responsibility for the conventional arms race on the U.S.S.R., in total contradiction of the facts, etc....

By avoiding giving a positive answer to the Soviet proposal, the Government missed a rare opportunity to acquire the friendship of the peoples of Africa and South America, as well as of other nations in Asia and Europe which advocate making their continents nuclear-free, and the support of the U.S.S.R. and the socialist countries. That reply does not accord with our nation's desire for peace and its need for national security. In this situation Israeli patriots could do nothing better than to unite to struggle for a basic shift in Israel's policy regarding peace, independence, neutrality and friendship with the U.S.S.R. and all peace-loving forces in the world. That is the way to ensure our security and attain peace between Israel and the Arabs, on the basis of mutual recognition of the just national rights of both sides.

Our party group proposes, therefore, that the Knesset debate the Soviet note and the Government's reply, with the object of obliging the Government to respond positively and give its full support to the Soviet proposal to make the Mediterranean a nuclear-free zone.

I. Barzilai (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the exchange of letters between the Governments of the U.S.S.R. and Israel should be discussed by the Knesset because they concern a central issue of Israel's foreign and defense policy. The text of the Soviet note, which was sent to all the countries around the Mediterranean, dealt with an

important subject—ridding the Mediterranean of nuclear arms. It is only natural that in its reply Israel saw fit to mention "certain oversights" in the Soviet note and to refer to the problem of peace and security in a more restricted area, that of the Israel-Arab conflict.

The Government was right in referring in its reply to the U.S.S.R. to the fact that when the suffering of the Mediterranean peoples from time immemorial—ancient Egypt, Rome, Greece and Carthage—is mentioned, the suffering and position of the Jewish people cannot be ignored. It is inconceivable that the Jews are not mentioned when the letter speaks of "the feelings of millions of Christians and Moslems" who are concerned about the peace of the Vatican, Jerusalem, Mecca and Medina. Are only Moslems and Christians concerned for the peace of Jerusalem, and not the Jews, for whom Jerusalem is their ancient capital...?

In its reply, the Government of Israel stresses the dangers inherent in the conventional arms race, and the supply of arms to the Arab rulers who continue to maintain a policy of aggression against Israel. The letter notes, quite rightly, that the Powers could bring about peace between us and our neighbors....The letter also expresses the support of the Government of Israel for international efforts "to stop the spread of nuclear weapons anywhere in the world at any time," including the Mediterranean, of course.

I assume that from this one can understand that Israel supports making any part of the world a nuclear-free zone, including the Mediterranean. The Russians state their readiness...together with the Western Powers, to guarantee that the Mediterranean will be regarded as being outside the area in which nuclear weapons will be used, in the event of military complications. Removing our region from the sphere of nuclear competition and even conflict between the Blocs is very important in preventing a holocaust in the region. Nevertheless, a nuclear agreement between the Blocs also opens the way for another agreement regarding conventional weapons. There is no doubt that even a conventional arms race can lead to a conflagration, but without an agreement in the sphere of atomic weapons there can be no agreement between the Blocs about limiting conventional arms and removing our region from competition between them. Moreover, as long as that competition exists, both sides...will continue to pursue the Arab leaders and court their support at Israel's expense. The Cold War serves our enemies, not us....

Consequently, any proposal to restrict the competition between the Powers in our region and to rid the region of nuclear arms, while giving guarantees that the countries of the region will not be attacked should there be military complications, contains a chance of attaining further agreements regarding disarmament and peace. We should, however, pay heed to the fact that the regional abolition of nuclear arms is occupying an ever-increasing role in international discussions. The

Addis Ababa Conference decided to disarm Africa. At Brazil's initiative the countries of South America are approaching an agreement to disarm that continent. There is no doubt that the subject will occupy an important place at the forthcoming U.N. Assembly. There is no reason why the Mediterranean region should not be included in the regional agreements to ban nuclear weapons.

But as regards the entire Mediterranean, it is not in our power to initiate matters, the key being in the hands of the Powers. We can merely support right and just initiatives. What is up to us is to ban nuclear weapons from the Israel-Arab region...which does not free us from the dangers of conventional warfare or absolve us of the need to assure our defensive strength as long as we are threatened. Can there be any doubt, however, that if nuclear competition is added to the conventional arms race, not only will tension rise to unbearable heights but our region will also be in danger of being destroyed? Just because small countries all over the world are afraid of the danger of having nuclear arms or bases on their territory, they are also justifiably afraid that the Powers will not regard that competition dispassionately, and when the time comes will intervene and stop the manufacture of nuclear arms by small countries; and because the small countries know that in order to produce nuclear arms enormous sums must be invested, thereby paralyzing the endeavor to attain economic independence, and as long as those weapons have not penetrated into our region, is it not incumbent upon us, as part of a peace policy, to initiate the disarmament of the Israel-Arab region?

While our Government's reply to the U.S.S.R. mentioned our own efforts to make peace with our Arab neighbors, it regrettably did not contain a proposal to ban nuclear arms from the Israel-Arab region, either bilaterally or by a mutually-agreeable international settlement....We have not relinquished our correct proposal for peace negotiations, despite the current refusal by the Arab countries, and we are attempting to obtain international support for it....

Our acceptance of the proposal to demilitarize the Mediterranean and our initiative to ban nuclear arms may pave the way for a dialogue with the U.S.S.R. aimed at attaining disarmament and peace in the region. In 1956 the U.S.S.R. proposed an arrangement of that kind for this region...to the U.S., Britain and France...based on the peaceful resolution of problems...non-intervention and the absence of military involvement by the Powers...the removal of foreign military bases...the cessation of supplies of arms...and the unconditional provision of economic aid to the countries of the region....Why wouldn't the U.S.S.R. be ready to make an agreement of that kind with the Western Powers today? Israel must surely be interested in it.

Israel's reply stresses that it belongs to no military pact, has no nuclear arms and has no foreign military base on its territory. It would be

advisable to attempt to revive the Soviet proposal of 1956. A political and defense orientation towards Bonn is certainly of no help in this. Our account with Germany is first of all a Jewish one, though there is also an external political aspect to it. Since the Foreign Minister's statement in the Knesset about the despicable activities of the German scientists, in order to stop which it was decided to conduct a widespread information campaign, the Government has done all it could to obscure the effect of its statement and weaken the Knesset's decision. Friendly gestures have been made towards Germany....An orientation towards Germany, regarding Bonn as a haven on a rainy day, is diametrically opposed to a policy of neutrality enabling joint U.S.-Soviet activity designed to bring peace to the region....A policy of non-alignment is the best way to improve relations with the East without harming relations with the West.

Yesterday the U.S. Secretary of State, Mr. Rusk, told the Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee that: "Egypt has adopted a policy of non-alignment which increasingly accords with the interests of the free world." We know that that non-alignment is not devoid of close ties with the U.S.S.R...but that seems to be no impediment to the interests of the free world....

Since the exchange of notes between the two Governments concerns the complex of our international problems and our ties with the Powers, the content of the various proposals should be debated by the Knesset.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, it cannot be said that those who proposed the debate in the Knesset today waited specifically for the note from the U.S.S.R. The House will recall that the subject was raised on various occasions and that a decision was reached. Although I have nothing against using the Soviet note to raise the subject again...nothing has happened to change the Knesset's previous decision....

I would like to start by saying that I make a clearcut distinction between the two speakers. I have no doubt about the concern of MK Barzilai and his colleagues for Israel's defense. I cannot say the same about the first speaker.

S. Mikunis (Maki): We don't care what you think.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: I greatly regret the fact that with regard to disarmament Mapam also ignores the main point and is led astray by formulae and slogans which are supposedly intended to solve Israel's defense problems, but have no content. If that was the whole story, there would be no danger involved, but those formulae and slogans create a dangerous illusion which influences youngsters who are already or will soon be serving in the Army...as well as the entire population of Israel. They create the false impression that there is a chance of altering Israel's defense situation by accepting the position adopted by MK

Barzilai and his colleagues....I understand the first speaker's statement that the demand for general disarmament by us and the Arabs is unrealistic.

S. Mikunis (Maki): At present.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Why is it unrealistic? Because the principal supplier of arms to the Arab countries is not prepared to stop supplying those arms....

M. Begin (Herut): Not bad.

T. Toubi (Maki): Why didn't you agree to the U.S.S.R.'s proposal to stop arms sales to the Middle East in the past?

M. Begin (Herut): Are you speaking on behalf of the U.S.S.R.?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Israel's security does not depend on agreeing to a formula which has no content or security for us.

S. Mikunis (Maki): Trust and friendship with Adenauer—is that a formula? Bonn on a rainy day—is that a formula?

The Speaker, I. Yeshayahu-Sharabi: Knesset Member Mikunis, kindly allow the Foreign Minister to speak.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Israel's representatives have made our position perfectly clear in every forum. Only those who deal in demagoguery, in incitement against the State of Israel—

(MK E. Wilenska interjects.)

—only they can say that they doubt that. In fact, they do not doubt it themselves, but they wish to give someone the impression that Israel's calls for peace are not genuine. When we proposed general disarmament we received a negative answer from the Arab countries and no answer at all from those who supply them with arms....Mr. Khrushchev has still not answered the Prime Minister's letter....

Does MK Barzilai seriously think that till now the U.S.S.R. has had no opportunity of talking to us, and that we have not proposed talks? ...MK Barzilai has himself invested considerable efforts in attempting to start a dialogue between us and the U.S.S.R., and knows that this was to no avail....Our ambassador in Moscow cannot plead our case there as no one will give him a hearing....

Several countries are mentioned in that note, Yugoslavia, Albania and Cyprus, for example, but they seem to have forgotten that near Cyprus is the State of Israel....Christians and Moslems are interested in Jerusalem, but we are not. We are mentioned only when they have something negative to say about us....Those are no mere sins of omission....

MK Barzilai says that we must first of all be interested in making the region a nuclear-free zone. I say that we must first of all be interested in Israel's survival and ensuring that it is not destroyed by arms of any kind, and on this point we are in agreement. Do we not feel that Israel is especially threatened, even before there is a world conflagration? And even if, as we all hope, there is no world conflagration and nuclear weapons are not used, that by no means guarantees Israel's existence.

MK Barzilai, you said that you are as concerned as I am for Israel's security. Then whence do you get the strength to fly to the clouds without seeing what is happening on the ground? And if we agree to disarm ourselves of weapons we do not possess today and hope the Arabs do not have yet, the Arabs have bombers, tanks, submarines, rockets—or soon will have. Does that strengthen our security? Let's suppose for a moment that Nasser agrees not only to Khrushchev's proposal but also to MK Barzilai's...and there are no nuclear arms in the region.

(From the floor: Isn't that better?)

No. It makes no difference for Israel's security, because he has bombers. He can't use weapons against us which he doesn't have.... What threatens us are the weapons he does have and which stream to his country every day....

We are told that the countries of Africa have agreed to disarm the African continent. Could MK Barzilai tell me which African countries threaten others? The only danger threatening Africa is that of a world conflagration, in which case they might be able to save their continent. Whether they would succeed in that or not is another question...but where is the similarity between their situation and ours?

I. Barzilai (Mapam): What's better, to have atomic arms here or not?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: MK Barzilai, I do not wish to speak sharply, but you should ask questions which are more to the point.

J. Riftin (Mapam): We've already answered that question. The question which remains as regards Israel's defense is why should we accept the introduction of atomic arms into our region? And you are evading that question, Madam.

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: Sir, if you want me to say that you are concerned for Israel's security, I will. What has that got to do with anything? The question you are evading is in what way does that slogan...benefit Israel today, before there is a world war. What has that got to do with Israel's security?...You evade answering that not because you are not concerned about Israel's security but because you are fearful of telling those who are stronger and perhaps greater than Israel that what they are proposing is not to the point...We suggest that you join us in proposing the general disarmament of the region, referring to what

exists, not to what does not....He is ready to give up what isn't there, but I say that Israel's security depends on what does exist in the region. Bombers which can get from their base to the center of Israel in a few moments, even if they carry only "clean," legitimate, conventional bombs, are a danger. As to the U.S.S.R.'s readiness to guarantee, together with the U.S., that nuclear weapons will not be used in our region should a world conflagration break out...my question is, what will become of us till then? I very much hope that sanity will prevail in the world and that we will not see world war and the use of nuclear arms. There is, however, the very real danger of hostilities—albeit with conventional weapons—in this region, even though the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. are still in a state of Cold War. It is inconceivable that, that being the state of affairs, we should agree to tell the nation, the youngsters, the world, in order to appease consciences which may not be totally quiet about what is happening in our region, that if the world goes mad we will remain an island. Good luck to anyone who believes that, but I do not want to talk about it. You must answer the question which preoccupies us today, not a hypothetical one....And why did you raise the issue of orientation towards Bonn or the U.S.S.R., MK Barzilai?

I. Barzilai (Mapam): Did I mention the U.S.S.R.?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: You spoke of the orientation towards Bonn. No, sir, our orientation is towards Israel, but it seems to be a disease of Hashomer Hatzair, via the Socialist League and Mapam, to seek a point of orientation. That is an old argument between us, and the disease seems to be incurable.

J. Riftin (Mapam): Is there no argument between you and Mr. Peres?

The Foreign Minister, G. Meir: When I want to tell you, I'll call you. ...Our orientation is primarily towards Israel, without feeling inferior and without seeking patronage, neither in Bonn, nor in Moscow, nor in Washington....

What does non-alignment mean in this context? Non-alignment with whom and what? No one who cares about Israel's security can adopt an approach of non-alignment, whether with those who send arms to our enemies...or with those who help us, albeit not enough....Is there no difference between someone to whom we can at least state our case and someone who does not answer and sends us a note which...is insulting...?

I find it regrettable, though not surprising, that Mapam also makes proposals which...give the nation the impression that there is something here which the Government has mismanaged, missing an opportunity to achieve peace....

Since the Government of Israel has not changed its mind on this issue, and since the debate is merely a repetition of a previous one, we propose once again that the subject be removed from the agenda.

The Speaker, I. Yeshayahu-Sharabi: There are two proposals before us. One is to debate the subject in the plenum, the other to remove it from the agenda.

(The proposal to discuss the subject in the plenum is not adopted.)

(The proposal to remove the subject from the agenda is adopted.)

J. Meridor (Herut): Distinguished Speaker and House, in abstaining we wish to make the following statement on behalf of Herut:

The note sent by the Soviet Government to the countries of the Mediterranean, including Israel, raises the question of making our region, whose geographical limits are not clear, a nuclear-free zone. The letter contains no suggestion about disarmament or about restricting the flow of arms to the part of the region which constantly and directly threatens Israel. In other words, while Israel's enemies are receiving non-conventional arms intended to kill large numbers of our civilian population, as the trial at Basle showed, the Soviet proposal contains no solution of this special problem, on which Israel's security and existence depends.

The U.S.S.R.'s appeal is intended to remove Western nuclear arms from the Middle East, the Near East and the Mediterranean. It is obvious that unilateral disarmament of this kind cannot be regarded as a solution to the problem of world peace. At a time when the range of rockets is thousands of miles, rockets situated in the Caucasus or even further north could just as well be situated on the border of or within the Middle East. It is undoubtedly a tragedy for all mankind that peace among nations and the preservation of liberty, where they exist, depend on the "balance of fear." But as long as the Powers have not reached an agreement enabling them to destroy all those terrifying weapons, disarmament which is in fact unilateral will help no country, whether large or small, near or far, which seeks to preserve its independence and liberty.

Human Right's Charter

Introduction

It will be recalled that the work of the Constituent Assembly convened in 1949 ended with a compromise, namely, that the formal constitution be written over time, one chapter at a time. This was done, and in fact is still being done at the time of writing. The lack of a Bill of Rights has been a sore point for years. Professor Klinghoffer, himself a teacher of Constitutional Law, proposed such a bill. His proposal was rejected by the Minister of Justice, a distinguished jurist in his own right.

Sitting 320 of the Fifth Knesset

15 January 1964 (1 Shevat 5724)

The Speaker, B. Idelson: We now proceed to MK Klinghoffer's bill on the Basic Law: Charter of Basic Human Rights, 5724-1963.

I. Klinghoffer (Liberals): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, not only is the proposal which I have the honor of bringing before the Knesset long and complex...but each of its component topics is important and raises problems which should be discussed extensively....

Obviously, the time allotted for presenting a private bill...is insufficient for conducting an exhaustive discussion of all these problems, but submitting it gives me an opportunity to attempt to convince the House that it should be transferred to one of the Knesset committees so that it may be prepared for a first reading.

I will try to do so by limiting myself to two aspects of the overall subject...namely, giving a brief review of the history of the idea of determining basic human rights in law or a special Basic Law, and stressing what I regard as the need for according the charter of basic rights a rigid character and supremacy within Israel's legal system.

The idea of a charter of basic human rights is based on the constitutional tradition which has taken root throughout the world in the last two hundred years. It was preceded by quasi-constitutional documents in English constitutional history, although the first in the series of modern human rights charters guaranteeing the individual areas of freedom in which the authorities may not interfere was the State of Virginia's Bill of Rights of 1776, which served as the pattern for many others all over the world....

The first country to introduce a legal basis for safeguarding basic social rights was Mexico, which included them in its constitution in 1917....The countries of Europe began including basic social rights in

democratic constitutions at a later date...Since the end of the Second World War...there has been...international concern to ensure basic human and social rights....This was reflected in certain passages of the United Nations Charter and the World Proclamation of Human Rights of 10 December 1948. This is not a convention, it is not a binding document, but it has moral and educational value and several new countries have incorporated a recognition of its principles into their constitutions. Since 1954 the U.N. has been preparing two international agreements, one regarding civil and political rights and the other regarding social, economic and cultural rights. The contribution of Israel's representatives to this committee should be noted.

Efforts have also been made on a regional level to assure basic human rights...and mention should be made of the Treaty of Rome of 1950...to which the sixteen members of the Council of Europe are party. Pursuant to this agreement, a special European mechanism has been set up for guaranteeing the human rights it deals with...and I have based my proposal on it to some extent.

Against this background...it is somewhat surprising that Israel has no constitutional law assuring these rights. Is it not paradoxical that the Jewish people, which has always fought in the diaspora for human rights, has not yet attained a charter of basic rights in its fifteen years of independent existence in its own land? My proposal represents an attempt to put an end to this regrettable situation. The fact that the Government has refrained from taking any initiative in this may be due to its allergy to the principle of introducing a rigid constitution which would supercede other laws, as well as to its recognition...of the fact that a regular law ensuring basic human rights will have no legal value....We must emerge from this deadlock. If groups within the Government are still considering adopting a charter of basic rights in the form of a law which can be amended or annulled, like any other law, by a simple majority in the Knesset...they would do well to pay heed to well-known jurists who have completely rejected that approach....

Those who reject the idea of rigidity tend to point to England, where...there is no constitution, no rigid law assuring basic rights, yet these are nevertheless guaranteed and protected, primarily by the independent courts. This outdated assumption may have been justified during the liberalism of the nineteenth century...but today the role of British Common Law has grown weaker and there is a larger body of legislation which even interferes with individual rights....

This idealization of the situation in England is responsible for several prejudices of which we should rid ourselves....Distinguished British jurists...have pointed out that the lack of a constitution there enables the monopolistic authorities to act despotically in their relations with citizens....

...In my view, it is time that Israel adopted a charter of basic human rights...which should supersede regular legislation. I assume that these two questions are the central ones which could arise in any argument on matters of principle in Israel concerning the constitutional guaranteeing of basic human rights....The actual details of my proposal to assure basic human, social, economic and educational rights...will, I hope, be discussed in the parliamentary stages which will follow this preliminary debate. I will add only that the U.N. Secretary-General, U Thant, designated 1964 as Human Rights Year throughout the world. We should respect that pronouncement by passing a Basic Law of a charter of basic human rights which will be worthy of its name and will bring us honor. I ask the Knesset to decide to transfer my proposal to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee so that a first reading may be prepared.

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I have studied MK Klinghoffer's proposal with great interest, and I must inform the Knesset that I come prepared for a debate....I would first like to note, however, that if MK Klinghoffer's concern at the fact that there is prejudice against those who oppose a constitution...means that he is not prejudiced, I have hopes that after hearing what I have to say he will abandon his proposal. Secondly, if he is really anxious about human rights and individual liberty in England, all I can say is, would that all the countries with splendid constitutions protected human rights and liberties as England does without one....England has a constitution just as Israel does, even though it is not rigid or embodied in a single document....

Professor Klinghoffer's proposal...is not original and has been preceded by several others, though these have not been debated by the Knesset....I and the staff at my Ministry have examined MK Klinghoffer's proposal, and have noted various positive and negative aspects of it, but I will concentrate here on the matters of principle....

First of all, I...doubt whether it is fitting to propose a law of this kind as a private member's bill, even though formally there is no way of preventing this. In 1950 the First Knesset, which was expected to prepare a constitution, discussed the issue of drawing up a constitution. It decided to deal with the issue by preparing Basic Laws, which would combine to form a constitution. It decided to charge the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee with preparing these laws... although at a later stage the Government decided to take part in this and submit proposals for Basic Laws to the Knesset....It submitted the Basic Law regarding the President of the state, which is still being discussed by the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee. The Ministry of Justice has prepared another Basic Law concerning the Government, which is still being discussed by the Ministerial Legislation Committee.

The Knesset has already passed several constitutional laws, such as the Basic Law on the Knesset, the Transition Law, with its various amendments...the Judges Law...the Law of Return, etc....My Ministry has also prepared a chapter on human rights for the Basic Law, but not in a form which will destroy existing legislation by proclaiming its supremacy, as MK Klinghoffer advocates. His suggestion will enable any judge to decide that the law which has been in force since the establishment of the state...is invalid, thereby leading to general confusion....Behind the fine and supposedly self-evident phrases of MK Klinghoffer's proposal hides a revolution in the country's constitutional basis and a blow to the Knesset's authority. Thus, the Knesset, which is responsible for legislation, and the Government, which is responsible for proposing the laws the country needs to the Knesset, are working to prepare all the constitutional laws which, in accordance with the decision of the Knesset, will one day form Israel's constitution.

My question is whether in these circumstances it is necessary for a Member of the Knesset to interfere in this process and take the initiative for proposing laws of this kind, unless the intention is to act demonstratively and goad the Government. Even if the Knesset were to accept the proposal, the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee would not deal with it until it had completed its work on the Basic Law: the President of the state...not to mention the Basic Law: the Government, which will soon be submitted. I do not think that this is an efficient or desirable way of managing our legislative affairs, and for that reason alone I will propose that the Knesset remove it from the agenda.

I...do not want the mistaken impression to be created that a Member of the Knesset has proposed something good, a charter of human rights, a large part of the fine constitution which the country needs, and for some unaccountable reason the Government is not prepared to accept it....In my view there is a fundamental mistake in Professor Klinghoffer's approach to our constitutional problem...namely, that he wants to introduce into Israel, which is a unique and unitarian state, something which is appropriate for a federal state. In a federal state it is necessary to ensure that the constitution is not subject to the legislatures of either the federal body or any one of its component provinces or states. Then it is also necessary to determine who will decide whether a given law clashes with the constitution or departs from the rights of the state, the federal government or any individual province or their governments. In a unitarian state, like Israel, there is no need or justification for that. On the contrary, no institution should be placed above the legislature, which should be enabled to adapt the constitution to the country's changing needs from time to time, even if the constitution is contained within one document.

This fundamental distinction between a federal and a unitarian state seems to have escaped Professor Klinghoffer, who wants our legis-

lature to be subject to the decision of any court, because he does not propose who will decide whether a given law contradicts the proposals contained in his bill...and any judge—not even nine Supreme Court judges, as is the case in the U.S.—may overturn a law which has been passed by the Knesset.

P. Rosen (Liberals): Would you agree to that?

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: I will answer you if you come to my Ministry, because that is not MK Klinghoffer's proposal. I do not propose setting nine judges above the 120 elected representatives, when the nation can replace the latter but not the former...though what we are talking about is five judges out of nine.

J. Sapir (Liberals): There is a certain lack of politeness in that.

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: Isn't my Ministry an appropriate place for discussing a subject of that kind?

J. Sapir (Liberals): The Knesset is here and you are replying to it.

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: Kindly refrain from telling me when to answer or not. What I said was perfectly acceptable. I have to answer MK Rosen, not the Knesset, regarding the question he asked me. I told him what I thought, and if after that he wants to hear more from me, I'll gladly invite him to my home, not my Ministry, to discuss it.

(From the Liberal benches: That's better.)

...In his explanation, Professor Klinghoffer said that Israel's Declaration of Independence is not a substitute for a document of that kind because the Supreme Court has decided that that document "expresses the nation's vision and credo, but does not in practice determine anything about the existence or annulment of laws." Exactly the same may be said of MK Klinghoffer's proposal, which does not determine what should be in the law but merely contains a long list of fine statements about rights which should be enacted in other laws, and which have in effect already been set out in detail in many existing laws....To act as if we had before us a *tabula rasa*, as if nothing existed in the state and we had to begin with that law, with all due respect—I do not wish to speak sharply.

I completely reject MK Klinghoffer's claim that "the objective can be attained solely by legislating a Basic Law which will supercede the general legislation." I maintain that that can be achieved, as has in effect been done, by observing the prevailing law and amending it from time to time by regular legislative procedures.

Nor do I think that there is a law which supercedes "the regular legislature." We do not have two legislatures. We have only the Knesset and in my view the Knesset cannot pass a law which limits its right to

legislate....Jurists who are familiar with constitutional law claim that a legislature can be limited by a constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly prior to the establishment of the legislature...since it is entitled to determine the way matters are to be conducted as well as the principal laws....

M. Begin (Herut): We also had a Constituent Assembly.

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: I'm coming to that. So the Constituent Assembly has a special and unusual status. But after our legislature was established...and we did not formulate a constitution, in my view the Knesset cannot be deprived of the right to decide on the laws submitted to it. When we elected the First Knesset we called it the Constituent Assembly, to accord with the course the U.N. resolutions had determined. But those resolutions were not implemented, and in effect the First Knesset did not function as a Constituent Assembly at all. On the contrary, we acted as a regular Knesset, dealing with all the topics a regular parliament deals with....

Even if there were any legal value to the section in the bill which requires amendments to be passed by a special majority, it is doubtful whether it is desirable to determine a special majority for any law. Times change and outlooks and worldviews change, so why should we prevent the majority in the Knesset in another fifteen years from amending a law which seems to it to be unjust...? Many of us still recall the damage caused to the American nation by the Prohibition Law, which was part of the Constitution, and which was regarded by the majority as being a grave mistake....Despite extensive public pressure, it took many years until the required majority could be obtained in order to change it....

Nor is it clear to me on what basis MK Klinghoffer assumes that he can propose that his bill be passed only if two-thirds of all the Members of the Knesset vote for it. The Knesset procedural code contains...no limitation on the Knesset's right to decide by the majority of those participating in the vote. This is not in MK Klinghoffer's power to change....According to what logic and on what moral basis can one say to the Knesset that it should impose limitations on itself? Should the decision of 15 Knesset Members who pass a bill of this kind remain in force forever, without being able to be annulled by 61 Knesset Members...?

How can one ignore the special reality of our life in Israel when, because of our unfortunate security situation, since we are surrounded by enemies who seek to destroy us, at any moment a situation might arise in which special legislation is required, and the majority in the Knesset will wish to do what is necessary to defend the state, but the Knesset will be free to act only with a two-thirds majority? And we know the secret,

we know how often there are 81 members in the Knesset when the vote is taken.

In trying to characterize the difference between MK Klinghoffer's approach to the question of constitutional law and the opposing view, and I have no wish to offend anyone, I reach the conclusion that he needs someone to pronounce that he is a free man, while those who hold the opposing view regard themselves as free men by the nature of things.... MK Klinghoffer seeks the right to act as a free man by law, while those who hold the opposing view regard themselves as having the right to do whatever the law does not forbid, as having been born free and with rights. MK Klinghoffer needs legislation and a declaration granting him rights, as if he did not have any without it. His approach does not accord with the situation in Israel. We are not a nation of slaves throwing off the yoke of tyrants and needing to announce to the world that we also have those rights which are taken for granted in every enlightened, democratic country. I am speaking sixteen years after the establishment of the state.

I also disagree with the legislative system underlying MK Klinghoffer's proposal. The first few paragraphs reflect their German origin, in my view.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Do you regard that as positive?

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: No. The first three and the sixth paragraphs read as if they were translated from the West German Basic Law of 1949...and a phrase like "the freedom to develop one's personality" is not recognized by us as a legal concept....

I do not intend to enter into a debate here as to whether it is appropriate for us to borrow the content of an Israeli Basic Law from that source. My reservations about those expressions derive from the fact that they are worded in philosophical terms which are alien to our legislation, and I fear that our courts will find it difficult to interpret them....But it is not merely a question of phraseology....Over the years the German courts have handed down various precedents based on that law which concern such specific freedoms as the individual's right to his picture, to choose his profession, to develop his business, etc. Those freedoms are included in the bill concerning the Individual and the Family which the Ministry of Justice published in 1955, since when we have been improving it. It is not our way of legislation to pass a law and then wait and see what content the courts put into it. Our way is to examine which freedoms should be granted the individual when the bill is being drawn up, defining each one carefully. The German precedents indicate that vague philosophical formulae like those proposed by MK Klinghoffer serve to confuse the legislative and judicial spheres, to whose separation we attach great importance....

I doubt whether the statements MK Klinghoffer desires us to make in his bill will bring us honor, since many people will regard them as mere empty phrases, without any practical value or content. For example, what does "Human dignity should not be harmed" mean? That one should not insult someone? Whom does it help, and how, if no accompanying sanctions are prescribed by law...? Who needs a declaration that "Every man has the right to develop his personality"?...

What is the value of the pronouncement that "Human life is sacred"? If it means that one must not kill...that is evident from our criminal law regarding murder....What is the point of saying that one must not strike a person? Will that stop a father from striking his son?...If the intention of the bill is serious, would it not be better to determine a penalty? Our criminal law has already dealt with this....

As a leading British jurist has said, without a clear and precise criminal law the citizens of a country will not benefit from declarations of this kind, apart from a general feeling of wellbeing. But that does not guarantee the public welfare. What point is there in declaring that science is free? Is it not free anyway? Do we make it free by declaring it to be so? And what does "teaching is free" mean? Does it mean that every teacher is free to teach what he wishes in school?...I believe that teaching is not free. Teaching is limited to what we determine by law.... Teachers are limited by the curriculum of the schools....

What is the value of saying that "The freedom to strike is guaranteed," if this is qualified by the phrase "and may be used in accordance with the law"? This means that the law, not the fine constitution, will determine to what extent the right to strike exists. That being so, what is the value of the fine phrase in the constitution?...What is important is not fine phrases but good laws, which are clear and precise and as detailed as possible....

...Thus, Professor Klinghoffer presents a series of rights which he supposedly wishes to guarantee, while they have always existed and are clearly guaranteed by law....His bill also contains detailed provisions which suffer from the same defects, and will have an adverse effect on existing law if they are accepted....I am not concerned only that certain provisions will be annulled by the bill—the Knesset can be warned of those dangers and appropriate solutions found—but that from time to time a clever lawyer will discover that a given law or clause contradicts the Charter of Basic Human Rights...and the courts will be obliged to annul laws which neither MK Klinghoffer nor the Knesset intended to harm....And even if the discrepancy is resolved, the state of confusion which will prevail until matters are settled will undermine the stability of Israeli law....It is not by chance that the great charters were written after revolutions, when nations were prepared to divest themselves of outdated legal systems. The State of Israel has no need of a legislative

revolution. It needs continuity of law, carefully considered changes and organic development....

Professor Klinghoffer's bill proposes that the courts be authorized to examine whether a regular law accords with the Charter of Human Rights. In other words, every judge...will be entitled to declare a given law invalid, or reverse the decision of another judge....Is that the attitude to legislation which should be granted by the Knesset after several readings in the plenum and a careful examination in committee? ...The issue of the examination of laws by the courts is one of the most serious of our day. In England the courts do not have the right to examine parliament's legislation, but would anyone say that human rights are not guaranteed in England? In the U.S. the Supreme Court has taken it upon itself to supervise the legislature...in accordance with the Constitution. It has happened there in the last two decades that many laws which were intended to achieve social progress were obstructed by the court, until its composition changed. The court blocked laws prohibiting the employment of children and restricting hours of work. ...On the other hand, despite the fact that their Constitution states that no man's right to vote may be restricted by race or color, and despite the right of the Supreme Court to act against violations of the Constitution, we know that in certain states Negroes are unable to use their right to vote. What, then, is the value of the fine phrase which has been in their Constitution for almost a hundred years?

...In 1949 the U.S. Supreme Court allowed an anti-semitic rabble-rouser called Terminalo to address a public meeting because it maintained that the law by which the Municipality of Chicago sought to restrict him contradicted the freedom of speech which the U.S. Constitution guarantees. Similar decisions are known to us from European courts, casting light on an insufficiently known but important aspect of charters of human rights. In a democratic country it is not the honest citizen who needs to be protected from the law, because democratic legislators respect human rights. Those who benefit primarily from charters of human rights are the enemies of civil liberties, who make use of the law designed to protect the democratic society....Professor Klinghoffer doubtless remembers the democratic regimes of Europe which were destroyed after the courts annulled the laws designed to protect them. It is no coincidence that the final paragraph of the U.N. General Declaration of Human Rights states that the Declaration should not be interpreted as allowing anyone to act in order to destroy the rights and freedoms it guarantees....The bill before us contains no such provision against any exploitation of it.

I do not want what I am saying to be interpreted as meaning that the courts always obstruct social progress or protect the enemies of democracy....The U.S. Supreme Court is the rock of freedom of its citizens, even though some of its decisions raise doubts in our minds. Our

Supreme Court has made an important contribution to preserving human rights, although this does not make it the supervisor of the legislature...for "who will supervise the supervisors?"

The supreme authorities of the state must be independent of one another, each one being subject solely to itself and its conscience. One cannot place human rights in the hands of one of them alone and rely on it to restrain the others; only if they all respect those rights is their existence assured. In that the courts are no better or superior to the legislature. I have every confidence that if the Knesset promulgates a charter of human rights it will not deliberately infringe it....If in the future the Knesset sees fit to limit one of the rights which at present we think should be protected, it alone can judge the situation which will prevail then....We must educate our sons to freedom and respect for the rights of others, but we must not tie their hands. That is why what is needed is a less rigid charter of rights, like the one my Ministry is preparing, and whose completion will not take long, I hope....I propose that the bill under review be removed from the agenda.

I. Klinghoffer (Liberals): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I must thank the Minister of Justice for the special attention he has given my bill. On the other hand, I cannot conceal from the House my deep disappointment at his attitude to the bill itself and my regret at the fact that he opposes transferring it to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee.

The very fact that the Minister of Justice saw fit to argue with the content and...underlying principles of the bill proves that there is room for further discussion. The Minister of Justice went into the subject in depth and at length, and although I disagree with most of the opinions he expressed, his speech reinforces my feeling that it is desirable and justified that the Knesset continue debating my proposal in accordance with accepted procedure, by transferring it to a committee. That is why I ask the House to decide to transfer my bill to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee.

Time does not permit me to answer all the Minister of Justice's criticisms of the content of my bill...though I will focus on a few of them. He said that it is not true that neither England nor Israel has a constitution. I know that there are differences of opinion on this point centering on the distinction between a material and a formal constitution. We have constitutional law in the material sense, but when one debates a constitution one is referring to a formal one, which neither Israel nor England has. The lack of a constitution in Israel negates the assurance given in the Declaration of Independence....It is true that a Constituent Assembly was elected, but it did not promulgate a constitution.

In this context it should be noted that the Knesset is the heir of the Constituent Assembly. The Fifth Knesset is authorized by the Constituent Assembly to determine a constitution, in accordance with the

Transition Laws of the Constituent Assembly and the Second Knesset. The assurance given in the Declaration of Independence should be honored. I propose that this be done now, at least insofar as concerns a charter of human rights, which will eventually fit in with other chapters of the constitution.

The Minister has criticized me for proposing a Basic Law as a member's bill and thereby supposedly misusing a Knesset Member's right to submit private bills. I think that that accusation is groundless. Had the Minister of Justice claimed that only the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee could submit Basic Laws...I would not have accepted it though I might have understood it. But that assumption would mean that the Government could not propose Basic Laws either. We know, however, that the Government has proposed Basic Laws in the past and wishes to do so in the future too. Since in practice the principle that only the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee may prepare and submit Basic Laws has not been accepted...it is not at all clear what is the logic behind distinguishing between the legitimacy of proposals for Basic Laws submitted by the Government or Knesset Members.

...The Minister regards my bill as an attempt to revolutionize our constitutional basis, since it could annul laws or provisions of laws and there is no knowing what this will lead to...I would like to say that had it not been for this effect of the Charter I propose it would have been possible to ask what it was worth...Its entire object is to be binding on the regular legislature and to bring about the consequent reexamination of the laws. That is why, at this point, I accept the Minister's criticism, which in my view emphasizes this positive aspect of my bill...

The Minister of Justice fears that the Charter I propose will restrict the legislature and thereby undermine our constitutional foundations. I would like to say that I propose nothing of the sort. I am proposing only that in every instance the legislature be identified with the regular majority of the House, with any quorum. Two-thirds of all the members of the Knesset also constitute the Knesset, they are the legislature. In what way does this discriminate against the Knesset? You identify the Knesset with its regular majority when it makes decisions with any quorum....

I regret the fact that the Minister of Justice saw fit to single out two or three paragraphs (out of more than seventy) of my bill which he regards as having been copied from the basic law of West Germany. The fact that I included those paragraphs does not indicate that I am influenced by the Germans...Those provisions, or ones very similar to them, are to be found in other documents which are international, not German, and include the term "dignity of man."...

In conclusion, as regards the Minister of Justice's remark...about the courts' supervision of the constitutionality of the laws, he asks "who will supervise the supervisors?" The answer is that when the courts ex-

amine whether a given law accords with what is in the constitution or not they are merely fulfilling a purely legal role....Comparing laws is, in effect, what judges do every day....That is the right of every court of law in Israel. It is not concentrated solely in the hands of the Supreme Court, although by appeals and taking matters to the highest court the uniformity of decisions is ensured. The function which the court fulfills when it examines the validity of laws does not differ essentially from its function when it examines whether a certain law accords with the provisions of the constitution. That is basically the same function, as regards both thinking and law.

As regards the emphasis the Minister has placed on the need to educate the generations to come, I do not see, within the framework of the Knesset's activities, a more appropriate opportunity of attaining that objective than by passing the Basic Law determining a charter of basic human rights, which without a doubt will be of the greatest educational value in enhancing the nation's political culture.

The Speaker, B. Idelson: We will now vote on MK Klinghoffer's proposal to transfer his bill to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee.

The Vote

Those in favor of the proposal 21

Those against 35

(The proposal is not adopted.)

Prime Minister's Resignation

Sitting 421 of the Fifth Knesset

15 December 1964 (10 Teveth 5725)

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I hereby inform the Knesset that at a special meeting of the Cabinet last night I announced my resignation, which by law entails the resignation of the entire Cabinet. I submitted my resignation to the President the same evening.

The reasons for my resignation are explained in my letter to the President. The letter has been published but I would also like to submit it to you....I request that it be entered into the *Record*, without my having to read it out here.

...Both the law and the logic of matters of state require that this government continue with its work until a new government is formed. I can assure you that we will go on with the essential tasks required for the government of the country, buttressing its security as well as its national and international standing, developing and ramifying its economy, continuing with the work of education and all the other spheres with which the government is charged.

The Prime Minister's Letter to the President of Israel

14 December 1964, 9 Teveth 5725

Dear Mr. President,

On 14 September 1961 the late president, I. Ben-Zvi, charged me with forming a government. A coalition government, headed by MK David Ben-Gurion, was formed and presented to the Knesset on 2 November 1961. The government was based on the authorized guidelines which were published at the time, as well as on discussions and further clarifications with the representatives of the parties which were candidates for the Coalition. In none of these was any indication given that "The Affair" would be revived.

On 16 June 1963 the Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, submitted his resignation, and on 19 June 1963 you charged me...with forming a new government. I presented the current government to the Knesset on 24 June 1964. This government was pronounced to be a government of continuation, based on the same guidelines and conditions as the previous one.

...As you know, four years ago, on 31 October 1960, a committee was appointed by the government then headed by David Ben-Gurion, consisting of seven ministers and headed by the Minister of Justice, to study all the material pertaining to "The Affair" and submit its conclusions to the government. With the establishment of the seven-man committee the subject was withdrawn from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which ceased its discussion of the matter. When the seven-man committee completed its deliberations its conclusions were brought before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, which took note of them.

The seven-man committee was not subject to any fixed procedural rules and could determine its modus operandi for itself. The committee held nineteen meetings and submitted its findings to the government. These were approved by the government and were reinforced by the decision of the Knesset, which determined that the government's decision to approve them was valid, despite the Prime Minister's resignation.

On 22 October 1964 MK David Ben-Gurion sent the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General a signed memorandum demanding "the appointment of a commission of inquiry consisting of Supreme Court judges to examine the government's refusal in the past to appoint a juridical commission of inquiry, as had been demanded by the senior officer accused, appointing a committee of seven ministers instead, and whether the conduct and conclusions of that committee accorded with truth, justice and the laws of Israel." In a second memorandum, which was prepared by his lawyers, he demanded the investigation of "The Mishap" and the question whether the Minister of Defense had given the order or whether the senior officer had acted independently and without the knowledge of the Minister of Defense.

I feel I must stress that in his signed memorandum, MK Ben-Gurion demanded that the matter of the seven-man committee be investigated specifically.

In my view, "The Mishap" is essentially a disagreement between two people. There are law courts in Israel for clarifying disputes of that kind. Those involved did not have recourse to that measure, and both the then-Minister of Defense and the senior officer have stated explicitly that, for reasons of their own, they are not interested in a commission of inquiry.

The Minister of Justice studied the material submitted to him by MK Ben-Gurion and proposed to the government that it appoint a commission of inquiry, in accordance with the Commission of Inquiry Order of 1921, in order to investigate "The Mishap" of 1954 and determine who was responsible for it. The Minister of Justice drew up that proposal on the basis of reasons which he enumerated and *prima facie* evidence. He did not see fit to clarify matters be-

forehand with the chairman and members of the seven-man committee.

It should also be noted that the Attorney General, who advised the Minister of Justice in this, did not recommend the appointment of a commission, expressed many doubts about its appointment and left the decision to the government.

Both the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General expressed the view that the activities of the seven-man committee should not be investigated. The Minister of Justice's proposal for the government's decision read as follows:

"...The government does not think that it should initiate a legal investigation of the question whether the government which was in office in 1960 was right to appoint a ministerial committee instead of establishing a juridical commission of inquiry to investigate "The Mishap." Nor does it regard it as its duty to examine the administrative procedures of the investigation by the seven-man committee which was appointed by the previous government."

One of the Minister of Justice's reasons for his proposal was that new evidence had come to light which had not been known to the various committees which had investigated the subject.

After having investigated the sources of this contention, I have a sound basis for saying that information which the Minister of Justice supposes to be new is either not new at all or is insufficient to prove that had the committee been apprised of it, its conclusions would have been different.

...To the best of my knowledge, no practical benefit will ensue from investigating something which happened ten years ago. I see no point in appointing a commission to investigate history, particularly since its conclusions, should it reach any, cannot constitute an irrevocable verdict. On the other hand, I consider it harmful to the country's internal and external standing and prestige for us to continue to concern ourselves with these investigations.

It is my understanding that most of the members of the government are not prepared to accept the Minister of Justice's proposal.

The subject under review has meanwhile become a matter for debate by the parties. In my view, the subject is a national one and the government should be free to decide on it. In the situation which has arisen, I cannot continue to accept responsibility.

I therefore found it necessary this evening to inform the government, at its special meeting, of my resignation, which entails the resignation of the entire government.

Mr. President, I hereby submit to you the government's resignation.

Respectfully and gratefully,

Levi Eshkol

The Speaker, K. Luz: The government has informed me that it agrees to a debate, which we hereby open. I give the floor to MK Begin.

M. Begin (Herut): Mr. Speaker, at a different time and in different circumstances Churchill said: "One man, and only one man, is responsible for what has happened." Acknowledging the difference...that phrase may be applied to Israel's governmental crisis. Indeed, one man, and only one man, is responsible for it. That man appears as a defender of the truth. The Knesset would do well, at this time, to observe how the truth is a plaything in that man's hands....

MK Ben-Gurion returned to the office of Prime Minister and Minister of Defense in 1955, following the elections to the Third Knesset. He knew of the tragic incident of 1954, which was deliberately and maliciously termed "The Mishap" to mislead the public. He read the conclusions of the Olshan-Dori Commission, which reached a stalemate. For five years he did nothing to get to the truth. He could have appointed a commission of inquiry consisting of judges or non-legal persons; he could have established a commission in accordance with the Military Justice Law; he could have charged those commissions with clarifying who did or did not give the order, what happened and who was responsible for it. But he did not....

In 1960 Jerusalem Regional Court Judge Halevi disclosed evidence of great legal and moral significance, namely, that the man known as the Third Man, a former officer in our army, had testified falsely before the Olshan-Dori Commission in claiming that the Minister of Defense had given the famous order in 1954.

That evidence had not been before the Olshan-Dori Commission. For lack of any alternative—since it was said that the Third Man had not acted on his own initiative but had been persuaded to give false testimony by his superior, with the knowledge of that person's superior, in other words, that there had been a criminal conspiracy by three officers to falsely incriminate the then-Minister of Defense—the Cohen Commission, comprising two colonels and a Supreme Court judge...was appointed. That Commission concluded that there had indeed been a conspiracy, that false testimony had been given and that its submission had been instigated.

The Cohen Commission's findings were submitted to the Minister of Defense. He read them and submitted them to the then-Attorney General for his opinion. But at that time, after the Minister of Defense, our defender of the truth, had read the Cohen Commission's conclusions, he went to his party Center and said: "I doubt whether it is possible to get to the truth, because there are two men before us, and everyone is equal before the truth," and also: "I would not demand a renewed inquiry because...the Olshan-Dori Commission reached an impasse."

Thus...when there is an impasse the defender of the truth does not demand that an attempt be made to get to the truth. For him the hazy

question mark hovering over the former Minister of Defense is sufficient. When he receives evidence of a conspiracy to give false testimony...our defender of the truth claims that everyone is equal before the truth. But someone who has given false testimony, someone who has incited someone else to give false testimony, is not as equal before the truth as someone who has not....

At that time the problem was brought before the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. The Minister of Defense, Mr. Ben-Gurion, and the Minister of Defense in 1954, Mr. Lavon, appeared before it and an investigation was begun. But our defender of the truth decided to do everything he could to withdraw the subject from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. The opposition there bothered him, and the committee of seven ministers was established solely in order to get the subject away from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. When the committee was appointed, our defender of the truth did not resign from the government in protest because a ministerial committee had been set up to clarify a dispute between two people.

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): That is not accurate.

M. Begin (Herut): Mr. Ben-Israel, you will have many opportunities to defend Mr. Ben-Gurion today—and I hope you succeed. What I said is perfectly accurate....After a lengthy investigation, the seven-man committee concluded that Mr. Lavon had not given the order. After that, pandemonium broke out in Israel. Our state has been unquiet, its days and nights have been uneasy, and all, supposedly, in order to get at the truth.

Until we reached the great and historic day when the Minister of Justice, together with the Attorney General, deigned to receive one of the one hundred and twenty members of the Knesset, someone who, with supreme modesty, calls himself a simple citizen...who submitted to them a "factual-historical study," in the legal-literary language of our Attorney General. That study, most of which was written by Mr. Eshed at the behest of the former Minister of Defense, was garnered over several years. All the files, all the archives, were opened before Mr. Eshed. One institution—so I discovered—refused to open secret files to him, but when the person heading that institution was replaced, all the doors were opened to Mr. Eshed there too. Now, Mr. Speaker, we can understand what the additional reason was for the "resignation" of the person heading the Security Service, in addition to the information he provided, in opposition to someone's will, about the activities of the German scientists in Egypt.

Mr. Eshed was instructed to seek and find, to burrow, root out and delve, and he submitted a document numbering hundreds of pages. But, interestingly enough, his document contains nothing about a meeting in 1954 between the then-Chief of Staff and the Third Man before the latter appeared before the Olshan-Dori Commission to submit his false

testimony. We found that meeting cited in the official findings of the Cohen Commission, and we asked Mr. Dayan, who is in favor of ascertaining the truth and of what is termed by people who have no knowledge of the law a "juridical" commission of inquiry, to explain to us why he met with the Third Man despite the great differences in rank and responsibility between them, and what each of them said to the other. One day the then-Chief of Staff announced: "I met the Third Man in my office and in the presence of my adjutant, but for the present I have not received the Minister of Defense's permission to disclose from the archives what passed between us." Since then almost four years have passed, and Mr. Dayan has still not received permission. Meanwhile we also have a different Minister of Defense. I am prepared to ask Mr. Eshkol if in recent years the former Minister of Agriculture has asked him for permission to remove the document containing what passed between him and the Third Man from the archives. Mr. Eshed, who looked for all the documents, and before whom all the safes were opened, did not include a single word in his essay about that strange event, how an officer met with the Commander in Chief of Israel's armed forces, after which it was legally proven that that officer, influenced by his superior—the senior officer—had given false testimony. But when Mr. Eshed's essay...reached our Attorney General the latter concluded: "The object of Mr. Eshed's work was to prove, at least *prima facie*, that there is abundant evidence...to undermine the conclusions of the seven-man committee." The Attorney General concludes by saying that Mr. Eshed succeeded in attaining that objective.

...I have had the honor of being on the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee for the last fifteen years, and I must say that in all that time I have never been so deeply shocked concerning the disregard for law and justice and the post of Attorney General as I was when I read that sentence.

Mr. Eshed was instructed...to undermine the conclusions of the seven-man committee. He submitted a "factual-historical" study, and the Attorney General hastened to say that Mr. Eshed had indeed succeeded in fulfilling his objective....By accusing the seven-man committee of a miscarriage of justice, Mr. Eshed has placed it in the position of a guilty party. But there is nothing in the document which represents the committee....

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): There will be an inquiry and matters will be clarified. Do you want to act as a commission of inquiry?

I. Barzilai (Mapam): But he has given a verdict.

M. Begin (Herut): MK Ben-Israel, I hear that you studied law, but you must have been a bad student.

The Minister of Transport, I. Bar-Yehuda: Have you also checked whether there were any forgeries?

The Speaker, K. Luz: Knesset Members, kindly stop these interjections.

...

M. Begin (Herut): ...The Attorney General did not send a single line of Mr. Eshed's so-called findings to the seven-man committee, he merely read the factual-historical study and concluded that Mr. Eshed had succeeded in undermining the seven-man committee's conclusions.

The Attorney General explained why it was necessary, should the government so decide, to appoint a commission of inquiry in order to get to the truth, noting that one of the aims would be: "To clear the IDF of the cloud under which it has been placed as an indirect result of the conclusions of the seven-man committee, namely, that a military action of the highest political significance, leading to the loss of lives, was implemented without either an order or the knowledge of the government or the Minister of Defense."

What this implies is that if the truth is investigated, and if it transpires that the conclusions of the seven-man committee were unfounded, namely, that the Minister of Defense, Mr. Lavon, gave the order, the IDF will no longer be under the cloud of having undertaken that important political action without an order.

Under what cloud is the IDF? Since when is the Attorney General an expert in military honor? Officers must be loyal. We like and respect them, we admire some of them. But if one of our officers errs, that does not mean that the entire army has erred...The whole IDF is not under any cloud. If we do not realize that, what will become of us? Dr. Israel Baer was also a senior officer in Israel's army. He was at home in the Ministry of Defense. He was the official historian...The court branded him as a traitor and a spy. That does not put the entire IDF under a cloud. It puts the traitor, and perhaps those who, despite the warnings, continued to trust him, under a cloud...

Through a legal opinion an attempt is made to persuade us that the seven-man committee placed the IDF under a cloud. They reached the conclusion that the Minister of Defense did not give the order; they did not decide who gave it. And even if we assume that the next conclusion is that the senior officer acted independently—and that has not yet been proven anywhere, not even by the seven-man committee—does that put the IDF under a cloud? Does the Attorney General say that as the person in charge of law and justice in Israel?

The Attorney General states that the decision of the government, and of the Knesset in approving it, is mistakenly regarded by many as having "the halo of parliamentary approval"—the halo. In what way are haloes the concern of the Attorney General? Why does he regard them as hallowed?...On 24 July 1961, after the Prime Minister—and hence the entire Cabinet—had resigned, the Knesset held a special sitting, at which it decided that the resignation of the government and the Prime Minister did not annul its previous decisions and that therefore the gov-

ernment's decision to accept the conclusions of the seven-man committee, and principally that Mr. Lavon had not given the order, remained in effect....

The Attorney General comes and says that despite the Knesset's decision, the government can by itself...decide to appoint a commission of inquiry, as recommended by the Minister of Justice on the basis of the Attorney General's opinion. The Minister of Justice recommended that the commission be appointed to investigate..."everything connected with "The Mishap," and to decide who was responsible for it and whether the then-Minister of Defense or someone else did or did not give the order to implement it."...This is tantamount to saying that...conclusions of the seven-man committee are null and void...since the new commission of inquiry is to examine whether the then-Minister of Defense, Mr. Lavon, did not give the order, and that conclusion was approved by the government and the Knesset....

How, then, can the government's decision remain in effect? Since the Minister of Justice's recommendation is based on the Attorney General's opinion, which implicitly negates the findings of the seven-man committee...it would seem that the Attorney General has threatened the status of Israel's parliament, just as in 1961 the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense threatened the government's authority to make decisions. This cannot be ignored by the Knesset....

...This constitutes an attack on the sovereignty of Israel's house of representatives, under the "halo" of a supposedly legal opinion. On no condition or excuse...can the government annul the conclusions of the seven-man committee, not because the government approved them, but because the Knesset did. All the members of the government swear before the Knesset to remain loyal to the State of Israel and its laws and uphold the decisions of the Knesset....The decision of the Knesset can be changed, there is an accepted procedure for that....If Mr. Ben-Gurion, the defender and student of the truth, wants to take that appropriate, legal and parliamentary course, he is free to do so....

In my view, the Attorney General must draw the necessary conclusion, on his own initiative, from the fact that his opinion has in effect been rejected by the overwhelming majority in the Knesset. An Attorney General cannot express—

The Minister of Justice, D. Joseph: His opinion did not say what you wanted to hear.

M. Begin (Herut): Mr. Minister of Justice, why this sudden anger? Do you think you are the only one who can give advice to the Attorney General? I stand on this podium as a member of the Knesset, as an elected representative of the people, and accuse the Attorney General of submitting an opinion which impairs the foundations of law, justice and order, which harms the sovereignty of Israel's house of representatives, and I

call upon him, with all due respect, to draw the necessary conclusions. If he does not, that is his concern, but you cannot prevent me from expressing my opinion, Mr. Minister of Justice.

J. Fischer (Mapai): The Attorney General cannot answer you from that podium.

M. Begin (Herut): Mr. Fischer, I have already heard that complaint....If the Attorney General will refrain from expressing views which undermine the Knesset, we will refrain from arguing with him from the podium of the Knesset.

J. Fischer (Mapai): Answer him in writing, the way he submitted his opinion.

M. Begin (Herut): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister resigned, was impelled to resign, because of incitement the like of which we have never seen in Israel. I will speak frankly; Mr. Eshkol—

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): How can you speak of incitement?

M. Begin (Herut): —Mr. Eshkol, I am addressing you and your government. We think that the government which you formed and headed is a bad one. But I would like to ask the persons sitting on those benches if they have ever heard me or one of my colleagues in the Opposition say "Shut up, distorter of justice!" to the Prime Minister?

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): But stones were thrown at the Knesset....

M. Begin (Herut): ...Our sages said that where there is sycophancy the law is distorted and evil deeds abound. The main conclusion you will have to draw is that there must be an end to the Byzantine sycophancy—

G. Ben-Israel (Mapai): How can you speak of sycophancy? Herut created the leadership cult....What hypocrisy!

M. Begin (Herut): —which has had such terrible repercussions in Israel, making possible such rhetorical questions as why aren't the members of the seven-man committee prepared to clear their name?

It turns out that they have blackened their name themselves, because that is what a certain defender of the truth has decided, and they must want to clear themselves. And he is surprised and unable to understand why they are not prepared to clear their name.

You reigned, Mr. Eshkol. We hear that next week you will try to form a new government, with perhaps some small changes. You may succeed....But, Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to tell you that even if you manage to form a new government you will no longer be able to run the country properly. First of all, the person who forced you to go to the President will not leave you in peace. But that is not the main point. The main point is that we have become a laughing stock; the main point is that in the diaspora there is darkness. Our brethren cannot understand

what has happened in this country, the country of their dreams, their aspirations and their love. The main point is that you had to summon the Deputy Prime Minister back from an extremely responsible national mission, and he had to interrupt his talks with foreign ministers in order to return here and deal with "The Affair." The main point is that the Deputy Minister of Defense had to run from a very important place to participate in the vote, and all because of "The Affair."

Your party, which formed the government, is sick. Its disease is internal and organic, not external. You can no longer run the country. Consequently, the only democratic course is to decide that the Fifth Knesset is dissolved. Let us go to the nation and hear what it has to say.

P. Rosen (Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the government's resignation comes too late. It should have resigned long since because of its failures in most areas....The government should have resigned when the Attorney General's opinion was published by the Ministry of Justice, with the Prime Minister's approval. In other words, by the government.

The Minister of Labor, Y. Allon: Not by the government's decision.

P. Rosen (Liberals): I said: in other words, by the government. An opinion was published, which means that someone allowed himself to spit in the face of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Police and the Minister of the Interior, and all those who were members of the seven-man committee....It is true that the government afterwards disqualified itself because it could not find an answer to the problem of whether to appoint a commission of inquiry or not. But it should have resigned before, when that disgraceful event occurred. To this day I cannot grasp how that was not the government's immediate response.

I have a sneaking suspicion that at certain moments the publication of that opinion seemed to suit the government, in the spirit of MK Zadok's proposal, which implies that this is a way of getting out of the mess....There is no need to appoint a commission of inquiry, the government will note the opinion, and that solves all the problems.

That is an easy way out, but it compromises the honor of the Prime Minister, ministers and former ministers. We have already heard from MK David Ben-Gurion that the opinion is a verdict, not a *prima facie* opinion. Someone else has said that that is moral assassination.

I do not think that what happened here could have happened in any civilized or democratic country....Five days after he received the material amassed by Mr. Ben-Gurion, the "White Paper," the Attorney General produced his opinion. How thorough could his study have been if it only took five days?...The material consisted of 450 typed pages, in two volumes....The Minister of Justice was aware of that fact, and I would like to ask him a hypothetical question....If anyone had been crazy enough to accuse Ben-Gurion of politically immoral behavior, on the

basis of the opinion of the Attorney General and two lawyers, wouldn't the Minister of Justice have gone first of all to Mr. Ben-Gurion and asked him what he had to say? Is it conceivable that someone who was Minister of Justice for twelve years, the Prime Minister and other ministers should be accused of bias...?

M. Begin (Herut): Half-truths.

P. Rosen (Liberals): Half-truths don't appear this time. Incidentally, I have always wanted to ask Ben-Gurion: if the conclusions of the seven-man committee are half-truths, which half is true? But what characterizes that opinion—as far as I can ascertain—is that the term “bias” appears only in the Attorney General's opinion, not in that of the two lawyers....To get back to the main point, I ask, how could it happen that that insulting and accusatory opinion was published without anyone consulting us, the members of the seven-man committee and asking us for an explanation...? I direct this question to the Minister of Justice, and I repeat my contention that I would have acted otherwise in the hypothetical situation I have described to you....

We hear that it was necessary to rescue Ben-Gurion from calumny. I have never defamed Ben-Gurion. I think that he is suffering from a psychosis that his name has been dishonored because the seven-man committee decided otherwise than he wished. His name has not been besmirched, but he has turned the entire struggle into one of prestige. I, at any rate, have never blackened Ben-Gurion's name. Even those who would rescue the reputation of Ben-Gurion, that supposed unfortunate who is vilified on every side, should have contacted me and asked me a few questions....And they certainly should have contacted the Minister of Justice and the Attorney General....

I do not think that this is the appropriate forum for clarifying the essence of matters. The subject is too complicated to be clarified here. What I would like to say, though, is that if the Attorney General's opinion is based on the report of the two learned lawyers, it is obvious that he did not examine the facts, and simply accepted what was in that report....The report ignores important verdicts which are far more relevant than the one the Attorney General quoted, and deliberately and maliciously misinterprets what was said at secret meetings....

I think that one of the gravest aspects of all this is the fact that the committee was spied upon and its stenographic record used....I think that the time has come to ban making stenographic records of secret meetings. Bitter experience has taught us that the fact that someone is liable to be listening at the keyhole has to be taken into account, thereby precluding participants from speaking freely, which is a very bad thing....

The answer to what I have just said will be that the Attorney General said only that there is a *prima facie* basis for thinking that those things

were done, not that they actually were done....I maintain that even that assertion cannot be made without hearing the other side....Even thieves are given a chance to speak before they are brought before the court.

Serious damage has been done. I do not know if the damage done to my good name can ever be repaired....That is a “verdict” and “character assassination.” But MK Zadok proposes that we note the Attorney General's opinion, and thereby do our duty. On behalf of myself and my colleagues on the committee, I protest at and reject these defamatory accusations, the factual basis of which has not been examined by the Attorney General....

...

M. Hazani (National Religious Party): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...today we commemorate the day over two thousand years ago when the siege of our holy city began, leading to the destruction of our Temple and the end of our independent existence until, by God's grace, it was renewed seventeen years ago....All those who prayed in the synagogues this morning could not help but be shocked by the parallel between the internal dissent and schism of the besieged nation then and now....What is particularly shocking is that both the Mishap and the Affair occurred in the month of Teveth....

Mr. Speaker, should not this coincidence fill us all with anxiety? Does it not oblige us all to free ourselves of the unfortunate Affair and its tragic appendices...? The Knesset has already expressed its desire to “put an end to the Affair.” According to both public interest and legal and constitutional logic, the combination of the seven-man committee, the Government, the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and the entire Knesset is at least equal to the Attorney General, who is authorized by the legislature to close a file on the basis of his own considerations if a trial is not in the public interest, even if the police investigators think that they have sufficient evidence against the accused person....

Accordingly, does not the same right apply to all the appropriate institutions which have the support of the masses in Israel and the diaspora, who all desire that this nightmare be removed from our lives, who all want the Government to deal with its proper tasks in these troubled times, and not with the appendices of the Affair...? Does this benefit or harm the public? Is not the right of all those bodies in this instance equal to that of the Attorney General? Should not their desire to stop making this administration and the entire state a laughing stock for friend and foe alike be considered?

...Truth and peace are interconnected, and cannot be separated from one another. One can and should endeavor to discover the historical truth if one thinks that it has been distorted, and that is all that is under discussion here, not a trial between the persons concerned....This should be done only in order to enhance peace and heal wounds. In this

case, however, the vast majority of the nation is convinced that by reopening old wounds we will merely fan enmity and dissension, as we have unfortunately seen within Mapai recently, diverting our attention from our real problems for many months....

Consequently, our party has adopted a balanced and restrained approach to this problem at every stage. For example, prior to the election campaign for the Fifth Knesset, which took place against the background of the Affair, we entreated all the parties to refrain from placing that subject at the forefront of their election propaganda, and we certainly adopted that policy....Neither tonight nor in the future will we go into the details of the Affair, at least not in public.

When we were asked to join Mr. Levi Eshkol's government, after Mr. Ben-Gurion had resigned for reasons of his own, we agreed to do so on the basis of the existing guidelines, and all the time we supported the government and its leader, even though part of the coalition agreement has not yet been implemented, and even though there has been some retrenchment in religious matters....

I. Barzilai (Mapam): Is this the right moment to deal with the Law of Return?

M. Hazani (National Religious Party): We did this because we regarded it as our national duty to permit the government and its leader to establish itself and examine ways of overcoming our manifold internal and external problems....We assumed that the Affair would not reappear on the national agenda, and would be left for historians to deal with in the future.

And, indeed, this government, with Mr. Eshkol at its head, began to work in an efficient and orderly fashion, managing to chalk up several achievements in internal and external matters...when the reverberations of the Affair once again descended upon us all, fanning the flames of hatred and schism within Mapai, blackening Israel's name and defaming the government, to the extent that Mr. Eshkol, followed by the whole government, felt obliged to resign....We greatly regret what has happened within Mapai, a party which has made a great contribution to this country in the past....

Nevertheless, and despite everything, throughout the long weeks of the dispute within Mapai and up until Mr. Eshkol's resignation, our colleague H.M. Shapira, the Minister of the Interior, made every effort to find a way out of the tragic maze in which Mapai, and with it the entire country, was trapped....People asked him why he was bothering, but we did not, because although we have many scores to settle with Mapai, our sense of national responsibility impels us always to strive for peace and brotherly love....

The root of the crisis is not within the government, it is within Mapai and between it and Ahdut Ha'Avoda....The Government on its own

would have decided not to revive the subject of the Affair, but pressures from the outside led it to resign....

There are two possibilities before us now....The first is that within the next few days a stable or permanent Government headed by Mr. Levi Eshkol will come before the Knesset, being quite free of the Affair. Our sense of national responsibility leads us to prefer that eventuality, provided that Mapai agrees to take that course.

The second is that if even now, after the Government has fallen, Mapai is unable to settle its internal dissension, the Government which has just resigned will have to continue in office as a transition Government until the elections to the Sixth Knesset. If that occurs we will insist on two things: that the term of the transition Government be made as brief as possible by setting an early date for elections to the Sixth Knesset, and that until the elections the transition Government adhere to the coalitionary guidelines and agreements....For the good of the country, however, we prefer the first alternative, namely, a permanent Government headed by Mr. Levi Eshkol and with no link to the Affair.

J. Hazan (Mapam): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, a heavy, choking fog has descended over our political life, distorting the entire character of our social life and concealing from the public the true motives and nature of the war currently being conducted in Israel for the character of the regime and of Israeli society in the future. The Affair is the fog. There is no inner truth in the demand for a renewed investigation of the Affair. There is no inner justification for David Ben-Gurion of all people to revive the Affair and its accompanying investigation. For he was the man who could have got to the bottom of clarifying the Affair to the extent that this was possible. But he did not do it.

It is true that in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee I demanded that the senior officer appear before the committee; the majority there rejected my demand. The Minister of Defense could have decided otherwise; the Minister of Defense then was David Ben-Gurion. But he did not do that. It is true that in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee I demanded that an authorized commission of inquiry be appointed or that the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee be authorized by the Knesset to serve as a commission of inquiry, so that the Affair could be investigated thoroughly. The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense could have enabled us to do that. But he did not. While he was in office the then-Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, David Ben-Gurion, could have appointed a commission of inquiry in accordance with his wishes. He did not have to agree to the seven-man committee. But he did. At the time the senior officer put his fate in the hands of the Minister of Defense, but he did nothing and the senior officer went his way.

I do not know on what basis and by what right David Ben-Gurion, who had the supreme authority at the time to ensure that the investiga-

tion of the Affair was exhaustive, but did not do so, demands that this issue be revived precisely now. There is no moral justification for this, since neither of the two persons most closely connected with the Affair want it....And so we have a new Dreyfus affair without a Dreyfus; and an Emile Zola who, by fighting for justice and law, undermines the bases of law, justice and honesty in Israel.

His demand has no real chance, even if it were to be accepted. I am sure that David Ben-Gurion, whose intelligence I respect, knows as I do that there is no chance of getting to the bottom of things. This is also the view of very important jurists who, before they expressed an opinion which clashed with that of David Ben-Gurion, were also considered by him to be important jurists, including Supreme Court Judge Haim Cohen, the government's first Attorney General, Jacob Shapira and Mr. Salomon.

Moshe Sharett, whose honesty is known to all of us, beyond all party frameworks, claims that according to his understanding it is impossible to get to the bottom of the truth today. He also thinks that the conclusions of the seven-man committee constitute the end of the Affair. Like us, like Moshe Sharett, David Ben-Gurion knows that it is impossible to revive the investigation today, but in my view he is not seeking the truth for its own sake. He is preparing for a political struggle for the political future and character of the regime in the State of Israel. The Affair is merely the fog, under cover of which it is intended to conquer political objectives....

I do not accept the distinction between party and national decisions. I maintain that if a party's decisions are not anchored in a sense of national responsibility it is not worthy of being called a party. It is merely trickery to say that a person or persons who were sent by their party to the Knesset and the government can suddenly throw off dependence on their party and become the representatives of Divine Providence, the emissaries of pure etatism....The truth is that they were and are members of a party. Conflict between parties is legitimate, as is the struggle within Mapai, though I greatly regret the nature and form it has taken....I caution against the heavy fog which covers the battle, concealing its true character from us, and we citizens of Israel should and must know the truth. Within Mapai a struggle is being conducted as to who will mold Israel's future regime. That is a legitimate struggle, but we citizens of Israel wish to know in whose name that battle is being waged, what each camp advocates, and why this terrible, destructive conflict has erupted....For when all is said and done, we do not forget that Mapai is an integral part of this state, and what happens in it influences our entire national life.

The battle is being conducted in this fashion because it is a naked struggle for power, representing no vision or political way....The camps within that party vote at some times for one view, at others for

another....I must admit that I was shocked when I suddenly saw David Ben-Gurion abandoned. I did not pity him, he does not need my pity, but it was bitter to see how those who only yesterday were his fervent supporters had suddenly deserted him, though after a few days the entire camp shifted to the other side. And so on. And all this without the nation being told clearly what the point of the thing is.

We are witnessing an internecine war which is sapping the strength of Mapai and, since it is the largest socialist party in Israel, of the whole country, blackening Israel's name in the diaspora and abroad during one of our country's darkest times.

People say that it is a war between the generations. In my view, within Mapai the younger generation has the wisdom of its elders while the older generation has the spirit of youth....The youngsters are in a hurry, and are led by a great commander....What has happened here is unprecedented in any other parliament, since it was the majority party, the one which is in government, which brought the government down, not the Opposition. No one outside Israel understands what this fight is about....Our enemies rejoice at this sorry spectacle. That is the truth. And it is hard for me to say this, because over and above everything I can never forget our common struggle and destiny....We are horrified by what is happening before our eyes, how you are debasing your honor and that of the state, which is as dear to you as it is to us....

When Levi Eshkol presented his government to the Knesset I said that I feared that it would exist in David Ben-Gurion's shadow and would be a continuation of the previous government without making any changes....That is what happened, but even that seems to have been too much for David Ben-Gurion, since there were changes of style as well as in debates and relations between the parties in the Knesset. Now Mapai has known the bitter taste of the treatment Ben-Gurion meted out to us here. We also witnessed a different style in external negotiations, which is a great deal in foreign policy, and although everything still remained under a certain shadow, someone seems to have concluded that if it had continued the people who in David Ben-Gurion's opinion should be in government might not get there....Then it suddenly transpired that without clarifying the Affair it was impossible to live another day, that that was the main thing in our lives, and that everything had to be done to revive it; it suddenly transpired that without that the government could not continue. But he had headed a government for several years without clarifying the Affair, he, David Ben-Gurion, whose intelligence I respect too much not to seek behind this *idée fixe* something very calculated, substantial and sharp, some perfectly clear political aims.

I have had various disagreements with Eshkol, but I would never stoop to calling him "distorter of justice" in public. And this appeared in the newspapers....Is this the way to educate our children? How is this

possible? It is possible only when the end justifies the means. And the end here is power.

To this day I do not know why the Prime Minister resigned. It may be because he grew tired of the struggle, or because he does not want to enter into a conflict with his friend and mentor, and David Ben-Gurion is known by many here as being a fearful foe....But this could also be Levi Eshkol's first step out of Ben-Gurion's shadow. If that is the case, and if a government is formed which is completely free of the Affair, despite all our past disagreements with this government and our future activity in opposition, we will support it, because this is the main point at this stage, because this will decide our future....

If it transpires, however, that this is not the case, if Levi Eshkol turns out to have capitulated, our view will be that there is only one course—early elections....We think that that is a bad thing, and it will undermine public confidence in our democratic institutions, but there seems to be no alternative. We will not do this gladly, we will do it in the knowledge that it is the only way to extricate ourselves from this mess.

I. Galili (Ahdut Ha'avodah-Po'alei Zion): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, I think that everyone realizes by now that the problem facing the nation and the state following the resignation of Levi Eshkol and his government is not who gave the unfortunate order in 1954, but who will be authorized to give orders from 1964 onwards. The forces which have arisen from within Mapai against Levi Eshkol could cast the state into an abyss of mishaps simply in order to depose this government....The trend towards the unification of the socialist movement will be ended, and there will be some who will use that opportunity to take the reins of government into their hands. I hope that Levi Eshkol's resignation is not an act of withdrawal or retreat, but a tactical step taken in the course of a struggle in a thoughtful and responsible manner so that the country does not sink into mishaps which will plague us for the next fifteen years....

If the subject were merely whether the issue should be investigated or not, the government would not have been bombarded by non-conventional weapons for the last few months, subjecting the country to schism, malicious whispers and gossip....

The Deputy Minister of Defense, S. Peres: Why did you want an inquiry in 1960? Why were the motives better then than they are today, and why was the investigation necessary then and not now?

I. Galili (Ahdut Ha'avodah-Po'alei Zion): Because in 1960 there was an official inquiry....It was based on the findings of two-thirds of the judges of the Supreme Court. We have no reason to doubt that inquiry.

The Deputy Minister of Defense, S. Peres: In 1960 Moshe Carmel told the Knesset that the investigation of the Affair was of prime importance for

the state and its security, and that the issue had to be examined thoroughly. Your party favored the investigation of the subject by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. What has changed since 1960?

I. Galili (Ahdut Ha'Avodah-Po'alei Zion): First of all, neither your party nor mine brought the Affair to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee when it let Pinhas Lavon appear before it....It was your party which transferred the investigation from the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee to the government. Your party decided to appoint the seven-man committee....Your party holds several admirable views. I have a coalitionary association with your party....Why do you prefer a juridical commission of inquiry to a simple court case?

The Deputy Minister of Defense, S. Peres: Because it is impossible to go to court.

I. Galili (Ahdut Ha'Avodah-Po'alei Zion): It is possible to go to court. If you seek the truth so eagerly, there is nothing to do but to go to court.... There are sufficient reasons for doing so. The way is clear. You are deceiving the public by saying that you wish to get to the truth but you do not want to go to court, even though that course is definitely open, and it is not true that those who oppose reviving the Affair wish to suppress the truth.

...The call to appoint a commission of inquiry now is suspect because the subject could have been investigated in 1954, when the former Minister of Defense could have done so without any difficulty, when the material was fresher and better-known, and the question of forgeries could have been investigated more easily, and everything was still fresh in people's memories....Why should I cast aspersions on someone who was Israel's Minister of Justice for fifteen years?

J. Fischer (Mapai): Why do you cast aspersions on someone who was Israel's Minister of Defense for fifteen years?

I. Galili (Ahdut Ha'Avodah-Po'alei Zion): I am not casting aspersions on that person....I do not want the country to sink into the abyss of a network of mishaps in the defense sphere, as will happen if the Affair is revived.

Levi Eshkol said that in the situation which had developed he could not accept responsibility. Why not? Because of the security situation or the economic situation? Is it like him to run away? He cannot accept responsibility because of the whispering and questions arising from within his party, when someone like David Ben-Gurion says he is not sure that this government's discussions adhere to the truth and the law of the land. He says this of a government whose head he has himself designated as his successor. I find that highly regrettable.

The Attorney General did not recommend that there should be an inquiry, and I quote from his opinion: "In general, it seems to me that

there is no justification for appointing a juridical commission, as has been proposed by Mr. Ben-Gurion. It is not customary for a government to examine its own actions or those of its predecessor, as Mr. Ben-Gurion suggests." The Attorney General points out the difficulties of getting to the truth when things have been forgotten. Ten years after the event it is impossible to get to the root of the matter simply because someone wishes to use it as a tool with which to undermine the government, which should not have fallen and which we hope will rise again....

I. Kargman (Mapai): It did not fall.

I. Galili (Ahdut Ha'Avodah-Po'alei Zion): I accept MK Kargman's linguistic correction. I hope that Levi Eshkol's action was a move in the battle for the continuation of this government and the fulfillment of its trends. This government is a coalitionary one and we have not always been in full agreement with all its decisions. But this government established our security situation and political standing in the international arena; it dispelled the apprehensions which accompanied the previous government regarding the lack of democratic civilian supervision of the defense network; it introduced a series of laws in the socio-economic sphere, advancing social justice in Israel and imposing duties on the moneyed sector; it developed, extended and diversified the education system; it led to progress in developing the desert; it introduced beneficial changes in the area of military government; it took steps to extricate Israel from its isolation, and towards improving our ties with the world beyond one single Bloc. There is no reason why this government should not remain in office and continue benefiting the country.

Knesset Members, I believe that if all those who seek the good of the country stand firm and refuse to allow ourselves to be cast into the murky depths, we will be able to save the country from the dangers threatening it and set it on the right course....

S. Mikunis (Maki): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the resignation of the Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, was caused directly by the investigations of David Ben-Gurion and his gang. Ever since Ben-Gurion was forced to resign in June 1963 he has shown signs of regretting that step and has systematically attempted to undermine the Eshkol government. In recent months in particular, we have seen how, using the Affair and the demand for a commission of inquiry as a cover, Ben-Gurion and his henchmen have attempted to bring the government down, destroy democratic rule, annul the sovereignty of the Knesset and establish a military dictatorship in Israel....

The storms which have raged in the Knesset and Israel in recent years around the Mishaps and Affairs, at the center of which were Ben-Gurion and his cronies, showed Ben-Gurion's dangerous and tyrannical tendencies to the nation. But Ben-Gurion's recent actions and

statements, which led to last night's government crisis, are sufficient to prove how real a threat Ben-Gurion and his group are to the democratic government of the country.

Ben-Gurion's appearance at the Mapai Center this month was very instructive as regards the character and tendencies of his anti-democratic assault....He threatened that there would be no end to the Affair unless he was permitted to create a new Affair against the seven-man committee, and attacked all those parties which approved its conclusions....The peak came when he threatened to "go to the nation," claiming to speak on behalf of the IDF's officer corps as the person who would "cleanse the state's name."...One does not need a lot of imagination to see how threatening such statements are....

When Ben-Gurion resigned from being Prime Minister in June 1963, my party group claimed that Ben-Gurionism should be removed from the composition and policy of the new government. From the outset, however, Levi Eshkol presented his government not as an independent one but as a continuation of the previous one. On more than one occasion we warned that if the Eshkol government continued to be a government of continuation it would invite Ben-Gurion and his men to take back control of Mapai and the country. That is indeed how things have turned out....Now, too, in view of the government crisis, we issue a dire and responsible warning that if there is no change in the government's policy, if it does not turn its back on the guidelines of the Ben-Gurionist policy wherein lie the root causes of the current government crisis, the crisis will be revived and will even become more acute.

Knesset Members, now the danger to democracy, democratic government, and the sovereignty of the Knesset, one of whose reflections is the Attorney General's opinion which is brandished so enthusiastically by Ben-Gurion and his men, is more evident than ever. The danger that Ben-Gurion will gain control is not only a danger to democracy, it also involves the danger of militaristic escapades, of a growing clash with the interests of the working people, of heightening Israel-Arab tension and increasing Israel's isolation. We therefore appeal to all democratic and patriotic forces in the nation to unite in order to block the way before the attempt of the Ben-Gurionist junta to gain control. Consequently, we wish to stress that the defense of the nation's democratic liberties and the maintenance of democratic government and the sovereignty of the Knesset are necessary conditions for the desired change in the government's policy. Maki calls for a government to be formed which will be loyal to democracy, peace and the defense of the laboring nation's interests and rights.

...

K. Cahane (Po'alei Aguda): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, for the three years since the last elections the government has existed on a basis which is not very broad. Some people predicted that it would not



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K. Cahane (Po'alei Aguda): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, for the three years since the last elections the government has existed on a basis which is not very broad. Some people predicted that it would not

last long, and these predictions were repeated when the current Prime Minister, Mr. Levi Eshkol, took office, but their basis has been proven to be false....

Despite the fact that it did not have a broad base, the government prevailed, even running the country to the general satisfaction of the populace. No deep rifts were discovered within it, and ways were found to resolve differences, though I will not say that my party is satisfied with the way religious issues have been treated....

No one, I think, would disagree with the claim that the country is facing many problems. The budget speech given by the Minister of Finance yesterday, in which he elucidated our economic situation and objectives, indicating that political stability is required....If we think of the multitude of security and political problems which have plagued us since the establishment of the state and have recently intensified, we must certainly draw the conclusion that we must avoid internal governmental crises as far as possible....

We are about to face difficult discussions at the U.N., as was proven by the debate on the Syrian border incidents, while our neighbors stand united against us....All this indicates how much we need governmental stability....

If a crisis had erupted against the background of our defense or economic policy I would have regretted but understood it....In a democratic country there are many opinions as to how things should be done, and such differences of opinion can sometimes lead to a government crisis....Decisions such as these have to be made democratically, whatever the price may be....

To our great regret, the current crisis has not erupted against that background....I think that the more we discuss the Affair, the worse it is for us....We have suffered enough from it already....Unfortunately, there is no one person or political factor in the country which can come and say: enough! Let us stop concerning ourselves with the Affair once and for all.

According to the regular timetable we are now ten months away from the elections to the Sixth Knesset. The preparations for the elections have begun, and I believe that everyone is more or less psychologically ready for them. If the elections were to be brought forward a few months because of the lack of a stable government, I would not regard that as a disaster....Nevertheless, I think that we should strive for the continued stability of the administration and the formation of a government based on a larger and broader majority than the preceding one....This would set an educational example to the nation, teaching people to continue in harness, and placing the state above personal interests....

I think this might even have an effect on the Jews of the diaspora. We know what an effort we have to make to maintain ties with them and

link them with the country and the state. One of the ways of doing this is to make it evident to them that their problems are ours, and ours theirs. It seems to me that it will be difficult to explain to the Jews of the diaspora why this government resigned and why it cannot be stable.

These reasons seem to me to be adequate for preferring to establish a stable government now rather than bringing the elections forward a few months. I would like to conclude by expressing the hope that all those parties which have it in their power to contribute towards reaching a favorable solution in that direction will make the necessary effort, and that this will bear fruit.

...

S. Peres (Mapai): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I feel that the Knesset would have made a valuable contribution to clarifying the issue before us had it agreed on a consistent approach to everybody and everything at all times....For if we decide to take Israel's grave security and political situation into account and not to discuss these issues, we should have decided thus in 1960 too, when we were also beleaguered and besieged. We can decide that as long as Israel is in a state of siege we will not clarify grave and complex issues of this kind. My personal view is that a besieged country remains a free country and must debate its grave and complex problems, as well as correct any errors that have been made. I therefore propose that we decide whether we are to be besieged with a clarification or without, and that that principle should be adhered to at all times. Let us decide how we are to investigate a matter such as the one before us, without considering whether the person who demands it is a member of the Knesset or not. Let us decide that if we are to clarify an issue such as this solely by juridical means, the conclusions reached by non-juridical means should be annulled. Let us declare that juridical and non-juridical findings cannot be on a par with one another, and if someone wants a verdict they should apply to the court, but let us avoid a system whereby one person may obtain a verdict and another—

(From the floor: The "another" refers to David Ben-Gurion.)

M. Begin (Herut): Has he been accused?

S. Peres (Mapai): He has not. David Ben-Gurion, like other members of the Knesset, thinks that he has been unjustly defamed, though perhaps not intentionally, in connection with this subject....We cannot have a situation in which on one occasion we all agree that an investigation of this kind can be held in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, and I say this as one of the people who appeared before it—

H. Landau (Herut): And you refused to answer questions. Perhaps you can tell us why.

S. Peres (Mapai): Control your temper. I don't know what questions you asked. You were not there, and sometimes I wonder who should regret that more.

I have every respect for the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, but I think that in the atmosphere which prevailed there then the chance of calm and objective investigation was nil....You cannot keep changing your minds, at one stage demanding an investigation by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, at another a ministerial committee and at a third a juridical approach. Decide on one method, and I will be prepared to accept it, but apply the same system to everyone and give everyone the same chance.

Let us decide, for example, whether we will adopt a strict or lenient approach to a certain kind of material; what was strict or lenient in 1960 should, in my view, remain so in 1964....If we claim that our memory is limited and that investigations should be conducted near the time at which events occurred, let us decide how long that memory can remain fresh. Were our memories fresh in 1960 and stale in 1964? Let us decide on a system, because if we do not we will be subject to moods and whims....

If in 1960 a very distinguished Knesset Member said: "The question is not who is responsible for planning and implementing certain activities, but who gave that order or orders and who is responsible." If that was correct in 1960, why is it not so in 1964...? Make up your mind, MK Ben-Eliezer....In 1960 MK Moshe Carmel claimed: "No conclusions can be drawn until we manage to get to the bottom of things; let us not conclude matters now without clarifying the matter in full, thereby adhering to justice and truth. It does not concern one person only. Many things are in the balance here which pertain to the essential interests, security and character of the state..."

M. Carmel (Ahdut Ha'Avodah-Po'alei Zion): Was that before or after the seven-man committee?

S. Peres (Mapai): On 25 October 1960, and I do not wish to quote anything else from memory. I would like to know why MK Galili is alarmed by the ramifications of affairs in 1964.

M. Bentov (Mapam): How long is this going to go on? A hundred years?

Y. Bader (Herut): There are answers to all this.

S. Peres (Mapai): In 1960 MK Hazan said: "There are moments when doing justice to an individual becomes the heartfelt desire of the nation and its future....People say that for the sake of etatism we must forego the desire to get to the root of the matter, but the contrary is true; genuine, humane etatism requires absolute justice. Israel must be a just state, or not exist at all."

Why was that principle burning and crucial for the nation's character in 1960, and why has that flame dwindled today? MK Hazan

also said: "On this issue we must not stop mid-way, and I appeal to all the institutions to take no step which could raise even the slightest doubt in the public's mind that an attempt is being made to cover matters up rather than pursue justice."

J. Hazan (Mapam): That was before the seven-man committee.

S. Peres (Mapai): During the investigation by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, MK Hazan made a just proposal, which I respect, namely, that the senior officer should also be allowed to appear before the committee.

M. Begin (Herut): True.

S. Peres (Mapai): I have no complaints—

M. Begin (Herut): Your colleague prevented him from being summoned.

Y. Bader (Herut): I voted in favor of summoning him.

S. Peres (Mapai): Mr. Speaker, defend me.

The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: MK Bader, do you wish to interrupt the present speaker or someone else?

S. Peres (Mapai): MK Hazan, I would like to ask you whether you really had the slightest doubt—I use your phrase—regarding Mr. Pinhas Lavon's rehabilitation?

J. Hazan (Mapam): No.

S. Peres (Mapai): You are in a most fortunate position. But there might be members of the public who do have the slightest doubt, in accordance with the opinions of the Attorney General and the Minister of Justice, and there are new findings, based on the views of two jurists, and that the proceedings of the seven-man committee were defective. If those proceedings were defective I do not think that casts the shadow of a doubt over the members of the committee, and we know what its intentions were. But there were defects. We hear that Knesset Members Pinhas Rosen, Haim Zadok and Menahem Begin hold a different view. Very nice. If that is so, we have before us at least two opinions belonging to two groups or legal schools; when there are two legal schools on one subject, and when the chairman of the seven-man committee says that the only operative conclusion of the ministerial committee is an administrative one, namely, that the investigation of the Affair should cease, when jurists who are generally respected and admired are involved, is there or is there not the slightest doubt...? If anyone had the slightest doubt in 1960, let us decide in 1964, not because you have doubts but because I and others who read those things have, to put an end to them.

M. Begin (Herut): What makes you so sure that there will be an end?

S. Peres (Mapai): ...As soon as we decide on one system we put an end to the system of adapting systems to moods and other things too, perhaps. All I am proposing is that we decide to adhere to one system.

...I suggest that MK Galili refrain from judging people's intentions, since by doing so he puts himself in the same situation....There are differences of opinion within Mapai on a number of subjects; there may be parties within which all views are uniform, but that is not our situation....There was no power struggle in Mapai, some of its members opposed the proposed Alignment, but when the majority decided in favor of it almost the whole Center supported Mr. Eshkol and the Alignment. I saw all the proposals submitted to the Mapai Center regarding the investigation of the Affair. People who demanded an investigation preceded this demand with an expression of complete confidence in Mr. Levi Eshkol. MK Galili should not permit himself to reject the legitimate demands of even one Knesset Member on the basis of suspicions which have crept into his heart, which is most ungenerous where Mapai is concerned.

Y. Bader (Herut): It's all untrue. Why did Eshkol resign?

S. Peres (Mapai): MK Bader, don't interrupt me, hold your peace, smile, do whatever you wish, but it is not honorable to be a professional interrupter.

...MK Galili said that the state would be stirred up. In what way would the state be stirred up if a closed investigation were to be held for two or three years and we reached an agreement with the press, because censorship is based on agreement, not law, and I hope all those concerned will help. Let us let the judges run things quietly. In what way will the country be stirred up? It will be if we leave many things unclear, if we leave doubts—even slight ones—in people's minds, not only with regard to the Affair but also concerning things around it.

MK Bader, for whose ability to express himself I have the greatest respect, said: "When a political rival fights to clear his name and get to the truth against tremendous forces, risking his public future in order to attain the justice he deserves, preferring human respect to public honors, one should not make this difficult for him; on the contrary, one should help him reveal the truth." MK Bader, does that principle apply to one person or to everyone and all cases? MK Bader concluded by saying: "The voters do not want only to hear fine phrases and promises, they want to know the truth." Help to reveal it.

...
The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: I hereby close the debate on the Prime Minister's statement.

Prime Minister's Statement on Establishment of Diplomatic Relations with West Germany

Introduction

When the reparations agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany had been discussed in 1952, the then-Prime Minister assured the Knesset that there would be no diplomatic relations between the two countries. Ten years later, however, as the culmination of a long series of events and debates, that subject was discussed. Although the basic positions of Israel's political parties had not changed, the vast difference in the international environment, and the subtle differences in presentation and emphasis, justify the inclusion of that debate here.

Sitting 460 of the Fifth Knesset

16 March 1965 (12 Adar II 5725)

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, on March 7 the German Federal Republic announced its desire to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. On that day Chancellor Erhard sent a special envoy to Jerusalem to discuss the various problems between the two countries with the Government of Israel. Last Sunday, on March 14, the Government decided to accede to the German Federal Republic's request to establish diplomatic ties with Israel.

I hereby inform the Knesset of that decision. The decision of the German Federal Republic Government was preceded by serious developments, which brought the problem of the relations between Germany and Israel before us in all their gravity.

While we were still engaged in a serious debate concerning the scientists and were seeking to prevent the acquisition of German military technological expertise by Israel's enemies, and while the Jewish people was still discussing with Germany the annulment of the statute of limitations regarding Nazi crimes, we were angered by the German Government's decision to stop fulfilling the obligations it had taken upon itself in various defense spheres, in response to threats and blackmail directed at it by the President of Egypt.

Israel's Government, Knesset and nation expressed their opposition and protest in a serious, dignified and considered way to the German people and the world. We rejected the offer of "compensation," which does not answer the matter of principle arising from the situation. We

regarded Germany as undergoing a historical test, being under a moral obligation to demonstrate its desire to throw off the heritage of horror of the Nazi regime.

In those circumstances I told the Knesset on February 15: "All civilized mankind tends to judge Germany's emergence from the burden of the past by its actions in the sphere of its relations with Israel and the Jewish people. It is also natural to regard Germany's policy towards Israel as a touchstone of its aspirations to fit into the family of nations as one of the factors of stability, security and peace in the world."

Distinguished Knesset, it has been the Government's lot on many occasions to explain its policy towards Germany from this podium. This policy is influenced by the memories of the past. The Holocaust of the Jewish people during the Nazi period adds a special gravity to everything Germany does which could harm the position or feelings of Israel or the Jewish people. We were not sparing in our criticism whenever something of that kind occurred. On the other hand, we did not abandon hope of seeing Germany publicly reject its dreadful heritage and lay a new foundation for its relations with Israel and the Jewish people.

The balance of our relations with Germany during the last few years included an historical account which required special severity as well as the aspiration for a future which would be very different from the terrible past. That balanced policy was made necessary by the circumstances.

Obviously the penetrating dialogue between the nations of Israel and Germany does not take place in a vacuum, cut off from other international factors. It is particularly subject to the influence of considerations and situations originating in the Middle East. When influential bodies arose in Germany which sought ways of atoning for the blood-soaked tragedy which has affected us and wanted, amongst other things, to establish relations of understanding and friendship with Israel, in accordance with the imperative of historical responsibility, the Arab governments intensified their pressure on Germany to avoid fulfilling its obligations towards Israel and the Jewish people. Germany did not always find the political and moral strength to withstand that pressure. Even before it succumbed to Arab blackmail regarding its security commitments it had allowed Arab pressure to affect its position on diplomatic ties with Israel. On 21 December 1964 I said in an interview for German television: "I assume that the Germans will understand that as far as the relations between Germany and Israel are concerned, after the gulf of blood between us, Germany has every right to tell the Arabs not to meddle in its affairs."

There is no doubt that the exaggerated consideration of the Arabs' opinion prevented the German Government from seeking to establish relations with Israel during recent years. On several occasions in the last ten years the Bonn authorities discussed this issue and were de-

terred because of the Arabs. The position of Israel's Government has been clear and frank, claiming that it is incumbent upon Germany to take the initiative in establishing diplomatic ties with Israel, and that Israel will discuss that request seriously, once it is made.

Knesset Members, the proposal submitted to us by Chancellor Erhard's envoy a week ago has a double value. It is an important and weighty political proposal. At this time and place it constitutes a significant example of resistance to the pressure and blackmail exerted by our neighbors, who seek to infect other countries with hatred and hostility towards Israel. In evaluating the German proposal at this time and determining our attitude towards it we cannot ignore the regional and international circumstances in which it has arisen. This moment has arisen during a unique combination of circumstances. We must not miss or reject it.

I should say here that the more we aspire, and we do aspire, to establishing closer ties with the new Europe, Germany's importance within the European community becomes more apparent to us. Our desire to strengthen Israel's position within the new European fabric, as well as the need to encourage opposition to the pressure and blackmail of our neighbors, impel us to answer positively.

Chancellor Erhard's special envoy, Dr. Birnbach, will return to Israel tomorrow to conclude the talks which began approximately ten days ago. Parallel to settling the matter of diplomatic relations, the envoy will also discuss with us several problems on which both Governments wish to reach mutual agreement. I have reason to hope that we will manage to reach a settlement.

I know that the decision we are being asked to make is not a routine one. It is not like establishing diplomatic relations with any other country. We do not usually request ratification of our establishment of diplomatic ties with other countries. We are all caught up in a struggle between emotion and intellect.

The moral and historical account arising from the Holocaust goes beyond any framework of political action. But even that account, which is unequalled in its gravity, cannot absolve us from fulfilling our central and decisive mission in this generation, namely, strengthening the State of Israel. The nation's past, present and future demand and command us to reinforce the state materially and spiritually, so that we may overcome the trials awaiting us.

It is also our sacred duty to assure the state a stable position in the family of nations. It is the memory of the weakness and helplessness of the period in which the Jewish people was destroyed which obliges us to grasp every opportunity to weaken our neighbors and guarantee a strong, firm basis for the continued existence of the Jewish people in its land.

I am sure, Knesset Members, that in weighing up intellect and emotion, the consideration of strengthening the state must tip the scales.

I would like to conclude with a personal remark. I must excuse myself before the Knesset and the participants in the debate for being unable to remain for the debate. Even now I am here against the advice of my physician and the evidence of the thermometer....

M. Begin (Herut): Mr. Speaker, it is now the spring of 1965. This spring the German state proposes to the Jewish state that it establish complete, utter, final and demonstrative normality between them, exchanging ambassadors, upon the presentation of whose credentials, in accordance with diplomatic procedure, two anthems will be played. One of them is the one sung by millions of Jews, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, "To return to the land of our fathers," before and until they were captured, imprisoned, starved, tortured, shot, burned and strangled. The other is the one sung by millions of Germans, from the Atlantic Ocean to the banks of the Volga, as they captured, imprisoned, starved, tortured, shot, burned and strangled those Jews.

But there was another spring, the spring of 1945, when two mighty camps closed with a pincers movement from the east and the west on the kingdom of blood which had arisen for the second time in one generation to rule the world. It was defeated and made to surrender unconditionally.

People die and soldiers are killed in war. In Germany's second war more people died and were killed than in any other war in human history. Nevertheless, when the war ended and victory was declared there was joy in people's hearts, a sense of release and deliverance. And so, even if other countries in the east and the west, in the north and the south, suffered from Germany's bestial brutality, the citizens and soldiers of those countries danced in the streets, threw their caps up in the air and rejoiced at the victory.

One nation did not rejoice, because it did not exist. Between the Baltic and the Black Seas, from the banks of the Volga to the Atlantic Ocean, a ghost passed through dozens of cities, hundreds of towns, thousands of villages, where Jews had lived with their wives and children for many generations. Those upright, honest, cultured people had disappeared as if the ground had swallowed them up. There was no great Jewish nation—six million people—to rejoice at the victory over the wild beast whose fangs had been pulled.

David Hacohen (Mapai): It is we who are the victors.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): You were lucky to remain alive.

M. Begin (Herut): The poet of the enclosed, starved, condemned ghetto, Isaac Katznelson, wrote of that great, mighty and sacred nation on burning scrolls: "Look, my people, see! Arise, stretch out your arms

from pits which are miles deep, which are full to overflowing, layer upon layer, burned with the lime they spilled on you. Arise! Arise! Those who are on the bottommost layer, beneath the deepest rocks! Come out, all of you, from Treblinka, from Auschwitz, from Sobibor, everyone, from Belzec, come, from Ponery, and from other places, and from other places! Come from every corner! With eyes wide open, with a frozen scream, a soundless wail, sunk deep in marshes, from the loam of Greece, from rotting moss, come out, come out, those who were dried and ground and eroded, let the whole community stand up, surrounding me, as if in a round dance, one great circle, grandfathers, grandmothers, fathers, mothers holding their babies, even the tiny infants, arise, Jewish bones, emerge from dust and soap."

Twenty years have passed since that spring. We may well ask, is it already twenty years? The tragedy of our nation is still in our bones, our souls, our whole being. Yet we may also well ask, is it only twenty years since then that the Government of the Jewish state decides to exchange ambassadors with the German state?

Knesset Members, before you are called upon to decide, I ask both friends and rivals to consider who the German ambassador to Israel will represent. To all intents and purposes a representative or ambassador is sent by the President of his country to the President of the country where he is posted. The truth is, however, that every ambassador represents his entire people.

Thus, the German ambassador will come to us, its flag above him and its anthem before him, representing whom? On 5 March 1933, two months after the son of Satan came to power in Germany, elections were held. There were still various parties in Germany then. They all participated in the elections, as was proved by the fact that the Socialists received 7 million votes and the Communists 5 million, accounting for a total of 12 million Germans. Between then and spring 1945 they had all disappeared. Not in Auschwitz, not in the gas chambers, and not in the pits. They disappeared into the German nation acclaiming Hitler. The National Socialist party received 17 million votes in those elections. Was it possible, though, that since they were held after the Nazis had gained control of Germany, terror had influenced some of the voters?

On 10 April 1932, about a year before Hitler gained control of Germany, presidential elections were held and 13 million Germans voted for Adolf Hitler. On July 31 that year general elections were held for the German Reichstag and 13,750,000 Germans voted for the National Socialist party in free, democratic elections in the Weimar Republic. Where are those millions? The Germans who were in their fifties in 1932 and 1933 are probably no longer alive. But most of those who were in their forties, thirties and twenties and in their teens are middle-aged and walking around as free men in their country. That includes those millions of Germans who, in full consciousness, in perfect freedom,

voted for the National Socialist party, which arose to kill every single Jew, if it could. The German ambassador will also represent them in Jerusalem and Israel.

There was a youth organization in Germany. Its name was *Hitlerjugend*. By 1938 it comprised seven million boys and girls. Membership in it had not yet been made compulsory, and German parents sent their sons and daughters to the *Hitlerjugend* of their own free will, as is proved by the fact that in 1938 four million German youngsters did not yet belong to the *Hitlerjugend*, and in 1939 membership was made compulsory for all German youngsters, after which the movement numbered 11 million children from 6 to 18. Where are those millions of German youngsters, who are in their thirties and forties today? They, who absorbed Nazi ideology, racism, tyranny, terror, the idea that might is right, hatred of Jews and the need to kill all Jews, in their most impressionable years, will also be represented by Germany's ambassador in the Jewish state.

There was a Nazi organization called the *Waffen-S.S.*, the vilest German organization, which caused our blood to flow like water. It had 400,000 members. Some of them doubtless died or were killed, but most of them are still alive and were addressed by the Speaker of the German parliament, Herr Gerstenmaier, who sought to persuade them to vote for his party in the elections. The hundreds of thousands of murderers of the *Waffen-S.S.* will also be represented by the German ambassador to our state.

After the Nazis came to power Hitler submitted to the Reichstag a bill known as "The Law to Annul the Privations of the Nation and the Reich." In that Reichstag there were 288 National Socialists. But 441 members of the Reichstag, from every party except the Socialists (the Communists were not in the Reichstag then), voted for that law, which overnight made Germany dependent on one man, the son of Satan, the devil. Those 441 members of the Reichstag included representatives of the party which governs Germany today. The German ambassador to Israel will represent them too.

In 1945 the National Socialist party had 11 million members. Where are they? Some of them died, some of them were killed. How many of them were left, ten million, nine million, eight million? All those millions are citizens with equal rights in modern Germany. The German ambassador will also represent them in Israel's eternal capital.

Once there was a little Polish village called Oswiecim. A man called Hess, the son of a devout Catholic who wanted his son to be a priest, who became the commander of the death camp where two and a half million Jews, including hundreds of thousands of our children and infants, were gassed, no longer walks there. But in Auschwitz, in the death camp, there were installations, there were furnaces, there were ovens. Who built them? The Gestapo issued tenders within Germany for

the provision of those installations. The ancient Frankfurt firm of Topf and Sons supplied the ovens and the furnaces. When the Auschwitz camp was liberated a letter was found there from Mr. Topf and his sons saying: "We hereby supply a useful implement for filling the furnace with coal and a metal fork for putting the bodies into the ovens."

Hess was hanged at Auschwitz by the Poles, but the firm of Topf and Sons still exists. The secretary who wrote that letter is still alive. The engineer who drew up the plan is still alive. The workers who cast those furnaces are still alive. The German ambassador will also represent them in the Jewish state.

In order to kill the Jews at Auschwitz a gas known as Zyklon-B was used. It was produced by I.G. Farben. Hess is no longer alive. The well-known chemicals firm of I.G. Farben still exists, its managers are alive, its employees work. Two German firms received licenses to supply Auschwitz with Zyklon-B. One was from Hamburg, the other from Dessau. The firm from Dessau, Dagash, provided Auschwitz with the poison for killing two million people, and in addition to the gas it provided fans so that those chambers could be aired after the six thousand, eight thousand or twelve thousand bodies had been removed, so that six thousand, eight thousand or twelve thousand Jews could enter those chambers day after day and get the impression that they were entering a bathhouse.

Dr. Gerhard Peters, the head manager of the Dessau firm of Dagash which supplied the Zyklon-B gas, was tried in Germany and sentenced to five years imprisonment. He has been walking the streets of Germany as a free man for many years. He will also be represented by the German ambassador in Israel.

At the trial of Dr. Dehring in London it was revealed that experiments had been performed on young Jewish girls between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, mainly from the Balkans, the like of which had never been performed on human bodies or minds since God created man and man created Satan. But it was also revealed that at Christmas 1942 Professor Dr. Hurth, the Head of the Institute of Anatomy at Strasbourg University, wrote to Himmler's adjutant saying: "We have a collection of skulls of all races, but only a few skulls of the Jewish race. The war in the east gives us an opportunity to overcome that difficulty."

Professor Dr. Hurth, who trained thousands of physicians in Germany and administered the Hippocratic oath to them, did not stop at his request for Jewish skulls for his anthropological experiments, but asked that they be kept whole, writing to Himmler's adjutant: "After the Jew has been put to death, his head is not to be harmed, it should be severed from the body by the physician and sent to us in an hermetically-sealed metal container."

Historical documents prove that thousands of German physicians were involved in and knew about these experiments, and today there is

no one to heal Germany's ills. The German ambassador in Jerusalem will also represent them.

Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, I hope that no one will try to torment us today by saying that there are criminals and villains in other countries too and that they all send and receive ambassadors. But in order to avert that tormenting sophistry I will say straightaway that it is true, there are criminals in all the other nations, and we are no exception. That is why we are allowed to pray with them on the holiest day of the year. But there is a world of difference between those two categories of criminals. Do not insult the regular criminals of the world by comparing them with those criminals, those physicians, those Gluebkes, those Hollanders, those Schroeders. They will also be represented by the German ambassador to Israel.

Thus, the Germany of yesterday, with its millions of members of the National Socialist party, the S.A., the S.S., the *Hitlerjugend*, the murderous physicians, will be represented in the State of Israel by his excellency the ambassador of the President of the German Federal Republic.

But what of the Germany of today? There are those among us who like to erect scarecrows and knock them down, claiming that some of us say that the Germany of today is exactly the same as the Germany of yesterday. No such claim has ever been made. There is a difference between the Germany of yesterday and the Germany of today. The Germany of today no longer has the Sudetenland. The Germany of today is divided. The territory to the east of the River Oder, which in the eleventh and twelfth centuries belonged to the Slavs, whom the Germans persecuted, destroyed and drove out by fire and the sword, returned into the possession of the Slavs. The main difference is that Auschwitz and Treblinka are no longer within Germany's borders. And smoke no longer ascends from the furnaces.

There are differences. And if someone tells me that the Germany of today is not the Germany of the Nazis he will have to prove that in view of these documents and facts. But of course, it is not controlled by all those Nazis. Has anyone denied that the Nazis of yesterday belong to the Germany of today? Have they vanished? Did they die or were they killed? Have they all gone, and is it not on their behalf that their ambassador speaks?

And now, Mr. Speaker, since we are speaking of the Germany of today and facing an historic turning point in our relations with it, permit a Jew to pronounce "j'accuse" against it, against the Germany of today.

I accuse the Germany of today of deceiving the whole civilized world. As a result of growing pressure from world public opinion Germany's two houses of representatives may decide to extend what is known as the statute of limitations regarding war crimes and crimes against humanity. That is the German deception. People who killed hundreds of thousands of men, women and children are sentenced to

two, three or four years imprisonment by the German courts. Eichmann's chief assistant, Kromay, who murdered 400,000 Hungarian Jews in the last few months of the Second World War, is a free man. His own assistant was acquitted. Sisters of murder, who killed thousands of sick people while carrying out "orders," are acquitted and permitted to go free, while the public cheers them.

I accuse the Germany of today that in one region alone, Bavaria, 11,000 of its 12,000 teachers were active Nazis, members of the S.A. and the S.S. who taught the younger generation and the generation of murderers, and are continuing to educate German youngsters today.

I accuse the Germany of today that most of the General Staff of its renewed army comprises generals who swore loyalty to Adolf Hitler and received, passed on and implemented orders issued by Marshalls Minstein and Reichenau. During the Second World War Marshall Minstein, who is considered to be the most distinguished soldier in the Germany of today, wrote: "The German soldier must show understanding for the need to take severe vengeance on the Jews." We know what "severe vengeance on the Jews" means. And Marshall Reichenau wrote: "The German soldier must understand the necessity of taking severe but just vengeance on subhuman Jewry." We know what German "just vengeance" on Jewry means.

I accuse the Germany of today that 17 of its Supreme Court judges at Karlsruhe were Nazis, evil judges, meting out wickedness, turning the word "justice" into a curse and sending innocent people to execution by hanging or the firing squad.

I accuse the Germany of today that 27 presidents of its Regional Courts are former Nazis whose hands are stained with blood.

I accuse the German Ministers Vladimir Kroft and Emmanuel Freusker of having been S.S. officers and members of Adolf Hitler's special guard.

I accuse German Foreign Minister Schroeder of having been a member of the National Socialist party and a leader of the murderous S.S.

I accuse Minister of Justice Shaeffer of having praised Adolf Hitler as the savior of the German Reich.

I accuse Minister of Transport Sebohm of having been the Nazis' financial advisor in Silesia and in degraded and ravaged Czechoslovakia.

I accuse Dr. Ludwig Erhard that, out of cynical calculations of German utilitarianism under pressure, on the one hand, and in the face of the vehement protest of the entire civilized world, on the other, he has proposed—for Germany's sake, for its interests, and to redeem himself and his nation temporarily—that diplomatic, or Ulbrichtic, relations be established with Israel; I accuse the German Chancellor of today of having cooperated with the Nazi regime throughout its existence. I accuse

Dr. Ludwig Erhard of having been the personal advisor of the infamous Gauleiter Birkel in the Saar region, and of having headed the Hitlerite Institute of Economic Research.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the Germany of today. You may ask, what about the other countries? They also suffered at the hands of the Nazis, they fought Germany and defeated it. They know too.

Members of the Knesset, in order to reply I will ask: did Germany kill 70 million Russians? 60 million Americans? 18 million Englishmen? 16 million Frenchmen? 3 million Belgians? That is the relative number of Jews that Germany killed, one-third of a nation. And should there be no difference—that is the crucial historical question—between our attitude to Germany and that of other nations? And should there be no difference between our attitude to other nations and to Germany? They send ambassadors to Germany, and we will send representatives to it too; Germany sends representatives to them, and will send us one too. Normalization. Is there no difference? That is the question.

Emotion. And all those heroes here in this House who proved until recently how on internal issues they are motivated by the emotions of hatred and jealousy, will say: it is an emotion which one must overcome. Only emotion asks: will there be no difference? I ask the intellect, logic: will there be no difference in the relations between us and Germany? Between us and other countries? There is a French ambassador in Israel, an American ambassador, a Russian ambassador, a Belgian ambassador—will there also be a German ambassador? Will there be no difference in relations in the triangle of them and Germany and us and Germany? Where is intellect? Where is this nation's historical logic?

How powerful symbols are. Last Sabbath we read in the synagogue the chapter concerning Saul, Samuel and Agog the Amalekite. A bridge of five hundred years connects that chapter with the passage in the Mosaic Law which says: "Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt. How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God." The passage—to which I will come back—ends with the words "do not forget," having begun with the word "remember."...

Across hundreds and thousands of years the words Isaac Katznelson wrote on scorched scrolls reverberate: "Every German is mortal. Every German's hands are soiled with Jewish blood, with the blood of an old person, a child or a woman." Nonetheless, gentlemen, there cannot and will not be a war of vengeance in our time. There are wars of independence, defensive wars, wars of necessity. There cannot and will not be a war of vengeance. We cannot wipe the German nation off the face of the earth. We cannot. We cannot fulfill Isaac Katznelson's call to utilize every opportunity to harm every German because every Ger-

man's hands are soiled with the blood of a Jewish child. We cannot. But what can we do?

Someone will undoubtedly speak of extremism today again. What could be more moderate than to ask this nation and this state to refrain from becoming friendly with Germany in the generation of the destruction, not to exchange ambassadors with it, not to establish tourism, not to play its disgusting anthem *Deutschland, Deutschland Uber Alles in der Welt*, and not to hoist its unclean flag, which flew above the destroyed homes and piles of rubble beneath which our fathers and mothers were buried? What more moderate thing could one ask?

After every step our teachers and masters come and say: but we have not forgotten, nor will we forget. An agreement is made between nations, between countries, regarding payments. It is called a reparations agreement by those who advocate it. The world calls it a forgiveness and atonement agreement, and that term has been proved to be more accurate. And we are told: we have not forgotten, nor will we forget. Weapons made by Jewish hands are sent to German hands, including some which did the bloody work. And we are told: we have not forgotten, nor will we forget. Uniforms are sewn by Jewish hands, including those on which a number is tattooed, for the German army. And we are told: we have not forgotten, nor will we forget. Delegations of teachers are sent to study in Germany. And we are told: we will always remember. Delegations from Germany are welcomed and taken to Jewish schools. And we are told: we will always remember. They say that the Germany of today is not the Germany of yesterday; the past is past; this is a completely different Germany. It is permissible to draw close to it, it is permissible to grant it complete moral rehabilitation. And we are told: we have not forgotten, nor will we forget. How? Without a doubt each and every one of you remembers, has not forgotten, will not forget. How could you? But what we are talking about is national remembrance, the failure to forget of an entire nation. And for the last thirteen years, since the Germans began paying—not beforehand—there has been one act after another, one step after another, which is tantamount to saying how can this nation, these youngsters, remember, how can it fulfill the commandment "thou shalt not forget," when it sees the German flag and hears the German anthem.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the historical and moral aspect of establishing relations with Germany. It is crucial. But there is also the political and security aspect.

When Hitler stood up in the Reichstag on 30 January 1939 and made the following announcement: "If the Jewish financiers manage once again to embroil the world in war, the result will be the destruction of the Jewish race throughout Europe," the world heard but did not believe. Our people listened, but did not accept. After what we have experienced, however, if an enemy of the Jews says that he wishes to destroy them, the

first response of every Jew must be: I believe that that is what he wants to do. It is no coincidence that for years Israel's most dangerous enemy today, Nasser, has been seeking weapons with which to destroy the Jews, man, woman and child. He knows that his army cannot defeat ours, neither in this generation nor in those to come, on any battlefield; that is why he is trying to get hold of weapons of mass destruction which can be operated from afar, and is beginning to manufacture weapons of that nature. With whose help? With the help of German scientists. It is now March 1965, two years since the Knesset passed its famous resolution, but the German scientists are still in Egypt. There is a transient disagreement between Egypt and Germany, but the scientists say that they will continue to remain in Egypt and produce the weapons of destruction for Nasser. The Germans deceived us and the whole world with the law against those scientists. Where is it?

Let's imagine that, after Dr. Birnbach comes with his generous offer...on behalf of Dr. Ludwig Erhard, the Government of Israel says: *non possumus*, we who belong to the generation that was destroyed cannot establish normal diplomatic relations with you only twenty years after Auschwitz and Treblinka. You Germans, who have put destructive weapons in the hands of Israel's most dangerous enemy, must remove them from there. What tremendous force that demand would have had throughout the world after that rejection. But you did the opposite. You shook the German hand which was extended to you. How can you demand that the German scientists be removed from Egypt forthwith? Ask Germany and it will tell you: what do you want of us? Can you not see that we have quarrelled bitterly with the whole Arab world in order to grant you recognition, in order to give you a German ambassador, and do you want us, in the wake of that dispute, to immediately risk the wrath of the Arabs by removing our scientists from Egypt?

At the Zionist Congress I heard Dr. Goldmann say that German Ministers had told him that Germany could not remove its scientists from Egypt because that would be an act of hostility towards that country. They have scientists in India, Pakistan and all over the world. The Egyptians would ask why they were removing their scientists only from their country. What an explanation! Now it will be doubly and trebly valid. Germany is at loggerheads with the Arab world, supposedly on Israel's account. Do you want them to quarrel with it over the German scientists too? The outcome of that policy will be that the German ambassador will reside in Jerusalem, and the German scientists will reside in Cairo. What is preferable as far as Israel's security, as far as the future and lives of its sons and children, is concerned?

A few weeks ago you said that Germany was repudiating the agreement it had signed, that it was no longer supplying the arms it had promised us, and that arms were preferable to diplomatic relations. Will you now say that diplomatic relations are preferable to arms? Be-

cause Germany says quite explicitly that it will no longer send us arms. Out of its well-known hypocrisy, using the language of euphemism, it does not say that it will not send arms to Israel, it says: we have decided not to send arms to areas of tension, i.e., Israel, any more. And if you ask it to send us arms again, it will say: what do you want of us, we have given Nasser our word. First, we will stop sending arms to Israel. Then we will establish diplomatic relations with it, but if you want both diplomatic relations and arms, we have quarrelled with the Arabs. From your point of view, not ours, which is preferable?

Germany has a disagreement with the Arabs today. That will soon be over. There are those among us who rejoiced when they heard the news about the establishment of diplomatic relations with Germany. There are days when one must do an extremely distasteful duty, when one must dampen joy and quash gladness. Do not rush to rejoice, those yeah-sayers among you. Countries which are piqued with one another soon put matters to rights. After the Suez Campaign all the Arab countries severed relations with Britain and France. And now? It's enough to ask. I have no doubt that within a few months, less than a year, this quarrel will blow over and Germany will appease the Arab countries. And how will it court them in order to quell their wrath? What will it not give them in return for its diplomatic relations with Israel? It has already given our enemies billions of dollars. It has already sent them experts in every field, including that of weapons of destruction.

Now there is a transient dispute between them. In order to overcome it in the next few years what will Germany not give Israel's enemies? What is preferable, then? A German ambassador in Jerusalem, and German scientists, German money and German experts in Cairo, Baghdad, Damascus and elsewhere?

The Prime Minister said today that we were all caught up in a conflict between emotion and intellect. I beg to differ. In this instance there is no distinction between pure, sacred emotion and intellect. They are one and the same. Both emotion and intellect, both heart and mind, tell us not to accept full and final normalization, before the whole world, in the generation of the destruction, between the nation which was destroyed and the people which destroyed it. But if it is true that we are all caught up in a conflict, then let us go to the nation. Let us ask it. What fault can you find with that proposal? Are these diplomatic relations with any country? This is an historical turning point, after all. We will make this decision only once in our lifetime. Let us ask our nation. Let every Jew say what his conscience tells him, yeah or nay. This topic was not part of the public debate three years ago. It has never been discussed. Let every Jew decide, yeah or nay.

We therefore propose that a general referendum be held in Israel on this fateful, historic, moral, political, security, unprecedented and unique question.

But you will undoubtedly reject this proposal too. You will not even accept the Jewish national rejection of the Germany of today. We will remain in the minority today, not for the first time. Ever since we have been called to fight for Beitar, Zion and Sinai we have been a minority at various times. And when, in our old age, knowing that it will not be long before we have to make way for our sons to succeed us, we assess the course we have taken and ask ourselves whether we did right or wrong by our nation in what we said and did, even though we were in the minority, I can say tonight, on behalf of my colleagues, that we have nothing to be ashamed of. We have no reason to look down in shame and hang our heads. On the contrary, from the time we began to speak out our faith in a Jewish state, until the day our leader and teacher demanded that the Jews of Europe be evacuated before it was too late, we have heard apologies from such persons as Shalom Asch and Isaac Greenbaum for having opposed the evacuation plan. And from the time we began the battle against foreign rule in order to forge the way for the nation to live in freedom and honor, until the day we opposed the "restitution" agreement, and to this very day, despite the fact that we are in a minority, we can hold up our heads and say: we did not do wrong by our people. We were right.

We will remain in the minority today, too. We have never accepted the view which Ibsen delineated in his "An Enemy of the People," namely, that the minority is always right. Even though Ibsen attacked those who distort democracy, his theory is anti-democratic. We reject it. But we certainly do not accept the theory that the majority is always right. How many times in our generation has the majority erred fatally, and particularly the vast majority in the democratic British parliament, which supported Neville Chamberlain at the time of Munich?

We are convinced that the majority is wrong. We regret this bitterly. We regret the fact that it contains Jews alongside whom, despite differences, we have undergone historic trials and tribulations, in peace and in war. We regret the fact that it also contains friends. We will remain in the minority, but we know that we will do our duty to our people and our country when we utterly reject the German proposal this night, and when we say to the people of Israel, remember, and do not forget.

...

M. Unna (National Religious Party): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, today we are called upon to decide whether to establish relations with Germany or not. It is only natural that we should have doubts and feel uncomfortable. One could get the impression that we are merely an object of political considerations in the political struggle between Germany and Nasser, and it is not Germany's desire to place its relations with us on a normal basis which directs it, although we hope that its sense of guilt and obligation towards us operated here too. Both

those among us who have always regarded the establishment of relations as necessary for us in both political and security terms, and who consequently felt that we should direct matters towards that end, and those who thought that we should not hasten to take that step, whose significance is not limited to the political sphere, must ask themselves whether today's circumstances do not require them to reassess their views.

Anyone who thought, like me, that there was no need to hasten towards this step, because establishing relations too soon could work against us, leading to negative results in the sphere of the public's national-moral consciousness, which is anyway not sufficiently developed, imagined that this day would come once Germany had brought an impressive number of Nazi criminals to justice; once the people with dubious backgrounds occupying official positions in Germany had dwindled to insignificant numbers; and once Germany's position in the world was not determined solely by its economic ability and significance and by its being a focus of world unrest and tension, but was primarily the outcome of its contribution to solving the problems afflicting the world.

On the other hand, anyone who sees the subject only through the prism of contemporary political and security aspects must ask himself whether those circumstances do not in advance create an abnormal background for these relations, even imposing obligations which could weigh heavily upon us in the future.

Today we must make a political decision. Our historical answer is not, cannot be, identical with the contemporary political decision at every moment and stage. The historical answer endures, and is fully expressed by such statements as the one made by...Rashi: "Although God may forgive the idolators for their other sins, He will not forgive them for having killed Jews."

Today the answer of each one of us who does not completely reject the possibility of establishing relations with Germany will first and foremost—and perhaps solely—be the result of his evaluation of our political situation and his assessment of the repercussions which a negative answer might have.

I think that there is no disagreement between us as regards the fact that over the last year our political situation has deteriorated and that the foci of danger for us have multiplied without our managing to create a counterweight in the political sphere. On the contrary, political developments have strengthened our enemies and boosted their activities against us. The changes which have taken place in Africa, the U.N. and the non-aligned countries have tended to increase the difficulties confronting us. One could get the impression that we have not yet reached the end of the road as regards the negative developments. In these circumstances it is incumbent upon us to utilize every opportunity

to reinforce our position and turn the negative tide of political developments. Establishing relations with Germany can work in our favor in two spheres: our international standing will be reinforced and stabilized by the normalization of relations between us and a power such as Germany, striking a fairly serious blow to our enemies, reducing their capacity to blackmail and exert pressure and damaging their prestige. Any political event which dims Nasser's glory today boosts our security. Hence his desperate attempts to offset the negative result for him of the establishment of relations between us and Germany by pan-Arab actions, tightening the link between the Arab countries and stressing that link to the outside. Were it not for the fact that Nasser regards the political developments connected with Germany's decision to establish relations with us as a serious political failure for him, it would be impossible to understand why he has taken such drastic steps and adopted such an hysterical tone in speaking of them.

We should give even greater consideration to the other side of the coin, namely, to assessing the negative results of rejecting the proposal, than to the positive ones. Rejection means not only foregoing additional stability in our internal situation, but also, and primarily, turning Nasser's failure into an achievement and even victory. For the inevitable result will be that Germany will regard itself as having been hurt and as being freed of a great part of its obligations towards us, and will lavish greater attention on cultivating its ties with the Arabs. Nasser would be able to point to a new achievement in his aggressive policy, thereby strengthening his position not only in the Arab countries but also in Africa and the whole world. With our own hands we would be improving Nasser's situation and advancing his plans against us. Do those who oppose giving a positive answer fail to see that?

We must utilize the political constellation which has been created in a calculated way and to the maximum. Apart from our demands on Germany, we must examine closely how this innovation in the international arena could influence other political problems in the world and open paths to a new initiative from us which would bring us up out of Egypt and weaken pressures dictated to us today by a policy which greatly limits our ability to maneuver.

In this connection I would like to mention the speeches made by the Tunisian President, Habib Bourguiba. We do not yet know the significance of his statement rejecting war as a way of solving international disputes and his declaration that Jews and Arabs can live in peace and mutual respect. But what he said undoubtedly has a positive ring to it and is unlike anything else we have heard emanating from the Arab camp for a long time. Bourguiba is connected with the Arab world as well as with France and Europe. What he said may well be more than an expression of dissatisfaction with Nasser's position and overwhelming influence in the Arab countries.

Our political doctrine is, after all, to rend the circle of hostility which perpetually surrounds us, and to attain a stable peace. Anything appearing on the political horizon which could help us towards that end should be given careful attention. If it contains even a grain of promise of being able to develop into something bearing the fruits of peace, we should cultivate it with all our ability.

If we have reached the conclusion that we should establish relations with Germany, we must not ignore the new problems which that decision imposes upon us. Diplomatic relations create living facts of public appearances, receptions, anthems, etc. We must make sure that none of this gives rise to any hitch. Thus, it is not enough for the resolution to be passed by a large majority in the Knesset. After the decision has been reached we must all—even those who oppose it—explain the considerations which led us to make a positive decision, so that they may be understood by all those whose grieving and wounded memories—and before whom I bow my head—have not cut them off completely from the capacity to understand the political-security aspect of this problem.

I do not accept the view that by establishing political relations we are preparing the way for relations with Germany in every sphere. Statements to that effect have been made, and I reject them. The diplomatic relations should encourage the development of cultural and social relations less than the reparations. More than ever our relations with Germany should be motivated by Israel's security needs and our desire to help those Germans who sincerely wish to overcome the heritage of the Nazis, and who are making efforts to stamp out the remnants of Nazism among their people, for there are still many of them. In that we can, and must, help.

Is there a different Germany? The debate on that issue was not to the point, in my view. For if people want to prove that there is a different Germany by stating that Erhard is not Hitler, they have not proved anything, nor is there anyone among us who would make that claim. If, however, it is claimed that the German nation today is the same as before and has not changed in any way, that would be unfair to all those who are fighting stubbornly and consistently against the phenomena of neo-Nazism which are not rare in the Germany of today, and there many such people, as we must acknowledge.

The question for us is whether we can say that the Germany of today, in which there are still many tens of thousands of people who participated actively in the Nazi horrors and live as respectable citizens, even occupying official positions, is a different Germany. In my opinion, as long as the situation remains as it is we cannot yet speak of a different Germany, i.e., a Germany which has no connection whatsoever with Nazi Germany. Let us hope that that day will come, and that it is not far off. Meanwhile we must take those steps which will help us become strong and will help them to overcome the Nazism which still exists.

We are now in the month of Adar, which is a lucky month for Jews, a time when mourning turned into joy. May it be a good omen for us, may recent events and our decision today go well for us and may they end in joy.

I. Barzilai (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, those who advocate full and correct diplomatic relations between Israel and West Germany claim that these ties do not reflect any rapprochement or appeasement. Even countries which are hostile to one another maintain diplomatic relations, they say. Why, then, should we not separate our national and historical account with Germany from the customary international practice?

The question remains, however, why wasn't Israel prepared to establish diplomatic relations with Germany ten years ago? The answer was then that our account with both Germanies was unique, extending far beyond any customary international practice, and that we could not sanction the so-called normalization of relations between us. There was a tragic uniqueness in those relations which was to be reflected in the fact that our relations with Germany could not be as they were with other countries.

At that time Ministers and party leaders, who advocate "normalization" today, explained that as long as Germany's character was molded by the generation which had witnessed and participated in the Nazi horrors, as long as the German authorities had not found ways of eradicating Nazism from its institutions, as long as it aspired to the rearmament of Germany, the State of Israel—which nationally and historically represented the history, desires and hopes of the Jewish people—could not treat Germany like any other country. Then, too, Israel knew that the lack of diplomatic ties could impose "operative" limitations, yet refrained from "normalizing" relations with Bonn.

The Prime Minister did not say then, as he did today, that "The moral and historical account arising from the Holocaust goes beyond any framework of political action." Why did the man who was Minister Eshkol then and is Prime Minister today not regard the establishment of diplomatic relations, as he said today, "as an opportunity to strengthen the establishment of the nation in its renewed homeland"?

Moreover, the Government of Israel thought that it should warn the world of the danger of arming Germany. On 16 November 1954 the Knesset passed the following resolution unanimously: "The Knesset expresses its deep concern in view of the renewed armament of East and West Germany. The Knesset appeals to the world to remember and not forget what Germany did to the world, and particularly to the Jewish people, and prevent the danger of the recurrence of the Holocaust..."

What has happened since then? How has Germany developed? Has it increased the pace with which it has exposed Nazis, has it abandoned its aspirations which threaten world peace and augur "the recurrence of

the Holocaust"? Those who justify drawing close to West Germany attempt to "prove" that Germany is "different" and is developing in a desirable direction. MK Ben-Gurion declared recently that "the people who rule Germany were never Nazis," and it is as well that he added "to the best of my knowledge."...Thus, he does not appear to know what he should know, what every child in Germany knows, namely, for example, that the Minister of Transport was and still is a Nazi; that Minister of Justice Bucher, who vehemently opposes extending the statute of limitations for Nazi crimes, received a gold medal for excellence from the *Hitlerjugend* and has stated that it is better to live among murderers than to interfere with the statute of limitations. Even Schroeder has admitted that as a young attorney he belonged to the Nazi party. How, then, is Germany throwing off its heritage of horror, as the Prime Minister described it today?

Der Spiegel, which the Deputy Minister of Defense, Shimon Peres, found worthy of granting an interview, reported this month that "Ribbentrop's generals have conquered desks in Bonn's Foreign Ministry, Hitler's generals wear the official dress of the Bundeswehr, and above all, the judiciary and the police are full of Nazis. This year a Nazi hunter was discovered to be a Nazi himself." The Director of the Center for Tracking Nazi Crimes, Irwin Shiolla, was himself a Nazi. Dr. Helmuth Kraumnik, the Director of the Institute of Contemporary Events, and who often appeared as an expert in trials of Nazis, joined the Nazi party in 1932. The Minister of Justice complains of the injustice of the fact that the university professors and physicians who taught the nurses how to administer "mercy killing" occupy respectable positions in the country while "the poor nurses are persecuted." His conclusion is not, God forbid, that the professors and physicians should be brought to trial, but on the contrary, that the accusation against the nurses should be dropped. And indeed, the West German court acted on his recommendation. Today's evening papers mention the fact that the Deputy Minister of Economic Development in the Bonn Government is suspected of having killed Jews.

That is the "different" Germany of today which is throwing off its heritage of horror, to use the Prime Minister's phrase. Ten years after 1954 it is not denazification but renazification that we see. On her return from a visit to Germany in 1961 the late Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt told the members of a synagogue in Los Angeles that about 80 percent of West Germany's official institutions were staffed by former Nazis. A survey conducted in West Germany by *Time* magazine revealed that nine out of ten schoolchildren knew that Hitler had built highways, ended unemployment and taken care of working mothers. One out of ten knew that Hitler had also concerned himself with killing Jews.

Only a few months ago Vice Admiral Hay resigned and revealed that in the German army the Prussian and Nazi spirit was being culti-

vated "like in the good old days." Two weeks ago a journalist called Sultzberger reported from Bonn that 43 percent of the German population aspired to restoring West Germany's borders to what they were in 1937, i.e., the attitude tending towards a new war has increased in recent years. It is not for nothing that Bonn is fighting to be included in the multinational nuclear network, and that several NATO countries oppose this. Germany's development during the last ten years as regards its internal regime and international pretensions does not only not justify lessening our anxiety over the normalization of relations, but also obliges us to sound the alarm at the dangers this development involves. If Israel and the Jewish people did not consider relations with Germany appropriate ten years ago, they are even less appropriate today.

There has also been a considerable deterioration in the sphere of Israel-German relations in recent years, particularly since German scientists appeared on Egyptian soil and took part in preparing weapons of destruction directed against Israel. Our protests and demands that the scientists' activities be stopped were fruitless and certainly did not convince the West German Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Development, who stated that the removal of the scientists from Egypt would harm the technological endeavor of the German people and the expansion of its political influence in the Near East. The German scientists remained in Egypt not because of the impotence of the Bonn authorities but because of their unwillingness to remove them from there. The Bonn authorities reached the heights of inconsiderateness and damage to Israel when they offered Nasser a deal, proposing that they would cease supplying arms to Israel in return for Egypt's cancellation of Ulbricht's visit....Nasser did not accept the offer. Bonn's attempt to make Israel a bargaining card between it and Nasser aroused the anger and disgust of the Jewish people, as well as the dissatisfaction and scorn of world public opinion. There were signs of an economic boycott of Germany. Bonn's ambassadors in the capitals of the West were embarrassed and reported the decline of their country's prestige even in the eyes of their allies. The West European press attacked and mocked the German leadership. The Bonn Government was on the verge of collapse.

D. Hacohen (Mapai): How did East Europe deal with that?

I. Barzilai (Mapam): I'll tell you in a minute.

D. Hacohen (Mapai): Please do.

I. Barzilai (Mapam): I don't want to tell you what they say about people who hear only half of what is said.

It was at this point that Erhard decided to save his prestige by proposing diplomatic relations with Israel, while reiterating his intention of stopping the supply of arms to Israel because of his concern for peace in

an area of tensions. Is the area where Germany is situated less full of tension than ours, and is that why West Germany opposes nuclear disarmament...? A Mapai newspaper calls this easy way out of the mess in which the Bonn authorities found themselves, and in which we serve as a bargaining card and toy in their relations with the Arab countries: "a revolutionary change in West Germany's attitude to our state." The Foreign Minister for some reason terms it: "An honorable request with which no fault can be found." And MK Kol...regards it as an expression of soul-searching and not merely a reaction to Ulbricht's visit. The chairman of Germany's majority party defined the approach to us as a punishment for the slap in the face Nasser had given them....Is that soul-searching? The Prime Minister admires "Bonn's stand in the face of the blackmailing pressure of the Arab leaders." Had Nasser agreed not to invite Ulbricht there would have been no proposal from Bonn. Is that soul-searching? For over ten years it did not occur to Bonn to suggest that, not even in Dr. Adenauer's time, but now, after slapping us in the face, their "conscience" has suddenly awakened, and what was done was done because of "soul-searching." Who believes that?

We are told that "security reasons" favor diplomatic relations; but the diplomatic relations are proposed to Israel by Erhard not for the sake of but instead of the military aid, the cessation of which is bruited by all the Bonn spokesmen so that the Arab leaders may hear of it and be appeased. We should also stop using the term "security reasons" too readily. One day we are told that military aid from Germany is essential, and the next we are told that it is giving us arms which belong to someone else, so Moshe Dayan said, and which we could obtain from their original source. Thus, the phrase military aid at some times has military implications, at others political ones.

...In the interview he granted to *Der Spiegel*, Shimon Peres said, among other things: "Israel is convinced that, for various reasons, Germany should participate in maintaining the balance of power in the Near East." Thus, it is not military equipment which counts but the political aspect of bringing West Germany into the region as the guardian of the balance of power. Shimon Peres thinks that the orientation towards Germany has already been achieved in part, while we think that it is a broken reed in both fair weather and foul. All we need for our security is that West Germany, the focal point of East-West tension, the stumbling block to East-West coexistence, the supplier of scientists for the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction in this region, should be the preserver of the peace here....

...Ulbricht's statement in Egypt that Israel was established by imperialism as a spearhead against the Arabs' rights is a distortion of the truth and a travesty of history...because our state was founded with the support of the U.S.S.R., and the Eastern Bloc gave us valuable aid when we had to defend ourselves against the Arab rulers. Ulbricht said what

his Egyptian hosts wanted to hear, making statements contradicting East Germany's avowed policy, which advocates the solution of disputes between sovereign states by peaceful means. The East German leader who ignores his nation's moral obligation towards the Jewish people contradicts the statements about the reeducation of the German nation and the efforts to stamp out the heritage of the Nazis.

And so, the German scientists will continue to work in Egypt, and we read in the press that they are to be joined by other German scientists. Defense aid to Israel will stop, so Bonn declares, before diplomatic relations are established, so that there will be no misunderstandings in the future. In return we will gain a German embassy, perhaps in Jerusalem, with "the usual ceremony," as MK Moshe Dayan put it. Perhaps for the former Chief of Staff saluting the Prussian eagle as *Deutschland uber Alles* is played is "the usual ceremony," but for me it is not, and I am not ashamed of this "sensitivity." At least consider the feelings of the thousands of Holocaust survivors, for whom *Deutschland uber Alles* arouses associations of witnessing their brethren being taken to the death camps, and do not speak so nonchalantly of "the usual ceremony."...I am not one of those who demand that we separate emotion from intellect, and I believe that a rational approach can and should be compatible with an emotional response in this instance.

We are told that if we reject the offer of diplomatic ties we will again push Bonn into Nasser's arms. There is no ignoring that point, which was so ably put forward by MK Unna. But does he not see that there are two sides to that argument? Anyone who follows Bonn's behavior can see the efforts at appeasement even now, during the period of the "quarrel" with Nasser. The Bonn authorities are already trying to convince the Arab countries that the cessation of military aid to Israel is more important to them than the diplomatic relations. That, incidentally, is also the view expressed by Shimon Peres.

The journalists in Bonn report that there is optimism about healing the rift with the Arab leaders. The establishment of diplomatic ties with Israel is also intended to show the Arab rulers that there is a limit to their disdain for the Bonn authorities. There are indications that Bonn will use its diplomatic ties with Israel as a bargaining card in reaching a new settlement with the Arab countries.

The Chairman of the Bundestag, Gerstenmaier, said that only a few months ago Nasser did not actually agree to the establishment of diplomatic relations between Bonn and Israel, but did not recoil from the idea too vehemently, placing greater emphasis on the cessation of military aid. The Arab countries are in no hurry to burn all their bridges with Bonn, despite certain decisions and demonstrations of strength. It may be that with the help of such intermediaries as Franco's envoy the dispute between Bonn and Cairo will end in an understanding. And

just as we were a ball in the first half of the game of Bonn-Arab relations, the half which led to the "quarrel," it is not inconceivable that we will be a ball in the second half, which will lead to "let's make up."

Only yesterday Bonn's spokesmen stressed the traditional friendship with the Arabs. Today too, even before relations with us have been established, before the crisis with the Arab leaders has passed, they can wink and say that military aid to Israel is still stopped, and that is more important to the Arab countries than the exchange of ambassadors. Thus, there is calculation in the German game; but it is not soul-searching.

It was a calculated act on their part to attain Jewish rehabilitation and display it to the world. It was a calculated act on their part to obtain "Uzi" rifles and army uniforms for the Bundeswehr from Israel. It was calculated so that they received a moral imprimatur from Jews to carry arms; a moral imprimatur from the State of Israel, which two or three years previously had cried out against the rearmament of Germany.

The "Uzis" were not needed to build Germany's military strength, and were passed on, even reaching Sudan, so we read in the press. But the "Uzis" were needed as proof that even Israel did not recoil from participating in a small, even symbolic, way in arming Germany, even though it had cautioned the world against it.

On more than one occasion we have paid the price of our fear of annoying the Bonn authorities, whether this was needful or not. That was why the senior official "resigned;" that was why the campaign against the actions of the German scientists in Egypt was arrested in mid-course. Things reached such a point that when Bonn announced the cessation of military aid to Israel, a campaign of whispers began, initiated by those who warned us not to stretch Germany's patience too far, because the recent crisis with Germany was also Israel's fault.

MK Ben-Gurion's declaration that the recent crisis between Israel and Germany was caused by Jerusalem and Bonn "without benefit to themselves," puts the blame on the Government of Israel and also warns it that now, after Bonn has condescended to establish diplomatic relations, we must be very careful not to annoy Germany with "emotional" demands and accounts. And one is horrified and wonders what else Israel will be expected to pay for the gesture of diplomatic relations.

If yesterday people thought that Israel was "exaggerating" in its struggle against the statute of limitations or in the affair of the scientists, and today people are so eager to respond to Bonn's invitation, fearing to pose conditions lest Bonn retract, then the day after the German ambassador's arrival here certain people will doubtless advise Israel to go on tiptoe in order not to push Bonn closer to Cairo, as if the events of the recent past and the future vicissitudes of Bonn's friendship with the Arab countries depend only on us.

...If there is a lesson to be learned from the crisis of Israel's relations with Germany it is that a firm stand by Israel and the mobilization of world public opinion, both Jewish and non-Jewish, against West Germany, forced the Bonn authorities to find ways of supposedly appeasing Israel after slapping it in the face.

That, however, is not the way to correct the contemporary and historical injustice. And we are helping it to absolve itself of the need to discharge its obligations towards our people....Israel must maintain both its special moral position vis-à-vis Germany and its political sense. We face a serious struggle, extending over a considerable period of time, until the German scientists are withdrawn from Egypt, until the statute of limitations for Nazi crimes is rescinded completely, until the Nazism which flourishes in every sphere of life in Germany has been uprooted and until the threat to the peace of the world and the welfare of the Jewish people which is embodied in German militarism has been eliminated.

It is not yet time for the normalization of relations with Germany. Neither the historical account nor current political circumstances justify the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and Germany, and we will vote against the Government's proposal.

M. Carmel (Ahdut Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, it is our view that the German Federal Republic's proposal to establish diplomatic relations with Israel should not be accepted, and we will not support it. The time is not yet ripe for the normalization of relations between Israel and Germany in this generation, which has witnessed the disasters of the war and the Holocaust of the Jewish people, for which the German nation is responsible. Before it attains that, Germany must make an effort to rid itself completely of the remnants of Nazism and to fulfill its duty towards the Jewish people in its state, which was Hitler's chief victim.

I do not wish to address the international aspects of the problem of Germany....I would like to stress, however, that Germany cannot attain normal relations with Israel when it omits to fulfill its obligation to eradicate the Nazism within it, to suppress its growing militarism, to restrain its impulse for revenge and expansionism, to rescind the statute of limitations for Nazi crimes, to punish the murderers, to remove the German scientists from Egypt, to withhold its economic and technological potential from Israel's enemies, to return pillaged Jewish property, to help the victims of the Holocaust to rehabilitate their lives in their country and to extend military aid to the Jewish state.

We cannot understand this eagerness to establish diplomatic ties with Germany immediately....If Germany's moral basis and sense of obligation towards the Jewish people is such that any delay or rejection on our part could send it straight into Nasser's arms...the diplomatic relations will also be sterile and unstable....

M. Begin (Herut): Very true.

M. Carmel (Ahdut Ha'Avoda-Po'alei Zion): We cannot forget that only three weeks ago we all felt that Germany had betrayed us by giving in to Nasser's blackmail and suddenly stopping its military aid to us, despite its explicit commitments. That recent memory is not very encouraging with regard to Germany's future actions. If Germany genuinely seeks to atone—to the extent that this is possible—for the evils done to the Jewish people by the Nazi regime, and to stand by its commitments to its victims, it must prove this by deeds before asking our nation to take this step, which it will attempt to represent to the world as forgiving and forgetting the unforgiveable and unforgettable annihilation of European Jewry....

There is no way of knowing how sincere and stable Germany's intentions are....It should be pointed out, however, that this proposal would not have been made had Israel's Government failed to take a firm stand towards Germany, exerting pressure on it, with the support of the Knesset...to keep its political and moral commitments. All this aroused a response throughout the world, and world public opinion will continue to keep a close eye on reemergent Germany. It is our duty not to do anything which could allay this watchfulness.

At first glance it could be said that diplomatic relations are merely a form of official legal relations between two countries which take on content to the extent that the parties involved are interested in this....That may be so in normal circumstances, but the improper behavior which we have seen here in recent years in everything concerning Germany, the wild rush to benefit from it to the fullest extent, with occasional lapses of the terrible historical memory of the Holocaust...mean that diplomatic relations will merely constitute the crown on that distorted network of relations. They will serve as the official imprimatur for the series of ugly phenomena of forgiveness arising from self-deception which, to our shame, encompasses considerable sections of the nation.

One can envy the British, the French and the Dutch, who also suffered greatly during the war because of Germany, although their suffering cannot be compared to ours; one can envy the restraint and the coolness they evince towards the Germans, despite the diplomatic relations between their governments. But unfortunately we do not recognize that psychological balance, and we have witnessed occasional breaks in the dam made by hasty friendships, as a result of private initiative or official encouragement, near the end of the war and before we dreamt of the possibility of establishing relations between the nation from which the murderers came and the nation whose sons were murdered. Jews run to Germany, trade with it, get rich there, entertain and are entertained there. Teachers, teenagers and women go there from here and come

here from there. Wonderful German products fill our roads and our homes; all this goes beyond the framework of the reparations, which were merely intended to return to the Jewish people what had been stolen from it, so that the murderer should not inherit us too. But the way the reparations agreement was made and implemented...broke down all the fences in our relations with Germany, leading to all the demonstrations of moral corruption...which have harmed the nation's spirit and honor.

The serious political and educational mistake of selling Israeli arms to Germany and sewing uniforms for its army had a destructive influence, generating cynicism among the nation and the youth, and damaging our moral strength, which is so essential for our existence and security.

Unlike his predecessor, the Prime Minister has said that Germany must prove daily that it really is different. This correct attitude towards Germany must be maintained in the future too. Even those who support diplomatic relations with Germany do not regard them as constituting forgiveness for the crimes of the past....They must also ensure that this issue is not represented as settling the account, because the tragedy of the Holocaust still exists in the feelings of this generation, the pain of our loss has not yet passed and cannot yet be consigned to history.

Israel's security continues to be our chief concern when we see the growing strength of our enemies. It was with great interest that we heard what the President of Tunisia, Habib Bourguiba, had to say last week against solving the Israel-Arab conflict by war and in favor of a settlement reflecting mutual respect between Jews and Arabs. That is a new note which should be welcomed as a renewed political initiative for peace. We do not yet know, however, whether this voice will find an answering echo in the Arab world or not....Be that as it may, fine hopes of peace are no substitute for security, and there is no security without weapons. We are in no position to be too choosy about the few sources of those weapons...in view of the rapid technological development of weapons and the changes in fighting methods....It is our right to demand that the countries of Europe and across the ocean which are friendly towards us supply us directly with the weapons which are essential for our peace and security. While we have never opposed receiving arms from Germany which cannot be obtained elsewhere, this does not mean that we accept the dangerous theory that Israel's security depends on Germany, or on an axis of which Germany is one pole, or that we agree with the foolish idea that in order to obtain arms from it we have to sell it arms. Nor will we accept the simplistic and unfounded view that the establishment of diplomatic relations with Germany could remove it from Nasser's embrace, while if we refuse we will impel it into his arms. It is not diplomatic relations which will determine that, but Germany's basic stand on its commitments to the world and the Jew-

ish people, with or without those relations. After all, everyone knows that there are countries which have had diplomatic relations with us since the state was established and which equip Nasser with weapons that endanger our very existence....

Thus, there is no need to attach undue significance to diplomatic relations, just as there is no need to belittle them. We do not reject diplomatic relations with Germany, just as we do not with other countries of the West, nor will we discuss Germany in the terms of the vocal and vulgar quarrel concerning its relations with the Arabs....Our concern is focused on assuring the conditions for increasing our defensive strength, as well as on preventing the increase of our enemies' aggressive strength. For we regard the association between re nascent neo-Nazism and growing Nasserism as representing the greatest danger, which Germany must help us to suppress....

The offense committed by both East and West Germany against the Jewish people is very grave, and their obligation towards our country is very great....Germany's ability to fulfill its obligation to us will constitute a major test, for us and the whole world, and what is required first is a reply from us which constitutes a gesture towards Germany as regards any normalization of the relations between us. As long as Germany has not done anything to atone for its heinous crimes of the past and has not fulfilled its commitment to the world and the Jewish people, we see no possibility of establishing diplomatic relations with it and will not support this proposal.

...

S. Mikunis (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, in the name of the Holocaust and Jewish heroism, in the name of morality, responsibility and national honor, in the name of the Jewish people's right and duty to stand at the forefront of the struggle against vengeful, neo-Nazi, German Hitlerism, and in the name of our deep concern for Israel's peace, security and future, the Israel Communist party group proposes that the Knesset reject the Government's decision to establish diplomatic relations with Bonn.

We reject the Government's foolhardy step, which could prevent Israel from making its full contribution to preventing a recurrence of the Holocaust, to strengthening itself today and to assuring our national future in the family of nations in this region on a basis of friendship and peace. We cannot agree with the Prime Minister's "theory," which makes an artificial distinction between "the moral and historical account arising from the Holocaust and the framework of political action," and according to which...that account has long since been filed away, without an attempt having been made to learn the lessons it contains for us for the present and the future.

Ever since the "reparations" agreement, which was opposed by us and other patriotic forces, the ruling circles have worked towards a po-

litical, economic and military association with West Germany's neo-Nazi rulers. At that price, while conducting an overall policy of dependence on the Western Powers, our country's rulers have given a moral and political stamp of approval to Hitler's heirs in West Germany, have conducted a campaign of false propaganda, declaring that "the Germany of today is not the Germany of yesterday," have made great efforts to impose on Israel a policy of "trust and friendship" towards Bonn's neo-Nazi leaders, have implemented the two-way weapons conspiracy with them, and have strengthened their ties with German militarism, the enemy of peace, the Jewish people and the whole world. To our regret, all our warnings have come true: our country has lost the prestige it gained during the struggle for independence, has wasted the friendship of other countries and nations, and has become ever more deeply embroiled in isolation and stalemate. Today we caution against establishing diplomatic ties and against the new version of the association with Bonn, which damages Israel's honor and endangers its security.

Only a month ago even the Government's organs had to admit the failure of its German policy...when the Bonn rulers did not hesitate to deny their ties with Israel and stop sending the promised arms as soon as their selfish imperialist interests required this. Only a few days passed, and following the deterioration in their relations with Egypt, the West German rulers announced their readiness to establish diplomatic ties with Israel, and now the ruling circles in our country are trying once again to delude the nation that this is a "new achievement."

The truth is that West Germany's policy of foolhardy expansionism in our region has reached a dead end. The well-known "Hallstein Doctrine" has failed again, this time in the relations with Egypt. The visit to Egypt of the Head of the German Democratic Republic and the ties established between those two countries have introduced another change to the detriment of German imperialism, and imperialism in general, in the Middle East and Africa. The Bonn rulers struggled with the Egyptian rulers with all their might to maintain their position in the largest Arab country and to uphold and expand their economic, political and scientific-military ties with Egypt, and failed miserably. When that move failed they turned to Eshkol, and soon discovered that there was no difficulty in hooking him. Incidentally, even the Bonn rulers were surprised to see how easy it was to bounce the Prime Minister, Eshkol, into the West German goal.

We caution against fresh illusions regarding a so-called "new achievement."...The very transparent intention of the Bonn rulers is to use the Israel-Arab conflict and our country against the anti-imperialist liberation movements of the Middle East, against their faithful friends—the neutral and socialist countries, against peace and against Israel's own security. That is what lies behind Germany's offer of

diplomatic ties with Israel....Erhard said quite openly earlier this month that West Germany regards it as its mission to stop "the Communist penetration of the Arab region."

We remember, we must remember well, how Chancellor Hitler made anti-Communism the banner of the Fascist "Axis" and then the spark which began the Second World War. We must remember well that Chancellor Erhard is surrounded by those same generals and Nazis who served Hitler. It is also highly significant that when he made that statement Erhard stressed that his imperialist allies—primarily the U.S. and Britain—had asked for a West German "presence" in the Middle East. It is shocking, but it is also clear, that Erhard's readiness to establish diplomatic ties with Israel is an additional step towards harnessing our country "at the right moment" to the carriage of those who seek to embark upon a new anti-Communist campaign. The meeting between Harriman and Eshkol in March was reported by the *Washington Post* as having been held in order to prevent the Communist penetration of the Arab countries, protect the imperialist monopoly on oil and guarantee arms for Israel for a common purpose, not for Israel's defense....We remember another such "common purpose" in October 1956. Everything appears to indicate that the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel is very far from being a "goodwill gesture," and that it is an imperialist plot designed to paralyze Israel and enslave it to the strategy of the Washington-Bonn axis directed against the nations of the region, including Israel.

What has this got to do with the official propaganda about the establishment of diplomatic relations being "Israel's last chance"? What has all this got to do with Israel's national interests and our people's desire for peace? What is the connection with the Prime Minister's statements about "a sincere desire" to improve relations with the U.S.S.R.? What is the link with the Government's declarations about "striving for peace" with the Arab countries? The truth is that the additional step of drawing close to West Germany, as reflected in the establishment of diplomatic relations, creates another element of intensification in the bad relations between Israel and the Arab countries; it fertilizes the soil for moving even further away from the U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries; it even creates a rift between our country and various West European countries which suffered under the Hitlerite conquest of the Second World War.

Moving even closer to West Germany will increase Israel's isolation more than ever. Intensifying the links with imperialist plans confronts Israel with the danger of being embroiled in a war which does not concern us, with all the dangers that involves. This is predicted too often in Washington, London and Bonn.

Our Communist party, all the patriotic forces in our country, will do all that is in their power to mobilize the masses to foil the official policy,

which could enable Hitler's successors and their imperialist allies to exploit the Israel-Arab conflict for their benefit, bringing disaster on the Jewish and Arab peoples. We must not let the enemies of peace and of nations once again use Jewish blood to oil the wheels of the Washington-Bonn war machine.

D. Bar-Rav-Hai (Mapai): Take care in using that phrase.

S. Mikunis (Maki): I do not need to be afraid of using that phrase. I have taken the wind out of the sails of the phrase: "Ben-Gurion—the voice of the people."

Two weeks ago the *Frankfurter Rundschau* wrote: "Bonn's policy in the Middle East has become a scrap-heap." Are we going to continue establishing closer ties with that dangerous and bankrupt policy? Has the time not come to reconsider Israel's official policy? How long...will our country continue to go in the opposite direction to all the developmental processes in our region? How will we fit in, how will we grow roots, how can we end the Israel-Arab conflict, how can we find a common denominator with the Arab peoples, if we continue to conduct a policy which opposes the anti-imperialist liberation movements of the region, if we continue to ignore the need to find a peaceful solution to the Palestine problem, if we continue with a policy which makes our situation worse and our isolation greater?

Thus, our opposition to establishing diplomatic relations with Bonn derives not only from the memory of the past, but primarily from our concern for the present and our national future. Other ways are open to Israel to solve our basic problems. In order to do so we must intensify the struggle against the official, bankrupt policy, pressing for a change of policy towards peace, non-dependence on imperialism and neutrality and improved relations with the U.S.S.R. and all the socialist countries, which constitute the focus of world peace, national independence, human progress and socialism.

...

The Speaker, B. Idelson: I give the floor to the Deputy Prime Minister, Abba Eban, who will reply on behalf of the Government.

The Deputy Prime Minister, A. Eban: Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I have never spoken in the Knesset on Israel's relations with Germany without warning of the grave moral danger involved, lest—even inadvertently—the impression be gained that sensitivity to the Holocaust and horror at its painful memory is the exclusive or unique property of the party groups which oppose relations between Israel and Germany. If we do not believe that the memory of the Holocaust is deeply rooted in the consciousness of every Jew in our generation, every bridge to a shared Jewish experience will collapse. No nation in history has developed the power of memory as the Jews have, and no nation has done

more than ours to turn memory into a uniting and identifying spirit. I have respect and understanding for every speaker who shared his thoughts with us in full regarding the memory of the tragedy which befell our nation during the time of the odious Nazi regime. I also have respect for the feelings of those who spoke briefly on the subject. Brevity may perhaps embody the implication that no one in Israel needs to convince his fellow of the full force of that tragedy or its ensuing psychological conclusions.

But the conclusions which the Government of Israel and the Knesset must draw are not only psychological, and are not connected solely with dreadful memories from the period of Hitler's evil rule. Past and future, emotion and intellect, the impressions of times past and genuine fear for the future—all these come under our review at this point. The question is where is the fulcrum between these considerations and emotions. The question is not only what do we feel, but what should we do. Would that it were possible to appease our consciences by jointly and with shocking sincerity mourning the calamity which has befallen our nation. If we were to do that and then disperse, would we thereby have responded to the reality confronting us?

Admittedly, there are those among us who think that emotion and intellect are not mutually contradictory. They may be directing us towards one objective. Those who voiced their reservations on the Government's statement, from MK Begin to MKs Barzilai and Mikunis, failed to attach sufficient significance to one of the central points expressed by the Prime Minister. It is precisely the memory of the weakness and impotence of the periods of destruction and affliction in Jewish history which requires us to seize every opportunity of undermining our enemies and guaranteeing a strong and firm basis for the continued existence of the Jewish people in its land. In other words, the more sensitive we are to the Holocaust, the more we must learn its lessons. We will be more attentive to the cry of the blood which calls out from the ground, and give greater honor to the memory of our martyrs' sufferings, if we ensure that this nation is never again subject to those conditions of weakness, inferiority and neglect which once brought us to the edge of the abyss. Strengthening Israel is not merely the requirement of the future, it is also the lesson of the past...Being deeply shocked by the Holocaust by no means involves rejecting the motion brought before us here.

Some Knesset members referred to the stand adopted by past Governments of Israel, citing the attitude of the previous Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion. Every man is free to phrase things as he wishes. But what is behind this? What guided and guides his thoughts and actions—indifference to the destruction of Israel in the past or a finely-honed sensitivity to the danger of a new destruction, and the desire to prevent it? Anyone with a proper sense of history knows what the answer is. Anyone who believes that Israel's peace and security is still threatened

must mobilize every reinforcing and strengthening factor, including those which grow from the soil of Germany, which became our mass grave. The greater the responsibility for Israel's security, the greater our duty not to miss any chance of improving it and the political balance between Israel and those who seek to harm it. The question is, how will we strengthen ourselves? By establishing full relations with Germany, as is suggested, or by rejecting the proposal to establish them?

I ask the Members of the Knesset to take note of that wording. The choice is not between establishing relations and continuing the previous situation in which there were no such relations. Since the arrival of Chancellor Erhard's envoy the choice appears to be quite different—seizing that chance or accepting responsibility for the new situation which will be created if we reject it. There is a deep and substantial difference between the non-existence of diplomatic relations two weeks ago, at the responsibility and lack of initiative of the German Government, and the non-existence of such relations tomorrow or the day after, as a result of Israel's calculated decision to reject the opportunity offered it. In the first case, the responsibility rests on others; in the second, it is ours. In the first case Germany would not be free of the moral pressure exerted on it because of its refusal to initiate the establishment of relations due to its submission to Arab pressure; in the second, if those who would reject this offer prevail, Germany could regard itself as being completely free of the burden of that pressure. It will draw the conclusion that it risked Arab anger for nothing.

Those in Germany who opposed, and still oppose, Chancellor Erhard's course, will sigh with relief. Anyone who listened to Arab broadcasts at the end of the week must admit that every Arab who is hostile to Israel hopes that Israel will miss this opportunity, so that the turn of fate which occurred a week ago will restore us to a situation in which the Arabs have a decided, even increased, advantage. From Baghdad, Damascus, Algeria and Cairo, especially from Cairo, comes the voice of the desperate hope, as the Cairo announcer put it, "that maybe Israel will do the work for us." Maybe it will reject the hand extended to it; *inshallah*, let it be.

Are we going to satisfy their desire? I do not believe that anyone of us wants the full weight of German power to be on the Arab side when we are put in the balance against our enemies.

That, however, may well be the outcome of rejecting Chancellor Erhard's proposal in the given circumstances. It seems to me that a Divine voice asks every member of the Government and every Knesset Member not only what they feel, but what will the result be. We will be judged by the reasonable and necessary results of our actions, not by the motives which led us to take them. The reasonable, almost certain result of rejecting this proposal will be the immense strengthening and encouraging of the only factor in the modern world which seeks to attack and

utterly destroy this nation. Just as those who are charged with planning our defense must learn to fight with the methods of today, not yesterday, Israel's political institutions must fix their eyes unwaveringly on the enemy of today, of tomorrow, who must be deterred; our relative position must be strengthened and his blackmailing maneuvers must be blocked and discredited. We must particularly prevent any hint of progress in his vigorous attack on Israel's international standing. On no account can we ignore the fact, as certain distinguished speakers did, that the proposal under review did not come to us from a vacuum, but emerged suddenly from the arena of Israel's conflict with its enemies. We cannot ignore the regional context of that reality or the way in which our decision will affect the fate of that struggle.

That consideration, which is informed by the Israel-Arab conflict, must not be brushed aside and detached from the central position it deserves in this debate. After all, the special pathos of our life in the state and the world derives not only from the memory of past suffering, but from the question mark which hangs over the heads of children growing up in this region, all of whose governments still hope to drive us out.

Amongst the motives which led the Federal German Government to take this step was the desire to withstand, albeit belatedly, albeit under pressure, the blackmailing maneuvers which constitute the essence of the Arab governments' political war against Israel. The agitated gathering in Cairo indicates that as far as the leaders of Arab nationalism are concerned, this moment appears not as a routine stage in weaving the web of international relations, but as a grave and fateful test of the Arab world's ability to fight Israel....

I will not enumerate all the developments which have made this special problem a larger issue and test, how a certain country's attitude to Israel was determined, whether on the basis of that country's sovereign will or that of Egypt's ruler, Nasser. That is the question and that question is Israel's entire political problem in a nutshell. The answer to it embodies the fate of Israel's fight for a firm political position, upon which its chance of deterring aggression and defeating it, should it materialize, depends to a great extent.

We do not control the paths of history. Its ways are hidden from us, but sometimes in its winding course one instance becomes the test of a general phenomenon. This is what has befallen us now. Our neighbor in the south is not wrong. Something important is in the balance—his ability to dictate to other countries what their attitude to Israel should be, to a greater or lesser extent. That is the question which is being tested here. Only Israel can rescue him now from a political defeat which will have untold repercussions.

...Not only our enemies follow our decision today with concern. It is true that no other nation has trod a path of suffering as protracted as that of the Jewish people between the destruction of the Temple and the Holo-

caust, the greatest devastation of the Jewish people. But there are nations which have suffered and can understand our feelings and distress. It is highly instructive to take heed of that. Before I was told that I would have to sum up this debate, I happened to be reading some French newspapers. The graves of millions of Frenchmen, the victims of the wars with Germany of 1870, 1914 and 1939, are scattered across the continent. Three times their land was overrun by the invader's boots. Note how, by making an immense psychological effort, a nation has switched its gaze from the torments of the past to trust in the future, agreeing to join with Germany in the new economic and political fabric of Europe. From every French newspaper, from every commentator, from all the molders of and adherents to its friendship with Israel, we hear the same advice.

I am not authorized to cite the sources of governmental advice we receive from Israel's well-wishers throughout the world. The picture is identical, however. The advice is: seize the opportunity; do not miss or reject it.

There is not one of Israel's enemies who does not pray that we will reject the proposal. There is not one of Israel's friends in the world who does not hope anxiously that we will have the moral strength and political perspicacity to decide in the affirmative.

The Knesset is of course sovereign, despite MK Begin's original proposal that we bypass it this time and turn to a system of direct democracy, replacing our system with one of representative democracy.

M. Begin (Herut): Why "bypass"? The referendum exists in democratic countries too. Didn't you propose a referendum on the electoral system?

The Deputy Prime Minister, A. Eban: And didn't you reject it?

M. Begin (Herut): But it is something which is official and legal.

The Deputy Prime Minister, A. Eban: The Knesset need not take heed of the counsel of friends or the thinking of enemies. But on no account should it cause its enemies to be satisfied and its well-wishers disappointed.

Throughout the Western Hemisphere, in the north and the south, from distant Africa and, above all, in the heart of Europe, we hear one voice. Throughout the world it is assumed that something has changed in the historical clash between Israel as it struggles to survive and those who would weave webs of aggression against it. Is it only in Israel that we will fail to grasp this point and act accordingly?

It has been said that we might unwittingly be raising the prestige of the Federal Government. If a certain deed strengthens Israel it is of no interest to me how it affects someone else's prestige. Our task is to strengthen Israel, not to concern ourselves with the prestige, or lack of it, of another government.

While suggesting that we reject the proposal, MK Barzilai said that we should rely on world public opinion. Does he think that international public opinion will support us after we reject this chance, against its advice? Each one of us knows in the depths of his heart that rejecting this proposal will bring unexpected joy to our enemies and will dumbfound the international public opinion which desires our welfare.

I hope the Knesset will forgive me if I do not reply in detail to all the arguments put forward by the dissenters. MK Begin will undoubtedly admit that the Knesset always listens attentively to his accounts of the Holocaust and the emotional storm it arouses in him. The problem is what conclusion are we to draw from that picture. It seems to me that on many occasions the Knesset has rejected the conclusion which that speech implies. That discussion is not new for us. The logical conclusion arising from what MK Begin said is that we should boycott Germany completely, "send it to Coventry," as it were. It cannot be helped, but the Knesset has never accepted that view. It refused to reject having any contact; it declined to sever all relations; it repudiated the suggestion to forbid mutual visits; it would not turn down the reparations agreement, with the results of which even the movements which opposed it did not refuse to come into contact.

The Knesset knows that Germany has become the third largest market for Israel's exports, and each year the Knesset approves the budgets in which this fact appears. The Knesset hears of Israel's efforts to participate in the activities of the European Community, in which Germany is a central factor. This means that for years the Knesset has not supported the total boycott of Germany. It advocates the gradual development of necessary and honorable contacts. The decision we are being asked to make today does not contradict the process of its decisions in the past. What is proposed today is, in effect, a continuation of the balanced policy which the Knesset has adopted for years.

While the Knesset has refused to sever itself completely from having contact with Germany, for years it has raised its voice, together with the Government, in complaint and reproof against every action which it considers as running counter to Germany's debt to Israel. Nor will we desist in the future from expressing just demands and speaking out decisively whenever we discern a deed or misdeed which contradicts the German people's moral debt to Israel and the Jewish people. We have never advocated freeing the relations between Germany and Israel from the burden of the dreadful memories of the Holocaust. Even today Germany is not absolved of the obligation to seek rehabilitation for what happened. We have never dismissed the lesson of the past, just as we have never abandoned the hope that a different future may arise....

In his statement, the Prime Minister said that we would discuss the various problems upon which the two Governments have expressed their desire to reach mutual agreement. He added: "I have reason to hope that

we will manage to reach a settlement." The restraint and caution which characterizes these words should not obscure their meaning.

I am astonished at the fact that Knesset Members made the strange claim that by establishing diplomatic relations we are supposedly abandoning all our just demands. On the contrary, we are creating new and regulated channels for continuing the penetrating dialogue which hangs in the air of history between Germany and Israel, against the background of the terrible past and in the light of the future whose horizons are still indistinct but not entirely without hope.

...I have the impression that I answered MK Barzilai's speech when he gave it on a previous occasion. The source of Germany's misdeeds is very clear to him. He has it all off pat. But he lacks the sense of proportion required by the fact that one of the two Germanies has nevertheless accepted the theory of historical responsibility, has done something, albeit symbolic, to express that responsibility, has acknowledged the existence of the burden which weighs on the relations between Israel and Germany in the wake of the Nazi era, has made its own contribution to strengthening Israel's security and has taken the step under discussion here, in the full and clear knowledge of the effect it will have on the attitude of the Arab world. Actions of that kind do not cancel any historic account. But we regard them as the beginning of an effort to discharge it.

MK Barzilai is angry with MK Dayan, who is not deterred by the prospect of having the German anthem played. I suggest that the Members of the Knesset refrain from allowing emotion to control truth. Germany's present anthem, which is known as "Germany Above All," was written by the liberal nineteenth-century poet, Hoffmann. It was introduced as the national anthem by the Socialist President, Ebert, in 1929, when the first verse, beginning with the words *Deutschland, Deutschland uber Alles*, was sung. In 1945, however, the use of that anthem and that verse was stopped. The poem was reintroduced as the national anthem in 1952, since when only the verse containing words and phrases referring to unity, freedom and friendship has been used.

M. Begin (Herut): Perhaps we should sing it together—*Deutschland, Deutschland uber Alles.*"

A. Ben-Eliezer (Herut): Perhaps we should rise and sing it together.

The Deputy Prime Minister, A. Eban: Perhaps we shall reach a situation where every speaker has the same freedom of speech as MK Begin has.

Even an emotional and penetrating debate need not descend to inaccuracies. MK Mikunis does not want Israel to have the same diplomatic relations with Germany as the U.S.S.R. has had for many years. I do not think that there is a single government in Europe, that same Europe which was flooded by waves of aggression, which is voluntarily and

permanently prepared to relinquish ties of any kind with the Federal Germany of today.

Distinguished Knesset, the debate has been lengthy and extended. It dived into the depths of the mournful emotions of a nation which has suffered deprivations for which there is no reparation or comfort. It will be a long time before any Jew can approach that subject free of the impact of the Holocaust. We cannot turn the wheel of history back. We do have some control over its future course. Nor is there any desire in us to avenge the blood that was shed. Would it be so historically farfetched, however, if we were to regard it as a moving historical vengeance that the self-same Germany, in its new version, from which the conspiracy to destroy the Jews emerged a generation ago, regards itself as being obliged to present itself before the embodiment of Jewish sovereignty, which is reflected in the verdict which arose from the Holocaust and the destruction, the verdict which declares that this nation shall live, not die, that it shall enjoy sovereign equality, not a life of wandering and inferiority?

I do not want, nor am I entitled, to tell any Jew how he should feel and react when the German representative salutes the Israeli flag, which is firmly planted in the family of nations. Everyone is entitled to his own views and feelings. It will be an emotional moment, but into the emotion comprising various and mixed feelings will creep the awareness that the spirit which has prevailed in this nation throughout its vicissitudes has decided matters, has been victorious, and it is the victory of that lust for life which will be symbolized by Germany's standing before the sovereign Jewish flag.

I hope and believe that the Knesset will speak out for strengthening Israel's international position, for blocking the hostile blackmailing of our neighbors, for continuing the dialogue between Germany and Israel in a dignified and penetrating manner and for the hope that out of the darkness of the past a different future will emerge.

I. Kargman (Mapai): ...The proposal submitted by Mapai, the National Religious party, the Liberal and Independent Liberal parties, Po'alei Aguda, Cooperation and Amity, Progress and Development is as follows: "The Knesset notes the Prime Minister's statement on the establishment of diplomatic relations with the German Republic, as the Government has requested."

...

The Speaker, B. Idelson: We will now vote on MK Kargman's proposal.

The Vote

Those in favor of MK Kargman's proposal 66

Those against 29

Abstentions 10

(MK Kargman's proposal is adopted.)

SIXTH KNESSET 1965-1969

Opening Sitting (Ben-Gurion's Address)

Introduction

Elections for the Sixth Knesset were held on schedule, on 2 November 1965. The results gave the Labor party—now for the first time united with Ahdut Avoda within the Alignment-Ma'arach—a somewhat enhanced majority: 47 seats as against 26 of the second largest list, Gahal, which comprised Herut (Freedom) and the Liberals, under the leadership of Menahem Begin.

It thus fell to the Head of the Labor list, Levi Eshkol, Ben-Gurion's appointed successor, to form a Government. Ben-Gurion himself was returned at the head of his new party, Rafi (Israel Workers List), which gained ten seats in all. Rather than joining the Government as a junior partner, his party decided to remain in the Opposition, an unaccustomed role for Ben-Gurion, who had led the country for thirty years—fifteen as head of the Jewish Agency before the establishment of the state, and fifteen (with an interval of two years) as Prime Minister. Before that happened, however, it fell to Ben-Gurion as the *doyen d'age* (senior in age) among the MKs to preside over the first sitting of the Knesset. He was 77 years old at the time. In a basically non-partisan speech, befitting the occasion and his formal position, he outlined his view of the state at the time.

Sitting 1 of the Sixth Knesset

22 November 1965 (27 Heshvan 5726)

The President of the State, Shneur Zalman Shazar: Esteemed Knesset, this is the first time since you honored me by appointing me President of the State of Israel that I have had the privilege of addressing the opening sitting of the Knesset...and greeting the people's representatives, who have been elected democratically and by law....

I congratulate the veteran delegates, who have been reelected and have contributed considerably to molding the entire tradition of our parliamentary lives, and the newly-elected representatives....May they combine with one another to form one stable representative body for the whole nation in Zion and jointly lead the State of Israel forward towards the fulfillment of its essential and eternal objectives, while constantly encouraging immigration, peace and justice.

...I also congratulate the new voters within the nation. More than 200,000 new citizens went to the polls this year and voted for the first time, whether as new immigrants who have never before participated in

democratic elections...or as young people who have grown up in our country and have recently reached adulthood. Although all of them were new to the game, they did not let the rest of us down, and despite the storm of emotions the election campaign raised, election day constituted a demonstration of the entire nation's political maturity, encompassing all the parties, ethnic groups, religions and waves of immigration....1,250,000 voters, constituting more than 85 percent of those eligible to vote...went to the polls in an orderly fashion and made their decision. The vote of the people is as the voice of God for us. May you all be worthy of the trust your voters have put in you, serving the nation faithfully and with dedication....

The election campaign was unduly long and exhausting, and it is doubtful whether every party can be wholly responsible for every statement and expression uttered by every speaker at every election meeting....We must attempt to allay the wounds caused by the campaign so that, purified and reconciled, we may emerge from the stormy corridor of the preelection period to the serious drawing room of the parliament, ready and willing to do the bidding of this great and gracious nation.

Whereas the preelection period is one of clashes, that of the established parliamentary life of the house of representatives is...one of dialogue between the nation's representatives in order to attain mutual understanding and wise legislation. Do not omit to listen to one another, despite all your real and imagined differences, and try to find a common language....Do not waste the precious trust or dissipate the hopes the nation has placed in you....We must go forward together, standing side by side as in days of yore....

Several veteran members have left...and we wish them a long, happy and fruitful life....We send warm wishes to all those in the IDF and the border settlements who are protecting our country....Several members of the Fifth Knesset have passed away, including founding members who have left an indelible mark on our country and others who were struck down in the prime of life....(The Knesset Members rise to honor the memory of their deceased colleagues.)

This parliament will have many duties to fulfill, both as regards completing the unfinished legislation of the previous Knesset and in creating new legislation in as yet untouched areas. This will require attaining greater economic independence for our young state, making the desert bloom, establishing development towns, maintaining agricultural development of every kind, expanding and modernizing industry and commerce, spreading the population throughout the country, absorbing and integrating immigrants, rationalizing our administrative institutions, establishing closer ties with diaspora Jewry and, above all, expanding and enhancing our education system....We must aspire for friendship with all the nations of the world, as well as peaceful and honorable relations with our Arab neighbors, and our legislation must

be geared towards those ends....May the spirit of the nation inspire your discussions, and may your hearts be united in mutual understanding and creation...leading our sacred and ancient nation towards the bright future it deserves....

I hereby open the Sixth Knesset of the State of Israel and invite the doyen of the Knesset, my friend David Ben-Gurion, to conduct the first sitting....

D. Ben-Gurion: Distinguished President and Knesset Members, as the oldest member of this Knesset it has fallen to me to conduct this sitting, until a Speaker is elected. I will first take the oath of loyalty, namely: "I swear to be loyal to the State of Israel and fulfill my mission in the Knesset faithfully." Secondly, I extend hearty congratulations to all the Knesset Members, both new and old, and hope that they will discharge their duties faithfully, responsibly and with a clear perception of our situation, needs and mission, our position in the world and the region, our duty to ourselves and the nation, without differences of race or religion, as well as to the Jews of the diaspora and mankind. We are a nation like any other, a member of the U.N., but our revival, existence and historic mission are unique in human history.

In every national revival there was a nation living in its land, albeit under foreign rule. The national liberation movement of every other country was based on that reality and all that was needed in order to fulfill its aspirations was to throw off the foreign yoke. We were cut off and remote from our homeland for hundreds of years, scattered among the nations of the world, but three unique factors operated in the revival of the State of Israel: the messianic vision which endured in our nation throughout the generations, accompanying us in all our wanderings; the pioneering activities of those who returned to Zion in recent times, through whose spirit and labor an extensive and independent economy, heroic defense force, renewed Hebrew culture and independent administration even under foreign rule have been established; and the loyal aid of the Jewish nation in the diaspora. We were also helped by the conscience of mankind after the terrible Holocaust perpetrated by the Nazis, as evinced at the U.N. Assembly of November 1947. Although the state has been established, the vision of redemption has not yet been attained, and we are still far from having attained peace and prosperity. Since the establishment of the State of Israel we have increased three-fold, but Israel contains only 18 percent of the Jewish people, and only 40 percent of its territory is settled....

Until the establishment of the state there were two causes of immigration: the messianic vision and oppression. Most of the Jews who were oppressed have reached us, with the exception of the large mass of Jews in Eastern Europe, which has been cut off from its land and from Judaism for the last fifty years and for which the exit gates are shut. But we have not abandoned the hope that all those Soviet Jews who wish to

join us will be enabled to do so, for there are growing signs of a change for the better in that mighty Power; meanwhile immigration has declined, and there are only another 5,000,000 Jews in all the countries of oppression. With the establishment of the state, however, a new factor has arisen, which we have not yet utilized adequately out of our adherence to the tradition of the Zionist Organization, which has grown weak and vacuous. The new factor is the power to attract of the state, of Israel's independence and its revolutionary and redeeming pioneering endeavor. Our task has not ended in the countries of oppression, but the qualitative and quantitative center of gravity of the Jewish people, which was in Europe until the First World War, has shifted to North America, although there are centers in certain European countries....If the State of Israel grows strong and stable, both economically and politically-morally...there is no doubt that many people will be drawn to our ancient homeland even from countries where there is no oppression, for they will find values and benefits here which Jews do not have elsewhere—independence, wholeness and Jewish originality in every form: in the economic, political, social, cultural, scientific and religious spheres.

It is by four tokens that Israel will attract immigrants from Western countries: by the splendor and purity of its progressive, democratic independence; by the cultural and social level of the nation in Israel; by the potential for creative and pioneering initiative; and by adequate economic conditions.

Not for a moment must we forget that most of the country's territory is unsettled and uncultivated. The ancient prophecy: "and I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines," has been fulfilled only in our time...and we have direct access by sea to Europe, America and West Africa via the Mediterranean and to Asia, Australia and East Africa via the Red Sea. But without populating the Negev and making it a center of industry...Eilat will not fulfill its great economic and political function in our relations with the peoples of Asia and East Europe, by virtue of its position at the junction of three continents. We must not ignore the military danger inherent in concentrating our population in the narrow strip along the Mediterranean....The dispersion of the population cannot come about without the dispersion of industry, a subject to which we have not yet given sufficient attention....

Despite the fact that for geographical, historical, political and economic reasons our international relations are currently focused on the West, we must observe the changes which are occurring in the world political map, particularly in Asia and Africa. We would be making a grave mistake if we were to ignore the fact that most of mankind lives in Asia, the cradle of all the dominant faiths as well as of civilization, and the home of the world's great nations, the path to whom lies through the Negev and Eilat.

We were the only nation which, in ancient times, trod a unique path in its concept of god and morality, waging a constant political, ideological and sometimes even military struggle against our neighbors, until the destruction of the Second Temple. After that we were the only nation which did not succumb to Christianity or Islam, when those two religions, which were nourished by Jewish sources, conquered the mighty nations among which we lived. We were alone among the nations as regards our tradition, language and faith. All the nations which bordered on Israel in biblical times have disappeared, leaving no trace save ruins, pyramids and inscriptions....But the Jewish nation endured, preserving its historical continuity, and after two thousand years returned from its dispersion to the land of its forefathers, reestablished its state and revived its ancient tongue....But although we belong to the U.N. and have equal rights there many members of that organization that do not recognize Israel and, worse still, our neighbors have not accepted our existence....In addition to the bellicose stand of some of our neighbors, we are still subject to guerrilla warfare by means of murderous gangs and terrorists coming from across the border, while the Arab League continues to stifle us economically. The problem of our security is as serious as ever and we must be constantly on our guard and increase the deterrent power of the IDF. However, we must not ignore the voices occasionally heard among the Arab peoples expressing a wise and realistic view of relations with us and demanding recognition of Israel's existence and the establishment of normal relations between the two Semitic nations. We must, of course, encourage any possible contact with true seekers of peace among the Arabs, because peace and cooperation with all our neighbors has been our goal ever since we proclaimed the renewal of our independence almost eighteen years ago, and is also needed by the world.

Peace, for which we yearn, will come, but until then we must heighten our security...which is dependent on the IDF's deterrent power and our status in the international arena. Both of these depend, amongst other things, on the moral purity of our national institutions. That is the heavy responsibility which rests upon the Knesset Members as the representatives of the people, but not upon them alone. It is the responsibility of every citizen of the state. The secret of our existence among many and varied nations, of our survival as few against many in ancient times and today, of our victory in the War of Independence...is our qualitative moral and cultural superiority. Only by maintaining and constantly increasing that dual superiority will we succeed in strengthening the IDF, maintaining our international position, increasing the country's attractiveness and enhancing the link between Israel and the diaspora.

Israel must find a path to the nations of Asia, who have an ancient and independent culture, including China, the largest of all nations.

We must reinforce our cultural, economic and political ties with the nations of Europe and America, where large Jewish communities live and from whom we have inherited scientific and technological progress. We must continue to extend a brotherly hand, to the best of our ability, to the liberated and emerging nations of Africa and maintain relations of friendship as well as economic and political cooperation with them.

However, Israel's fate, future and position will be decided above all on the internal front, and in these four spheres: a. The country's ability and the people's desire to attract and absorb immigrants, particularly from the West...; b. Our pioneering capacity in developing the country, including the desolate areas of the Negev and the uninhabited parts of the north, and in building a diversified and independent economy which encompasses agriculture, industry, seafaring and transportation...; c. An ever-increasing effort to develop general and technical education, making the entire nation...a powerful center of science and research, literature and Torah, art and the humanities; d. Our ability to mold a new, free and progressive society based on mutual help, brotherly love, justice and peace without discrimination, a society which will be the pride of all Jews everywhere and a light unto the nations...To achieve all this we must all give of ourselves and cultivate the spirit of volunteering at all levels of the nation....I hope that the Knesset Members will help in this....

Claim Regarding Atomic Work at Dimona Reactor

Introduction

From time to time, ever since the early 1960s, Israel's nuclear capability had been the subject of public debate. The position of the Government, namely, that Israel would not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East arena, has remained unchanged throughout. In the following two debates different, opposing angles from which the policy was assailed, are demonstrated. The exchange of personal statements between MKs Eban and Peres is of interest, particularly when one comes to consider the development of their subsequent political careers.

Sitting 7 of the Sixth Knesset

7 December 1965 (13 Kislev 5726)

M. Wilner (Rakah): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, we propose discussing a subject which may be fateful for our entire future. On 21 November 1965 *Davar* cited the report of the Institute of Strategic Studies to the effect that "One atom bomb a year can be made at the atomic reactor in Dimona." The fact that a newspaper which is associated with the Government publishes the conclusions of a British survey as a *fait accompli*, and in a tone of complacency, is a cause of grave concern....The paper notes additional information published by the Institute, such as the fact that the proportion of Israel's gross national product spent on defense is the highest in the world, reaching 10.7 percent. It can be assumed that the Dimona reactor accounts for a large part of this. The resultant economic burden is apparent to all....How many schools, hospitals and apartment buildings could have been built had not the money been spent on the reactor...?

The issue is not solely or primarily an economic one. Like any sovereign state, Israel is entitled to attend to its national defense. But, in common with many others, both within Israel and abroad, we regard the development of atomic weapons as a danger to Israel's national defense. The military aspect of the atomic activity at Dimona could constitute a danger in that specific respect. It is no coincidence that most of the members of the Government's atomic commission, well-known Israeli scientists, resigned when Mr. Ben-Gurion was in office, because

they apparently did not agree with that dangerous trend of atomic activity....

The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: Kindly note that if you cite something, if you quote facts, I cannot stop you. But if you speak hypothetically, basing assumptions on what you think "apparently" happened, I will have to ask you to be more careful in what you say....

M. Wilner (Rakah): ...I assume that those scientists are seriously concerned about and dedicated to Israel's position and security. The dispute between Israel and the Arab countries can be resolved only by peaceful means while assuring the rights of the nations concerned. Any idea of resolving it by a military escapade must be repressed. Israel's acquisition of atomic arms could, in our view, become a national disaster, endangering our nation's security, exacerbating the relations between Israel and the Arab countries and destroying the chances of attaining a peace settlement, something which our nation urgently desires. A development of this kind could also undermine Israel's position amongst the nations of Asia and Africa and the whole world. Many nations are fighting the spread of nuclear arms today. A U.N. resolution to that effect has just been passed and the possibility of declaring certain areas, particularly Africa, as nuclear-free zones is being discussed.

Atomic weapons will bring about increased tension, not greater security....In the international conditions of our region, anyone who embarks on a nuclear arms race here will not be able to retain the monopoly, as has been proved by the rockets....Israel should be more interested than anyone else in preventing an atomic arms race in the region. As a small country, Israel cannot contemplate a nuclear military clash. Our nation will benefit from having the area become a nuclear-free zone. The Knesset should take the initiative in this, passing a resolution to this effect, and thereby strengthening Israel's international position and reducing tension....

There is another aspect to this problem. In the past, German governmental circles leaked the information that they were also involved in funding nuclear research in Israel. That is very disquieting too. The leaders and generals of West Germany, many of whom are confirmed Nazis, aspire to attain nuclear weapons. In conjunction with the Bonn Government, West German scientists are utilizing every opportunity to advance in this sphere, including making use of other countries. Politicians from Bonn run to Washington, London and Paris in order to get permission to have nuclear arms. Can you not see that nuclear arms in the hands of Hitler's heirs will seriously heighten international tension and the danger of war?

We propose that the Knesset discuss the findings of the Institute of Strategic Studies in London so that it may pass the following resolutions: 1. To stop the military trend of the work at the atomic reactor in

Dimona; 2. To support signing the international agreement to make our region a nuclear-free zone; 3. To sever all connection with West Germany in the area of atomic research; 4. To express our vigorous opposition to equipping West Germany with any nuclear arms.

The Deputy Prime Minister, A. Eban: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, in his speech today MK Wilner has expressed his party's concern for Israel's security, integrity and international position in a very original way. I cannot conceal my view that there is an inverse relationship between the length of that speech and its usefulness. I will not bore you by answering all the points raised, but will refer solely to his motion for the agenda....

The Institute of Strategic Studies in London is a distinguished private institution which studies international military issues. It has no official standing. Its assessments and evaluations have no binding force. It is free to garner facts and publish appraisals as it pleases. In its survey of November 12 the Institute listed the types of tanks and planes which, in its view, were in the possession of the various countries of the world, including Israel and the other countries of the region, and also gave an assessment of their scientific capacity. I fail to see why these guesses and hypotheses require the Knesset to react in any way. None of the dozens of countries mentioned in that survey have seen fit to hold a parliamentary debate on it. The parliamentary season accords the Knesset and its committees ample opportunity to study the problems of Israel's technological research and development. The publication of private surveys abroad should not disturb the Knesset's routine....

On 20 May 1964, in answer to a parliamentary question, the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense explained the objective of Israel's nuclear research, which is intended for peaceful purposes, research and development. There has been no change in the principles which the Prime Minister delineated then. I am sure, therefore, that the vast majority of the Knesset will agree that nothing is to be gained from discussing the surveys of a foreign research institute, and propose that the subject be removed from the agenda.

The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: There are two proposals before the Knesset: a. That we discuss the subject; b. That we remove the subject from the agenda.

(The proposal to discuss the subject in the Knesset is not adopted.)

(The proposal to remove the subject from the agenda is adopted.)

Reports of Visits to Dimona Reactor by U.S. Government Representatives

Sitting 79 of the Sixth Knesset

5 July 1966 (17 Tammuz 5726)

Y. Bader (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, I am not a member of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and I do not know precisely what goes on at the atomic research station in Dimona. In my view, it would be preferable for that enterprise to be under the aegis of the Ministry of Education and Culture or the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, but whatever the allocation of responsibility may be, the entire Government is responsible to the Knesset....There have recently been reports of dubious activities at the plant, and this is a matter for the State Comptroller and the Finance Committee....

When the Israeli public is kept in the dark about something, we hear all about it from America. I read in the *New York Times* that there have already been three secret visits to the reactor by Americans, and that these are an annual—and hence regular—occurrence, making them of a supervisory nature....I also read that the object of those visits is to allay the fears of the Arabs....All this is very serious, for who knows what is leaked to Arab diplomats....It is not customary for a country to publish the results of its secret research...and I fail to see why we should engage in research so that American experts can pass our findings on to our enemies!...It is our concern for Israel's honor and sovereignty which leads us to ask why American experts should visit the atomic reactor in Dimona on a regular basis. I can understand one visit, to show off the buildings, the roads, the cleanliness, the dome (almost like St. Peter's in Rome), but why the subsequent ones? These are no courtesy or goodwill visits....

This entire affair is an affront to Israel's honor, sovereignty and international position....Why shouldn't the French, the British or anyone else pay annual visits too...? We appear to have voluntarily seceded part of our sovereignty and agreed to foreign supervision of our affairs. The Government should have turned down the initial request to visit the plant...and should certainly never have permitted the second visit....The condition of secrecy has not been kept....The Government must stop all future visits and must also complain about this leak. Our country is small but is no less precious to us than the U.S. is to the members of the State Department....Our sovereignty must be more precious to us than that of any other country...particularly because we are young and small....

Our future requires that the Government speak out clearly. Our tendency is not to admit the mistakes of the past...but henceforth this matter must stop. There must be no more visits, whether regular or occasional, by foreigners to Dimona, whatever country they may represent....We propose that the Knesset discuss this subject because it is of vital importance to us all....

The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I appreciate MK Bader's astonishment and complaint....Although he also said much that was irrelevant, the burden of his speech concerned what was published about visits, or supervision....I would like to say that in everything it does, Israel preserves its sovereignty meticulously. There has been no supervision...of the atomic research reactor in Dimona. Since 1961 American scientists have visited it as guests of the Government of Israel, that is, at the invitation of the Government of Israel....

I can assure the Knesset that in the future, too, we will preserve Israel's sovereignty....There is no reason to fear that these guests will give false reports to anyone...and you have heard what they have reported....After all this, I think the Knesset will agree with me that there is no cause to hold a debate on this subject....I propose that because of its delicacy the subject be transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee for discussion....

(The proposal to transfer the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is adopted.)

The Speaker, J. Serlin: We will now hear statements from those who abstained. I give the floor to MK Wilner....

M. Wilner (Rakah): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...is the subject really as simple as the Prime Minister has tried to show? If the Government of Israel simply invites American scientists to visit the reactor in Dimona why should this be done under a veil of secrecy...? If everything is so simple, why are we so incensed about the leak to the American paper?

We oppose any foreign supervision of the State of Israel. Israel must jealously maintain its national sovereignty and independence. What is concealed from the two and a half million inhabitants of Israel cannot be laid bare before American or other scientists who have not come as tourists....The Prime Minister has proposed transferring the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee "because of the delicacy of the subject." The matter must be very serious indeed, in that case, and just as we oppose foreign supervision, we are against any word or deed in the direction of atomic arms. We favor making this region a nuclear-free zone...and reiterate our demand that the Knesset agree to nuclear disarmament. The Government's evasive stand on this issue

adds a dangerous dimension to the Prime Minister's reference to "the delicacy of the subject."...

S. Peres (Rafi): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, there are matters of supreme importance on which the nation should be united and which should be discussed in confidence by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. My party would have supported both a united policy and a discussion in the appropriate forum were the real subject only the leak to the *New York Times*. But the Government, which seeks to transfer the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, is a prime source of almost daily leaks to the press on this subject, without requesting a debate in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. Why did a Government spokesman announce last week that the visits were made with the agreement of the French...and that they did not interfere with the work...? Why did we read in yesterday's papers that I am unfit to represent Israel at a private conference on the subject...? I would like to tell the Prime Minister that it is intolerable that we should be permitted to express our criticism only in a closed committee while you may leak damaging statements about my party to the press...disregarding the harm this does to the subject in hand and the country as a whole....

I have just returned from a conference at which that subject was discussed at great length. It is true that Ghana, which advocates disarmament, was not invited, but all the countries which have something to say on the subject were....I saw that, unfortunately, there does not seem to be any likelihood of restricting the growth of nuclear weapons in the world, not because of Israel but because the Powers do not agree with one another....The world is no longer divided up by geographical area but by scientific level....Hardly anyone believes that the nuclear disarmament of the Middle East can be attained separately from the conventional arms race....What I am saying is directed at the members of Mapai and Mapam....

In the wake of what the Prime Minister said—after having been quoted by the Foreign Ministry on this subject, I propose that the Government distinguish between what we tell our friends, who include the U.S.A., and what we avoid telling our enemies. I do not understand why Israel has to allay Nasser's fears...from the Knesset podium. I know that the Arabs suspect us. I know that that suspicion has a deterrent effect. Why should we dispel that effect? By saying this I am advocating neither the dissemination nor the restriction of nuclear arms.

N. Peled (Mapam): That suspicion encourages an atomic arms race.

S. Peres (Rafi): MK Peled, the difference between us is that I do not think that Nasser needs energy pills. He is sufficiently encouraged as it is, and it was not lack of energy which prevented him embarking on the rockets race.

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): What about "Shavit 2"? Why was it fired just before the elections?

S. Peres (Rafi): "Shavit 2" was fired after Nasser had purchased rockets from the U.S. and decided to fire them a few days later. The Knesset Members should know that persons who have no connection with the elections participated in discussing "Shavit 2." I am convinced that the issue was decided on its merits. As we know, Nasser began the rockets race before "Shavit 2" was fired. Some people here, who have an amazing knowledge and understanding of what Nasser does, would do well to examine the dates of events and not solely the explanations published afterwards....

Rafi abstained from voting in favor of transferring the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee because the Government is conducting its internal policy...by leaking information to the press while asking the Opposition to restrict its criticisms to a confidential forum....

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, I agree with the previous speaker on one point, namely, that the secrecy of the visit has grim implications for the way the country is run. Against whom was the secrecy directed—the world, potential enemies or Israel's people, press and Knesset? The main point, however, is that the Government of Israel is succumbing instead of initiating, taking steps under pressure which could have served as a starting point for a great political move had they been taken voluntarily and in accordance with our interests.

No one could have had any doubt—except, perhaps, for the previous speaker—that on this subject the world would not watch what we did, or did not do, with indifference....That being so, why did we not initiate a great political campaign? Why did we not propose the nuclear disarmament of the region directly to the Arab world...? There are very few subjects on which Israel can convince the opposing side to speak directly; this is one of them. The Arab world is concerned about what Israel is doing, or not doing, or might do, in the nuclear sphere. That concern could have been put to great political use in order, for the first time, to attain a direct dialogue with the Arab countries.

...

Personal Statement by the Foreign Minister, A. Eban

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban: Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, MK Peres' speech obliges me to make the following statement:

MK Peres' assumption that the Foreign Ministry or the Foreign Minister is interested in his participation or non-participation in con-

ferences in Canada is both arrogant and unfounded. Neither I nor my Ministry care where the honorable Knesset Member wanders and in which symposia he takes part. On the other hand, I have every right to propose to organizations to which I belong and with which I maintain relations that additional invitations be sent to other people regardless of who has already been invited....If MK Peres requires reassurance, allow me to repeat that I am completely indifferent to his visit to Canada or anywhere else.

Anything a public servant, including MK Peres, says lays him open to criticism. This evening he split the Knesset on a subject upon which it should have been united, speaking clearly about the need to be vague and stressing in public the importance of distinguishing between what we say to friends and enemies. He revealed this tactical wisdom on a subject of the utmost delicacy to friends and enemies alike....

MK Peres claimed that a Government spokesman had arbitrarily said something which he did not say regarding French permission for visits to Dimona. No such statement was made or published anywhere. The Deputy Minister of Defense said quite rightly that Israel's efforts to secure arms in the U.S. were made with the knowledge of the French, which is a very different thing....In a voice charged with emotion, MK Peres complained that others refuse to be impressed by his etatism, but someone who constantly and continually represents himself as being a great etatist lays himself open to criticism on that score, and cannot prevent me from doubting the superiority of his credentials in this. Be that as it may, the nation judged his etatism in November, and that is sufficient for me....

Sitting 81 of the Sixth Knesset

11 July 1966 (23 Tammuz 5726)

Personal Statement by MK S. Peres

S. Peres (Rafi): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, 1. In a personal statement from this podium on July 3 this year the Foreign Minister claimed that neither he nor the Foreign Ministry was interested in my participation in international conferences. This seems to indicate that there are two Foreign Ministries, one which leaks information at length about its attitude on this to *Ma'ariv*, as published on 1 July 1966, and one which is "indifferent." I rejoice at the Foreign Minister's belated indifference to the supposed "arrogance" of others. It is regrettable, however, that it has emerged only post factum....

2. The Foreign Minister accused me of "splitting" the Knesset on a subject upon which it should have been united. I am consoled by the fact that he has come to the conclusion that we should have been united on that subject.

3. The Foreign Minister maintains that I stressed "in public" the need to distinguish between what we say to our friends and our enemies. What I said was that we must distinguish between what we "tell our friends and avoid telling our enemies." The Foreign Minister should be more careful when quoting others, even "in public."

4. ...I am glad to note that the Foreign Minister did not deny having given the information to *Ma'ariv*.

5. The most serious point is his claim that I said that a Government spokesman "had arbitrarily said something which he did not say regarding French permission for visits to Dimona. No such statement was made or published anywhere." I would have understood had the Foreign Minister said "not made," but "not published" is contradicted by the facts, because the front page of *Ha'aretz* of 29 June 1966 mentions "a closed meeting of Ministry of Defense employees from the atomic reactor at Dimona" at Mapai House in Dimona at which the French permission granted for visits to the reactor by Americans was referred to by a Government spokesman....That spokesman told me, after my speech in the Knesset, that in speaking of French permission he meant solely the purchase of arms from the U.S.A....

6. ...Mr. Eban mentioned the results of the elections in November....We both have the right to adapt our views to what emerges as victorious or to continue fighting for what we believe is right....Thank you.

Budget Law, 5726-1966

Introduction

The new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abba Eban, introducing his first budget, presented a wide-ranging, and generally optimistic, review of Israel's international relations. The subsequent debate was marked by a sharp clash with the former Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion, and by the disagreement with Herut over relations with Germany, by now customary.

Sitting 51 of the Sixth Knesset

23 March 1966 (2 Nissan 5726)

...

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban: ...Distinguished Knesset, the budget submitted to the Knesset by Mrs. Golda Meir in March 1965 concluded the ninth year of her incumbency at the Foreign Ministry. Her energetic personality and ceaseless work have left an indelible imprint on that period of vigorous activity in the sphere of Israel's policy. As I embark upon my term of office I would like to say a few words about our international position as it has crystallized over the last decade.

Since the Sinai Campaign Israel has emerged from narrow straits onto the open sea; routes have been opened to Africa and Asia and peace has been secured on its southern border. Its international ties have increased, its trade relations have expanded, it has gained the reputation of being a country which can withstand siege and has attained new international standing by virtue of its participation in expanding the economy, society and culture of dozens of developing countries. Through its own ability and the unending dedication of its defenders Israel has succeeded in maintaining a defensive and deterrent force. The support of the Jewish people and friendly parties throughout the world have helped to ensure that that force does not lag behind in its arms and equipment and is of paramount importance in guaranteeing the maintenance of peace.

Anyone who reviews Israel's eighteen years cannot fail to be impressed by this country's singularity. It is unique both in the immense dangers which have confronted it and in its ability to overcome them. The dangers have not yet passed, and we would be denying the truth were we to pretend otherwise. But our neighbors are denying the truth by refusing to accept the fact of Israel's existence and continuing to delude themselves that they can destroy it...

Israel's tremendous defense and political undertaking is revealed to its fullest extent when we contemplate the obstacles confronting it. At first glance there would seem to be an immense disparity in this region between the forces at Israel's disposal and those available to its enemies as regards numbers, territory, wealth, resources and international representation. This multifaceted superiority led many Arab leaders to assume that Israel's existence depended on the consent of the Arab world, while the Arab world had no parallel need for peace with Israel. But events have proved them wrong. After eighteen years of war against Israel, Arab nationalism has gained nothing....First the Arabs attempted to prevent Israel's establishment...then to reduce its territory, flood it with a stream of hostile refugees, rend Jerusalem from it, expel it from international organizations, close world markets to it, foil its irrigation projects, bring it into bad light with the international community and, above all, deprive it of any positive connection with emerging Africa and Asia.

Not one of those objectives has been attained. Not one of them seems likely to be....Israel has grown in strength and stability and its contacts with the outside world have flourished....From within the Arab world voices have been heard expressing doubt as to whether war is in fact the way to solve the Israel-Arab conflict. Thus, the factors operating to stabilize Israel's existence have overcome those working against it. Apart from help for Israel based on support for its national and social undertaking, Israel is aided and strengthened by the general international situation, which does not foster warfare....It is our generation which will decide whether mankind will destroy war or war will destroy mankind. The repudiation of force as the way to change borders between sovereign states has become an accepted part of the policies of the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., Western and Eastern Europe as well as most of the other countries of the world....Even territorial agreements which were originally regarded as temporary are now preferred to any attempt to change them by force. Mankind prefers to dwell in an imperfect, temporary building than to be buried beneath its ruins. Anyone who cultivates the dream of overthrowing Israel in an eruption of hatred and violence will clash with Israel's defensive strength and desire to exist as well as with the principles of modern international policy.

...The world has undergone far-reaching changes during the eighteen years of Israel's independence, shifting from two focal points of influence—Washington and Moscow—to an increasing number of independent countries, with shifting relations, alliances and blocs....During the last eighteen years the E.E.C., the People's Republic of China, thirty-six sovereign African states (instead of three) and 150 members of the U.N. (instead of 57) have come into being....There have also been extensive technological changes. Eighteen years ago only one Power had nuclear arms, there were no intercontinental missiles, satellites or

space voyages and the objective of reaching the moon had not yet been set. Demographic changes have added 500 million people to the world's population....There have been vast improvements in transportation and communications, changing traditional concepts of distance. Changes which formerly took hundreds of years now take but a short span....

In this changing world the makers and implementors of policy must be aware of what is happening and ever on the alert for what tomorrow may bring. Although dangers may be aggravated, achievements must be firmly entrenched and the as-yet-unfulfilled yearning for coexistence may yet be satisfied....Nonetheless, there is no reason to believe that what little stability our region has experienced over the last decade will be undermined in the near future. Israel's defensive and deterrent ability has not declined....The international climate appears to favor peace to a greater extent than ever before....

It is my view that the principal task of modern diplomacy is to stand firm and prevent explosions until the whole world is united in a regime of peace and justice. There is no guarantee that this will happen. History teaches us that man acts sensibly only after every other alternative has been exhausted. All the alternatives to peace are gradually being exhausted, it seems. But this vision of the future cannot prevent interim setbacks. Violence has not been arrested everywhere, and we observe the fighting in Vietnam with concern....Regrettably, the institutions established to preserve international security are not particularly effective....The international deadlock has affected the U.N., as is evinced by the fact that the talks about restoring peace to Vietnam are being conducted outside it. Although the U.N. has helped solve colonial problems throughout the world, aiding emerging countries...and encouraging the formation of an international community of sovereign nations...it has not done enough to reduce the gap between developed and developing countries and eradicate poverty, hunger and injustice...objectives which Israel upholds and has endeavored to foster, to the best of its abilities....We must remember that Israel is no longer the youngest, smallest or poorest of nations....We are somewhere in the middle of the scale on all three counts, and this must increase our responsibility towards all mankind....

...I have never accepted the view that we must choose between policy and security....In our day war is not "the continuation of political intercourse," to use Clausewitz's superficial phrase, but reflects the failure of policy, and the prime object of Israel's policy is to prevent war....To further this end and to counteract incitement against us, Israel currently has 96 diplomatic and consular representations in 78 countries....We also welcome official and unofficial visits by politicians, scientists, academics, journalists, parliamentary delegations, etc. Israel should appear to the world not as a complex international problem but as a positive social reality....

The first action taken by the newly-elected Government of Israel...was to establish contact with the newly-elected Government of France...reflecting the stability and durability of the friendship between the two countries....There is no doubt in my mind that France seeks stability in the Middle East and continues to regard the strengthening of Israel as one of the major conditions for this....It is reinforcing and extending its status in this region with that end in view...and we will be helping in this by cultivating and enhancing our ties with the rich culture of that great nation....My recent talks with President Johnson and other American leaders have also provided evidence of friendship for Israel and readiness to help in solving some of its principal problems, in maintaining the balance of power...and in extending economic aid....Our relations with Britain and the Commonwealth countries also continue to be based on a common assessment of the problems of the world, and of this region in particular...and across the political spectrum in Britain I have encountered sympathy for and interest in Israel as well as support for its social, democratic and cultural enterprise....

...The U.S.S.R.'s affirmation of the need to solve territorial disputes peaceably has encouraged us in our search for closer ties with that country....Above all, we wish to see a change in its policy of the unilateral supply of arms to a country which advocates war against Israel....There have been positive and encouraging cultural exchanges between the U.S.S.R. and Israel...and I note with satisfaction the strengthening of our diplomatic and commercial ties with such Eastern European countries as Romania and Poland....Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and the German Federal Republic a year ago...economic discussions have been held which will, I trust, soon be concluded....The implementation of the Reparations Agreement, which has contributed greatly to Israel's development, will shortly be concluded...although it in no way compensates for the dreadful loss and suffering inflicted on our nation....

Our relations with the countries of Western Europe continue to be good...and we have made it clear to the E.E.C. that we desire a comprehensive agreement upon which the economic relations between us may be based....Although we have not yet established diplomatic ties with India, and China repudiates the principle of peaceful coexistence in this region, for historical, cultural and economic reasons we aspire to establish ties with the countries of Asia...and in some cases have succeeded in this to no small extent....We have also extended our relations with the countries of Latin America, despite efforts by the Arab countries to undermine them....Israel maintains 29 representations in Africa, reflecting...our deep and positive involvement in the economic and social development of those emerging countries...which have suffered under colonial regimes for many generations....We must continue to culti-

vate Israel as a center for studying the problems of developing countries....

Throughout the world we are witnessing the recognition of the fact that a small country like Israel which can defend itself effectively furthers international stability....Our friendship with countries everywhere is both a valuable asset in itself and an indirect political aim...bringing peace nearer by isolating and thereby weakening Arab hostility....The Arabs reject Israel's existence...and discussions about "gestures" and refugees are merely tactical ploys....Once the Arab leaders are able to perceive the pluralistic reality of the situation in the Middle East...which includes Israel as a nation and a culture, there will be peace in the region...benefiting all the countries concerned. ...Allow me to make it absolutely clear that we have always sought peace, that the arms race is continually being aggravated by the Arabs, principally Egypt...and that we will repel any attempt to attack us....As long as our neighbors aspire to destroy Israel...there can be no reduction of the tension in the region....Egypt's aspirations to dominate the Arab world...do not serve the interests of a free, pluralistic Arab community of nations, living at peace with one another and the rest of the world, within the Middle East....

Above all else, Israel must fulfill its special role devolving from its Jewish character...as reflected in the lofty heights of Jewish thought and values. Our representatives must speak on behalf of Jewish humanism, and it is this which the Foreign Ministry attempts to achieve. All the inner depths of Israeli reality, not solely foreign policy, must be explained by our representatives throughout the world....We must stress the richness and variety of our social fabric, the challenge of our new society, the antiquity of our values and traditions and the freshness of our social vision...and convince the nations of the world of the justice of our cause....The last eighteen years have proved that we are able to influence others, that we are not helpless....Despite our limitations and the obstacles confronting us...we are free to influence other free men and inspire them with our lofty vision....

D. Ben-Gurion (Rafi): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...on the whole I see no reason for Israel to alter the foreign policy laid down by the first elected Government in March 1949, seventeen years ago, as formulated by yours truly, namely...: a. adhering to the principles of the U.N. Charter and friendship with all peace-loving countries, especially the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.; b. aspiring towards a Jewish-Arab alliance...within the framework of the U.N...; c. supporting any step which strengthens peace, guarantees human rights and equality between nations and enhances the position of the U.N.; d. ensuring the right of all Jews who wish to do so to leave their country of residence and settle in their historic homeland; e. effectively maintaining the full independence and sovereignty of the State of Israel.

...Had I thought there was any cause to boast of our achievements I would have been as glad as the boasters....But whereas our actual foreign policy gives no cause for concern, those who are in charge of implementing it do....Mapai lost votes at the last elections, though the votes it received are the outcome of its great achievements of the past, prior to the gross distortion of justice perpetrated by the Ministerial Committee of 1960, despite the vigorous opposition of the incumbent Prime Minister....This was reflected in Mr. Eban's base misrepresentation of Rafi in the interview which appeared recently in *Le Monde*...where he claimed that "Ben-Gurion's supporters" had tried to shock public opinion by adopting an unrestrainedly extremist position in the defense sphere....Abba Eban contends that the voters have made it perfectly clear that they want no military escapades, although they want to strengthen Israel's defensive and deterrent power....Mr. Eban knew quite well that by attributing militaristic ideas to Ben-Gurion's supporters in the Opposition, his French interviewer would assume that these were the policies of the previous Government, as he indeed did....

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban: That was neither said nor hinted....

D. Ben-Gurion (Rafi): You may reply when it's your turn to speak, and if you reply as you did last week, there will yet be an answer to your reply....And so, Mr. Eban has implied that during Ben-Gurion's premiership there was an unrestrainedly extremist position in the defense sphere, and that this was rejected by the voters at the last elections....The basis of David Ben-Gurion's Government was collective responsibility, and every Minister was free to oppose the Prime Minister's view or resign, as indeed happened in certain cases....But now we have the redeeming concept of "the merging of security and the search for peace," as delineated by Mr. Levi Eshkol and his Deputy, Mr. Abba Eban...and one might think that those redeemers had not supported Ben-Gurion's escapades, and that Ben-Gurion himself had not accepted the decision of the majority when the Cabinet opposed him....

When the Minister of Defense, Mr. Pinhas Lavon, resigned after fifteen months in office, the Prime Minister, Mr. Sharett...beseeched Ben-Gurion to abandon his status of private citizen and resume the position of Minister of Defense, regarding him as the only person in the country capable of restoring confidence and effectiveness to the IDF and the defense network, which he had established and built up....All the members of the Cabinet supported him in this...mentioning the fact that as Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion had always consulted and informed the Cabinet and accepted the decisions of the majority. Mr. Eban's description of "Ben-Gurion's supporters" in his interview with the journalist from *Le Monde* sought to present a totally different view, implying that there was no balance between preserving our security and cultivating peace in Ben-Gurion's time....

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban: That was not said.

D. Ben-Gurion (Rafi): I am saying that, sir. That is the implication of what you said. Don't interrupt me all the time. That is what any foreign journalist would have construed from what the former Deputy Prime Minister and current Foreign Minister said....

I suppose that you have read Israel's Declaration of Independence of 14 May 1948, whose final wording was decided by the person you have branded as being responsible for military escapades, namely, yours truly. On the greatest day in our history, that Declaration...called on "the sons of the Arab people dwelling in Israel to keep the peace and play their part in building the state on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its institutions, provisional and permanent." It continued: "We extend the hand of peace and good-neighborliness to all the states around us and to their peoples, and we call upon them to cooperate in mutual helpfulness with the independent Jewish nation in its Land. The State of Israel is prepared to make its contribution in a concerted effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East." That declaration was ratified unanimously by the Provisional Council of State...even though neither Mr. Levi Eshkol nor Mr. Abba Eban were members of it or of the Provisional Government....

Mr. Abba Eban, you did not display national dishonesty or irresponsibility when you served in the Government which I had the honor of leading. Seeing that you have adopted the method revived by your colleagues and your leader, Mr. Levi Eshkol, and his henchman, Mr. Shimshon Shapira, I expressed my lack of confidence in you and your Government last week.

...

David Hacohen (Ma'arach): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, although I am far beneath MK David Ben-Gurion, both as regards the content of his speech and my own intellectual abilities...and owe him an undying debt of gratitude for his leading role in bringing about the miracle of the establishment of Israel...his scathing criticism of our Foreign Minister, Abba Eban, was out of proportion to the subject under review. In the past I have heard the abundant praise Ben-Gurion has heaped on Abba Eban's ability and achievements on behalf of the state...but now he is set at naught by his erstwhile mentor, David Ben-Gurion. Truly, this affair contains the elements of a Greek tragedy.

...The role of our foreign policy is to steer our course through troubled waters, in other words, to strive for peace, while simultaneously increasing our military strength. I agree with the Foreign Minister that security and foreign policy go hand in hand....Despite the differences between the Arab countries, it is likely that their military collaboration will increase....Despite the fact that Nasser's greed to dominate other countries is regarded as a threat by many Arab leaders, this does not

diminish his avarice....Nasser's prestige has been impaired by his inability to unite the Arab countries, but he and his revolution have breathed new life into the Arab peoples and revived their extreme nationalist vision, the brunt of which is directed against us....

We will always be attentive to any whisper of peace and intimation of intelligence regarding the solution of the conflicts between us and the Arabs, but our friends abroad—as well as those among us—who draw our attention to the supposed realism of one statement or another of Nasser's...should be more careful in drawing conclusions about radical changes in our enemies' attitudes towards us. Nasser has never spoken of a realism which involves recognition of the fact of Israel's existence. His realism is the outcome of his encountering our forces in previous engagements, primarily in the military sphere but also in the areas of international and economic policy....His realism consists of strengthening himself militarily....Nasser has never concealed his intentions of aspiring to destroy the State of Israel...he has merely made tactical changes in the path he has taken towards achieving that end....

When I said that our foreign policy must serve peace I meant that we must constantly explain our sense of the danger to that peace, primarily to our friends among the Great Powers....Washington has said recently that Israel "understands the fears of the Arabs and realizes that threats only heighten those fears." What threats are they talking about? It is the Arabs who threaten to destroy Israel, and consequently we, and not the Arabs, should be fearful....We are told that Washington is concerned lest the conventional arms race become one involving more sophisticated weapons, such as rockets....For years Egypt has been stating quite openly that it aspires to build its own rockets....By providing Egypt with aid in the form of food, thereby releasing it of the need to concern itself with assuring food supplies for its population, the U.S.A. is enabling Nasser to proceed with his nefarious plans against Israel....If a Power which is friendly to Israel supplies arms to those who announce their intention of destroying it, claiming that thereby the balance of power in the region is maintained, we must respond by stating that what is important for us is whether our friends act in such a way as to endanger our existence, declarations of friendship notwithstanding....The Foreign Minister must continue to explain our position to the Government and people of the U.S....At the same time, however, we must declare that we will not sit idly by while our reputation is blackened and our existence threatened....

In connection with the controversial issue of our relations with Germany...I would like to...point to the overwhelming fact that Germany preferred diplomatic relations with Israel to its relations with almost the whole Arab world. That alone proves that this is a totally different Germany....While not denying the fact that indifference to the

Holocaust can be regarded as culpability...I am convinced that there are many people in Germany today, particularly among the younger generation, who are not merely shocked by the fact that the German people disgraced itself by becoming an instrument of mass murder in the hands of a homicidal maniac, but are ashamed of what their parents did, and even tell them so. If we adopt the view that the sixty million people of West Germany—one hundred million if you include East Germany and Austria—are inveterate murderers and there is no point attempting to reeducate them, what hope is there for mankind? What is the point of ostracizing large sections of the German nation which seek friendship with Israel and wish to atone for the sins of their fathers...? The establishment of active diplomatic relations between our two countries must serve to reveal ever-growing circles of Germans whose attitude to Israel is positive...as well as to counteract hostile Arab propaganda directed against us within Germany....This has nothing to do with forgetting and forgiving....

On no account should our bitter account with the entire German nation...be regarded as contradicting our need to attain a position in Germany by an extensive network of ties and publicity, penetrating all strata of the nation, though without failing to make it clear what it did to us when it sold its soul to Satan, and how it must purify itself....

...

H. Landau (Gahal): Madam Speaker...the question to be asked is whether peace with our neighbors is reality or an illusion. The Prime Minister has claimed that he has a new political style which brings the chance of peace nearer. I must admit that I generally find it difficult to discern any style whatsoever where the Prime Minister is concerned, and even less so any indication of a chance of peace. The Foreign Minister spoke at length on that subject, and I must admit that he has style, too much of it, even. Sometimes I think that is all he has....He has spoken of indications of an awareness of the need for peace among certain Arab circles...but there is no evidence of that in reality...and certainly not among the Arab rulers....You may say that Bourguiba has indicated a willingness to accept facts, but what he has said is that he has realized the improbability of destroying Israel by military means and that therefore the best strategy is the political one, aimed at obliging Israel to implement the U.N. resolution of 1947 and restore the Arab refugees....All you will achieve by claiming to see intimations of peace where there are none is to present our enemies as lovers of peace, as if their statements were empty phrases. You will convince our friends that the danger to us has subsided and you will cause the nation to lower its guard....

As for the intimations of peace...time and again Nasser has reiterated his intention of dominating the Middle East, including Israel....I believe that it is as much his pan-Arab imperialist ambition as his hatred of us which motivates him. He cannot achieve that without territo-

rial continuity with the countries he wishes to control...and Israel prevents him from achieving this....For the moment he is concentrating on extending his control over Yemen...which means that he will control Bab el Mandeb, the southern entrance to the Red Sea, endangering our freedom of navigation to and from Eilat to a greater extent than by his control of the Straits of Tiran....

This possibility obliges us to take extensive political action in this region and the world....In the long run, of course, Nasser has not abandoned his dream of "liberating Palestine," as he puts it. Although the danger is not immediate, the massive supply of arms from the U.S.S.R., the economic aid from the U.S.A., the tremendous potential in terms of manpower at his disposal, not to mention all the air and armored forces our enemies possess, must give us pause....The day may yet come when the balance of power between us and our enemies reaches equilibrium, or they are even stronger than we are...Is there any realist among us who believes that we will be able to reach an agreement with Nasser...? I would like to make it plain that I do not believe in the approach based on routine, which the Foreign Minister calls "strengthening ourselves while aspiring for peace."

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban: Nor in causing panic.

H. Landau (Gahal): Sir, the style is fine, but the content is not....You claim that Israel is growing stronger, receiving tanks from the U.S.A...but that is not enough to avert what must surely come—a military confrontation. We must give the subject our attention today, not rely on style, promises or guarantees, not even on "the atmosphere which favors peace more than ever before"...as the Foreign Minister said today. If we do not reach a solution...we will eventually become a state which is subject to patronage and dependent on others. That is where we are going. We have friends, including the Powers, and we must do our best to increase their number...but we must not become dependent on them for our existence and security....

Thirteen years ago negotiations were held between the nation of murderers and the representatives of their victims...resulting in what was known as the Reparations Agreement, by which the Government of Israel received a small amount of the plunder the Germans had taken from the Jews of Europe before murdering six million of them in the death camps and gas chambers. The Government of Israel claims that the reparations apply solely to lost Jewish property, not to the deaths of one-third of our nation, an irreparable loss for which there can be no forgetting and forgiving....But the Germans say that the account has been settled, the injustice righted and they can now return to the family of nations, along the path paved by the Government of Israel....

What has happened over the years? Each year the money was given, and each year another layer of murders was covered over, with your as-

sistance. In Germany there are Nazis in the government, in the courts and in the education system. Thousands of war criminals are free, are respected citizens, because German courts cannot bring them to justice....It was not long before German scientists were manufacturing weapons of destruction for Israel's enemies and German industry was supplying arms to them so that they could be used to destroy the surviving remnant of the Jewish people....Germany feels strong now, it has even begun to speak of territorial claims....And it is that Germany which MK David Hacoen claims is different....

D. Hacoen (Ma'arach): It definitely is different.

H. Landau (Gahal): ...What is grave politically...is that the rehabilitation you have granted Germany has enabled it to be a political force in the Middle East, and not in our favor.

D. Hacoen (Ma'arach): That depends on us.

H. Landau (Gahal): That depends on how we crawl to the Germans....And when one dares to say a few words of criticism about Germany and remind them of their murderous past, they get angry....As far as they are concerned, normalization was completed once diplomatic relations were established, and for them normalization means that the moral debt has been paid. That, according to *The Economist*, is what the Germans told the Arab League recently.

Now that the Reparations Agreement has ended, the Government has asked Germany for economic aid, which the Germans are prepared to give, though on the same terms as all the other developing countries receive. But the Government demands more....On what basis? Not on the basis of the plunder, because that account with the Germans has been settled. The Government of Israel is demanding that a moral debt be paid, not by punishing Nazis and war criminals...but by money.

D. Hacoen (Ma'arach): No one has said that. That is a base lie.

H. Landau (Gahal): That is what our representatives in Bonn said....

D. Hacoen (Ma'arach): It's not true. There's not a word of truth in it.

...

H. Landau (Gahal): Members of the Government, have you thought what you are doing? How you are trampling on our honor in the eyes of the whole world, representing our nation as Shylock?

J. Fischer (Ma'arach): Are you the only person concerned with Israel's honor...?

...

H. Landau (Gahal): ...A great Christian, Francois Mauriac, said recently...: "I am not a Jew. I am a Christian. And as such I should for-

give. But there is one thing I cannot forgive. I cannot forgive the Germans. In Paris I saw a trainload of Jews destined for the concentration camps....I cannot forget that. It was terrible." Members of the Government, if you cannot learn from Jews, at least learn from Francois Mauriac.

New Knesset Building; Basic Law: The Government

Introduction

On 31 August 1966, after several years of planning and construction, thanks to a generous grant from the family of the late James de Rothschild, the Knesset inaugurated its building—on a hill overlooking the Valley of the Cross, on one side, and the Kirya, the site of the Prime Minister's Office and several Ministries, on the other. Hitherto it had held its meetings in cramped quarters in an office building in downtown Jerusalem which had been temporarily converted for the purpose. The inauguration was attended by an impressive array of Speakers of other democratic parliaments, in whose name the Speaker of the oldest parliament, that of Iceland, spoke.

Immediately thereafter the Knesset held its first sitting in its new home. The occasion was dedicated to the first reading of the Basic Law: the Government, another important milestone on the long road towards the completion of Israel's Constitution, on which the First Knesset (originally known as the Constituent Assembly) had embarked as far back as 1950.

Special Sitting of the Knesset

31 August 1966 (15 Elul 5726)

The Speaker, K. Luz: Distinguished Knesset Members, it is a great honor for me to open the first sitting of the Knesset in its new home. It was in this same month, almost two and a half thousand years ago, that...the prophets Haggai and Zechariah began building the Second Temple, after the work had been interrupted by the Persian rulers, as we read in the Book of Haggai: "And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and did work in the house of the Lord of hosts, their God. In the four and twentieth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king." Seventy-seven years later, also in this same month, the wall around Jerusalem which Nehemiah had ordered built, was completed, as we read in the Book of Nehemiah: "They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon." It was a great political and defense

achievement, and the work was successful, because: "the people had a mind to work," and also: "the joy of Jerusalem was heard even afar off." Today we have completed the official residence of the highest institution in the land, and our joy will be heard even afar off. In order to strengthen the walls of Israel's parliamentarism we will discuss the Basic Law: the Government at this festive sitting, supplementing the Basic Laws regarding the Knesset and the President, and thereby fulfilling the words of the prophet: "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem."

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, honored guests...allow me first of all to congratulate the Knesset on moving into its new building...and express the hope that its deliberations may be fruitful and wise, benefiting Israeli democracy, parliamentarism and national unity...Strengthening the institutions of democratic rule in Israel, while evincing mutual tolerance and respect for the rights of others, guarantees the country's social and cultural progress....

The Basic Law: the Government, which lies before you today, constitutes an important part of Israel's future Constitution....Permit me to give just a few words of explanation....The principal intention of this proposal is to consolidate the rules and procedures governing the work of the Government, Israel's Executive, in one Basic Law....The foundations of this law were laid by the Provisional Council of State in 1948, upon the establishment of the state....It was only natural that the first legislation introduced by the First Knesset—the Transition Law—was of a constitutional nature...not only determining the status of the President and the basic principles of parliamentary life in Israel, but also giving basic instructions regarding the work of the Government and its connection with the Knesset....That law remains valid and relevant to this day...and serves as the basis of the proposal before you now....

Jerusalem will remain the seat of the Government...and the confidence of the Knesset, to which it will be accountable, will continue to be essential for its existence and functioning....While constituting the Executive, the Government is subject to law, i.e., to the will of the Knesset...as it has always been....The past experience of Israel and other countries has proved that in the allocation of rights and responsibilities within the network of public life there are always indeterminate areas which could be called "no-man's land." Till now Israel's Governments have tended to solve those problems in the spirit of England's unwritten constitution. A comprehensive constitution must refer those areas to the Government's jurisdiction once and for all, since we are dealing with executive powers....

The role of the President in forming a new government will remain as it was, namely, to assign the task of forming a government to one of the members of the Knesset....An innovation has been introduced in the

setting of a time-limit by which the new government must be formed after the elections have been held....The Knesset's approval must be given for changes within the Cabinet and for the creation, merging or cancellation of Ministries....Such changes are more complicated in a government based on a coalition than in one based on a single party....

As you know, the meetings of the Cabinet and Ministerial Committees are secret, as is the practice in every democratic country...and we have included a clause to this effect in the proposal now before you....I propose transferring this proposal to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, where it can be discussed more exhaustively....

M. Begin (Gahal): Mr. Speaker...had the Government been wiser we would be debating the human rights bill today, although in the formulation of certain civil rights the English have preceded us by 751 years, the Americans at Philadelphia by 190 years, the French at Versailles by 177 years and the U.N. by 18 years. However, we preceded everyone by thousands of years in laying the foundation for all human rights by stating that God created man in his own image and referring to every man, regardless of race, origin or religion...."One law shall be unto him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you." But the Government was not wise, and today we are discussing an agglomeration of old laws and bad amendments known as the Basic Law: the Government.

...The proposal currently before us does not make a clearcut distinction between the powers of the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary, or define the nature of those powers....We propose, therefore, that the law start with the words: "The Government's authority derives from the confidence of the Knesset...."

...Clause 5 determines that the Prime Minister must be a Member of the Knesset...but this does not hold for members of the Cabinet....This Government sidestepped the law even before receiving the confidence of the Knesset, when some of its members who were about to be made Ministers resigned from the Knesset and remained in the Cabinet....This gives the public a bad example of how laws can be circumvented....Nor do we think it advisable that the death of the Prime Minister should automatically entail the resignation of the entire Government....A Minister's resignation is to come into effect one week after he has submitted it, whereas a Knesset Member's takes effect after only forty-eight hours. We propose that for both categories, the resignation should be effective after forty-eight hours, since longer pause for thought should not really be necessary....

Clause 22...which is taken from the Coalitionary Discipline Law, states that a Minister shall be responsible to the Cabinet for the way he and his parliamentary party group votes in the Knesset....This undermines the basis of parliamentary rule. The Government is responsible to the Knesset, but here we find that a Minister shall be responsible to the

Government. Thus, if the Government is based on a coalition, representing the majority in the Knesset, the majority of the Knesset will be responsible to the Government....This is unheard of in any other parliamentary democracy....Apart from anything else, the Coalitionary Discipline Law has not been able to prevent certain party groups within the Coalition from voting against the Government in certain instances...or from abstaining or leaving the chamber in others....

I wanted to ask whether the Government intends to attach any sanction to the clause regarding the secrecy of Cabinet discussions...for if not this becomes a *lex imperfecta*, and serves no purpose....If this bill is brought before the Committee we will propose that the Knesset be entitled to express its lack of confidence not only in the entire Government but also in one of its members. The collective responsibility of the Government is an important aspect of a parliamentary regime. But if the Knesset sees that a Minister has acted unwisely and betrayed the trust put in him, it should be empowered to remove him from his post....Although we have suggested certain changes in the proposal, and will doubtless suggest more in the committee, we propose that it be returned to the Government, primarily because of the amendments which upset the relation between the Executive and the Legislature. This is a Basic Law which is basically bad.

...

M. Unna (Mafdal): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, I congratulate the Knesset on its move to its new home...marking an inspiring moment for us all...as expressed in King Solomon's prayer: "Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel....The Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers; let him not leave us, nor forsake us. That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers....That all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else."

...In a parliamentary democracy the central institution upon which the task of implementing the will of the people rests is the Government....The fate of the country rests on whether the relations between the Legislature and the Executive are based on cooperation and interaction....The weakness of a democracy's ability to implement decisions has always revealed its vulnerability....Moreover, the importance of the Government in modern states is far greater than it was in the past. Today the state interferes to a greater extent in the lives of its citizens than ever before....Consequently, the law must define the nature and function of the Government as well as its place in the constellation of state institutions....These features do not appear in the proposal before us...which focuses on form rather than content....

In order to give the Government's actions a legal imprimatur and put them in the proper light, its principal tasks should be specified, e.g.,

the Government implements the law and the judgments of the courts; the Government may introduce legislation; the Government is responsible for the administration of the country; the Government makes agreements and treaties with other governments and international bodies; the Government must submit a report to the State Comptroller....

The Government's relations with the Knesset are not defined clearly enough either....The Government derives its authority from the confidence of the Knesset. Nowhere does the bill state that once that confidence has been withdrawn the Government must resign....The Government's collective responsibility...and the need to account for its actions are not the only connection between the Government and the Knesset....The Government must bring an annual budget before the Knesset...and propose legislation....

In my view, the proposed law does not give sufficient consideration to the restrictions, requisites and status of Ministers...which should be at least as stringent as those applying to Members of the Knesset....

S. Peres (Rafi): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, this debate is being conducted in the Knesset's new abode....Many events took place in the old one, which was unsuitable in several ways but will always have historic associations for us....It was there that we were informed of victories on the battlefield and there that we feared for Israel's borders. It was there that we promulgated the Law of Return and gave form to the new state. There we weighed up the interests of the individual against the common good, and sought to find a happy medium which would express them both. It was there that we translated the relations between people, language, faith and land into the language of legislation and budgets. We heard the statements of the leaders and the challenges of the Opposition. We have known exhaustion and exaltation, festive occasions and boredom, distraction and tension and have dealt with both disappointments and achievements....

The Basic Law: the Government should embody both the freedom and the ability to act. It should reflect our respect for and trust in the President; the industriousness and leadership we expect from the Government; the dedication to the people and loyalty to its future of the parliament, and the essential, unending and uninterrupted right of the entire nation. It should reflect the relations between all these, the perspicuity of combining them, the honesty of expressing them and the justice underlying them all. The Basic Law before us appears to rely on the assumption that we will always have a coalitionary government based on a shaky electoral system. Its emphasis is not on the Knesset, the Government or the President, but on the factions within the administration and the relations between them...it focuses on the substitute rather than the substance....

The basis of the weakness lies in the current electoral system, whereby the voter is unable to vote for people or platforms, and can

merely determine the bargaining power of party groups whose plans and platforms melt away into nothing....It is true that Israel's founding fathers gave the nation a heritage of values and implementation, pioneering spirit and personal fulfillment; a love of our people, history, language, land and faith; belief in action and the chance of ingathering the exiles and the ability to defend ourselves. These values should be expressed in the country's Basic Laws.

But the founding fathers did not anchor this etatist vision in law...being caught between the power of habit and the pressure of reality, between urgent compromise and a distant legislative horizon. Israel's free processes have not yet been cast in a permanent mold; they are not yet regarded as being part of the heritage we hand down to the generations to come....We have independent values but we do not yet have original laws; we have established a regime but we have not yet crystallized a form of government. Law and administration are a structure and should reflect a specific and appropriate ideology....The Members of the Knesset are determined by the Government rather than the other way round....Once election day is past the voter has no one to turn to, for the basis of democracy is not only the vote, it is also the regular, national and local contact between the citizen and his representatives....

With regard to the Knesset's control over the country's finances, for example...all the Knesset does is approve a budget which reflects a given method of implementation, rather than passing a law covering income and expenditure....In effect, we have no real control over economic plans and budgetary changes, so that even after the budget has been approved the extraparliamentary discussion of it continues....It is neither appropriate nor legal to make parliament a rubber stamp, but the power of the party groups...obscures legislative continuity and deprives the house of representatives of its basic function....A parliament cannot be strengthened by weakening the government, nor can a government be advanced by weakening the parliament....

Clause 5, for example, does not make it clear what a Minister's function and responsibility is; is he first and foremost a member of the Cabinet, or the head of a Ministry?...Clauses 6 and 11 reveal that the party groups and their leaders enjoy a special status although essentially the Knesset comprises Knesset Members, not party groups. Clause 14 is particularly dangerous...in that it makes the structure of the government a market place for coalitionary negotiations. Party transactions, rather than logic, determine the form of the Government. A Ministry also constitutes a way of spending the taxpayer's money and its budget must be part of the Budget Law. Consequently, the number, nature and size of Ministries must derive from the law and not from the interests of legally irrelevant bodies...I propose that the number of Ministries be rationalized and reduced to twelve....

M. Begin (Gahal): I said that in the first Knesset.

S. Peres (Rafi): ...We reject the proposal that, without a Knesset law, the Government should be able to cancel, add or split Ministries. Each Ministry should have legal validity, as reflected in its authorized budgetary allocation....The clauses concerning the Prime Minister do not define his position adequately. In our regime the Prime Minister...is simply the senior Cabinet Minister and his views do not overrule those of the entire Cabinet....Arrangements must be determined in law regarding who is to substitute for him in his absence....My party group proposes that this weighty subject be discussed further at the next Knesset sitting, since the time allocated for this festive debate is insufficient....We oppose making Cabinet discussions secret. A free, democratic society depends on freedom of information...the Cabinet is not secret and there is no such thing as Cabinet secrets....The Government should help the press gain access to and publish information, with the exception of information which should remain classified for reasons of state security....All this must be covered by the law....

The bill before us is inadequate, and we appeal to the Knesset Members not to perpetuate what was instituted as a temporary solution....It is our duty to bequeath a government of ideas, not relations, to our successors....Let us call on our scholars and learned men in every sphere to give the matter thought and prepare considered opinions....This will enable us to prepare a firm and balanced basis for government which will withstand the test of time....It will be based on justice, freedom and responsibility, and will steer us through troubled waters. We must not act hastily where Basic Laws are involved.

M. Ya'ari (Mapam): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...my party group would have been happier if, on this festive occasion, a human rights bill had been brought before the Knesset rather than the law before us....We also regret the fact that our country does not as yet have a written constitution....

The bill before us omits to say what will happen if no Knesset Member manages to form a Cabinet. If that occurs we may find ourselves ruled by a Transition Government for four years, without its ever having received the confidence of the Knesset....A tie may necessitate fresh elections....Whereas the newly-formed Government must be presented to the Knesset and gain its approval, once this has been done the Government is entitled to change, add or split Ministries without having to bring this before the Knesset....This appears to us to be an undesirable situation, and should be removed from the bill before us....

The clause regarding coalitionary discipline is both unaesthetic and unfair....Ministers whose party groups break coalitionary discipline in a Knesset vote should not be obliged to resign....There is no such thing as coalitionary insurance anywhere in the world...and this

clause seems to imply that our Knesset Members are less reliable than those of any other country....This clause reflects a distorted view of the role of the parties and the coalitionary regime in our country....With all its imperfections, no better system of representing the people than the political party has yet been found....While the proposal before us seeks primarily to restrict the freedom of the small parties within the coalition...it does nothing to protect their rights and ensure that coalition agreements are kept....Is it appropriate that temporary arrangements imposed on us in the past by circumstances be perpetuated in a Basic Law...? We maintain that it is legitimate for a party which is in the Coalition to fight for its principles, while cooperating loyally with the other components in the Coalition. Our experience of the past has taught us that hardly any party in our country has acted contrary to these basic ideas....It is the freely-made decision of each party group, not coalitionary insurance, which will determine the stability of collective responsibility and the government of our country, in the final event....As we have in the past, we will continue to bear the burden of coalitionary discipline, though not joyfully...but we appeal to the members of the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee to remove the offending passages from the law....

...

M. Wilner (Communists): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, on behalf of my party and our electorate I would like to congratulate the Knesset on the completion of its new home. The Knesset symbolizes the sovereignty of the State of Israel, which was established by law in accordance with the will of the people and the U.N. resolution which acknowledged the right to self-determination of the two nations of Palestine, the Jews and the Arabs. We Communists were part of Israel's birth. I personally was privileged to sign the Declaration of Independence. Israel's right to exist is incontrovertible. The same applies to the national rights of the Palestinian Arab nation. Only on the basis of mutual recognition of the national rights of both the peoples of Palestine will peace and security be assured....

Laborers, architects and many artists have invested their best efforts and talents in the new building. The test now lies in the social and political content of the Knesset's laws and decisions, in the extent to which it protects the rights of the workers and the democratic freedoms of the people, in the extent to which it aspires to peace with the Arab nations and formulates a new policy for Israel, one of independence from the Western Powers, neutrality and improved relations with the U.S.S.R. and all the socialist and neutral countries...in accordance with Israel's national interests.

Last week's statement by the Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, that his party, Mapai, was preparing plans for changing the electoral system cast a shadow over the celebration of the new building.

I. Navon (Rafi): Don't take it seriously.

M. Wilner (Communists): Your party has talked a great deal, but done nothing. I'm afraid that with the weakening of the Government's position it will be taken seriously. We call on the members of the Knesset and the public to be on the alert. The threat to the existing democratic system of proportional representation must be rejected now, as in the past....All these preparations for changing the current electoral system reflect merely the weakness of the Government and the growing dissatisfaction of the working classes with its policy.

That also lies at the basis of the Basic Law: the Government....We wish to take this opportunity of complaining once again of the fact that, after eighteen years, the State of Israel still has no Constitution. This is very convenient for the Government, since democratic freedoms are not guaranteed and the Government may act as it pleases....We propose that a Constitution be prepared within the coming year to be ratified by the present Knesset—guaranteeing the basic democratic rights of citizens, including freedom of conscience and from religious coercion, as well as the rights of the workers, including the freedom to strike and the right to work. The Constitution should ban any discrimination and national repression and should prevent the Government from introducing laws or taking steps contradicting Israel's Declaration of Independence, which guarantees equal rights for all its citizens, irrespective of creed, race, sex or age. The Constitution must ensure that initiating war or taking military action across the border should have the approval of the Knesset, and also that the Government does not make secret agreements or treaties....This is particularly urgent in view of recent developments and the experience of the past, such as when the Government signed secret agreements with Britain and France in 1956 as a result of which war was initiated against Egypt....We do not want the Sixth Knesset to be presented with a similar *fait accompli*. The Constitution should also forbid the Government to work to obtain atomic arms for Israel....

The Basic Law: the Government suffers from a great many defects....It accords the Government very wide powers...it gives collective responsibility a legal basis and extends it to all the Knesset Members belonging to factions within the Coalition, thereby granting the Government an automatic majority in the Knesset under law....The clause regarding the secrecy of the discussions of the Cabinet and Ministerial Committees is anti-democratic....There is military censorship...and if the Government or the Ministers do not want a particular subject to appear in the press they should keep mum about it. The Ministers should see to it that the Government does its job properly, and not at the expense of the freedom of the press.

At the ceremony marking the inauguration of the new building the Prime Minister spoke at length about democracy. But the bill before us, his statement about changing the electoral system, and the preparation of laws to restrict the right to strike prove that in internal matters as well as external ones the Prime Minister acts in direct contradiction to the fine sentiments he occasionally expresses....Let us protect the democratic freedoms and the authority of the Knesset. The democratic freedoms are very restricted as it is, and are to a great extent formal in a bourgeois state such as ours in which there is social dichotomy, millionaires alongside the unemployed, and the wealthy beside the poor....For these reasons we propose that the bill be returned to the Government....

...

The Minister of Justice, J.S. Shapira: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, many different, and contradictory, arguments have been raised against this bill. Some people have claimed that the Government is attempting to take too much authority for itself, others that the Government has not defined its authority. I am sure that a bill of this kind gives rise to disagreement and that there is ample scope for changes and amendments, but that is not the issue.

I was astonished to hear MK Begin conclude his speech by proposing that the bill be returned to the Government. MK Begin could not dismiss the bill out of hand, nor could he prove that it could not be dealt with and amended by the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee. Simply by virtue of his being in the Opposition he saw fit to propose sending the bill back to the Government. He has claimed for many years that one of the things which hampers Israel's development...is its lack of a Constitution. Both the Prime Minister and I have announced that we are debating a topic approved by the First Knesset, namely, combining and adapting existing laws to form a Constitution....Someone who is serious about the country's need for a Constitution should...suggest that the proposal be transferred to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee with all possible haste, so that it may be amended appropriately....If the Knesset were to accept MK Begin's suggestion this would mean delaying the Constitution for another year....

Prior to formulating this proposal I read a great many constitutions, concentrating on the chapters dealing with the government. Contrary to the views of many among us, they contain an abundance of formal and technical instructions...which legislators regarded as appropriate to include in the constitution....The first clause of the proposal, concerning the Government's authority, has been attacked for a variety of reasons....The object of the law is to deal with issues which already exist, or should exist, by stating that everything the state does—and which does not come under the jurisdiction of either the Legislature or the Judiciary—is done by means of the Government....After all, neither the

Knesset, the Judiciary nor the State Comptroller have executive powers....

Naturally...this makes it necessary to have laws in several spheres delineating the Government's freedom to act. Consequently, the Government asked the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee to prepare a human rights bill. In every constitution one chapter complements another. If we remove the chapter dealing with the Judiciary we will be in a world of arbitrariness; if we remove the chapter on the Government we will be in a state of anarchy; if we withdraw rights from the Judiciary the regime will become a dictatorship.

Certain Knesset Members have claimed that according to this law the Government is not sufficiently under the Knesset's control....In a democratic republic, such as Israel is, the true source of the authority of each arm of government is the people, which elects 120 representatives to the Knesset to express its views, reflect its opinions and introduce the legislation it desires....The Government's dependence on the Knesset...is reflected in four things: the proposal the Government is bringing before—not forcing upon—the Knesset;...the fact that the Government is subject to the laws the Knesset passes, to restrictions the Knesset imposes on it by law and to the delegation of authority to the various authorities;...the necessity of securing the confidence of the Knesset;...and the Knesset's role in approving the budget....So, in the view of MK Begin and other members of the Opposition, all this makes the Knesset dependent on the Government. Naturally, phrases might be better worded here and there, but there is no need for basic changes.

It was proposed that the law should limit the number of Ministers. Is the nineteenth year of Israel's existence the appropriate time to come forward with a proposal of this kind? Who needs it and what for? Other countries have cabinets which vary in size, in accordance with changing needs and political constellations. Why should we force ourselves into a Procrustean bed?...MK Begin was so enthusiastic about MK Peres' proposal that he immediately claimed copyright, having made that proposal in the First Knesset....He also claimed that we had made no provision for the eventuality of the Prime Minister's demise....This is not the case, however, for the proposal states that if the Prime Minister dies...the Cabinet chooses an acting Prime Minister from among its members until a new Government is established....The principle of continuity has applied to the Knesset and the Government since the establishment of the state...being intended to prevent a power or leadership vacuum for even one minute....

With constitutional laws the situation is generally such that when one comes to rephrase existing passages one does not discard something which has been accepted and has not been proved inappropriate. This applies to both form and content. Clause 22...which concerns the Coalition, was passed as a law in 1962 and we have not heard of any serious

hitches in government as a result of it....Several distinguished Knesset Members have sought to defend the freedom of the press and speech, attacking Clause 24 concerning the confidential nature of Cabinet discussions....To the best of my knowledge, in no country in the world, not even the most democratic and well run...are Cabinet discussions open....

MK Peres proposed that we should first decide to change the electoral system and then deal with other matters. That is a fine proposal which means that we will have to defer discussing the Basic Law: the Government at least until the next Knesset is elected. This Knesset does not have even a hint of a majority in favor of changing the electoral system. You know that as well as I do....I fail to understand MK Peres' contention that the basis of Clause 14 is coalitionary convenience rather than the interests of the state. That clause has always existed, and no change has been made in it. It has always been possible to create new Ministries and cancel old ones, as well as to merge or split existing ones. Why was it acceptable for 18 years and only now is not?

S. Peres (Rafi): This is a Basic Law, while before it was the Transition Law, and there is a difference between the two.

The Minister of Justice, J.S. Shapira: Something which has existed for eighteen years in a state which has existed for eighteen and a half years is tantamount to a permanent law, irrespective of what it is called....

In a parliamentary debate on legislative issues held in the nineteenth year of the state's existence one cannot expect to rely on independent precedents and a great deal of experience. Furthermore, when one tries to draw on the experience of eighteen years one is told that that was a transition law, not a Basic Law. Hence it is only natural that we should seek precedents in other countries with more experience, though we must examine these in the light of our own special circumstances and needs....This is not the only product for which we need to import the raw material....Let us hope that the day will come when bills will be brought before this house which the Knesset Members can discuss in the light of Israeli parliamentary precedents dating back hundreds of years....

The Vote

Those in favor of transferring the Basic Law: the Government to the Constitution Law and Justice Committee	51
Those in favor of returning the Basic Law: the Government to the Government	23

(The proposal to transfer the law to the Committee is adopted.)

Prime Minister's Statement on Defense and the Political Situation

Introduction

In accordance with what had become a tradition, the Knesset began the Winter Session 1966-67 with a political debate, opened by Prime Minister Eshkol. Fatah terrorist incursions, which had begun some two years earlier, and the issue of war and peace occupied a central place in the debate. There is no indication, however, that the countdown to the Six-Day War, a few months later, had already begun. Even Herut Opposition speakers maintained that there was no danger of an all-out war against Israel in the near future, "as long as Nasser is forced to keep his troops in the Yemen."

Sitting 97 of the Sixth Knesset

17 October 1966 (3 Heshvan 5726)

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...there is nothing new in the aggressive tendencies of our neighbors, their efforts to hinder the development of the state and their attacks on Israel's borders. Ever since the Arab armies tried to strangle the state at its birth in 1948 there have been various stages of Arab aggression....At the end of the War of Independence Israel and the Arab countries signed the Armistice Agreements, but while we regarded them as a step towards peace...the Arab leaders regarded them merely as a temporary lull in hostilities, enabling them to gather strength prior to renewing the fighting. The Arabs thereby make a mockery of their signatures on those agreements and violate the U.N. Charter, according to which disputes should be solved peacefully. They have made the Middle East a region of continual tension, giving rise to an unending arms race which diverts precious resources from economic and social development. Their attitude opposes the historical character of this region, where different nations, religions and cultures have always lived side by side....The hostile countries seek to establish...that the Israel-Arab conflict is unique and that the principles of direct negotiations, disarmament, peace and cooperation do not and cannot apply....That policy has not succeeded in blocking Israel's development. Despite the waves of hostility, the nation's unity has increased, exiles have been gathered in, defense has been strengthened, the economy has developed and the population has grown.

The relations between Israel and the Arab countries are currently influenced by the Arab summit meetings held during 1964 in Cairo and Alexandria, at the initiative of the Egyptian President, with the avowed intention of resolving inter-Arab problems in order to create Arab unity which could be directed against Israel....Nasser sought a settlement on the issue of the Yemen, as a step towards gaining control of the Arab world. The first step against Israel was to sabotage the irrigation project, which was about to begin functioning. It was decided to set up a joint Arab Command and to establish Shukeiry's organization.

Now, two years later, it transpires that various trends are at work within the Arab countries...with Egypt, Syria, Algeria and Iraq...in one camp...and Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco in the other. A third group of countries identifies with the second camp but refrains from making this public for tactical reasons, and this includes Lebanon, Libya, Kuwait and other countries.

...Nasser's attempts to gain control of the Yemen by military force have so far proved unsuccessful...and have led to unrest within Egypt, where hunger and poverty are rife....Ever since gaining power, Nasser has aspired to rule the Middle East...but during the last two years his dream has been shattered....On my recent visit to Africa I discovered that his attempts to gain influence there have also been to no avail.... Presumably he has gathered that his dream of influencing the course of events in the Moslem world is also unattainable....It is reported that Nasser hopes to gain power in Aden and the southern part of the Arabian peninsula when Britain leaves that area in 1968, and is keeping his army in the Yemen for that reason....Other Arab leaders are aware of this, and it certainly does not enhance Arab unity....The independent national interests of the various Arab countries have effectively ended any idea of Arab unity, which is Egyptian dominance in disguise....

...Despite the summit resolutions, we began pumping water from Lake Tiberias in 1964, and Israel's irrigation project is working according to plan, on the basis of the division of water agreed upon in the past. We acted to prevent any attempt to divert water that was legally ours, making it clear that we would not brook any interference with what is ours by right and agreement....

The actions of Shukeiry's organization have made it clear that it is not solely designed to murder our people and destroy our property...but also to serve its Egyptian masters in undermining Arab regimes....A gang known as Al-Fatah, whose principal aim is to sow havoc in Israel, though also to cause unrest in certain Arab countries, has also been established. The members of the groups within this organization are primarily criminals and murderers. Neither Al-Fatah nor Shukeiry's organization enjoy much support in the Arab world...except for Syria...which is notoriously unstable and ruthless in its policies....

During the last two years the Arab countries have grown in military strength, but whereas we have not been threatened by a full-scale attack by the Arab armies, infiltration by Arab terrorist gangs has been renewed, and since January 1965 there have been sixty instances of murder and destruction within our borders....We have firm evidence indicating that the Syrian Government trains and encourages terrorists to strike at Israel....However, the Syrian rulers say one thing to their army, nation and the peoples of the Middle East and another—revealing their cowardice and mendacity—when addressing an international forum...even accusing Israel of acting aggressively....Syria also seeks to export its own internal unrest to other countries...asserting that Israel is conspiring with imperialist forces to overthrow Syria's "progressive" regime....

These blatant lies must be refuted, and shown up for the falsehoods they are....What concerns Israel is not the internal regime or international relations of any Arab country but Israel's security....Syria alone bears the responsibility for the tension on the border....Our overriding interest is in peace....Eighteen years after the Armistice Agreements...there are slight indications that elements within the Arab world are abandoning the idea of war as a way of solving the Arab-Israel conflict....But we do not put our trust in that...and maintain our alertness in the face of the incessant arms buildup by the Arabs.... Nonetheless, neither do we weary of our search for peace and cooperation with the peoples of the region....

The Israel-Arab conflict will be resolved when the Arabs realize that Israel has as much right to independence and sovereignty as they do. We are not a foreign body which has chanced upon this land. The Land of Israel and the Jewish people have been intertwined since the dawn of history. Our people has returned to its land and its home and there is no power on earth which can sever the eternal bonds which bind the two together....

These are some of the basic aspects of Israel's defense policy. Consequently, in view of the series of assaults on our borders last year we have decided that we must utilize every opportunity of putting our view before the world and every diplomatic measure to put an end to them—but not that alone. We responded with force only when it became evident that political steps were not bearing fruit...and directed our actions at the countries from which the terrorists launched their incursions into Israel...i.e., Jordan, Lebanon and, primarily, Syria....I would like to note with satisfaction that at last week's meeting of the Security Council the representatives of the U.S., Britain, France and New Zealand expressed their Governments' assessments of the situation and recognition of the source of the aggression. We hope that other countries will follow suit.

In accordance with the rules of international justice, the U.N. Charter and the interests of peace, the Council should condemn the Syrian aggression. Regrettably...it is doubtful whether this will be done...since the U.S.S.R. representative supported the distorted Arab version....Nevertheless, we hope that the majority of the members of the Security Council will recognize the Syrian Government's responsibility for the situation and its ensuing dangers....To the rulers of Syria I say that we have no desire to interfere in the internal or international affairs of any other country....If you really fear this, we are ready to sign a non-aggression pact with you at any moment....But if you continue to cause death and destruction, we have proved in the past that we can retaliate, choosing the time, place and means which suit us best, in accordance with our legal, sovereign rights....

Unfortunately, we cannot ignore the fact that one of the world Powers, with which Israel seeks friendly relations, furthers the view that Israel is supposedly planning to attack Syria as part of an international plot against the so-called progressive regime in Damascus. By so doing, the U.S.S.R. is strengthening Syria and extending the local tension between Syria and Israel to the international arena. To the U.S.S.R. I say that our policy is the one you constantly advocate, namely, the peaceful solution of disputes, and it is a distortion of the facts to describe Israel's policy towards Syria as deriving from our view of its regime. It is Israel's prerogative to protect its rights and the lives of its citizens, as it is of every country....

I have seen fit to give an overview of the situation in the Middle East, and of Israel-Arab relations in particular. I believe that a comprehensive approach is necessary for conducting a rational discussion of the particular problem concerning us at present, namely, Israel-Syrian relations, in view of the exacerbation of the situation on our northern border....The Government of Israel will continue to work for peace in the region, but will defend its sovereign rights and the lives of its citizens. In conclusion, I hope the Knesset will join me in appealing to the Security Council and world public opinion to condemn Syria's responsibility for the situation and restrain its rulers....

...
J. Hazan (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the question before us is whether there will be war or peace. The situation is tense...and dangerous. We are all shocked and angry. None of us is prepared to accept attacks on our citizens and our security. But we will be acting imprudently if we unleash our emotions and respond to every attack...acting as those who scheme against us would have us do....We are surrounded by a web of schemers and plotters, who may not be in full control of their actions themselves....We must act wisely....The Syrian rulers want chaos while we want construction; they want murder while we want life; they want war while we want peace; they want rivers of

blood which will widen the gulf between the Arabs and Israel while we seek to build bridges of understanding and cooperation.

It is untrue to say that Israel is planning to attack Syria, at the instigation of the U.S., in order to overthrow its regime. It is difficult to know to what extent Syria is in control of the situation and to what extent it is dragged into this whirlpool by the provocations of forces it has cultivated and now fears to disown.

We must muster all our strength in order to save the peace....That must be our lodestone, and I praise the Government's actions in this sphere to date. I know how much self-restraint, what courageous consideration, is required to overcome justifiably angry public opinion...and respond intelligently and by political means to acts of murder and vandalism, from a position of strength, not weakness....

I hope that, whatever the outcome of the deliberations of the Security Council, it will acknowledge the justice of our position and prevent Syria's leaders from continuing to support murderers....It must be made clear...that if world public opinion, as reflected in the U.N., cannot defend our lives, we will be united in doing so ourselves....The U.S.S.R. has encouraged the libellous accusation that we are preparing to attack Syria, at America's behest. Instead of warning the aggressor, it warns the victim....The U.S.S.R. bears a heavy responsibility for the dangerous deterioration in the situation on our borders with Syria....As someone who believes in socialism and the U.S.S.R.'s role in bringing world peace, I must raise my voice against the U.S.S.R.'s repudiation of that policy in our region....The cheap and dubious gain of its policy here must be weighed against the loss of support for and belief in it throughout the world.

But in this, too, we must act wisely. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister have consistently taken courageous and persistent steps to improve relations with the U.S.S.R...despite all the disappointments in this sphere. And there have, indeed, been some feeble rays of light on that particular horizon....

I can only advise the Prime Minister to continue in his persistence, for no other course will bring us any benefit. Here, too, of course, one could act in a primitively emotional and irresponsible way. To this day the U.S.S.R.'s policy towards us contains more injustice than justice. It is easy to give up. It is very hard to have faith...and continue trying to build bridges. But the only path open to us is a persistent, quiet and wise policy which will make it difficult for the U.S.S.R. to persist in its policy towards us and force it to change it.

We must remember that we are going towards the abyss. An attempt is being made to drag us into war. We must do everything to overcome those schemes. We must be ready to defend our lives and our right to exist....I demand a policy which is firm yet courageous in its self-restraint...and in its efforts to save peace....

...
M. Dayan (Rafi): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset...no one disputes the need to take political action...but there are differences of opinion with regard to what their nature should be. We have received support from the Security Council—as we have just seen...and are praised by everyone there for refraining from taking military action....In my view, however, the object of our political action is to obtain understanding for our need to resort to military action in certain instances....

With regard to our internal information policy, I have read the statement made by the Minister of Information, Israel Galili, to the effect that it is now possible to reach a more balanced position in the political arena and that conditions are ripe for improving our relations with the U.S.S.R....The question is, what has changed? There is no evidence for that, as far as I can see....If anyone has improved relations with the U.S.S.R. it is Syria, not Israel.

The main question, in my opinion, is that of our assessment of the situation....MK Hazan, amongst others...has said that we must choose between war and peace. I think that that is an incorrect perception of the situation, and could even destroy our basis for assessing it accurately....If MK Hazan wants to say that if we attack Damascus there will be war, he is right. But he knows that that is not the issue. The issue is whether, if Israel responds with military action to the actions of Al-Fatah in Syria, if these are directed against Israel, this will lead to war. Anyone who says that it will is also saying that Israel must not take military action....

The issue is more complex....Is Syria able and willing to embark on a war against Israel now? Are the other Arab countries, and especially Egypt, able and willing to wage war on Israel because of the foolhardiness of Syria or a certain group? Will the Red Army come to Syria's aid because of action it has taken if Israel takes military measures in response to that action? Will the Red Army wage war on Israel?

Statements of that kind mean only...that Israel must decide to restrict itself to political action. I would like to make it perfectly clear that if I thought for a moment that military action on our part would draw us into a confrontation with all those countries I would say that it was not worth risking a conflagration on account of Al-Fatah, even if we had to endure terrorist attacks which were even worse than those we have known to date. But my assessment of the situation is that accepting Al-Fatah's attacks without reacting to them will worsen our security situation.

The radio reports that the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense has said that we must increase the strength of our Border Patrol in order to prevent infiltration and terrorist attacks....In my view there is no wave of infiltration at present. A few dozen bandits of the Al-Fatah organization have crossed the border, but that is no reason for the State of

Israel to panic and expand its defense arrangements....These terrorists come from the direction of Syria and Jordan....I know that Syria takes no action against them...while Jordan does....

The Prime Minister has said that our defense situation has deteriorated considerably as a result of the improved relations between the U.S.S.R. and Syria, implying that the U.S.S.R. would come to Syria's aid in the military sphere....Anyone who says this is drawing the wrong conclusion...and thereby weakening our position. Even when England had a formal and binding military pact with Jordan we did not avoid taking the necessary steps to defend ourselves. There is no such pact between the U.S.S.R. and Syria today....

Other Arab countries will come to Syria's aid in its political struggle. That is simple. They will all help it in the Security Council, and if the struggle is political we will thereby be fostering Arab unity. That is all very simple and straightforward. But they will not help Syria if it engages in a military escapade, just as they did not help Egypt during the Sinai Campaign. Jordan and Egypt are careful not to act similarly to Syria with regard to the Al-Fatah organization. But they do this because they assume that Israel will take military action if the acts of terrorism continue. We must understand that if other Arab countries find that terrorist actions against Israel can originate from Arab territory without there being any military response by Israel against the country concerned, they will have to permit terrorist activities from their territory too....

G. Meir (Ma'arach): Who are you arguing with?

M. Dayan (Rafi): I'm not arguing with those who agree with me.

G. Meir (Ma'arach): Who are you arguing with...? Who has said anything to occasion this?

M. Dayan (Rafi): MK Golda Meir, at the beginning of my address I said that MK Hazan said that on this issue we have to choose between war and peace.

I would like to conclude by saying that anyone who does not want us to find ourselves—and I suggest that none of us desire this—in a grave security crisis with Arab countries, and possibly with the leading Arab country, Egypt, should not advocate making concessions in minor disputes.

...

A. Ben-Eliezer (Gahal): Madam Speaker, Knesset Members, MK Hazan claims that we must choose between peace or war....I wish I could agree with him that the choice is in our hands. That is not the case, however. There is no peace. There is fighting and there is a danger of an all-out war on all fronts.

To my mind, the political issue which Israel's policy must tackle is how to end the existing fighting and prevent an all-out war. We are deluding ourselves when we speak of attaining peace, and are placing our independence, our existence and...ourselves in jeopardy....The State of Israel does not need to prove that it desires peace. It does this every day. No country in the world suspects that Israel wants war, apart from provocative forces which seek to benefit by sowing dissent among other nations. First and foremost, the Arab nations around us are convinced that the State of Israel desires peace. Nasser would not have sent 70,000 soldiers to the Yemen unless he was sure that Israel had absolutely no intention of attacking him....What the State of Israel must prove is that it is able to maintain peace, even the partial and parlous peace we have now....To my very great regret, we do not always manage to prove that we are able to maintain peace without paying a heavy price....

I do not think there is a danger of an all-out war against Israel...at least not in the near future. Who would attack Israel? Neither Lebanon...Syria...nor Jordan...whether singly or together, would venture to do so, knowing that Israel could overcome them and exact a heavy price at the same time....It would seem that the only real danger of all-out war against Israel comes from...Nasser, who heads the strongest army in the Middle East, after Israel, if he manages one day to unite the Arab armies under his command....It is a danger, but one that seems remote as long as Nasser is forced to keep his troops in the Yemen. Thus, according to logic, there is no immediate danger of all-out war by the Arab countries on Israel.

Nonetheless, we must be aware of the fact that every day there is a danger that Israel will be attacked, and our policy must be one of constant alertness....We live in a part of the world where logic does not reign supreme, because almost all the countries of the region serve either Western or Soviet imperialism, and that policy can determine the steps those countries take vis-à-vis Israel....

There is one danger to Israel, and that is that there will be a miscalculation....It will be very serious if an Arab country reaches the conclusion that Israel has lost its power to strike and decide. It will be very serious if Syria reaches the conclusion that Israel does not respond...because it has been alarmed by a Soviet warning or has found that it is not strong enough. The lack of a response to acts of terrorism against Israel will give rise to a miscalculation not only by the Syrians but also by the Jordanians and, primarily, the Egyptians, and in that respect their thinking will be logical. If Israel hesitates to react to Syrian activities, how will it dare to respond to actions taken by the Egyptian army? Israel must act to dispel this misapprehension on the part of the Arabs.

I am not referring to the moral aspect of Israel being unable to accept one-sided bloodshed....We do not think that retaliation will bring

peace. It might prevent further bloodshed, but might also generate it. But we cannot return to the policy of the 1930s and accept one-sided bloodshed....

There is another danger of war between Israel and the Arabs, namely, war among the Arab countries. Israel has made it quite clear what its position would be were Egyptian, Syrian or Iraqi troops to enter Jordan. That is a real possibility, i.e., war between the "imperialist" Arabs and the "progressive" Arabs....Soviet encouragement of and backing for the various Arab countries has also given them a sense of false confidence in themselves and the backing they think the U.S.S.R. would give them....I think it is erroneous, MK Dayan, to call the terrorist organizations "a few bandits." They are organized groups backed by the Arab countries behind which is the U.S.S.R....

If the Middle East has become an arsenal containing sufficient arms to destroy the entire region...that is to a great extent the result of the U.S.S.R.'s involvement....It supplied arms to the previous "reactionary" Syrian governments as well as to the current "progressive" one....It supplies arms to the dictator on the Nile and would also be prepared to supply Jordan and Saudi Arabia provided it thought that would serve its ends....Had it not been for this Soviet policy...Israel's enemies would be unable to threaten to destroy it and the conditions for peaceful coexistence might have been created long since....

The U.S.S.R.'s policy in the Middle East calls its avowed policy of seeking world peace into question. Israel should put Soviet policy in its correct light and show that it is turning the Middle East into a powderkeg with the label "for peace" on it. It is not true that it is impossible to arouse opposition in the world to the U.S.S.R.'s policy in the Middle East. The Communist world is no longer so monolithic, neither as regards the relations between China and the U.S.S.R. nor as regards the Communist parties of such countries as France and Italy....I appeal to Israel to bring this problem before the enlightened world...putting the policy of supplying arms so generously to the test.

My colleagues and I have done what we could to find meeting-points between the U.S.S.R. and Israel...but we cannot ignore the fact that Soviet planes are sent against us...obliging us to shoot them down...as the U.S.S.R. would do in parallel circumstances....I gather that the U.S.S.R. has warned us. But I would like to ask it how it would respond to acts of terrorism across, say, its border with China....Would it rely solely on the Security Council?

I know that at present Nasser is busy. But we must not ignore his policy...namely, to form and lead an Arab empire....He has studied Nazi ideology carefully. We know that when wars end the countries involved sign peace treaties and live in peace. Nasser has declared that he will wage war ceaselessly on Israel. He does not wish to conquer Israel, he wants to destroy it. He wants our unconditional surrender and is not

prepared to make peace with us on any terms....Until 1956 Nasser's policy was to gain control first of Israel and then of the Arab countries....Now he has simply changed his tactics and wants to gain control of the Arab world first. But the strategy remains the same....If Jordan still retains its independence and Syria still exists it is because Israel exists, preventing Nasser from sending his troops into those countries to conquer them....No one knows when his campaign in the Yemen will end and he can mass his forces against Israel, but Israel's policy must take that eventuality into account....

There is no contradiction—nor should there be any—between foreign policy and defense policy. On the contrary, foreign policy may sometimes prevent a military clash....That is why it is not enough to say that we prefer a policy of an eye for an eye. What we prefer is a policy which prevents bloodshed....Our activities in the Security Council are important...as are all political measures....It is true that we must rely on ourselves...but we do not yet manufacture the tanks and planes we need, and have to purchase them from the countries which do. That is why our policy must be one which enables us to acquire those weapons....

In recent months the Prime Minister has attempted to conduct a policy of hypnosis. He has tried to hypnotize the Arabs into thinking that they want peace....He has discovered non-existent Arab leaders and tells us about all kinds of new thinking....The time has come for large-scale political action, not solely to obtain resolutions, important though they may be...but also so that Israel may attain parity in arms. That does not mean that Israel should receive the same amount of arms as Transjordan does, but that it should receive as much as all the Arab countries do....It is high time the Government of Israel openly demanded ground-to-ground missiles from the U.S...to offset those being manufactured by Egypt....

That is the policy which enables us to acquire friends and break the embargo which has existed for several years. There is a link between foreign policy and information, on the one hand, and the defense policy we should be conducting, on the other. We protest against the mining of our civilian roads and refuse to accept this one-sided bloodshed. Political measures are sufficient only if they bring peace or prevent bloodshed. If not, the Government of Israel must act as it has to date and do its maximum to prevent bloodshed.

...

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the vast majority of those assembled here agree on the issue of whether we should use political measures or self-defense....Both aspects are important and necessary, each separately, and sometimes together....

The question is...what will happen if we use force? It can be assumed that any government can prevent terrorist actions from within its territory....MK Ben-Eliezer mentioned the absence of logic in this region, and he is not the only one here who has given thought to that subject....Our reply is that force is used as a last resort, when every other course—information, an appeal to the conscience of the countries concerned and of the world—has proved unavailing....During a recent interview I used the phrase: "The ledger is open and the record is kept," and then was accused of being a bookkeeper by members of Mr. Ben-Eliezer's party....Anyone with a musical ear—and I believe that our enemies and Syria have this—will understand the underlying message, however mild the tone in which it was said....

I have been reminded that I once repudiated the policy of an eye for an eye. I said that we have to find different methods, and MK Ben-Eliezer has also said that. But I will go further and say that sometimes the policy should be many eyes for an eye. One can wait and see....But the conclusion almost all the speakers reached was that our action was right and appropriate....MK Ben-Eliezer has hinted that Israel has not done enough to protect its borders. I would like to point out that had it not been for the internal settling of accounts and internal fears we could have reached agreements with several countries by now....

In effect, MK Ben-Eliezer said everything that we have said, more or less, though with his own special temperament and emphasis he added that there should be policy too....Nevertheless, we do not wish to be isolated, and are doing, and have done, our utmost to acquire allies....I want to make it clear that Zionism is not reaction, it is the revolution of the Jewish people, its liberation movement....In political life one can expect the daily coming of the messiah, just as one may in religious life....That is why we are constantly searching for signs of a new spirit and new thinking....Had it not been for Vietnam, this may well have already evinced itself....Nonetheless, it has always been our policy to search...and we will continue to do so....

The Government did what it did in the widest and highest forum, the United Nations Assembly. And naturally that does not include tete-à-tetes and conversations with the representatives, Prime Ministers and Presidents of various countries....We do not rely solely on the Security Council as the means for disseminating information about Israel....

I hope that the majority of the Security Council will recognize who is responsible for the situation on our border. That cannot be obscured...as it has been in the past in international forums....Perhaps that will also cool the hotheads in Syria, which would be a very desirable result....I hope that the U.S.S.R. will use its influence in Damascus, for I am one of those who believe that it can...so that the situation may become calm and unpredictable complications avoided....

M. Baram (Ma'arach): On behalf of the Ma'arach, Gahal, the Mafdal, Rafi, Mapam, the Liberal Party, Aguda, and Cooperation and Development, I propose the following motion:

"At the conclusion of the Prime Minister's statement the Knesset:

1. Condemns the acts of terrorism and murder committed on Israel's territory by organized terrorists coming from across the border;
2. Appeals to the Security Council to do its duty of keeping the peace, demanding that the Syrian Government adhere to its commitments in accordance with the U.N. Charter and the Armistice Agreements and cease all acts of aggression directed against Israel.

Like any independent, peace-loving state, Israel maintains its sovereign right to self-defense, as acknowledged in international law, in order to assure the integrity of its territory and the welfare of its citizens."

...

The Vote

Those in favor of MK Baram's motion	61
Those against	2
Abstentions	2

(MK Baram's proposal is adopted.)

Proposal to Make the President Head of the Armed Forces

Introduction

The basically ceremonial, symbolic role allotted to the President of Israel has from time to time given rise to misgivings—by the incumbent himself, notably the first President, Professor Chaim Weizmann, as well as to thoughts and proposals—ranging from the abolition of the office, at one end of the spectrum, to its strengthening to the degree of an Executive Presidency on the American model, at the other. One proposal tending to enhance the importance of the office is dealt with in the following debate. It should be noted that the constitutional question of who commands the IDF was left vague until the Basic Law: the Israel Defense Forces was adopted in 1974, in the wake of the Yom Kippur War.

Sitting 105 of the Sixth Knesset

2 November 1966 (19 Heshvan 5727)

The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: I call on MK Begin to come to the podium to present his bill—the Basic Law: the President (Amendment).

M. Begin (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I have the honor of proposing that the Knesset decree that “the President of the state is the head of the armed forces.” I ask the Minister of Justice, who is to reply on behalf of the Government, to point to one “well-ordered” country where this constitutional arrangement does not obtain.

In a monarchy the crowned head is the head of the armed forces....In a republic with a presidential regime the elected president is the Commander in Chief of the armed forces, being authorized to instruct the various military commanders directly to act or cease acting. In a parliamentary republic the president does not have that authority vis-à-vis the armed forces but is formally their head.

After eighteen years of independent existence, Israel is the only well-ordered country which has no constitutional provision as to who heads its armed forces. From a military point of view the commander of our armed forces is called the Chief of Staff and is authorized to give orders to the commanders of the Navy and the Air Force, while we do not have a specific commander of our land forces, as other countries do. On behalf of the Government the person in charge of the Chief of Staff—and hence of the armed forces—is the Minister of Defense. But the Minister of Defense is not the head of the armed forces. Who is, then?

I have heard various answers to this question. One is that the entire Cabinet is the Commander in Chief...But this has no legal basis or validity. The armed forces must have a commander...That is why we propose that the Basic Law: the President be amended to give this role to the President....This will mean that the President will appoint the IDF's Chief of Staff...in accordance with the Government's decision, as brought before him by the Minister of Defense....This is an appropriate democratic and etatist arrangement....

To date not only have we had no legal arrangement regarding the appointment of the Chief of Staff, but the entire procedure was strange.... When a senior officer of our army was due to replace the Chief of Staff, the two officers, i.e., the outgoing and the incoming Chiefs of Staff, would go to the Minister of Defense's office, the departing Chief of Staff would hand the C.o.S.'s pennant to the Minister of Defense, who would hand it to the incoming Chief of Staff, thereby appointing the new Chief of Staff, without any legal basis. After that everyone went to the President's residence and was photographed together with the President. I would like to ask the Knesset Members: is this an appropriate and adequate procedure?...I think not. In my view it does no honor to either the President or the Army....Judges and ambassadors are appointed by the President, at the recommendation of the appropriate committees and Ministers, because it was thought appropriate that these appointments should be seen to be above political party and partisan interests.... Should not this principle also apply to the appointment of the Chief of Staff of our armed forces...?

I am sure that the legislative, or constitutional, arrangement we propose, which is the custom in every well-ordered country, is fitting for a democratic country, will add honor to the President and will give honor to the Army and its commander, the Chief of Staff. I therefore have the honor of proposing that Clause 11 of the Basic Law: the President, be supplemented by Clause 11a, which will read: “The President of Israel is the head of the armed forces and appoints the Chief of Staff of the IDF in accordance with the decision of the Cabinet, which will be brought before him by the Minister of Defense.”

The Minister of Justice, J.S. Shapira: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the honor of the President of Israel is dear to all of us, and for that reason any amendment to the Basic Law: the President should be considered very carefully....

There are several reasons why this proposal should be removed from the agenda....The IDF is actively concerned with the task of protecting Israel day and night, day in, day out, and pays a heavy price for doing so. It is, perhaps, the most important executive force in the country, and can fulfill its function adequately only if it is part of the network of the Executive....These tasks cannot be fulfilled without keeping a watchful eye on the country's foreign policy and economic life.

MK Begin noted that his intention was not to make the President the real head of the armed forces but merely to give him an empty title....Our approach to the IDF, in accordance with the legislation of the Council of State in 1948, is that the Minister of Defense is charged with supervising this. There is a Minister and always will be a Minister, a member of the Cabinet, who will supervise everything connected with the IDF. By accepting MK Begin's proposal we will either be creating a fiction or establishing a procedure which does not accord with the proper government of the country and does not fit in with the network of our parliamentary life.

Not only is the Government...responsible for the structure, equipment and actions of the IDF, through its Minister of Defense, but there has also been a gradual democratization in the supervision of the IDF in recent years. The Government appointed a Defense Committee...which is a ministerial institution of the utmost importance, receiving reports on everything connected with our armed forces, as MK Begin terms the IDF. In addition, the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee has extremely wide powers and is kept informed of every development in the security situation and the IDF....

It is not true to say that formal appointments are made by the President in order to stress their non-party or partisan or particular nature. Many of our civil servants are required to be non-party or partisan but they are not appointed by the President....Ambassadors are given their letters of appointment by the President because in the past, in other countries, they represented the king, and today they are regarded as representing the state, and for ceremonial purposes the appointment is made by the President, at the Government's recommendation, of course. Judges, the State Comptroller and the President of the Supreme Military Court...are appointed by the President in order to stress the fact that they are independent of the Executive....

But it would be a very bad thing for Israeli democracy were there to be the slightest indication that the Chief of Staff was independent of the Executive, for only through the Executive can the Knesset control the armed forces. If we had a presidential regime things would be different. But we have a parliamentary regime and we must...extend the people's control, via the Knesset, over the IDF and its senior officers. It is true that the procedure for appointing the Chief of Staff and the senior commanders has not yet been settled, and I agree that this should be given a legal basis, so that the Executive can make those appointments in accordance with certain rules...but there is a wide gap between this and MK Begin's proposal, which I propose be removed from the agenda.

M. Begin (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice's first criticism of me for venturing to seek to amend the Basic Law: the President is very strange....What does he expect a member of the Opposition to do...?

(From the floor: Express his reservations.)

M. Begin (Gahal): That is what he is doing...which he follows up by proposing an amendment to the law....The Minister of Justice claims that I propose giving the President an empty title, but at the same time he contends that I am striking at democratic procedure and civil control of the armed forces. The two criticisms are mutually contradictory.... Where is the logic in insisting that Israel should be the only country where the head of state is not also the head of the armed forces? This arrangement obtains in all the countries of Europe, and they have long and continuous experience of sovereign rule, without an interruption of 1,800 years, as in our case....Why should we not benefit from the experience of others...? Furthermore, our proposal makes it clear that control of the armed forces is retained by the Executive, because we state that the appointment is made at the recommendation of the Cabinet....The fact that an appointment is made by the President adds splendor and honor to the post rather than stressing its non-party nature, which is determined by law in the case of judges....

I regret to say that the Minister of Justice has failed to speak to the point in replying to my proposal....I did not stress the aspect of control and independence, but rather that of honor, the honor of the President, the Army and its commanders. You gave no valid reason for advocating that my proposal be removed from the agenda....You concluded by saying that some legal arrangement for making these appointments is needed....The real reason for your dismissal of my proposal is that it was put forward by a member of the Opposition, and the Government feels uncomfortable agreeing to a proposal coming from the Opposition....I know how the majority in the House will vote...but we will discuss this issue again....We want Israel to be a well-ordered state, and in every well-ordered state the head of state is the head of the armed forces.

...

(MK Begin's motion to transfer his proposal to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee was not adopted.)

(The motion to remove MK Begin's proposal from the agenda was adopted.)

Abolition of the Military Government

Introduction

Ever since the War of Independence of 1948–49, certain areas of the country which were heavily-populated by Arabs, particularly those which had come under Israeli control as the result of the General Armistice Agreement with Jordan and were close to the armistice lines, were administered by a Military Government. From time to time the Opposition—in rare unanimity of left and right—had called for the abolition of the Military Government, maintaining that security could be maintained by other means. However, even though military regulations had been gradually relaxed or eliminated, the Government of the day had been reluctant to relinquish a tool which under certain circumstances might one day become vital again, even at short notice. Towards the end of 1966 the Government, led by Levi Eshkol, determined that the Military Government was no longer necessary, and tabled legislation aiming at its total abolition.

From the very outset, the Arab citizens of Israel, including those in areas under Military Government, have enjoyed full civil rights, including the right to vote. Thus, it may be assumed that electoral considerations played a part in the decision and in the relevant debate.

Sitting 107 of the Sixth Knesset

8 November 1966 (25 Heshvan 5727)

...
The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, when I presented the new Cabinet to the Knesset on 12 January 1966, I said that the Government intended to introduce additional concessions in the areas under Military Government. I said that the Beduin in the Negev would not be required to have travel permits and would be able to move about the country freely. I said that the area under Military Government in the north, apart from closed areas along the border, would be opened to two-way traffic. I added that it was our intention to abolish the Military Government altogether within a year.

When I addressed the Knesset on 18 May 1966, I reported that concessions had already been introduced in the areas under Military Government in the north, with the exception of closed, uninhabited areas, most of which are situated along the border. I noted that the Beduin in the Negev had in effect been released of the need to obtain travel permits and could move north freely....

The Government has decided that as of 1 December 1966 the mechanism of the Military Government will be abolished and tasks formerly fulfilled by it will be transferred to the jurisdiction of the appropriate civil authorities. The abolition of the Military Government is the continuation of a process. Since 1949 various changes and concessions have been made with the intention of gradually releasing citizens of Israel from restrictions and prohibitions which were necessary for security reasons when they were introduced and have since become superfluous. Additional far-reaching changes and concessions were introduced in 1963. The center and north of the country, including the cities of Tel Aviv, Haifa and Netanya, were opened to free passage. The process was continued in 1966, when the Negev was opened and entry to the north of the country was permitted, with the exception of uninhabited border areas.

The military framework known as the "Military Government" exists and functions by virtue of internal military orders, and consequently there is no need to amend or annul any law in order to abolish it....The areas which were under the jurisdiction of the Military Governors will be annexed to the regional commands of the IDF and will be under the jurisdiction of the regional commanders....The IDF will no longer issue travel permits. The police force will also be authorized to issue permits for the areas to and from which permits are still required, in accordance with the laws which pertain to all the citizens of the state. The special military frameworks which were part of the Military Government will be abolished, as will the twelve representations of the Military Government.

These rules, which will come into effect on 1 December 1966, do not annul the closure orders which apply to specific areas and pertain to everyone, in order to maintain the security of the state. This decision of the Government derives from its recognition and hope that internal security can be maintained without having recourse to Military Government. Time will tell. All the necessary measures will be taken to prevent any impairment of the security of the country. With this step, as the continuation of previous ones, the Military Government comes to an end.

A. Ben-Eliezer (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, a Government which proposes abolishing the administrative institution known as the Military Government in the security conditions of November 1966 is admitting that that institution was unnecessary, unimportant and ineffectual and failed to provide an answer for all our internal and external security problems....We can safely say today that...if we had abolished the Military Government years ago and strengthened the existing institutions designed to protect Israel's security we would not be facing the problem the Prime Minister has described.

The Military Government...was a security illusion, distorting the character of the state, which was described not only by our enemies as a country where discrimination was upheld by law, and making no contribution to increasing a sense of loyalty to the state amongst our Arab citizens. Our loyal citizens must be guaranteed full rights, as well as duties. They will have to prove their loyalty at all times....

We do not support the abolition of Military Government as proposed by the Prime Minister, i.e., without substituting an Israeli law for the British Emergency Regulations...which were a weapon of colonial repression and were used by the foreign ruler against Jewish freedom-fighters....The maintenance of the Military Government sustained the rule of a certain party, through the distribution of weapons to Arab citizens on the basis of favoritism and the entry into Israel of 40,000 Arabs across the armistice lines....

There is nothing worse in the sphere of security than maintaining an illusion....Israel's defense institutions are its Army, its police force, the Border Police and the various arms under their control....By increasing their strength and efficiency we will increase our security. The illusion that Military Government made a security contribution of any kind was shattered years ago. Many thousands of Arab citizens work in various branches of Israel's economy, all over the country. They move about freely. All the Prime Minister told us today was that the administrative mechanism which employed 39 people has been dissolved and that its authority will be transferred to other security branches....

The security problems Israel faces in November 1966 require us to be fully on the alert and make genuine efforts rather than basing our security on an illusion. The maintenance of our internal security is without a doubt a condition for assuring our external security, and it is the defense forces who will do this.

...

I. Raphael (Mafdal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the Knesset has discussed the subject of the Military Government dozens of times...and always with a genuine and general concern for internal security, which is part of external security....The existence of the Military Government has always been a stain on our democratic regime and has been exploited by our enemies to incite others against us....Opinions in the Knesset have always been divided on this issue, even within the Coalition and the Opposition....

That is why we all welcomed the gradual concessions which the Government introduced in the regulations of the Military Government over the last few years, eventually reaching...its complete abolition, as we have been informed today....This constitutes an important step forward—even though certain restrictions remain in force—and an expression of trust in the Arab population. It also reflects the change in that

sector's attitude towards the state, which is the result of a long, slow process, proving that the country's considerable investments in providing education, raising the standard of living and improving services amongst that sector have borne fruit. We therefore welcome the Government's decision and hope that this step will prove itself and eventually lead to others.

M. Dayan (Rafi): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members...the Prime Minister's statement made no mention of any change in the Emergency Regulations or the regime it imposes on certain areas....The change the Government has announced today is an administrative one, substituting police rule for military rule...while the same law will apply....

I agree with the Government that the time is not yet ripe to amend the Emergency Regulations, within which framework the existing situation in a given area can always be reviewed....As I see it, the purpose of that law is to protect the country's security by acting as a deterrent...rather than being applied....An Arab can live his whole life in Israel without being made aware of that law, provided he does not harm Israel's security....

We are currently experiencing a series of infiltrations by terrorists into Israel from across the borders....These activities could benefit from the help of local residents, and the terrorists undoubtedly aspire to this....The Emergency Regulations exist specifically for a situation of this kind, i.e., infractions of the law which are connected with the national political issue of Israel and its neighbors. More than ever before, the Emergency Regulations must serve as a deterrent now....

I do not think that the Government's decision to replace the military administration with a police one reinforces the deterrent effect of the Regulations....Substituting a person in police uniform for one in military uniform is of no significance whatsoever....This substitution will inevitably weaken the deterrent effect which is the object of the Regulations rather than reinforcing it.

Abdul-Aziz Zuabi (Mapam): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, we welcome the Prime Minister's announcement of the abolition of the Military Government machinery and regard it as a step towards the complete abolition of it and the Emergency Regulations of 1945 and their replacement by an Israeli law which will be appropriate for Israel's democratic regime while assuring its security and existence.

We have always demanded the abolition of the Military Government, believing that not only did it not contribute to Israel's security but, on the contrary, harmed it by harming Arab citizens...interfering in their private lives...appropriating their property, damaging their livelihoods...separating the two peoples who share a common homeland, preventing the Arab citizens of Israel from sharing in the coun-

try's economic and social life...and making them feel that they were second-class citizens....

We have always believed that the Arabs of Israel are the bridge to understanding between the two peoples and between Israel and its neighbors....I do not know how many Arabs became loyal friends of Israel as a result of the Military Government, but I know that many of them became syncophants, and I do not know if they can be a bridge to understanding and peace between the two peoples....

The security of the state is dear to us, whether as Jews or as Arabs, and especially now, when we hear of attacks, mines and murders. As Arabs, our welfare and security are inextricably intertwined with that of the state....We therefore welcome this step, even though it is not enough if the intention is solely to replace one kind of uniform with another and leave the Emergency Regulations in force....We hope to see genuine concessions and the abolition of the administration, not merely "psychological effects."

We would like to regard this step as the beginning of a genuine shift towards granting Arab citizens greater social and economic equality and abolishing every vestige of the Military Government....Nonetheless, we welcome every step, however small, which leads towards greater equality and an end to discrimination.

...

The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members...MK Ben-Eliezer's interpretation of what I said is false....What was inappropriate twenty or ten years ago is appropriate today, both because of the growing strength, maturity and numbers of Israel's Jewish population...and because of other changes....MK Ben-Eliezer spoke of 39 officials being involved in the Military Government...but the correct number is 84....

This may not be the most auspicious time for this step as far as the security of the country is concerned, but we must ensure that every possible precaution is taken so that unnecessary trouble is avoided....

I would like to tell MK Raphael, who supported the Government's step, that there is not, and never has been, a stain because of the existence of this arrangement. I hope that time proves us to have been right in taking this step....If there was any stain it was in the attribution of base electoral motives to the ruling party or parties....

MK Dayan maintains that the only thing that has changed is the mechanism, not the law. I said that too. The Regulations remain in force....I was very pleased to hear what MK Zuabi had to say in favor of the Government's action, though there is no need for him to be constantly harping on the discrimination issue. If we were to take a national referendum we would find that everyone feels discriminated against in something or other. Even Knesset Members who do not get an extra two or three minutes of speaking time from the Speaker feel discriminated

against....We must be realistic....The Minister of Justice has spoken in the past of the need to abolish some of the Emergency Regulations of 1945 while amending and retaining other parts....

The Government's intentions were good....Throughout the years there has been a slow ripening process and we have gradually advanced, granting concessions, reducing the burden and limiting restrictions, eventually reaching the point where we find ourselves today, being able to abolish the Military Government....Possibly this step should have been taken sooner...or perhaps postponed for another year....Inevitably, its success depends on us all....It would be well for us if those concerned really tried to be a bridge to peace, rather than the opposite.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the officers and soldiers, the members of the Regular Army and those doing their National Service, as well as the civilians, who have worked to guard the borders, particularly in those areas where it was feared that there would be infiltrations. Now the infiltrations have become more serious and we may have to find more effective ways of preventing them and defending ourselves. I thank all those I have mentioned.

R. Zabari (Ma'arach): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, on behalf of the Ma'arach, Mafdal, Mapam, the Independent Liberals, Aguda and Cooperation and Development parties I propose that we conclude the debate with the following resolution: "The Knesset takes note of the Prime Minister's announcement of 8 November 1966 regarding Military Government."

...

The Vote

Those in favor of MK R. Zabari's proposal 48

Those against 7

(MK Zabari's concluding proposal is adopted.)

Security Situation

Introduction

A series of incidents instigated by regular Syrian troops and irregulars from across the Syrian border brought about a significant deterioration of the security situation in the north, and this was addressed by the Prime Minister in the Knesset on 17 January 1967. In the subsequent debate the means of putting an end to these incidents without all-out war constituted the focus of attention. Most speakers ignored or minimized the danger on Israel's other frontiers.

Sitting 137 of the Sixth Knesset

17 January 1967 (6 Shevat 5727)

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I last spoke to you about the situation on the Syrian border on 17 October 1966...while our complaint to the Security Council about Syria's acts of aggression was under discussion....We drew that body's attention to the fact that...since January 1965 there had been 60 acts of terrorism and aggression against Israel, intensifying in the weeks before our appeal to the Security Council. We noted Syria's claim that those actions were legal and that Syria was obliged to encourage, not prevent, them. I expressed the hope that the Security Council would acknowledge Syria's responsibility and exert a restraining influence on it....As you know, the resolution was not adopted by the Security Council because of the Soviet veto, but most members of the Council supported the proposal regretting the attacks and resultant loss of life and calling on Syria to keep a closer control on its border.

During the debate Syrian aggression continued. After the debate ended...we had seven weeks of relative quiet on the northern border....During the last two weeks, however, there has been another wave of Syrian aggression, including firing on farmers and on boats on Lake Tiberias, shelling Israeli territory, initiating direct military actions and allowing the infiltration of terrorists, who sabotaged water pipes and mined a soccer field....As I have said before, our policy is to check and deter the aggressor once all the political steps have been taken. During those two weeks of Syrian aggression...we despatched four messages to the Security Council, and another one was sent today....The attention of the U.N. Observers has been drawn to the situation, we have been in close contact with the U.N. Secretariat in New York and have informed the Powers of the gravity of the situa-

tion....Last night the U.N. Secretary-General took the unprecedented step of asking Syria and Israel to avoid taking any military action and to agree to General Bull's proposal to hold an extraordinary meeting of the Syrian-Israeli Armistice Commission....With all due respect for the Secretary-General's concern...we are surprised at the fact that he has made no distinction between Syria, the aggressor, and Israel, the victim, and has failed to note the root of the problem, namely, Syria's policy of hostility towards Israel....

Our immediate response to recent events was that the IDF put three tanks out of commission, acting to remove the cloud of fear from our settlements on the Syrian border while preventing an escalation of hostilities...since Israel seeks peace and resorts to defensive and deterrent action only when it has been proved that attempts to influence and restrain are fruitless....We responded in the affirmative to the U.N. Secretary-General's appeal for a meeting of the Armistice Commission, but it must be made clear that we will react as circumstances require to continued aggression by Syria and the terrorists....

If Syria does not wish to make peace with us we cannot force it to. But if it wishes to initiate hostilities on our borders both we and the peaceloving world must make it clear that that cannot be tolerated. The situation is very grave. We must be on our guard. The Government does not object to a debate on the subject.

...

H. Landau (Gahal): Madam Speaker, Knesset Members...since early 1966, since the last military coup in Syria, we have witnessed Syrian aggression along the border...and the Syrian President has openly avowed his intention of destroying Israel....At the U.N. General Assembly our Foreign Minister expressed his surprise at the fact that certain of our neighbors have little regard for the principles and Charter of the U.N. and the agreements they signed seventeen years ago. Of course, he phrased it in eloquent, Cambridge English, but essentially he was mouthing righteous platitudes...to which the Syrians replied with shells and mines....In response to the Syrian attacks Israel complained to the Security Council, our policy being to refrain from taking defensive military action...and we were "rewarded" with the Council's "even-handed" appeal to both sides....Our policy appears to be one of gradual retreat, rather than taking the course of justified self-defense....The Prime Minister has publicly advocated self-restraint, apparently feeling that the current rate of bloodshed is not high enough....What are you waiting for? How many deaths are needed before the situation becomes clear to you...? How many more messages are you going to send to the U.N.? The situation seems to signal to Syria that it may initiate hostilities on our borders....

Now the U.N. Secretary-General has proposed that Syria and Israel sit down together to attempt to solve the problem of working the land on

either side of the border...regarding the hostilities as "seasonal incidents." And Israel has agreed to this, as if working the land were the only problem between Syria and us. The Syrians haven't agreed yet, they are demanding a discussion on the status of the demilitarized zone, since they refuse to acknowledge our sovereignty over it....We regard it as our duty to warn the Government not to enable our sovereignty over our land to be challenged....The U.N. Secretary-General, with all due respect, has no right to interfere in Israel's internal affairs....In the past, unfortunately, the Government allowed Syrian arms to have a say in things. But it did not help. The "seasonal incidents" continued. No retreat or concession was of any avail. On the contrary, the aggression was merely intensified....One concession invariably leads to another....Where will all this lead us in the final event...?

A three-fold danger threatens the State of Israel. First, there is Nasser, who has made his intentions public, and is building an army to implement his plan. At present he is not strong enough and is tied down, but he is waiting for the right moment. Second, there is Arab unity, the danger of which has increased after the recent coup in Syria. A unified Arab Command is being established which, although ineffective at present, is uniting Egypt and Syria militarily. Massive quantities of weapons of every kind are streaming to the Arab countries from both the East and the West, yet Israel remains silent....All I will say is that Israel may have the key to its security even in the face of those dangers. The third danger is guerrilla warfare originating from Syria. This is no mere border tension or a new wave of Syrian aggression, but an official policy of perpetual guerrilla warfare against Israel, since Syria is as yet unable to face us on the battlefield....One of the objects of this warfare is to establish a "Palestinian liberation movement" in the political as well as the military sense. I saw and heard the first signs of this at the last U.N. Assembly....And in everything it does, including this guerrilla warfare, Syria is assured of the unreserved support of one of the Powers...while Israel continues to adhere to its policy of self-restraint....

We must cease using such terms as response or retaliation with regard to this open aggression....They are wrong and misleading. When we are attacked we must respond with a counterattack, our object being to deter the aggressor. That is the only way. All bloodshed is bad, but one-sided bloodshed is a disaster....We must prevent further bloodshed and put a stop to the Syrian guerrilla attacks before they grow and expand on all sides. It is Israel's right and duty to defend itself....I know what political pressures this involves, but self-restraint will only exacerbate the attacks on us. We must not be alarmed by mention of the Security Council. We do not seek to be condemned, but that should not prevent us from doing what we must when we are attacked....Deterrent force is the principle underlying the current equilibrium between the

East and the West, but it is effective only if it is real, not imaginary...and this is what the Government of Israel has failed to realize....We must prove that Israel's deterrent power is real, and thereby prevent future bloodshed and wars, so that we may eventually attain peace....

...
M. Unna (Mafdal): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the subject of this debate cannot be separated from those confronting the country today. We are currently undergoing far-reaching changes in every aspect of the life of the country...and there is a great deal of uncertainty as to what tomorrow may bring. This does not help us consider the problem of our security wisely and well. This places a double burden on the Government of seeing the situation as it really is and not being influenced by subjective or random factors. The Government must lead, not be led.

The Prime Minister...quite rightly, stressed the need to preserve the life and property of our inhabitants....This is the concept underlying everything the Government does, but there is no simple formula as to what is the best way of doing this....Direct deterrent action is not always the best way of attaining the Government's aim of assuring our security....We expect the Government to consider the various factors in the political and military arena in a cool and calculated way, taking both the short and the long run into account....We disapprove of the attempts being made by certain elements to mold public opinion by disseminating views and assessments of the situation as if they were proven facts. This is undesirable and even dangerous at a time when the Government must decide in a responsible way....The Government, for its part, must ensure that the public is properly informed, so that it will not be led astray by tendentious propaganda. Our public is intelligent enough to be informed even about subjects which are not pleasant....

We have heard the view that the Government's failure to take immediate retribution or retaliatory action is misguided and that it is pursuing a phantom....In our view, the Government was right to take political steps and clarify the situation to the Security Council and the various countries of the world....It was right to agree to U Thant's proposal to sit down with Syria within the framework of the Armistice Commission...in an attempt to restore stability to the Syrian border....Military action has a well-defined place in the range of steps available, and there may be a situation in which there is no other alternative...but this must be unequivocal and clearly-defined...for every major action involves dangers....

In border disputes the IDF has proved that it can give an appropriate and convincing reply without engaging in escalation. MK Landau's contention that we do not react is a distortion of the facts....The IDF deserves to be praised for the high standard, technical ability and military

discipline evinced by our soldiers during the last flare-up...I do not think that we have yet utilized every possibility of preventive and retaliatory action in responding to acts of terrorism....In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that this debate will make a contribution to increasing understanding of our security problems and the Government's handling of them among the public, enabling the Government to make it clear to friends and foes alike that the House is united in realizing the gravity of the situation and in its firm decision to maintain our rights....

S. Peres (Rafi): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset...acts of aggression against Israel have accelerated during the past year...and Arab animosity and intransigence towards us remains as great as ever....Let us not delude ourselves that there is any chance of a dialogue in the foreseeable future....The Arabs claim that time is on their side, but it is equally on ours, provided we use it well....Just as it is a mistake to fear Nasser prematurely, it is a mistake to neglect our endeavors and preparations for the future....Our concern for our security in the future must lead us to focus on such internal issues as furthering education, cultivating the economy and strengthening our defense and deterrent network....Israel has the resources in manpower and materials to create a strong, vibrant, united, modern and attractive society, though we have not yet found the right formula or team for this....

Syria's hostile attitude to Israel derives from its basic ideology...and its tactics appear to waver between the two poles of reluctance to become involved in an open and premature war against Israel and the maintenance of constant guerrilla warfare....Despite their blindness and lack of caution, Syria's leaders are well aware of the IDF's ability to defeat their army...and the fact that they cannot rely on any outside help....What they seek, therefore, is a guerrilla war de luxe, one which has only benefits and no risks, and that is what Israel must prevent....Is that what we are doing by agreeing to the Armistice Commission? It is obvious that the topic which should be discussed, Syrian aggression, will not be on the agenda. And the subject of Israel's sovereignty over certain areas may be brought up by Syria, thereby placing Israel in an awkward position....

It was interesting to hear Israel's representative maintain that "in view of past experience" there is no point appealing to the Security Council....As for an appeal to world public opinion—would general disapproval of our action really prevent us from taking action to defend ourselves...? Having recourse to the Armistice Commission, the Security Council or world public opinion will be truly effective only when Israel takes the additional step of defending itself....Then the symmetrical resolution the Security Council will in any case adopt will reflect a symmetrical situation....Then our disputes with Syria will be resolved on the ground, regardless of what is on the agenda of the Armistice

Commission....Then world public opinion will understand and support our actions, once we have explained them....

If the Syrians want war no one can stop them. If they do not—which I assume is the case—they will learn that there are no one-sided measures. The Syrians want to act and want Israel to be paralyzed....They must be confronted with the same Israeli strategy which has prevented infiltration from Lebanon and stopped it from Jordan and Egypt. In order to achieve that there is no need for war, but neither the Security Council nor the Armistice Commission is enough....What is needed is a series of considered, restricted military steps, for preventive rather than retributive purposes, so that those who decide whether to launch attacks on us will not be invulnerable...and concrete, rather than abstract, tranquillity will be obtained....

J. Hazan (Mapam): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset...as long as there is no lasting peace, it is ingenuous to assume that there is one step we can take which will guarantee quiet on our borders. It may have been an historic mistake on our part to agree to stop the fighting during our War of Independence and sign the Armistice Agreements without having attained a peace agreement....None of us could foresee what was to come then. We wanted peace....Our task today is to strive for a stable peace while maintaining our security, within the framework of shaky Armistice Agreements which our enemies constantly seek to disown....We must take care not to be drawn into hasty action which may secure our borders for a short while but shifts a stable peace even further away....MK Peres has proposed that we respond to the Syrians' provocation, strike at them, and thereby gain tranquillity....They know what the consequence of their actions will be, yet they continue with them....That is not the way to peace, I fear....

In order to protect our citizens and defend our borders...we must persevere with our political struggle. Our opponents here claim that that has not brought a stable peace nearer, merely producing temporary lulls. Have military actions had any greater effect...? We want quiet Jewish lives, not Greek tragedies. We must focus on political measures, despite the disappointments we have had in that sphere. I endorse the Government's recent steps and its agreement to reconvene the Armistice Commission....We know that there is little hope that any great achievement will ensue, yet we must make every effort to secure its success....We must also strengthen our borders. We know that they cannot be hermetically sealed, but we must make crossing them more difficult....Obviously, this does not constitute a complete solution to our security problems, but it could reduce direct clashes and retaliatory actions....Public opinion abroad and at home is important, but I do not think that statements like those made by MKs Landau and Peres contribute to molding responsible and considered public opinion in Israel. On the contrary, they mislead it into thinking that military action can

solve the problem....Anyone who speaks of military action should know what he is talking about and be aware of the responsibility he is taking upon himself.

I suggest that the Government lead the country bravely rather than submitting to the changing whims of public opinion...while assuring our security and striving for peace....There are, indeed, intimations of a desire for peace within the Arab countries. We must cultivate them and prevent those who would crush them from doing so, thereby foiling the plans of those who seek to widen the gulf between us and the Arab world and embroil us in a state of perpetual war....

...

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...it was gratifying to see the new and wonderful coalition between MKs Landau and Peres, who certainly make strange bedfellows.... What is the world coming to when those two see eye to eye...? Evidently, we all desire peace and security; the question is how to attain them? For that there is no tried and tested remedy. We have tried a variety of means—diplomatic and military—but no one can claim that we have not tried every means at our disposal....MK Landau has implied that we have failed to respond to attacks upon us....That is patently untrue, and on no occasion have we refrained from reacting....I would like to assure the House that we have no intention of deviating from our rights as delineated in the Armistice Agreements....MK Landau also sought to imply that we are being discriminated against in the sphere of arms supplies, but that is also untrue....We are obtaining arms to the best of our limited economic ability, and a nod is as good as a wink to a wise man....We are by no means the unfortunate, discriminated-against country you depict us to be....As for our having recourse to the Security Council...we know that however convinced and convincing we are as to the justice of our claims, the U.S.S.R. will impose a veto....But that need not stop us trying....

I believe that we all desire the same thing—peace and security....I listened to MK Hazan and could discern no difference between what he says and what I say....I am not saying that there is no point in what is known as static defense, but we cannot rely solely on that....Our experts tell me that defending our borders is no simple matter, and even if we devote all our manpower to that task we cannot ensure that there will be no infiltration....I await the day when the terrorists will be caught....

I think that when all is said and done, I can say that the Knesset agrees that we must preserve Israel's sovereign rights and conduct negotiations with the parties concerned, even though clashes break out....I do not wish to be unduly optimistic or pessimistic, but we must make an effort in the hope that this will be worthwhile....

The Vote

Those in favor of the Coalition motion to take note of the Prime Minister's statement on the security situation	54
Those against	21

(The motion is adopted.)

Budget Law, 5727-1967

Introduction

Presenting his Ministry's budget for 1967-68, the Foreign Minister persisted in the generally sanguine tone of the previous year, as did most of the participants in the debate. It was widely assumed that the year which had just begun would bring neither peace nor war.

Sitting 149 of the Sixth Knesset

14 February 1967 (4 Adar A 5727)

...

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban: Madam Speaker, I come before the Knesset to request a "moderate" sum of money with which to conduct Israel's international relations. We maintain representations in 98 countries...indicating the sound position Israel has forged for itself in the world...despite hostile pressure to prevent this....Few other small countries have such a wide range of cultural, economic and political ties with so many countries...and currently only our economic limitations prevent us extending our ties even further....

Far-reaching changes are taking place in the international arena....The tension between China and the U.S.S.R. is increasing. The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. are making greater efforts to reach agreements....Romania has established relations with West Germany.... Within the Communist Bloc different viewpoints are discernible.... France is taking a new, independent line in international relations. This year has seen the end of the dangerous clashes between Indonesia and Malaysia and between India and Pakistan....Along-side international tension, there appears to be a general trend towards ending disputes and achieving coexistence....

The spirit of change can also be felt in our part of the world....Arab unity has crumbled...being replaced by thinly-veiled hostility, in some cases....The Palestine Liberation Organization is shunned....The Egyptian army is entrenched in the Yemen...while the international institutions and the Powers, which "bear responsibility for world peace and security," remain silent....That silence in the face of aggression should be a warning to all peace-loving countries....In an agreement signed last week, Egypt and Iraq placed the responsibility for preparing the next round of aggression against Israel on the terrorist organizations...while the Syrian leader has made yet another fiery speech about

his intention of destroying Israel....Once again, we say to the neighboring countries: the choice between continued hostility or peace is in your hands....Israel will defend itself, as it has in the past, against any aggression. Israel is stronger now than ever before. If the war you seek breaks out there will inevitably be bloodshed and destruction, and armies will probably cross existing borders...but this will not be one-sided....In addition, international influence works to preserve existing political and territorial facts, not to destroy them....Your attempts to cut Israel off from the world are unavailing in the face of modern methods of communication and transportation....

These things must be said, because peace will be really possible once the Arab leaders grasp that the renewal of Israel's sovereignty eighteen years ago was an irreversible event. The judgment of history is final....Once the Arabs have recognized that, we offer them a different vision: a multifaceted Middle East distinguished by a variety of societies and cultures....Israel can do a great deal to help the development of its neighbors, offering Jordan an exit to the sea, extending technological and agricultural knowhow and serving as a bridge, rather than a blockage, between the economies and peoples of the region....There are signs that certain elements within the Arab world are beginning to realize that the slogan of "destroying Israel" is an illusion....Israel's defensive ability also has a long-term psychological effect...increasing the chances that the Arabs will come round to accepting our existence.... That is why Israel must fortify itself while striving for peace....

There are those among us who claim that thoughts about peace are a dangerous illusion. This approach is merely weakness masquerading as strength. Foreign policy must operate on both the short and the long-term view....Others claim that we are not genuinely interested in peace, having prepared no peace plan. That, too, is incorrect, since the absence of peace derives from the fact that there is no readiness for peace on the other side rather than the lack of a peace plan on ours. The dispute is over Israel's sovereign existence in the region....Once that right is recognized, peace can be discussed....As long as it is not, any debate between the sides concerns ways of chopping up and smothering Israel while the Arab countries retain their current dimensions.

Despite its isolation, objective circumstances have already made Israel a stabilizing factor in the region...guaranteeing the territorial integrity of certain Arab countries against the expansionist aims of others....Until such time as better and permanent agreements are signed with our neighbors, the Armistice Agreements of 1949 and the arrangements determined in 1957, marking the end of all military aggression against Israel, obtain...even though several Arab countries do not adhere to those undertakings...and the international institution whose job it is does not enforce them....

The general atmosphere in the region in the near future depends on the Syrian Government. If Syria honors its commitment to prevent aggression against Israel from its territory all our borders will be quiet, but if Syria resorts to guerrilla warfare...it will be violating its agreement and will be responsible for the consequences....We hope it will act wisely....Regrettably, the Middle East is still an area of competition rather than cooperation between the Powers, with all that that implies....

During the past year Israel has continued its dialogue with the four Powers...requesting that they maintain the balance of power in the region, thereby preventing aggression against Israel, and affirm their adherence to its independent existence....This year the U.S. has helped to equip the IDF with defensive and deterrent weapons to a greater extent than ever before...has reaffirmed its commitment to Israel's existence and territorial integrity...and has extended considerable economic aid of various kinds....This year France has extended its influence in the Middle East...particularly in the sphere of its commercial and cultural ties with the Arab countries....France's traditional concern with independence and its bitter memories of the period of its conquest and occupation have put its relations with Israel, which have always been warm, on a special plane...and our country can only gain from France's new role in the region....British policy towards Israel...is based on the maintenance of the independence and territorial integrity of the countries of the region, while preserving the arms balance, and the renewed assurance that if closer ties are achieved with the Arab countries these will not adversely affect friendly relations with Israel. This stand can also be counted among the factors likely to bring greater stability to the region....Public opinion in all the three Powers I have mentioned is favorable to Israel, and all three have thriving Jewish communities.... The criticism which has been levelled at us by these three Powers as a result of our responses to military aggression directed against us during the last year is partly due to the fact that no other country is faced with security problems like ours....Be that as it may, we must make a greater effort to explain our situation and the motives for our actions to the world....

Over the past year we have conducted a continuous dialogue with the U.S.S.R. in Jerusalem, Moscow and at the U.N...stressing the importance we attach to its influence on current stability and future peace in the region....The cornerstones of Soviet international policy are "refraining from the use of violence as a way of solving territorial disputes..." and "non-intervention in the internal affairs of countries..." both of which we heartily endorse....These lofty principles are not borne out by the U.S.S.R.'s unreserved support for aggressive behavior towards us on the part of our Arab neighbors....It goes without saying that we must continue our dialogue on international issues with the U.S.S.R...but this does not depend on us alone. There is a basis for be-

lieving that the desire to draw nearer to certain Arab countries since the spring of 1966 has had a distorting effect on the way the U.S.S.R. sees our region and our state. For us, the distinction between "revolutionary" and "reactionary" Arab countries is not relevant, while that between peace-loving and aggressive countries is....Logic is paralyzed and the truth perverted when Israel is described as a tool in the hands of the oil companies and other foreign elements which seek to change the regime in Syria. All we wish to change in Syria is its aggressive policy towards Israel....

Western Europe has become a political factor of some importance on the international scene....Israel's relations with the E.E.C. have developed slowly and steadily, and we hope that these may become closer in the years ahead...with mutual trade and technology agreements.... During the past year we have invested special efforts in strengthening our ties with the countries of Eastern Europe...as reflected in agreements concerning commerce and technology....We will make every effort to ensure that Israel is accepted as an associate member of the E.E.C. during 1967...while simultaneously reinforcing our ties with the rest of the continent....We cannot avoid the issue of Germany in our European policy. Germany is divided into two countries, one of which has acknowledged its responsibility towards the Jewish people and the State of Israel and seeks friendly relations with us....It can be of help to us in our attempt to gain entry into the E.E.C.

For seven years we have been involved in international and bilateral development schemes in the emerging countries of Africa as well as in Asia and Latin America....In the coming year we hope to continue to expand these projects, which have greatly benefited all concerned.... Israel supports the efforts of the African nations to attain independence...abolish the vestiges of the colonial regimes, liberate themselves from racial discrimination and apartheid and replace the illegal government in Rhodesia with one which is independent and democratic.... The value of our endeavors in Africa cannot be measured in short-term political or economic gains...though they have already raised our standing in the world and brought us considerable prestige, trust and understanding....

Although we have representations in several Asian countries, these are not as widespread as we would like....We can console ourselves in our inability to find common ground with China with the fact that we are by no means alone in this....We earnestly hope that the fighting in Vietnam will come to a speedy conclusion and peace negotiations begin....

In conclusion, I would like to say that in the coming year we hope to see more realistic and sensible thinking in the region, greater consistency and unity in the efforts of the Powers to attain stability and coexistence, closer ties between Israel and the whole of Europe, and fresh

progress in our relations with the developing countries....We also intend to intensify our cultural and scientific ties with the world....In all our activities we are caught between our lofty intentions and our limited means....The sum total of our actions over the last year reveals that... most governments and nations are eager to have close and active ties with Israel...seeing it as historically unique, and admiring its power of endurance, ability to recover, tenacity in preserving its national identity, originality in creating social frameworks and receptiveness to the central trends of thought and action....

Israel's limitations are apparent and need no explanation. Its advantages and the sources of its strength are less evident and require elucidation. But Israel cannot illuminate the outside without being illuminated from within. Israel's reputation and standing in the world cannot be enhanced by describing it in gloomy, pessimistic or disparaging terms....Israel's image and reputation abroad are not determined solely by debates on international policy but are also constantly molded by the country's image and the way it conducts and presents itself.

H. Landau (Gahal): Madam Speaker, Knesset Members, I have come to raise the issue of Soviet Jewry...not merely to feel that I have done my duty but to place it on our national agenda....That body of three and a half million Jews has been cut off and enclosed for far too long...and despite its heroic efforts, there is a very real danger that it will cease to exist...apart from the fact that it suffers from persistent persecution by the Soviet authorities....

Today, with the growing rapprochement between East and West, there is a greater chance than ever before of doing something for Soviet Jewry....We must demand that those Jews be permitted to leave and join their brethren in their homeland here....Voices have been heard throughout the world demanding this...but the Government of Israel has remained silent on this subject....We must not rest until this national and humanitarian problem is solved. This is the time for action....I very much fear that, just as our leaders did nothing when millions of our brethren were led to the gas chambers, in years to come they will be accused of having stood idly by while the life of Soviet Jewry was gradually extinguished....

We must not remain silent! We must make it clear that we have no quarrel with the U.S.S.R. We wish to have better relations with it...and believe that solving the problem of Soviet Jewry will help to achieve this...as well as improving the standing of the U.S.S.R. in the world.... The whole world rejoiced when the Soviet Premier, Kosygin, announced in Paris two months ago that Soviet Jews would be permitted to join their families....We await the fulfillment of that promise eagerly....

In his address the Foreign Minister spoke at inordinate length but said nothing new....The illusion is repeated and reality is ignored....

Despite our warnings not to go to the Israel-Syrian Armistice Commission...the Government went...and, as we had predicted, the only topic the Syrians were prepared to discuss was our sovereignty over the demilitarized zone....Meanwhile, Syrian aggression continues...and all the Foreign Minister's high-flown rhetoric will do nothing to stop it....

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban: What do you propose doing tomorrow morning?

H. Landau (Gahal): That is an ingenuous question, sir. I made my proposals from this podium three weeks ago. In his reply, the Prime Minister said that if the Syrians continue with their aggression we will teach them a lesson. But this has been going on for three months without any reaction on our part....They are advancing and we are retreating....And all the Foreign Minister does is repeat his refrain about "the Syrians bearing responsibility for the consequences."

D. Hacohen (Ma'arach): Is that the way to speak to the Foreign Minister?

H. Landau (Gahal): It keeps coming back like a refrain....When will the Foreign Minister begin to see the reality of our region as it really is...? When will he grasp that the guerrilla attacks are on the increase...? He persists in speaking of "a new spirit" and "new ideas" about peace in the Middle East. Why does he delude the nation? When will he recommend that appropriate action be taken to make the Syrians understand that we will not tolerate this situation...?

We must keep a close watch on the flow of American arms to Hussein...alongside the massive stream of Soviet arms to Egypt and Syria....We must strengthen our forces to parallel the combined strength of all our enemies. The nation should be apprised of the arms gap between us and our enemies. Then it would surely reject the Foreign Ministry's elegant phrases, which obscure and distort the picture. We must foresee what will happen in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula when the British leave Aden in 1968 and Nasser tries to gain control of the Bab el-Mandab Straits and the entrance to the Red Sea. We must become an active factor in the geopolitical area in which we live....

In the light of the events at the last Security Council session, I propose the following:

A. The Foreign Ministry should deal continuously with issues concerning us which arise at the U.N. We must not rely on last-minute improvisations...or be taken by surprise by Arab proposals....

B. Israel must appear at the U.N. and present the problem of the region as it really is, taking the initiative in raising the problems of Israel and the Jewish people, and regarding the U.N. as the most important stage for the dissemination of information....

C. In dealing with Africa, the Foreign Ministry should no longer extend its philanthropic activities to all and sundry, including countries, such as Mali, which are openly hostile to us....

D. We must intensify our ties with Latin America....

Regardless of what the Foreign Ministry claims, our relations with the Common Market have been a total flop, distinguished once again by a lack of understanding, preparation, information, and appropriate action on our part....The Foreign Office has done nothing in the face of increasing neo-Nazism in Germany....We are a Jewish state. Who else knows what dangers Nazism entails? I understand that interests are involved, but the greatest interest is assuring our existence....Once again we find short-sightedness and blindness....For such "achievements" as these the Foreign Ministry's budget of 65 million Israeli pounds is exorbitant....

...
M. Dayan (Rafi): Madam Speaker, Knesset Members...cooperation with the developing countries is one of Israel's and the Foreign Ministry's most important activities...yet the budgetary allocation to that activity has been cut this year....At a time when British policy is to focus on its possessions east of Suez, when France's situation in Djibouti is problematic, when the entire eastern coast of the Red Sea is closed to us and much of the western coast is controlled by Egypt and Sudan and when, for various reasons, our relations with South Africa are cool, the countries on the coast of East Africa are of crucial importance for us....Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia are of direct and immediate interest to us;...consequently, we should be expanding our development activities there instead of restricting them....

We need Germany's aid today, after having established diplomatic relations with it....The two relevant topics are our entry into the Common Market and the relations between Germany and the Arabs. Germany will doubtless establish diplomatic ties with the Arabs...but we do not want these to be at Israel's expense...and if we are asking Germany for help, we have to do this in a direct, not a roundabout, manner....

The Foreign Minister has said that Syria will have to choose between honoring its undertaking to prevent terrorist aggression against Israel and accepting responsibility for its actions....The Foreign Minister did not say what Israel will do in the second event....I think that we were right to accede to U Thant's request to meet with Syria. But after that, once Syria had stated both privately and publicly that it would not adhere to the Armistice Agreement...I do not see any reason for our continuing to meet with Syria....

As for what is known as the new approach to foreign policy...I welcome efforts to achieve what was not achieved in the past...and on the whole I do not see any essential differences between Rafi and Mapai in this sphere....But I reject any attempt to delude ourselves by talking of

new thinking in the world or something which existed beforehand but was not discerned by the previous leadership....I do not think that there could be greater obduracy and less understanding than that displayed by the U.S.S.R. in the dispute between us and Syria, which is really one-sided action against us by Syria....I fail to see any evidence of a new spirit there....Nor do I think we have any special achievement to boast of in our contact with the Security Council in the last year or three years....

...
J. Hazan (Mapam): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, it has been said that policy is the art of the possible. With regard to Israel's foreign policy it would be more correct to say that it is often the art of the impossible; the art of making the impossible possible. The possible is accepting the existing situation...while the impossible is endeavoring to change it...not on the basis of any illusions but out of a belief in the objective and the path to it....Our struggle is first of all against...fifteen Arab and Moslem countries...which maintain thirteen embassies in Washington as opposed to our one. Ours is a small, Mediterranean country which must conduct a global policy because we are the state of the Jewish people, which is scattered throughout the world. We would be denying our mission if we did not conduct an independent, neutral policy as regards both East and West, because the Jews of the world are to be found in both the East and the West. It is complicated but necessary.

In practical terms...this means that we must extend what aid we can even to those countries whose friendship for us has cooled, because the wind may change and with it their attitude towards us....We must work continually at winning friends and must not be deterred by setbacks....This must be our frame of reference in Africa and Asia...and I agree with MK Dayan that our budgetary allocation for this item is too small....We are all aware of China's hostile attitude towards us...but China is very much an unknown quantity in the world today...and we must act with the utmost caution....We must keep our distance from the dispute in Vietnam, maintaining an independent stance and helping to attain peace....

We must persist in building bridges between ourselves and the Socialist world. The chances of this are better today than ever before...being aided by the pluralism and liberalism which are currently taking the place of the monolithic central rule of the past....This policy cannot be conducted while abandoning our basic and justified position. We cannot cease deploring the U.S.S.R.'s one-sided policy in the Near East, or stop demanding the right of Soviet Jewry for national self-determination....The best thing Israel can do for Soviet Jewry is to improve its relations with the U.S.S.R....There is some, very slight, progress on this front...and we must continue with our efforts....

I do not think we should be constantly reviewing the security situation...which was discussed here at length not long ago....I do not think the Foreign Minister can be accused of manufacturing illusions....MK Landau appears to think that the only solution to the problem is war....I imagine we are all united in realizing that no one is safe if, despite all our efforts, we find ourselves at war. Where we differ...is in the efforts we are prepared to make to avert that eventuality....

The question of our relations with Germany was mentioned in passing...which I do not think is an appropriate way of dealing with such an important subject....We must be very wary of developing friendly relations with Germany. I do not recommend that the Foreign Minister hasten to visit Germany. I know we have diplomatic ties with it. But I think it is our Jewish duty, our moral obligation to ourselves, to maintain them as correct and cool relations, nothing more than that....

S. Mikunis (Maki): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the Foreign Minister has painted a very rosy picture of the situation in the world and the Middle East. It is true that great changes are taking place...and that there seems to be a general trend towards coexistence, national independence, democracy and socialism. The question is whether Israel's foreign policy is doing all it should to share in this process....

In Israel and abroad there is general consternation at the rise of neo-Nazism in Germany—a subject the Foreign Minister glossed over....Is it right to prefer West Germany, the bastion of neo-Nazism, militarism and revanchism, to the G.D.R., the bastion of anti-Nazism and the prime opponent of German militarism and revanchism? Is Israel's foreign policy entitled to ignore the main point as far as Germany is concerned, namely, our boundless pain and sorrow over the annihilation of the six million, their command to us to neither forget nor forgive and our concern at developments in Germany which could bring another Holocaust upon us? The Soviet Government's warning against the revival of Nazism in West Germany was serious and appropriate. Apart from the Jews, that country suffered more than any other from the Nazi predator, even defeating it at great cost. Who else but Israel should stand in the forefront of the international forces attempting to combat German militarism and its efforts to obtain nuclear arms? Instead, "Soviet Jewry Week" begins tomorrow, a week of anti-Soviet propaganda in the public, the press and even the schools. Why did the Government not prevent this...support for the cold war against the U.S.S.R. by international reaction...? The U.S.S.R.'s firm stand against racism and anti-Semitism and its advocacy of a peaceful solution to the Israel-Arab conflict, amongst other things, should not be forgotten....This "Week" will harm, not benefit, Israel-Soviet relations, and should be cancelled....

Once again the Foreign Minister has no solution to the problem of Israel-Arab relations. Doing nothing is not a policy. I am not ignoring the gravity of the problem, I know there is no quick and easy solution, and neither is it dependent solely on Israel. This, however, does not absolve the Government from taking steps in an effort to get things moving....In his address to the U.N. Assembly on 4 October 1966 the Foreign Minister said that one of the most important lessons of the major events of 1966 was that "there are no military solutions to the disputes between countries." I endorse that sentiment wholeheartedly. I assume that the Foreign Minister does not exclude the Israel-Arab dispute from this approach....The solution to this dispute must be based on mutual justice, recognition by each side of the legitimate rights of the other and readiness by both parties to solve the problem justly and peacefully. The U.S.S.R.'s support and aid in this is assured..

In order to gain recognition among Arab public opinion of Israel's right to exist a significant political step should be taken. It could be readiness to an agreement making the region a nuclear-free zone as a step towards ending the conventional arms race. It can, and must, be evincing readiness to discuss the subject of the Arab refugees with the Arab countries....I would like to take this opportunity of mentioning the discriminatory policy adopted towards the Arab minority in Israel. We are convinced that its total abolition and the assurance of full and equal rights to Israel's Arabs will also help to alter Israel-Arab relations in the direction of peaceful coexistence.

What is needed at present is to be patient as regards the Israel-Syrian Armistice Commission...and to do everything to ensure that its discussions succeed, including being ready to compromise, provided our borders remain quiet....The lesson of the Sinai Campaign is that we must not rush in to do the dirty work of others, of one imperialist country or another. I say this as the representative of the Israel Communist Party, which sees every aspect of the subject and is fully apprised of every aspect of the situation in the region....We do not sanction chauvinism of any kind...whether Israeli or Arab....We approve of the link between the Arab national movement and the world anti-imperialist movement...though we object to its chauvinism as reflected in its avowed aspiration to destroy Israel's sovereign existence and the national rights of the Jewish people....We reject any despair or fatalism as regards the chances of peace between Israel and the Arabs and the improvement of relations with the U.S.S.R. That is why we are struggling to achieve a basic change in traditional Israeli policy.

We trust our people, as well as the Arab people, to find the path to peace and mutual understanding....I will end with the words of Naomi Shemer's song, which is currently so popular:

Tomorrow we may sail in ships
From Eilat to the Coast of Ivory,

And on the old destroyers
They'll load oranges happily.

All this is no legend or dream,
It's as true as true can be.
All this will come tomorrow, if not today,
And if not, then the day after, you'll see.

...

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban: Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I will respond to most of the speakers in a restrained tenor...but cannot promise to suppress my indignation in replying to MK Landau's speech....I invited MK Landau to join Israel's delegation to the last session of the U.N. Assembly to enable him to learn how that particular political arena functions—

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): What a waste of money.

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban:—and so that he could give our representatives friendly advice over and above party considerations. To my regret, he missed both the opportunity to learn and the opportunity to display identification with the team of people who stand at the forefront of extremely difficult battles, and since returning to Israel he has not missed a single opportunity of criticizing the entire delegation....Those people are experienced and hard-working. They listened to what he had to say with the utmost patience and politeness. They deserve to be treated with greater respect, not to have aspersions cast on their ability and loyalty....MK Landau claims that our delegation arrived at the U.N. quite unprepared for the job of mobilizing the aid we needed. Nothing could be further from the truth. The truth is that preparations for that mission began in March 1966...25 weeks beforehand. Talks were held with 95 governments in their capitals and with 64 foreign ministers at the U.N. This point indicates the unique character of our political undertakings. In order to foil a resolution which would impair Israel's sovereignty approximately 500 different kinds of political contacts were effected....The eventual defeat of the resolution was generally acknowledged to be a great political victory for Israel....

I do not understand the logic and sagacity of a mood which turns every achievement into a complaint, every effort into a failure and every serious endeavor into a mockery. Furthermore, Israel's representative was the only speaker to address the Assembly who mentioned the growing neo-Nazism in Germany, doing so upon the Foreign Minister's explicit instructions...but this point was not taken up by any other speaker there....

MK Landau advises us to deal with the subjects arising at the U.N. throughout the year. How kind of him....Apart from being based on the

false assumption that this is not, in fact, the case, this phrase cannot even be called a platitude, since a platitude is a self-evident truth....MK Landau adopted the same attitude in referring to our work regarding Israel's entry to the Common Market....It is MK Landau's prerogative to be ignorant on this subject, and he exercises it to the full...but when someone is ignorant the alternative of remaining silent is always open to him....For many months five Ministers, the Governor of the Bank of Israel, five Directors-General and dozens of economists and technicians have been dealing with this topic. Discussions have been held with every European foreign minister and finance minister....For weeks a working group has been planning its appearance before an examining committee comprising some of the most lucid minds in Europe. Every possible argument and contingency has been predicted and the appropriate replies formulated, supported by detailed statistics in every relevant sphere. The committee has already expressed its admiration for the hard work, careful array of facts and dedication the working group has evinced. The subject is a very complex one...but how casually MK Landau labels our efforts as displaying "lack of preparation, information and appropriate action." I do not know where all this effort will lead. I trust that it will produce results. Certain European foreign ministers and finance ministers share this belief, provided we persist in our endeavors. The greatest danger lies in relaxing, relinquishing or despairing of our efforts....

I have no intention of replying to all the points MK Landau raised. That would be too tedious. Once again, he describes the flow of arms to Jordan. One could get the impression that not a single tank, plane or weapon is sent to Israel. MK Landau knows that I cannot engage in a detailed debate with him about the balance of forces. His panic-stricken cries to the effect that this is entirely to our detriment is both inexact and tactically unwise....I hope that when we celebrate twenty years of independence the entire country will see more than it ever has yet, as a result of our deeds, not our anxiety....

MKs Dayan and Hazan maintain that the budgetary allocation for our work in developing countries is insufficient. I confess that I am in an awkward position here, for it is no secret that I or anyone else in my position would prefer a larger budgetary allocation....My Ministry's reduced budget this year is the outcome of the Knesset's debate and decision of last year....I would like to point out that the item mentioned is not the only one which funds our activities in developing countries, and that resources are channeled for this purpose from other categories and Ministries...as well as from international bodies....Nor should we forget that the question of quality rather than quantity is also significant here....I trust that in the coming year we will be able to note the expansion of this enterprise....MK Dayan's contention that our work in East Africa has been reduced is unfounded....

I have no desire to enter into a debate with MK Dayan about periods of leadership....When I spoke of changes I ascribed them to international shifts rather than to periods of leadership. For example, three years ago the region was distinguished by the "summit" spirit, the object being to unite the Arab countries; in 1967 all this appears to be crumbling, each Arab country demanding a separate national identity....MK Dayan has said himself that one must learn from experience....Experience has taught us that military reactions by us to acts of aggression by others place us in a difficult political position....I see no reason for failing to review our security approach and examining possible ways of achieving the desired deterrent effect....Our policy with regard to the use of force is to ensure that the minimum necessary, rather than the maximum possible, is employed....

I maintain that the Government was right to agree to enter negotiations within the framework of the Syria-Israel Armistice Commission and to remain there as long as the discussions adhered to the agreed agenda....I do not think that Israel lost anything by responding to that international initiative. We must remember the tense atmosphere at the time that invitation was issued. No one can foresee what will happen next in the relations between Syria and Israel. If we have to defend our rights we will do so. But the Government's policy line is to exhaust every reasonable possibility of resolving matters without an armed clash which is compatible with maintaining our rights. Whatever the final outcome may be, Israel will not lose by having genuinely sought to exhaust every possibility of reaching a solution by peaceful means. We must not despair of that possibility, though neither should we exaggerate its likelihood....One of the lessons we have learned is that when Syria wants to prevent acts of hostility against us it can do so....The State of Israel has not relinquished the right to defend itself against Syrian aggression. I do not think that anyone interprets the Government's stance as being one of flinching from action when this is needed. The Government will defend the integrity of its borders and the security and lives of its citizens against any aggression...the underlying principle being to increase our strength while striving for peace, and defending ourselves while making every effort to attain a settlement.

The Speaker, A. Ben-Eliezer: We will now vote on the Foreign Ministry's budget.

(The Foreign Ministry's budget is approved.)

Situation on the Syrian Border

Introduction

While—concealed from all the principal actors—the countdown towards the Six Day War, which was to constitute a major watershed in Middle East history, had already begun, the Knesset debated a report by the Foreign Minister on his trip to Australia and New Zealand. In his introduction, however, Mr. Eban referred to recent events on the Syrian border. The firm yet sanguine tone is worthy of notice.

Sitting 174 of the Sixth Knesset

12 April 1967 (2 Nissan 5727)

The Foreign Minister, A. Eban: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...our political activity extends across a great many areas, and I have no doubt that it has the support of the Knesset and the nation.

The facts have not borne out the gloomy assessments voiced by the Opposition regarding the Government's policy on the Syrian border. On April 5 MK Landau said that "by its silence and errors, Israel's Government endorses the creation of grave political facts." I personally doubt the wisdom of definitions of that kind, which attribute to the Government indifference in the face of hostile activities. Do I have to prove this week that the Government does not hold its peace? It is not indifferent, and the essence of its activity over the last few days has been to prevent the creation of new negative facts. It does not agree that the borders of its work should be pushed westwards under the pressure of violence. In this attitude it has international support. The object of the U.N. Charter is not to prevent the plowing of land but to stop the use of armed force across international borders. The full pressure and influence of international elements must be employed against the use of cannon, not of plows. It was that principle which guided the Government in the action it took last Friday. The Government's decisions, and their brave and brilliant implementation by the IDF, continue to produce a positive response in the region and around the world. The reasons for and results of that action were explained carefully and precisely in our official statements.

I would like to remind all the news agencies of the world that Israel has always given accurate details of losses it has incurred during defensive and deterrent actions. No Israeli plane was hit or brought down, whereas six Syrian planes were. The Syrian Government, which has evaded discussing the issues of land cultivation on various pretexts, is

attempting to settle them by bullets and shells while establishing new facts which are detrimental to Israel. Underlying this policy is an attitude of disdain and hostility for the sovereignty and integrity of the State of Israel. The Syrian Government deserves severe international criticism both for its avowed belligerent policy and for the actions undertaken in pursuit of it. If it wishes, it can guarantee quiet by totally refraining from trespassing, opening fire and encouraging infiltration and terrorism. The maintenance of quiet on the basis of these mutual principles is the aspiration of Israel's Government....

Political and Security Situation

Introduction

The massive, demonstrative concentration of Egyptian forces in the Sinai which began on Israel's Independence Day (in accordance with the Jewish calendar, it coincided, after nineteen years, with the original date, May 14) increased tension overnight and brought near the ominous specter of all-out war, which had been considered an extremely remote possibility only a few hours before. U Thant's abrupt acquiescence to the Egyptian demand for the withdrawal of the U.N. Emergency Force from its positions, in fact going beyond the terms of the original demand, albeit unintentionally, inadvertently added fuel to the flames. In this situation, the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Levi Eshkol, reported to the Knesset on the steadily worsening political and security situation. Although aware of the Soviet role in the chain of events, Eshkol took care not to exacerbate relations with that country, still hoping against hope that it might bring its influence to bear in Cairo and Damascus to prevent the outbreak of hostilities. At the same time, he announced that the Cabinet had authorized a partial mobilization of reserves. Mr. Begin, the first speaker for the Opposition, reminded the Government of his dire warnings against withdrawing from the Sinai ten years earlier. Nonetheless, the debate was characterized by a remarkable degree of unity.

Sitting 176 of the Sixth Knesset

22 May 1967 (12 Iyar 5727)

...

The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...on the night of 15 May 1967 we received information from various sources about Egyptian troop movements towards the Sinai. Military forces were transferred demonstratively and in broad daylight. Cairo explained this step as being a response to Israel's alleged preparations to attack Syria, with the massing of Israeli forces on the northern border.

Upon learning of Egypt's military movements and hearing the explanation for them, and before Egyptian troops had crossed the Suez Canal, we informed the U.N. that the claims regarding the massing of Israeli forces in the north were unfounded. This statement was published in the world press. Indeed, our statement was transmitted to the

capitals of the Middle East, including Cairo, by the U.N...and the facts contained in it were confirmed by the U.N. Observers....

Nonetheless, the Egyptian troop movements towards the Sinai continued, as did the dissemination of false propaganda from Cairo and Damascus about so-called Israeli troop movements. During the first days of the movement of the Egyptian forces towards the Sinai official political circles in the capitals of the world maintained that this was merely a demonstrative step which lacked any special military significance. The Egyptian troop movements into the Sinai were intensified during the second half of last week and today they are virtually in battle position in the eastern Sinai and elsewhere throughout the peninsula. Prior to May 14 the Egyptians had less than two divisions, primarily infantry and some armored corps, in the Sinai. Today...they have almost four divisions there, as well as a great deal of artillery and increased Palestinian forces in the Gaza Strip.

The number of Egyptian planes in the peninsula has also increased, and the total number of Egyptian soldiers there is now estimated as being in the region of 80,000. This is the first time Egypt has introduced such a large force into the Sinai....All this has aroused international concern as to Egypt's actions and intentions.

While the Egyptian forces were advancing in the Sinai the Head of the Egyptian Armed Forces informed the Commander of the U.N. Force, on May 16, that he had instructed his forces to be ready for action against Israel the moment Israel took any aggressive step against an Arab country...that his forces had been deployed in the Sinai accordingly...and that, for its own protection, the U.N. Force was advised to remove itself immediately....The Commander of the U.N. Emergency Force replied that he would report to the Secretary-General, since he could move the U.N. Emergency Force or change its disposition only on the Secretary-General's instructions.

The U.N. Secretary-General, U Thant, immediately asked the Egyptian representative at the U.N. for clarification, but at the same time, for some reason, announced that he would regard any request for the temporary removal of the U.N. Force from the border as a demand for its complete withdrawal from Gaza and the Sinai. The Egyptians responded by demanding the full withdrawal of the U.N. Force from Egyptian territory and the Gaza Strip. Although the U.N. Secretary-General noted in his reply of that day that the withdrawal of the Force could have serious implications for peace in the region, amazingly enough, he responded immediately to the demand for withdrawal.

On Friday, May 19, the Commander of the U.N. Force informed the Israeli authorities that as of 4 p.m. that day the Force would cease to fulfill its function, would withdraw to its bases and would concern itself solely with self-defense. That was the only official information Israel received from the U.N. I should note here that Israel was a party to the

international arrangement reached in 1957, but for some reason the Secretary-General did not see fit to consult anyone before making his hasty decision.

The U.N. Force, comprising soldiers from various countries, was set up in accordance with the Assembly's decision of 5 November 1956, and was situated at various points in the Sinai....Its task was...to contribute to maintaining peaceful conditions in the region, i.e., to prevent hostile acts and aid in the transition towards peace. Although the U.N. Force could not physically prevent armed hostilities, the fact that it existed in certain areas and the tasks it fulfilled undoubtedly played a positive role. The U.N. Force was situated in the region for more than ten years. The demand for its withdrawal, and the response to it, have undoubtedly weakened the U.N.'s peace-keeping role....The Secretary-General did not bring the demand for the withdrawal of the Force before the Advisory Committee or the Assembly before making his decision....Several countries have expressed their reservations concerning the step taken by the Secretary-General. Israel had reason to believe that any demand for the withdrawal of this Force would be discussed extensively in advance, so that the appropriate conclusions could be drawn.

This recent development is a link in the chain of tension which began in Damascus. From this podium I have stated in the past that Syria is characterized by its demands for an immediate war with Israel and in this connection has begun organizing groups of murderous terrorists to operate within Israel. Between January 1965 and May 1967 there have been 113 terrorist actions or attempts, for which Syria is responsible, either directly or indirectly....This is in addition to the dozens of shooting incidents originating from Syrian territory and directed against farmers and settlements. Since July 1966 we have complained to the U.N. about these Syrian activities in 34 letters to the Security Council and have been in constant contact with the U.N. Secretariat and the Head of the U.N. Observers in the region....

Throughout this period the acts of terrorism have been accompanied by belligerent declarations, threats and statements by the Syrian leaders. This has been done in the sight of the whole world and the members of the U.N. Syria has also made the foolish claim that it is Israel which is about to attack it. Last week was not the first time its sources disseminated false information about large concentrations of Israeli forces on the northern border....

Four times in the last two years the Head of the U.N. Observer Force proposed reviewing the situation on both sides of the border....In March 1965 Israel agreed to such a review but Syria did not....In June 1966 both sides agreed and the review was held....In October 1966 Israel itself proposed that a review be held, in view of the reiteration of the Syrian claims, and this was done. In April this year, when Arab and other sources spread rumors about Israeli troop concentrations, the Head of

the Observers proposed that a review be held. Israel agreed to this but Syria did not. The same situation occurred in May, and the review has not been held to this day, because of the Syrian attitude.... On May 15 the Egyptians claimed that they had sent their forces into the Sinai on the basis of the Syrian contention about large concentrations of Israeli troops on its border. In fact, Syria had done everything it could in the preceding weeks to foil any attempt by the U.N. to assess the facts accurately....

In his report to the Security Council of May 19, U Thant said: "A few days ago the Government of Israel informed me that there were no unusual concentrations of Israeli forces or troop movements on the Syrian border," and "the reports of the U.N. Observers have confirmed that there have been no troop concentrations or movements on either side of the border." In other words, the Syrians have evidently been spreading false rumors, which were used by the Egyptians....

In the face of the Syrian aggression we attempted, unsuccessfully, to my regret, to utilize every political course of moderation. When the acts of aggression increased we occasionally found it necessary to use our right to self-defense. I will not repeat here the explanations we gave at the time to the world, the Knesset, the nation and our neighbors....

During the last six weeks there have been 19 incursions into Israel. In his report to the Security Council of May 19, the U.N. Secretary-General said: "The acts of terror by Al-Fatah are a central element in bringing the situation to an intolerable level of tension and danger. These acts arouse powerful reactions in Israel, on the part of both the Government and the public." He added: "Some of the recent incidents appear to indicate a new level of organization and training of those implementing the acts of terror."

The tension between Israel and the Arab countries has always been affected by the state of the relations among the Arabs and between the Powers, against the background of their policies in the region and the world.... In view of the recent increase in tension, the Powers should exert all their influence to avert the danger of a conflagration in the Middle East. Special responsibility rests on the U.S.S.R., which has sway in Damascus and Cairo but has not yet dissociated itself from the Syrian Government's policy towards Israel. Quite the contrary... the U.S.S.R.'s declared policy of seeking peaceful solutions to disputes should be manifested in our region, without discrimination....

The concentrations of Egyptian forces in the Sinai have reached proportions which increase tension in the region and arouse concern in the world. The situation must be restored to what it was previously, on both sides of the border.... The members of the U.N., and the Powers in particular, should condemn acts of aggression against a member-state of the U.N. and demand their cessation.... Every international influence should be exerted to ensure the continuation of the quiet which has

existed on the Israel-Egypt border since 1957, by honoring the essential national and international rights of every country, including Israel.

As you know, the U.N. Secretary-General is about to come to the Middle East with the intention of attempting to pour oil on troubled waters and bolster peace. We will follow his visit and its outcome with interest. From this podium I would like once again to tell the Arab countries, including Egypt and Syria, that our intentions are not aggressive. We have repeated this many times. We have no interest in harming their security, territory or legal rights. Nor will we interfere... in their internal affairs in any way.... On the basis of mutuality, we demand that they act similarly....

Some international elements have claimed that the Egyptian troop movements have no military significance.... But we maintain... that we must take every step necessary to cope with every contingency.... As a result of the Egyptian troop concentrations on the border and the withdrawal of the U.N. Force I have ordered—naturally, with the approval of the Government—the limited mobilization of our reserves, in accordance with our plans. When the limited mobilization was completed I had the opportunity of visiting the IDF units. The fighting fitness of our Army, which has been cultivated over the years, has reached a high standard today. The IDF can withstand any test with the same dedication, talent and ability it has evinced in the past....

In conclusion, I call on the nations of the region to show mutual respect for the sovereignty, integrity and international rights of every country. The State of Israel, which trusts in its ability to defend itself and the firmness of its spirit and strength, expresses its readiness to participate in the attempt to restore tranquillity and to progress towards peace in our region.

D. Ben-Gurion (Rafi): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, what has to be said about the development of our security and political situation and the steps which should be taken in order to assure peace and security should be said in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, not the Knesset plenum. I therefore propose that the debate on the Prime Minister's statement be transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee... so that no damage be caused the state....

The Speaker, K. Luz: ...The Government has announced that it agrees to a debate.... If any party groups oppose this... I am prepared to accept MK Ben-Gurion's proposal....

(After a recess of one hour.) The result of the consultations is that the Knesset will hold a debate.... I give the floor to MK Begin....

M. Begin (Gahal): Mr. Speaker... there are differences of opinion between us. We will express them. When facing the enemy we must have national unity, and we will express that too. In our view, it is of supreme parliamentary and national importance to hold a debate. That is what

we did in the past, both before and after the Sinai Campaign. And that is what we will do today, too.

Where there is no panic there is no need for pacification. There are not, nor have there been, any signs of panic in this nation, which has once again displayed courage at the testing time. But artificial pacification which obscures the facts causes harm, clouds our vision...and allays our alertness when we are most in need of those faculties. Our nation must be fully apprised of the facts. It is regrettable that the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense did not present them to us. Since he did not, I will fulfill my duty and do so.

In the last few days our security situation has become graver, and this will not disappear overnight. The nation, which has withstood many tests, must know this. It knows that it is surrounded by enemies who seek to destroy it, even though this fact is sometimes obscured...Our nation does not want bloodshed. In this generation it has lost an unparalleled proportion of its members. On no account will it accept the shedding of Jewish blood in the land of its forefathers, to which it has adhered; it will not accept violations of our national sovereignty, acts of hostility or mines; it will act within its internationally-recognized rights to defend itself against this aggression.

A week ago Egypt announced that it was sending its forces towards Israel...and that if Israel attacked Syria, Egypt would wage war on Israel...I would like to say that the Prime Minister was not speaking accurately when he said here today that certain international elements had interpreted Egypt's actions as being merely demonstrative. That interpretation originated here, among Government circles...Everyone knows that Egypt is at war with Israel. If that country sends its troops, tanks, planes and cannon towards our border, that is an open and explicit threat of aggression. That is how the entire world understands troop movements of this kind on the border between two countries, one of which has announced that they are at war.

But Israeli explanations focused on the demonstrative nature of this action...Egypt itself announced that it was massing troops in the Sinai...but we denied its aggressive intentions through our mistaken and damaging interpretations...Furthermore, Egypt announced it would attack Israel if we attacked Syria. That is a direct threat of aggression. Everyone knows that Israel has not attacked Syria, while Syria has attacked Israel directly and indirectly and continually declares its undying hostility towards Israel and its intention of destroying it....

We have exonerated Egypt of the crime of openly threatening violence. Meanwhile facts have been created, and the nation must be apprised of them. Fully-equipped armies are facing one another. The Prime Minister told us how many Egyptian soldiers are in position in the eastern Sinai. That number comes to 80,000, with artillery, tanks and planes. Of course, we must put an Israeli force in position facing

them. The Egyptian dictator is engaging in "brinkmanship"...How far will our brinkmanship take us? Even if there is no all-out war, when forces of this kind face one another...anything can happen....

That is why we must speak clearly to the world and the enemy today....In order to prevent a deterioration in the situation and avoid acts of hostility which could develop into an all-out war, it is the duty of the Prime Minister and the Knesset to speak out clearly today. Of course it is a tragedy that in 1967 Egyptian forces are facing Israeli forces in the eastern Sinai. Ten years ago, in February 1957, we had to tell the Knesset that the IDF was abandoning El-Arish, Abu-Ageila and Kuseima....Those places were not geographical spots or mere battle sites for us. They were also advance bases across the enemy's desert, where for years he had been preparing his offensive and training terrorists, whence he had sent those who mined our roads. It was to those bases that the defeated Egyptian army returned with whoops of victory, and everything was as it had been in the past.

Today it is a fact. That is why the Government must conduct an immediate and urgent political campaign, supplemented by the demand that those forces which have been massed against Israel should return to their former bases. This is not a formal issue. At the time of our withdrawal from the Sinai, perhaps too late, the demilitarization of the Sinai was proposed. It was not accepted....Now all the international elements which claim that they are interested in the preservation of peace should exert every possible pressure to ensure that those forces retreat from Israel's southern border and the armistice line in that part of the Land of Israel which has been conquered by Egypt.

The U.N. Force which was stationed in Egypt and the Gaza Strip has been dissolved and no longer exists....A friendly nation, perhaps out of short-sightedness, proffered the strange advice that the U.N. Force should move to Israel instead. I must declare adamantly that...Israel must not agree to the stationing of foreign troops on its sovereign territory. That U.N. Force saved Nasser from a complete downfall and Egypt from an historic defeat. Israel's Army won the battle more than ten years ago and we do not need any foreign force to protect us. It is Israel's soldiers, not the dissolved U.N. Force, which will deter the enemy from using aggression....

Freedom of navigation to and from Eilat is an incontrovertible law, and no more need be said on that point.

The enemy in the south threatens us with aggression if we use our right to defend ourselves against the aggression of the enemy in the north. If that threat were to succeed, if we were to accept acts of hostility orchestrated by Syria and implemented by its emissaries, because Egypt threatens us with aggression...not only would that be an unparalleled victory for the enemy but our state would be open to attack, Jewish blood could be shed freely and our sovereignty would be a mockery. That is

why it must be said loud and clear that the threat of aggression from the south will not induce Israel to accept the aggression from the north. And if that aggression continues Israel will implement its right to self-defense. Today the Syrians say that if something happens in the south they will attack in the north. Once again, if we succumb to these threats of violence and aggression, all is lost....Nor must we be intimidated by threats of renewed and intensified terrorist actions from Egypt and Syria....Nothing will make Israel accept the current and continuing aggression.

We must clarify these points to our enemies, international elements and our nation. Of course, once again our nation is being tested, and is showing its mettle. Its sons went when they were called, knowing that military service is not easy and that there is no telling what the morrow may bring. We are proud of them and send them our blessings. Whatever the differences of opinion between us about the mistakes and errors which have been made, about the self-defeating information campaign, when it comes to the question of the nation's stand against the enemy it will stand united, undivided, behind its sons, believing that they—our sons—will deter or smash the enemy's aggression.

...

I. Raphael (Mafdal): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, for over ten years our southern borders have been quiet. Israel wanted that quiet, and embarked on the Sinai Campaign to achieve it; the Egyptian rulers wanted it because they realized that guerrilla warfare by means of murderous terrorists was neither worthwhile nor effective. That is why they agreed to the presence of an international buffer force...though they were also glad of the excuse it gave them vis-à-vis both their own population and the other Arab states for the quiet on their border. Israel had no objection to that Force because it had never sent armed men across the border to terrorize or murder innocent civilians in their beds. The U.N. wanted that Force, believing that it contributed to calming one of the world's potential trouble-spots....

There can be only one explanation for Egypt's one-sided decision to demand the withdrawal of the U.N. Force. Its leaders may envy the Syrian terrorist groups and aspire to return to the Fedayeen attacks of more than a decade ago, seeking once again to turn the Sinai and the Gaza Strip into bases for terrorists trained to attack us. That may be why they have asked for the buffer force, a potential eyewitness, to be removed. What other explanation can U Thant have for Nasser's demand? That being so, how could he agree to remove the Force with such alacrity and without any consultations? What was the point of cultivating and investing in that Force if it was to be set aside so easily the moment it was needed...? U Thant has indirectly condoned a serious insult to the U.N. by Nasser, who has done this in order to enhance his status within the Arab world....

The withdrawal of the U.N. Force is an even graver step than the concentration and reinforcement of Egyptian forces in the Sinai. I have made no secret of the fact that I reject any attempt to explain these troop movements as being purely demonstrative, and am happy to note that this view is now generally accepted....The troop movements are a direct threat to our borders and our independence....Nonetheless, I am convinced that they do not indicate Nasser's intentions as clearly as the withdrawal of the U.N. Force.

We cannot assume that Nasser has already decided to embark on a full-scale war against us. It is doubtful that Nasser, who is astute and calculating, will pay heed to the boastful claims of his military advisors and leaders. He can guess what the outcome of a clash with the IDF would be....He is not yet ready to accept another military defeat while the memory of the first one is still fresh in his mind. That is why I doubt that he will be quick to provoke our ships sailing in the Straits of Tiran and linking our country with those of Africa and Asia. Even after the withdrawal of the U.N. Force from Sharm el-Sheikh, the Egyptian rulers know—and the Prime Minister repeated this in his speech today—that any move against Israeli navigation will be regarded as an act of war. And just as the Egyptians had the good sense not to damage the National Water Carrier, despite their repeated declarations, we may assume that cold logic will prevent them from getting involved in this sensitive front.

The real and immediate danger is, then, that Egypt will be tempted to follow the Syrian example. Syria has not embarked upon war with us, it merely shells peaceful farmers from its trenches, pours artillery fire on peaceful settlements across the border and sends bands of terrorists to wreak murder and destroy roads and installations. For such "good deeds" as these the Syrian leaders win the support of the extremists among their population and the approval of other hot-headed Arab leaders. In fact, Syria has never been condemned by the Security Council, because the representatives of "progress" there have extended their patronage to those criminal offenders.

It is true that from time to time Syria is punished by the IDF, when it goes too far...but it seems to be worthwhile for the leaders of that unstable country to take a few punches and be regarded as the "champions of the popular liberation war."...If Egypt follows Syria's lead the problem will be much graver. Our borders with Egypt are longer and more exposed. Within Egypt, and particularly in the Gaza Strip, there is Shukeiry's organization, whose declared object is to send terrorist gangs against us. That organization receives open moral and material support from several Arab countries....Many of its members—recruited from the refugee camps—are supported in effect by money from UNRWA which was intended to help mothers and babies and the homeless. The rulers of East Germany, who have not yet grasped that they should return some of

what their Nazi compatriots seized from their Jewish victims, have already found their way to Shukeiry, their "progressive" ally, assuring him of military aid in his war against the Jews in their final stronghold....

The State of Israel will never acquiesce in the activities of the terrorists, nor will it fail to guarantee the peace of its settlements, the security of its roads and the tranquillity of its citizens. It will spare no effort, resources or manpower to prevent terrorist actions, reveal infiltrators and strengthen the defense of its borders....It is saddening to see that the newspapers of the Soviet champions of peace, *Izvestia* and *Pravda*, castigate the anti-terrorist units, branding them as the aggressors....If our actions designed to prevent aggression against us prove unavailing, the IDF will have to take whatever steps are considered necessary to guarantee our security...and this will inevitably open the way to the head-on clash we seek to avert. That, I think, is the greatest danger of the recent developments....

Despite all our criticism of U Thant...we should remember that in the last few days he has declared unequivocally and for the first time that the deadlock currently affecting our region is the result of Syria's uncompromising attitude and that Al-Fatah's terrorism has exacerbated the tension....It is a good thing that the U.N. Secretary-General is aware of this, and it is a good thing that all the Powers have announced their concern for peace in the region. We must regard this as a binding commitment. If their intentions are honorable, and the lesson of Vietnam should have taught them something...it can be assumed that they will take some initiative in order to reduce the tension.

Knowing the power of our country and the capacity of its Army to crush those of our enemies who would test us, I would like to say that peace is most dear to our hearts. Let us not be tempted by thoughts of victory. We must take care not to be drawn into the fray or to react hastily. As long as peace can be preserved, we will preserve it. Even an uneasy peace with hope is better than a successful war which leads to a schism. That is why we must respond to any call, from whatever quarter, which seeks a solution....

All of us, without exception, are united in our desire to defend our country. In times of tension and alert, at a time when our population has displayed admirable fortitude, the barriers between opponents have fallen; the differences between the Orthodox and those who do not consider themselves Orthodox have fallen. The hearts of us all beat for the aim which is dear to everyone. Anyone who saw what happened last Saturday in the Orthodox quarters of Jerusalem and heard what occurred in the center of Bnei Brak, when Orthodox Jews drove to their units accompanied by the blessings of their rabbis, recalled scenes from the War of Independence, when we arose as one nation to defend our lives and existence.

How good it would be if we could transfer at least some of that sense of unity to everyday life, so that our unity would not be limited solely to times of danger. Even in our daily tasks, which are also historic ones of creating a nation and building a homeland, we need greater unity, more readiness to understand one another and more brotherly love. But with the sense of our great mission and recognition of our responsibility to the nation and the generations to come, we will withstand the difficult tests ahead.

J. Hazan (Mapam): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, the Near East has become the focal point of a storm because of three factors: the conflict between the Powers over the fate of the region; the struggle between the Arab countries for their position within the region; and the Jewish-Arab dispute, which is exploited by the first two elements. The campaign is now entering its gravest stage. From the furthest point of the southern sea, where it was situated till now, in the Yemen, Aden and the oil sheikdoms, it is now moving towards us. Nobody—not even those responsible for this upheaval—knows how things will turn out. We must not delude ourselves or belittle the gravity of the situation. We must be ready for the most serious development, and precisely for that reason we must keep our presence of mind as well as our courage, so that we will not be the ones to pay the price of this storm.

Our policy is now at a crossroads in the life of our young country. Today more than ever our position must be both clear and balanced, responsible and firm. That is the stand we must take vis-à-vis our enemies, our friends, world public opinion and the U.N. We are a nation under siege and we should be aware of this truth and behave accordingly. We must not speak lightly nor forego our basic right....Our enemies must be aware of our position...: we do not want war, we want peace; but we will not accept defeat or forego our rights in order to attain peace. The enemy must be made aware that we regard his military dispositions as constituting preparation for war and that we are ready....Although our nation wants peace, we will defend ourselves vigorously and unitedly.

Our friends throughout the world, the peace-loving Powers, must be told that we are on the brink of war, without any illusions which provide balm for their consciences or absolve them of responsibility. We did an injustice not only to ourselves but to the whole world when we failed to sound the alarm from the first day of the Egyptian troop concentrations, for they are aggressive, threatening war and destruction, and all the peace-loving elements in the world must realize that immediate action has to be taken in order to save the peace. We must embark on a vigorous political campaign. Nothing can replace our own ability to defend ourselves, but while maintaining a maximum defense alert, we must strengthen ourselves with a front of friendship, aid and political pressure.

First of all, we must appeal from this podium to our people, not only in Israel but throughout the world, and let them know that the State of Israel is in danger. They must know that the Israeli nation is preparing to defend it and themselves and they should aid us in this....

The U.N. has received a bitter blow. Its Force was stationed on the border between Israel and Egypt as the symbol of peace; it was withdrawn with astonishing alacrity when it was time to preserve the peace. Nonetheless, let us not share in pouring scorn on the U.N., which has disappointed us on more than one occasion. We are interested in its actions on behalf of peace...and we will not overlook any opportunity or spurn any quarter which can help restore peace....

All our strength should be focused on neutralizing the southern front, but we must not neglect to intensify our alertness on all our borders. I do not believe in the hermetic sealing of borders, but the more difficult we make it to cross them...the more we will guarantee peace and will not have to make grave decisions which none of us want or knows where they lead.

I do not wish to amuse myself by guessing what Nasser wants and what the motives for his dangerous maneuvers are. I repeat: we must not delude ourselves and the world. The massing of tens of thousands of soldiers and hundreds of tanks near our borders is a direct threat of war. He must know that we are ready for it. He must know that we want peace, but will fight to victory if he forces war on us. He must know that for this war we will muster every last iota of strength, unity, solidarity and national responsibility.

The nation's emissaries, our sons and brothers—the IDF—are already on the border; we are with them, the whole nation is with them, in the defense of peace and of the great hope of our lives—the State of Israel.

...

S. Mikunis (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, the military tension on the Israel-Arab borders has reached heights unknown during the past ten years. There is the danger of war on our southern and northern borders. The supreme imperative, that of life and security for our nation and the neighboring ones, is to prevent any deterioration into the abyss of war and to reduce the military tension.

It is up to the Governments of Israel, Egypt and Syria to prevent the outbreak of war on the Israel-Arab borders....It is up to them to decide whether they are to be guided by considerations of the welfare of nations and national independence or the unfortunate routine of the use of force and the threat to do so....Given the current dangerous situation on the borders, we find it necessary to appeal to all peace-loving elements in the world to exert their influence on both sides and prevail upon them to refrain from taking any step which could lead to the outbreak of war between Israel and the Arab countries. The Soviet Government's message to Washington that it aspires towards the maintenance of peace in

the Middle East, and the note sent to the Egyptian President, Abdul Nasser, by the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, expressing her satisfaction at the fact that Egypt does not intend to heighten the tension in the Middle East, are indications that things are moving in the right direction....The institutions of the U.N. and all those anxious for peace should act to remove the Israeli and Arab armies from the borders, so that the Armistice Agreements may be observed and the basic conditions for reaching a peaceful settlement created....

In his one-sided and evasive statement, the Prime Minister...omitted to mention the chief agent of the dangerous situation on the borders, namely, American imperialism. Both the international situation and common sense tell us that the global and regional policy of the U.S., as well as of Britain, is interested in exacerbating the tension between Israel, on the one hand, and Syria and Egypt, on the other....In addition, the U.S. stands to gain by provoking a regional confrontation which will divert international and internal attention from its dreadful crimes in Vietnam and the genocidal methods it employs against the Vietnamese people which have earned it the opprobrium of the whole world. From Hanoi to Athens, and from Athens to the Israel-Arab borders, the contaminated and dangerous hand of American imperialism is evident.

The Prime Minister said...that "amazingly enough" the U.N. Secretary-General responded to the Egyptian demand for the withdrawal of U.N. troops from the Gaza Strip and the Sinai. Many people are amazed, and justifiably so. The U.N. is not generally known for the alacrity with which it acts, and the objective position of the Secretary-General is such that he cannot make quick and independent decisions on such serious and complex issues....The Prime Minister avoided giving an explanation for U Thant's eagerness to withdraw the U.N. Emergency Force, after almost eleven years, just when a tensely dangerous situation arose. Someone must have "persuaded" U Thant that a clash between Egypt and Israel was preferable to one between Egypt and the U.N. Force, and that someone was interested in removing that buffer and thereby facilitating a military confrontation between the armies of Israel and Egypt....That "someone," whether it was the Pentagon or the infamous C.I.A., was American imperialism, which is behind the current belligerent provocation....

In referring to the U.N. Secretary-General's report...the Prime Minister should have quoted from it more fully. It is true that the Secretary-General mentioned the fact that one of the causes of the deterioration in the situation is the anti-Israel "terrorism" of Al-Fatah, but he also criticized the "war-like pronouncements" of Israel's leaders which, he contended, "were so threatening that one could say that they were deliberately intended to cause trouble."

Thus, the threat of force and the use of force on either side of the Israel-Arab border has served American imperialism and continues to do so. It has solved no problem but has exacerbated all the disputed issues between Israel and the Arab countries. One of Israel's most weighty conclusions must be to avoid taking any step which could involve it in the alien interests of the forces of imperialism. Let us take note of the recent statement by the Commander in Chief of the Egyptian forces in the Sinai...to the effect that his troops will not initiate hostilities in response to a local skirmish unless Israel launches a major attack on one of the Arab countries. That reflects a serious and even responsible approach. Every avenue has not yet been explored, and a great deal depends on the behavior of the Government at this critical time.

...There are no absolutes, there is no hard and fast dichotomy between good and evil, in the Israel-Arab conflict...and any attempt to depict the situation as such will not bring peace nearer. Imperialism can exploit the conflict...but in order to fight imperialism and ensure the independence and security of Israel and the neighboring countries the conflict must be resolved peacefully, on the basis of the mutual recognition of the just national rights of both sides. On this score the rulers of both Israel and the Arab countries have failed to date....

As long as our rulers ignore the legal rights of the Arab refugees and the Arab rulers deny Israel's right to exist...there will be no end to the Israel-Arab conflict. At this moment the most pressing issue is to save the peace....We reject the pressure of militarist circles in Israel, which prefer a large-scale military campaign to continued defensive activities on the borders against penetration by terrorists and murderers, even though they have to admit that Israeli strikes across the border are fruitless. We also reject the propaganda campaign and organization which advocates "the liberation of Palestine" and whose object is to destroy Israel...which merely aids imperialism in the region and causes further damage to the Palestinian Arabs....

Like the Arab peoples, the people of Israel seek to eliminate war from Israel-Arab relations. It is incumbent upon the Government to reject internal and external pressures to make military decisions. It is Israel's right, as it is every country's, to use force only in the last extreme of self-defense, but every step must be considered with maximal caution when the borders are so volatile. The dangerous situation on the southern and northern borders obliges the Government to stop threatening to use force, and actually using force, across Israel's borders, to initiate political action aimed at obliging the Arab countries to act similarly, and to evince readiness to return to the Armistice Commission and observe the Armistice Agreements, which are the only international basis for the relations between Israel and the Arab countries.

The ultimate test for Israel, its neighbors and all the forces of peace in the world and the region will be an all-out effort to prevent the outbreak of war on the borders and save the peace.

Introduction

Events moved quickly. During the night of May 22 and 23, between the opening of the debate on the Prime Minister's statement and its conclusion, while U Thant was en route to Cairo to plead with President Nasser, the latter announced the closure of the Straits of Tiran, at the entrance to the Gulf of Eilat. Encouraged by the unwonted, newly-found solidarity manifested by other Arab rulers, which some days later brought his hitherto despised archenemy, King Hussein, to Cairo to sign a mutual defense treaty, and infected by the war-like enthusiasm of some of the Egyptian pilots and officers, Nasser appears to have taken the decision on the spur of the moment. It is not clear whether he had consulted, or at least informed, the Soviets beforehand. That decision, in retrospect, must be considered as the point of no return on the slippery road to war.

Sitting 177 of the Sixth Knesset

23 May 1967 (13 Iyar 5727)

Jabbar Mu'adi (Israeli Druse Party): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, at this crucial time in the life of the Israeli nation, I would like first of all to send the warm wishes of the Israeli Druse Party and the Druse community in Israel to the soldiers of the IDF who are guarding the borders.

We believe in the ability of the IDF, which is actually and potentially the greatest deterrent force in the Middle East, and not only in the press and on the radio, as some claim. I therefore declare that the Druse community will place all its strength and capability at the disposal of the brave army. It is regrettable to hear of Nasser's decision to block the Straits of Tiran, which is tantamount to declaring war on Israel, a war which will inevitably end in the defeat of Israel's enemies.

I direct the following appeal to the three hundred thousand Arab citizens of the state: do not be misled by internal and external propaganda, because extremist action which will harm the country's interests will simultaneously harm anyone undertaking it, causing grave damage to himself and others. All Arab citizens must be loyal to the state and appreciate the benefits it has brought them, because the situation of the Arabs in Israel is better than that of the Arabs abroad...and, recogniz-

ing this, Arab youngsters should join the Army immediately. I say this primarily for the benefit of the Arabs themselves. I conclude by wishing the IDF complete victory.

...

Z. Tzur (Ma'arach): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, the advance of the Egyptian army from its bases at the rear towards our borders, and the withdrawal of the U.N. Force from its positions in the Sinai, the Gaza Strip and Sharm el-Sheikh after May 14, directly and openly threaten our borders and our security and bring war dangerously near.

Nasser's announcement this morning that he is closing the Straits to Israeli shipping constitutes another grave threat to our security, for not only can we not renounce our navigation rights...but the exit to the Red Sea is essential for our existence, and any restriction of our rights is a restriction of our sovereignty, our territory and our security. We must view this situation with the utmost gravity and responsibility. We must appeal to the Powers to use their influence to prevent the conflagration which might arise if Nasser is permitted to implement his aggressive threats and the situation is not restored to what it was before May 14.

Although we are confident of our strength and believe in our victory if we are put to the test, we still hope for peace, because we know that there has not yet been a good war, even for the victors, just as there has not been a bad peace, with the exception of the so-called Munich Peace, which led to the World War, the Holocaust and genocide. Nasser's hostility to Israel is not new. Although the Egyptian border has been relatively quiet since the Sinai Campaign, Nasser has never ceased to announce his intention of destroying Israel.

The bitter lessons of the history of mankind, and primarily the tragic experience of our nation, which ignored Hitler's pronouncements until it was too late, should have taught us to take heed of the Egyptian dictator's statements about his objective of destroying Israel. But we would not abandon the assumption that peace, however shaky, offered a faint hope of a change for the better.

May 14, with the movement towards our border of the Egyptian army, created a new situation....Nasser's statements and threats were suddenly far more ominous than in the past....This was no mere demonstrative act, but a danger greater and more real even than that prior to the Sinai Campaign....Now, like Hitler in the past, Nasser has suddenly ended all the U.N. arrangements. Now there is a direct and open threat on our borders, on points which are essential for our security, and the Straits are closed to Israeli navigation.

Our region has always been a volatile one, not necessarily or solely because of Israel...but because of the competition between the Powers for areas of influence, between the Arab countries for supremacy in the region and Nasser's struggle for dominance in the Arab world. We are not going to pull anyone else's chestnuts out of the fire for them. We our-

selves are the chestnuts....We must not let our existence and security be endangered by this competition between the Powers....We do not seek the charity of the world and have never asked the soldiers of another country to fight on our behalf....We did not rely on the U.N. Force to defend our existence, but it represented a guarantee that the status quo would be maintained, as would peace on our border with Egypt and our freedom of navigation in the Straits, as determined in the U.N. resolutions.

We wonder why the U.N. Secretary-General withdrew the U.N. Force so hastily and without consulting the Assembly or informing Israel, just when the situation in the region became tense....It was the pressure exerted by the Powers on Israel in the past which obliged us to withdraw from the Sinai, thereby reinforcing Nasser's belief that he would be able to act aggressively towards us without encountering any reaction from them. But they undertook at the time to ensure that the status quo, peace and freedom of navigation were preserved.

May 14 marked the twentieth anniversary of the special session of the U.N. where Gromyko made a remarkable and surprising speech on behalf of the U.S.S.R., saying, amongst other things: "We must show concern for the pressing needs of a nation which has suffered so dreadfully because of the war caused by Hitler's Germany. That is the obligation of the U.N. In view of the necessity of evincing concern for the needs of the Jews who are now without homes or means of subsistence, the Soviet delegation believes that it is necessary, in this context, to draw the General Assembly's attention to the following important information: the experience of the past, and especially of the Second World War, has revealed that no West European country could defend that nation's rights or even its existence against the violence of the Hitlerites and their allies. That is an unpleasant fact, but must be acknowledged... and it explains the aspiration of the Jews to establish a country of their own. It would be unfair not to take that fact into account and to deny the right of the Jewish people to realize that aspiration."...

Has the Holocaust, its results and dangers already been forgotten? And today, twenty years after the establishment of the State of Israel, which was and is the one and only refuge for Jewish refugees, is it no longer the duty of the U.S.S.R. to act with other countries in order to prevent acts of hostility against Israel and attempts to destroy it...?

For the security of Israel...and the preservation of peace it is necessary to stop the acts of terrorism and the guerrilla warfare against us on the Syrian and other borders...and to move the Egyptian troops back into Egypt. Above all, it must be made clear that closing the Straits to Israeli navigation is tantamount to attacking us, and on no account will Israel tolerate that.

It is true that the Israeli nation is not flustered by the situation which has been created, trusting in its strength and that of the IDF....Every

man and woman in Israel knows that we are fighting for our existence, that there can be no retreat, and this explains the courageous and firm stand of the Israeli public....We know that this is an emergency, that great danger confronts us, and we must comport ourselves accordingly....The hearts of us all are with those who are guarding our borders and defending our existence. We will stand united in the battle for peace against hostility and aggression, and will fight for our fate responsibly and determinedly.

E. Rimalt (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, this debate has proved what we knew already, namely, that the entire House and the nation is united in recognizing the gravity of the situation...and the need to stand firm against any aggressor who seeks to destroy Israel and harm its citizens. There is no doubt in this country, over and above all differences of opinion...that national unity blossoms magically overnight in our hour of need...and will fortify us in this national testing time....The Jewish people recoils from war and bloodshed. We have shed too much blood on the altars of world history...but no one in this nation doubts that if the enemy forces us to defend ourselves we will do so firmly and valiantly.

Even when one has lived through a great deal and experienced three wars...it is difficult not to be moved each time anew by this people, its young men, its youngsters, its courage, its steadfastness, its internal national discipline. Our whole nation is mobilized. Our young men know that they are not going on a picnic or a ramble. The young wives and elderly mothers send them off with victory wishes, not with tears or despair or weeping but with congratulations, because the wives and mothers share in the national undertaking....It is against this younger generation that so much criticism has been levelled by the older generation...without listening to what it had to say. This generation has not let us down....

At this grave moment we must see the situation as it really is....Failure to do so...is potentially disastrous. A mistaken assessment of the situation derives from illusions which, however pure the thought behind them, are no less dangerous than illusions deriving from negligence or lack of faith....Just a year ago the Prime Minister gave an over-optimistic review of the foreign affairs and defense situation...claiming to see signs of a "new spirit" among some Arab leaders....Our party group warned of putting a mistaken interpretation on the situation....Our misgivings have been borne out by events....Was Egypt made ready for war overnight? Was the decision taken only yesterday? A month ago? No one can deny that over the years the Egyptian leader has been consistent in declaring his intention of destroying Israel, even though there may have been ups and downs in the priority accorded to this aim....

The Prime Minister said yesterday that he regarded the solution to the problem as being in the restoration of the situation to what it was before the Egyptian troop movements....We must not delude ourselves—there can be no return to the previous situation. Today the choice is between respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries, the full adherence to the Armistice Agreements by our enemies and acknowledging that the U.N. Charter applies to Israel too, including Israel-Arab relations, or the existing situation, which will inevitably lead to escalation and deterioration, i.e., conflagration.

What has happened is that the Egyptians have proved that Nasser's timetable is not as various commentators would have it....He is prepared to bring the clash with Israel forward to today or tomorrow. The U.N. Force does not exist, neither as a defensive force—which it never was—nor as a symbol of Egypt's agreement that there will be no infiltration or terrorism. He has the Straits of Tiran. There is no freedom of navigation. The Tripartite Declaration, whatever its value may have been in the past, no longer exists, at least not as it did twelve or even six months ago. The Egyptian and Syrian troop dispositions would not exist without the assurance of the full support of one of the Powers.

We cannot prevent war, however much we would like to. In the face of logic, we must hope and pray that war will not break out, though at every moment we must be ready to repel aggression and defend ourselves. But it is not in our power to prevent it. Only we can and must defend ourselves. Only the Powers can prevent war. The U.S. is committed to the preservation of world peace....I would like other Powers to join it....

At this time we send greetings to our sons and brothers who are guarding the borders or are ready to go to their posts at any moment....We send encouragement to the wives and mothers. We must appeal to the Jewish people, telling it that the Jewish state—the sovereign, concrete expression of the nation, the remnant of the Holocaust, the Jewish homeland—is in danger. The spiritual identification of world Jewry with our existence and our fate is the most important help they can give us....At this time the leaders and the nation must have the highest personal qualities: the ability to make decisions, to distinguish between what is and is not relevant, and to evince the capacity for caution and the courage to act. I regret to say that to date we have not noticed these characteristics in the Eshkol Government. I will conclude by repeating that we must hope and pray that, in the face of logic and reality, war will be averted, but we must be ready at any moment to repel the enemy's aggression.

...

The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I apologize for the fact that you had to interrupt the sitting on my account, but the times are not completely normal.

I will speak briefly, for at this crucial time I have no intention of replying in detail to everything that was said here. Furthermore, to be quite frank, I was unable to hear everything that was said, though not because I was not interested. What I did hear, and the interparty consultations which were held today, have led me to conclude that the Knesset is united. The events of the last twenty-four hours oblige us to add a short statement referring to one topic only.

This morning the President of Egypt issued a statement regarding his intention of closing the international waterway through the Straits of Tiran which links the Gulf of Eilat with the Red Sea to ships bearing the Israeli flag as well as to other ships carrying cargo of a strategic nature.

Distinguished Knesset, any obstruction of freedom of navigation in the Gulf and the Straits is a grave violation of international freedom and the sovereign rights of other nations and an act of aggression against Israel.

As the Knesset knows, since 1957 various governments, including those of the principal maritime nations, have declared their intention of implementing their rights to free navigation in the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Eilat. During the last few days Israel has been in close contact with those governments....In consequence, I can say that international support for those rights is serious and quite widespread.

What is to be tested here is a clear and official international commitment on which international law and order depends. Thus, this is a fateful moment not only for Israel but for the whole world. In view of this situation, I hereby appeal to the Powers to act immediately to implement the right to free navigation to our southern port, a right which belongs to every country, without discrimination.

The Government of Israel will adhere to the policy it announced at the U.N. General Assembly on 1 March 1957. Since that statement was made, freedom of navigation in the Straits and the Gulf has been established for ten years as a deeply-rooted international reality, as reflected in hundreds of ships sailing under dozens of flags and creating a widespread and developing cultural and communications network.

The illegal statement by the Egyptian President supplements the lawless behavior Egypt has displayed for many years by closing the Suez Canal, in contravention of its undertaking to permit freedom of navigation there to the ships of all nations.

Members of the Knesset, yesterday I called on the nations of the region to respect one another's territorial integrity, political sovereignty and the rights of all the countries of the region. I announced Israel's readiness to share in reducing tension and strengthening peace in our region.

Any base attempt to block the navigation of a member-state of the U.N. will constitute a dangerous precedent having grave repercussions

for international relations and freedom of navigation. The latest development reveals the dangerous significance of Egypt's actions. I call on the world to display practical and effective responsibility in preserving the peace.

I will submit details of the situation to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, where they will be discussed.

The Knesset debate has revealed the nation's unity in facing the future. It is with unity, alertness and confidence that we will face the days to come.

Security Situation

Introduction

After another week of waiting—with the IDF reserves fully mobilized—the Prime Minister addressed the Knesset on the security situation once more. During that week the Foreign Minister, Abba Eban, had visited Paris, London and Washington. De Gaulle, who only a few years earlier had termed Israel France's "friend and ally," cautioned against firing the first shot and counselled reliance on the Big Four. Words of encouragement were heard from Harold Wilson and, above all, from Lyndon Johnson. The latter reiterated the U.S. adherence to the principle of free navigation through the Straits and reported on attempts to undertake concerted action with the U.S.'s European allies to assert that right. At the same time, he warned against unilateral action by Israel, saying: "Israel will not be alone unless she goes it alone."

Sitting 179 of the Sixth Knesset

29 May 1967 (19 Iyar 5727)

...

The Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, since my statement in the Knesset last week, there have been certain developments in the region....

Two weeks ago large concentrations of the Egyptian Army were moved to the eastern Sinai, facing the border with Israel. Today most of Egypt's army is massed there, in battle positions. Syria, Egypt's ally, has massed its forces on our northern border. Parallel to these movements, the U.N. Emergency Force was hastily withdrawn from the Sinai, the Gaza Strip and Sharm el-Sheikh. That Force, which was established by the U.N., entered the Sinai and the Gaza Strip under an arrangement with Israel for the withdrawal of its forces from the Sinai and the Gaza Strip. That withdrawal was undertaken on the basis of clear international commitments regarding freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Eilat and the cessation of infiltration from the Gaza Strip. The withdrawal of the U.N. Force signifies the end of the relative calm on the southern border for the last ten years. The U.N. Force was an indication of the international community's readiness to ensure quiet on the border and freedom of navigation in the Straits. For ten years Nasser's agreement to the Force's presence in the Sinai and the Strip reflected Egypt's readiness to permit freedom of navigation in the Straits.

But a week ago the Egyptian ruler announced that the Straits of Eilat would be closed to Israeli ships and ships carrying cargoes to Israel. He has repeated that statement several times since then, as well as threatening anyone trying to break that illegal blockade. The Egyptian President has continued to announce that he is ready and able to attack Israel, and that his object is to destroy it. Yesterday he even threatened to embark immediately on extensive terrorist actions against Israel's settlements and inhabitants. Terrorist actions were launched against us from the Gaza Strip today.

These actions and statements have altered the political and security situation in the region. Consequently, the Government has taken a series of political and defense steps designed to guarantee Israel's vital interests. The first condition for maintaining the peace and our interests is our military strength. For that reason, with the Government's consent, I have ordered the mobilization of the IDF's reserves. They are now ready to thwart the enemy's plans on all fronts and borders.

Members of the Knesset, the Government of Israel has stated on more than one occasion that it will exercise its right to freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Eilat, and will defend it if necessary. That is a supreme national interest regarding which there can be no concession or compromise. It is clear to us—and I think to the world, too—that as long as the blockade exists peace is endangered. It is that grave situation which, I believe, obliges us first of all to clarify, with maximal urgency, with those Governments which undertook to support and implement freedom of navigation whether they are prepared to translate their commitments into action, in accordance with the international law which the Egyptian ruler has violated so blatantly.

The purpose of the Foreign Minister's brief visits to Paris, London and Washington was to clarify that question. The Foreign Minister explained to the leaders of those countries that this is a matter of vital national importance and that we are resolved to ensure it, come what may. From the Foreign Minister's discussions it transpired that all the Governments with which he came into contact aspire to maintain the status quo which was recently broken. The President of the U.S. and the Prime Minister of Britain issued firm public statements on the subject.

The position of the U.S. is especially interesting, since in 1957 its government was the first to issue an undertaking to Israel, through diplomatic contacts, in a letter from the then-President and Secretary of State and in public statements at the U.N. and elsewhere.

After having heard President Johnson's statement of May 23 and our Foreign Minister's report on his talks in Washington, the Government had the firm impression that the U.S. was unequivocally committed to ensuring freedom of navigation in those international waters. A similar attitude was evinced by the Prime Minister of Britain, Mr. Harold Wilson, in his public statement and in his talks with the For-

eign Minister. Other maritime nations have informed us of their readiness to support freedom of navigation effectively. We have also been told that practical consultations are already being held on this issue. Given these conditions, it is reasonable to expect that the countries which support freedom of navigation in principle will act effectively and quickly in order to ensure that the Straits and the Gulf will be open to the passage of the ships of their and other countries, without discrimination. This expectation, which is based on explicit and official undertakings, has greatly influenced the position and actions of the Government of Israel at this stage. There is no doubt that the expression of the Great Powers' readiness to guarantee freedom of navigation has been influenced by both their principles and the knowledge that Israel will ensure its rights.

Our obligation was, first of all, to test the international commitment, and this will become apparent in the next few days. Israel regards the closing of the Straits as an act of aggression against it. The Israel Government's statement to the U.N. Assembly of 1 March 1957 continues to express our policy. We are currently involved in widespread political activity designed to restore freedom of navigation. This activity would not have been possible and its chances would have been minimal had it not been for our own strength and the justice of our demand. On the other hand, our mutual relations with the nations of the world have helped us to increase our strength and maintain our rights, and will continue to do so.

The Egyptian ruler's announcement of the closure of the Straits, the terrorist activities, his aggressive intentions and the concentration of his army on our border have raised tension in the region to a peak. Nasser has brought war dangerously near. On various occasions I have reported to the Knesset and the nation about the IDF's growing strength. Today our Army is at the height of its strength in manpower, knowhow, fighting spirit and weaponry. Our attention must be focused not only on ensuring freedom of navigation but also on the danger of a military attack led by Egypt. Anyone with eyes in his head can see that as long as the huge concentration of the forces of Egypt and its allies remains on the borders there can be a conflagration at any moment. Consequently, the IDF will remain armed and mobilized, ready for any test and, when necessary, able to repel any attack.

Egypt's actions constitute a threat to peace in our entire region. The frenetic statements and threats issued by the Egyptian President create illusions among his easily-enthused supporters. The Egyptian ruler should remember that this is not the first time he has been carried away by his imagination and seen himself the victor before doing battle. He should remember that his illusions were soon dispelled, as we saw.

The situation has placed a heavy burden on the state and the entire nation. We will do everything we can to ensure that the mobilization of

the reserves disturbs our economic life and the lives of individuals as little as possible. During recent weeks we have witnessed inspiring displays of popular volunteering throughout the nation. From the everyday routine of life strong springs of devotion, responsibility and dedication have burst forth. Israel is united in the sense of going through a time of trial. Israel is true to itself, its essence and its mission. These days will yet be remembered as a wonderful exhibition of national maturity.

I would like to take this opportunity of saying a few words from this podium to the IDF, to the soldiers who at this moment are standing ready in the Negev, Galilee and along our borders on land, at sea and in the air. As in every other test we have undergone since the establishment of the state, today, too, the inhabitants of Israel and the Jews of the world derive a sense of security and strength from the wonderful phenomenon known as the IDF. The planning, organization and implementation of the mass mobilization, the sophisticated weapons, the firmness of spirit and the complete readiness for every mission have been distinguished by first-rate skill, knowledge and thought, and were accompanied by remarkable human displays of selfless devotion.

Soldiers of the IDF, who like you know how our strength has increased in recent years! The supremacy of your strength over that of our enemies is, today more than ever, the guarantee of our security. By virtue of your steadfastness and ability to defeat the enemy in any conditions the Government of Israel can face the serious decisions it must make calmly and confidently, in accordance with our great and grave responsibility for the peace and security of the state. We are confident that by your continued readiness, firm spirit and belief in the justice of our cause you will continue to ensure Israel's security and rights in the face of the challenges it faces. On behalf of the Government, the Knesset and the entire nation, accept our gratitude for everything you have done till now, and our blessing for what is to come.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is self-evident that I cannot give an extensive account here of our situation, negotiations, connections and clarifications with the world and the preparations being made in Israel. The members of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee are kept constantly informed.

Members of the Knesset, trusting in the IDF, encouraged by the growing support and encouragement for us in the world and strengthened by the enthusiastic identification of the Jewish people, we stand on our guard, ready to repel any threat, danger or attack, until we reach security and peace.

Prime Minister's Statement on the Military Situation

Introduction

Hopes for determined American and international action to reopen the Straits soon evaporated. Public opinion in Israel—with full mobilization involving practically the total paralysis of all economic, educational and cultural activity—was growing increasingly impatient with the apparent indecision of the Government as a whole, and of the Prime Minister in particular. That impression was heightened by the halting delivery of the Prime Minister's radio address to the nation. Under the pressure of public opinion, aided by a group subsequently nicknamed "The Merry Wives of Windsor," Eshkol invited the leaders of the major Opposition parties—Gahal and Rafi—to join the Government. The leaders of Gahal became Ministers without Portfolio, while Moshe Dayan, representing Rafi, became Minister of Defense. The 81-year-old Ben-Gurion (whom Begin had proposed as Prime Minister) declined, preferring to remain outside the Cabinet.

The watershed in Israel's foreign relations also turned into one in its domestic history. For the first time Gahal was part of the Government, and ten years later Mr. Begin was to become Prime Minister. Moshe Dayan was still Minister of Defense during the Yom Kippur War, in 1973. At its first meeting, on 4 June 1967, the newly-enlarged Cabinet decided to undertake an all-out offensive against Egypt. In the early hours of 5 June 1967 the Israel Air Force attacked the Egyptian Air Force, most of whose planes were on the ground at the time. A few hours later, while a complete news blackout was still in force, Eshkol imparted some vague information to the Knesset, at the same time informing it of the changes in the composition of the Government, which required the Knesset's approval. This was granted after a minimal debate, in a mood of supreme unity, after which Knesset Members spontaneously sang the national anthem, "Hatikva." For the first time Ben-Gurion and Begin were observed talking amiably to one another, some claim, embracing one another. Some emergency fiscal and budgetary laws were adopted at that sitting, in the same climate of unanimity. During the course of the Prime Minister's statement Jordanian artillery was shelling Jerusalem, including the Knesset building, and the sitting took place in the basement shelter.

Sitting 182 of the Sixth Knesset

5 June 1967 (26 Iyar 5727)

The Speaker, K. Luz: We send our blessing to the IDF and the citizens of the state; we trust in the skill, resolution and courage of our soldiers and our men, women and children. The State of Israel lives and fights; the people of Israel lives....

...

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, before bringing the expansion of the Government before the Knesset, I must inform the Knesset and the nation of a fateful development which befell the State of Israel today. Fierce battles began this morning between the Air Forces of Egypt and Israel, during the course of which the Egyptian Air Force suffered heavy losses. During the course of the day the Air Forces of Syria and Jordan attacked us too, and were also defeated by our Air Force.

Since the morning our forces on the land and in the air have had to fight back, with the object of defeating the armies of the aggressive Egyptian ruler. The battle is still under way. The IDF has not let us down and is standing up to the test, as it will in the future, too. The battles are now being conducted across Israel's border, in the Sinai. I will not give details now, for obvious reasons, neither figures, places nor names. All I can say is that our forces are driving the enemy back.

In my radio broadcast this morning I stressed that Israel would not attack any country which has not waged war on us. But anyone who attacks us will encounter the full force of our capacity to defend ourselves and defeat the enemy. Despite that warning, Syrian and Jordanian forces joined in the hostilities against Israel by aerial bombing as well as shelling from artillery and firearms. More than anywhere else, perhaps, Jerusalem provides evidence of this. The forces of those countries opened fire on various fronts, including the capital, Jerusalem. The IDF began a counteroffensive, as was required in order to defend the state and repel the enemy.

Members of the Knesset, I feel it would not be superfluous to give a brief review of the background to the recent events. Upon the establishment of the State of Israel the Arab armies tried to crush the infant state. After our forces successfully withstood superior Arab armies it will be recalled that Armistice Agreements were signed between Israel and its neighbors. Those agreements...were intended to serve as a transition to a lasting peace, but the Arab countries refused to discuss peace and embarked on preparations to destroy Israel on the battlefield.

Openly defying the Armistice Agreements and the U.N. Charter, the Arab countries imposed a blockade and an economic embargo on Israel, declared a state of belligerency and rejected every proposal for negotiations and a settlement as outlined in the U.N. Charter. In other

words, they sought to separate Israel from the rest of the world, remove it from the aegis of international law and place it beyond the pale of the relations between the countries of the world.

This state of belligerency and aggression has continued incessantly for the last nineteen years. There were periods of relative calm, which were rapidly replaced by acts of hostility by the Arabs against us. This year, approximately three weeks ago, Israel began to be threatened in a way which was unprecedented in the entire history of the state. The entire situation became volatile as a result of a series of aggressive steps taken by the Egyptian ruler. The first step was the introduction of a huge Egyptian force into the eastern Sinai. This was followed by the withdrawal of the U.N. Force. Then came the closing of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli and international shipping, which constituted an act of war. These steps were accompanied by feverish preparations for an all-out war of destruction against Israel, at least according to his statements and boasts.

Initially the Egyptian ruler fallaciously claimed that he was acting in order to deter Israel from attacking Syria. He spread the lie—and there were those who helped him in this—that Israeli forces were massed on the northern border. Our statements that there was no such massing of our forces, and the U.N. Secretariat's confirmation of this, were to no avail. But Nasser soon revealed his hand; from making the false claim that his intention was to defend Syria, he switched to the desire to change the status quo in the Straits of Tiran. Nasser did not conceal his view that he wanted to turn the wheel of history back, to before the establishment of the State of Israel, to before 1948, his plan being to stifle Israel's independence....

Prior to cutting Israel off he made an agreement with Syria, which has been responsible for the acts of terrorism directed against Israel during the last two years. In order to complete the circle, in the last few days he made pacts with Jordan and Iraq. By this morning five infantry and two armored divisions had been drawn up in the Sinai and there were 900 tanks along the border, 200 of them facing Eilat, with the obvious intention of cutting off the southern Negev. Iraqi troops and Egyptian commando battalions have reached Jordan and the Jordanian Army has been placed under Egyptian command. During the last ten days Egypt has flown air sorties over Israel. Following Nasser's announcement of his intention to wage all-out war on Israel, the Commander of the Egyptian forces, General Mortaga, issued an order of the day to his troops, in clear and simple words, which was quoted on Cairo Radio on June 3, as follows:

"The eyes of the whole world are upon you in your most glorious war against the aggressive Israeli imperialists on your homeland, awaiting the outcome of your holy war to conquer the rights of the Arab people. The results of this special moment are of historic importance for our

Arab nation and the holy war in which you will restore plundered Arab rights in Palestine and reconquer the stolen land, with the help of God and the ability of justice, by force of arms and the unity of your faith."

During the past few weeks we have done our utmost to persuade influential political elements in the West and the East to exert their influence with the object of removing the danger from our border, opening the Straits and restoring the previous situation. This aspiration was not fulfilled. While we were still hoping for deterrent political influence, under the auspices of heads of state, the warlike deployment of the aggressive forces of Egypt and the Arab countries under Egyptian leadership grew from day to day. The bellicose incitement of the Egyptian ruler and his aides reached unprecedented heights and Israel was threatened with attack on all fronts.

When the threat became reality and the Egyptian war machine was set in motion, we had to defend our lives and fight back. The forces on the front are Israeli and only Israeli. Our soldiers on land, sea and air, who have the love and trust of the nation, are imbued with a spirit of heroism and are led by talented, experienced and able commanders. Our Army is ready for any danger and can defend the country and repel any aggressor. The nation wishes God-speed to its soldiers—it behooves me to say this from this podium—who are risking their lives to defend their country. To the citizens at the rear I say, remain calm, each and every one of you; do what you have to do with dedication and efficiency, placing your abilities at the disposal of the nation.

At a time such as this, which may be one of a cruel and bloody struggle, the distinction between battlefield and rear becomes blurred. At a time such as this the whole nation is an army, the whole country is the battlefield. Each and every one of us, everywhere and at all times, must regard himself as being charged with the defense of Israel. All of us, led by our Army, will defeat those who have risen up against us. I would like to mention the wonderful display of solidarity from our brethren in the diaspora. The identification of the Jewish people with the State of Israel irradiates us with light and security. The sense of brotherhood and unity which beats in the heart of every Jew brings those who are far near and bridges distances. The Jewish heart, wherever it may be, beats now with the State of Israel and yearns for victory.

From the Knesset I would like to express my deep gratitude to the many Gentiles throughout the world, statesmen and intellectuals as well as simple folk, who have been shocked by the threat to Israel's welfare and have expressed their feelings in an unparalleled wave of support for the State of Israel.

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Knesset, I would like to say that even in times of battle we have not abandoned our aspiration for peace. I would like to ask the Arab countries who, for almost twenty years, have chosen the path of threats and aggression instead of cooperation and

peace: what good has that attitude done you? Precious resources have been wasted to finance the cold and hot war against Israel. Since 1952 Egypt alone spent more than 4 billion dollars on establishing its military force and its war machine. During that period all the Arab countries and Israel spent more than 10 billion dollars on military needs. That sum would have been enough to rescue a great many of the peoples of the region from poverty and sickness and to lay the foundations of widespread economic and social progress. The time has come for the Arab nations to do some soulsearching, which may perhaps persuade them to prefer peace and progress to hostility and bloodshed. At this moment I will even go so far as to say that peace will surely come to our region, even though it tarries, because all of us, throughout the region, need it.

To the leaders of the West and the East I would like to say from this podium: competition between the Powers and the Blocs has played no small part in intensifying the arms race in the Middle East and the continual increase of tension in our region. For years we appealed for international action to further peace in our region and demanded the cessation of the arms race with the object of attaining the mutually-supervised disarmament of the countries of the region. We demanded that the territorial and political integrity of all the countries of the region be guaranteed. To my regret, our requests were fruitless. There is a lesson to be learned from this.

Since the beginning of the present tension views have been expressed as to the need to broaden the Government and its parliamentary base. When I felt that the testing time was approaching—on the battlefields—I took the initiative of establishing a wide Emergency Government, and invited Gahal and Rafi to join it. By now you all know that the negotiations have borne fruit, and I welcome the expansion of the Government.

Taking the emergency conditions into account, the Ministers involved were informed of the decision and appointed to their positions three or four days ago, before their appointments had gained the approval of the Knesset. I regret to hear that my colleague Moshe Dayan has left already...and I understand why he was in a hurry to go.

I am confident that the new Ministers have realized, in the last few days more than ever, how strong is the military force we have been developing over the years since the establishment of the state, and especially in the last few years. A mighty, powerful and able force, which is not behind in scientific and technological developments, has been established. The new Ministers saw the IDF being mobilized and I am sure that they were deeply impressed by the first-rate planning of the General Staff as well as by the IDF's battle capacity. I am sure that this force will lead us to victory, and the expansion of the Government will strengthen us in our course and enable us to overcome all obstacles.

Commemoration of IDF Casualties and Congratulations on Victory in Battle

Introduction

Within six days the IDF gained resounding victories on three fronts. The Egyptian Army and Air Force were smashed and the whole of the Sinai, this time right up to the Suez Canal, was occupied. Jordanian forces were compelled to withdraw beyond the River Jordan. In the last two days before the ceasefire decreed by the U.N. Security Council came into effect the Syrians were pushed back from most of the Golan Heights beyond Kuneitra, the provincial capital. It was in this abruptly changed situation, in a new mood, that the Knesset convened for the first time after the war.

Sitting 183 of the Sixth Knesset

12 June 1967 (4 Sivan 5727)

The Speaker, K. Luz: Knesset Members, I hereby open the first Knesset sitting in united Jerusalem. Congratulations!

Let us remember our glorious dead, who gave their lives that the Jewish nation might live on the soil of Israel.

(The Knesset Members honor the memory of the fallen by standing.)

The blood we had shed till now was not enough to enable us to live in peace in our land. Once again the soil has soaked up the lifeblood of our heroes. Our renewed covenant with our land, a covenant of faith, labor, sweat and blood, is an everlasting one.

The Jewish people will always remember the glory of its heroes and will mourn the splendid youth, joyous courage and dedicated will of its sons who fell in the difficult battle.

Bereaved parents, widows, orphans, relatives of the heroes, no words can express the terrible tragedy of the loss of your loved ones, but no sacrifice has brought salvation as much as theirs has. Be comforted in their victory.

To the IDF, the Chief of Staff, Major-General Rabin, the planner and commander of the campaign, his aides, the IDF's generals, whom I have invited to be present at this sitting, to all the soldiers and officers, we extend the heart-felt congratulations and gratitude of every citizen of Israel and every Jew throughout the diaspora for your fighting strength, courageous spirit and readiness to lay down your lives.

To our Government and the Prime Minister, Mr. Eshkol, who was also Minister of Defense until the outbreak of hostilities, and to his aides, we extend our blessings and our thanks for the perseverance and ability with which they led our Army, by strengthening it, equipping it with the best weapons and creating the conditions for its outstanding military ability.

Since last Monday's Knesset sitting, which was held on the first day of the fighting, we have been as dreamers, for every hour we received news of conquests and acts of heroism. This week, which towers like a mighty peak over the plateau of life before and after it, produced mighty events in the history of our people, the spiritual elevation of the nation in Zion and expressions of volunteering in the diaspora.

May the sparks of spiritual exaltation remain in our hearts as a hidden fire which will move and help us to strengthen the state spiritually and materially, enhancing the life of the nation and renewing the immigration of large numbers of Jews to Israel.

We look forward to the great day when there will be peace with our neighbors and lasting peace in our region and the whole world.

...

The Prime Minister's Statement on the Political and Military Campaign

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, a week ago the fateful campaign began. The existence of the State of Israel, the hope of generations and the vision which had been fulfilled in our time, was in the balance. Now, a week after the Knesset's last sitting, which was held in the midst of the bombardment, we are gathered to hear that victory is ours.

The enemy's assault has been repelled, most of his strength has been destroyed, his military machine has been broken and the bases of his aggression have been eliminated. The threat of war has been lifted from the country. The skies above our heads are safe. The danger to Jerusalem, the Coastal Plain, the northern settlements, the Negev and Galilee as well as the farms by the Strip has been removed.

The IDF rules the Sinai Peninsula as far as the Suez Canal, the West Bank of the Jordan and the Golan Heights. There is free passage through the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Eilat. Jerusalem is united. For the first time since the establishment of the state Jews can pray at the Western Wall, the relic of our Temple and our historic past, and at Rachel's Tomb. For the first time in our generation Jews can pray at the Cave of Machpela in Hebron, the city of the Patriarchs. Indeed, in us has been fulfilled the verse: "For thy work shall be rewarded...and thy children shall come again to their own border."

In the midst of victory we bow our heads in sacred veneration of the memory of those who fell. Many hundreds of soldiers of the IDF and civilians gave their lives for victory. I know that there is no consolation for the grief of the individual and the family. Each person is a whole world. I would like the bereaved families to know that the casualties fell for something than which there is nothing more just or essential. I would like them to know that in their deaths they bequeathed us life. On behalf of the entire nation, the Government and myself, allow me to say that we share your heavy sorrow. We will remember our dear sons, the courageous soldiers and officers of the IDF, who went ahead, who sanctified our nation and our country in their lives and their deaths. They join the chain of heroism and self-sacrifice of those who gave their lives for the country, a chain which will never be broken.

To the wounded we wish a full and speedy recovery and return to an active, fruitful and useful life. Anyone who has seen our wounded men in the hospitals—and I have—cannot fail to be stirred by their courage and endurance. We are eternally grateful to the doctors, nurses, workers and volunteers, and especially to the doctors who came as volunteers from abroad to help in the sacred work of healing the sick. May God give you strength!

Members of the Knesset, these have been days of awe. Our nation will remember them forever. They were days of spiritual exaltation. The entire nation was mobilized to fight for its existence and its hope. Everyone felt that he had to contribute his share, and each person did what he had to.

Over the years, in the face of the continual threat from our enemies, we were obliged to—and did—build the IDF's defensive and deterrent strength, investing enormous resources in readying and equipping it. The IDF is a mighty fighting force, as the world discovered, because of its high standard, because of its first-rate soldiers and officers and, above all, because in the heart of every soldier and officer beats a sense of mission to the nation and the country. The IDF is the army of the nation. When it fights the entire nation fights. When it fights it expresses every period of Jewish history. When our army fights it does so for the redemption as well as the survival of the nation.

The nation withstood the test because it was united, because at the crucial moment it was able to concentrate its efforts and act as one. The nation withstood the test. Hundreds of thousands of youngsters and immigrants, acting in ways both great and small, each one in accordance with his age and abilities, proved that their roots in Israel are eternal. As I travelled the length and breadth of the country, I was very impressed to see children filling sandbags and doing every kind of work they could. It proved that the spirit of the nation derives from the spiritual revival of the state. We saw that we were not merely the in-gathering of the exiles, we were an old-new nation, a united nation,

which has arisen and been forged by fire into one Israel, combining all the tribes, all the communities and groups, those who came from abroad as well as those who were born here. A nation has arisen which is ready to make any effort and sacrifice to assure its mission.

The State of Israel withstood the test, knowing that it bore the hope of the entire Jewish people. The unity of our nation has been forged anew during these days. Jews throughout the diaspora identified with the state, with the heart of the nation. Thousands of our people came to our help, from both near and far. Hundreds of thousands, millions, both Jews and non-Jews, all over the world, were ready to help us in our struggle, in any way. And those who were unable to help were with their country in spirit during the battle. Just as the country was elevated and strengthened, the unity of the Jewish people was reinforced. Jerusalem was united, and all Jews were brethren.

The last four weeks have been a time of tension and trial. The first three were filled with tension, expectancy and searching, while the fourth was one of trial and action.... On Independence Day immense Egyptian forces began crossing the Canal and moving towards the Israeli border. Within three days those forces were drawn up facing our border, and then Nasser demanded the withdrawal of the U.N. Force from Sharm el-Sheikh, the Sinai and the Gaza Strip. On 23 May 1967 Egypt announced the closing of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping and international shipping bringing strategic cargoes to Israel's southern port of Eilat.

After the Egyptian ruler had annulled the international arrangements which had been in effect for the last ten years, he publicly announced his intention of wiping Israel off the map. As we have since discovered, on May 27 the Commander of the Egyptian Air Force issued a secret battle order to his pilots to prepare for a surprise attack on Israel. Nasser signed a military agreement with Hussein on May 30 and with Iraq on June 4. These agreements, in addition to that between Egypt and Syria, completed the encirclement of Israel which was intended to enable a sudden attack on Israel from all sides.

On June 3 the Commander of the Egyptian forces in the Sinai issued an order of the day to his soldiers ordering them to prepare to attack Israel and describing the expected results "of this special moment" as "of historic importance for the Arab people." How prophetic!

Upon the advance of the Egyptian troops into the Sinai Peninsula I ordered, with the consent of the Government, the initial mobilization of the IDF's reserves. As the threat grew greater the mobilization was expanded and our preparations intensified. On May 29 I informed the Knesset that the IDF "is ready to foil the enemy's plans on all fronts and borders." I took that opportunity of telling the Egyptian ruler that "this is not the first time he has been carried away by his imagination and seen himself the victor before doing battle." I added that "he should remem-

ber that his illusions were soon dispelled, as we saw." I told the IDF: "By virtue of your steadfastness and ability to defeat the enemy in any conditions the Government of Israel can face the serious decisions it must make calmly and confidently, in accordance with our great and grave responsibility for the peace and security of the state."

Last Monday, 5 June 1967, seven or eight Egyptian divisions, two of them armored, were drawn up along our borders; there were 900 tanks, 200 of them facing Eilat, their object being to cut off the southern Negev; along Israel's eastern border there were 60,000 Jordanian soldiers and 300 tanks; the Jordanian Army was placed under Egyptian command and Egyptian commando units and Iraqi forces had reached its territory. 50,000 Syrian soldiers were ready to attack on our northern border with Syria, and along the whole border there were cannon and mortars, embedded in cement and iron, dug in and entrenched, the result of the work of years. 600 Egyptian, Jordanian, Syrian and Iraqi planes were ready. Egyptian air sorties were flown over Israel during the days prior to June 5.

The moment of decision came. As the Egyptian forces moved towards Israel's border our forces went out to repel the enemy's aggression. Aerial and armored battles began. In a radio broadcast a few hours later, I announced: "We will not attack any country which has not waged war on us, but anyone who attacks us will encounter the full force of our capacity to defend ourselves and defeat his troops." Despite that clear warning, the Jordanian forces, which were under Egyptian command, began attacking and bombarding us all along the line, and especially in Jerusalem. A great deal of blood was shed in Jerusalem. At the same time the Syrians began attacking our northern settlements from their entrenched positions in the Golan Heights. By Friday, June 8, Israel's forces had defeated the enemy in the Sinai, the Gaza Strip, all of Jerusalem and the entire West Bank.

I would like to take this opportunity of noting that despite the fact that the Jordanian forces shelled Jerusalem, killing and wounding many people and causing considerable damage to property, we avoided shelling the city out of consideration for its sanctity and in accordance with our policy of refraining from harming the civilian population. As soon as the city was liberated, and before going to the Western Wall, I summoned the heads of the Christian and Moslem communities and issued the following statement: "Rest assured that no harm will be permitted to befall the holy sites of the various religions. I have asked the Minister of Religion to establish contact with the religious leaders in Jerusalem in order to assure appropriate contact between them and our forces and in order to ensure that they can continue with their spiritual activities unhindered. From Jerusalem—the symbol of peace for generations—from the Holy City, to which calm has been restored, I would like you to join me in calling for peace among all the peoples of the re-

gion and the entire world." Arrangements were immediately made to ensure that the places holy to Christianity would be controlled by Christian religious leaders and the places holy to Islam would be controlled by Moslem religious leaders.

In view of the continued and heavy shelling of the northern settlements by the Syrians, continually endangering men, women and children, and inflicting considerable damage on the settlements, we were obliged to act in order to silence the Syrian positions on the Golan Heights and the Bashan. By Saturday, June 10 the Syrian Heights were in our hands, and the bases of aggression, which had threatened the northern settlements and inflicted heavy casualties and damage on them for nineteen years with the intention of turning them into piles of rubble, had been destroyed.

During the course of the fighting our forces destroyed some 450 enemy planes and many hundreds of tanks. The enemy's forces were defeated in the battles, many of them fleeing or being taken prisoner. For the first time since the establishment of the state the threat to our existence from the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the northern border has suddenly been lifted. In those battles the tens of thousands of soldiers of the IDF fought with unparalleled courage and heroism. They acted with selfless devotion and the spirit of comrades in arms, displaying resourcefulness and sagacity. Officers led their units and threw themselves into the fray. Many of them were killed or wounded as they led their men, their comrades. Soldiers endangered themselves to rescue their comrades from death or capture, even though they themselves were wounded. Because of that dedication and spirit of comradeship we were victorious. Happy is the nation which has such an army.

From this podium I would like to congratulate the members of the Government, the Minister of Defense, the Chief of Staff, the generals of the IDF in the field and in the General Staff, the commanders of the corps and the regiments, all the officers and soldiers of the IDF on land, sea and air. I am confident that the entire nation and army will gladly endorse my special congratulations to the Air Force, to its present and previous commanders, who prepared that superb airborne force.

Parallel to the security developments, we were subjected to an international political campaign. During the first days of the crisis, between Independence Day and Thursday, May 18, the entry of the Egyptian forces into the Sinai was described in various capitals as a demonstrative act. The Egyptian demand for the withdrawal of the international Force was fulfilled hastily by the U.N. Secretary-General without obtaining the consent of the U.N. Advisory Committee or bringing the subject before the Security Council. The world condemned the withdrawal of the U.N. Force, yet no international institution did anything to prevent the impending aggression or remove the Egyptian troop con-

centrations from the Israeli border. The ineffectiveness of the U.N. may have encouraged Nasser to continue on his aggressive course of closing the Straits of Tiran. Even after the closing of the Straits, the Security Council did not ask Egypt to annul this, although some of its members described it as illegal and dangerous.

After the closing of the Straits of Tiran, the U.S. and Britain began political action designed to ensure freedom of navigation there. Israel attached importance to this international action and to the increased opposition to one of the central aspects of Egyptian aggression. It rapidly transpired, however, that Nasser was not satisfied with closing the Straits of Tiran, and intended to destroy Israel. Thus, while the Powers were seeking a solution to the problem of the Straits in accordance with international law, the land battles began. During the three weeks prior to the battles the world witnessed, perhaps for the first time, the true character of the Arab policy of hostility and the blatantly aggressive intentions of the Egyptian ruler, of which we had warned it for many years.

In my speech to the Knesset on May 29 I noted how much we had been heartened by the "growing support and encouragement for us in the world." In the days that followed, that support and encouragement became a flood, engulfing countries, governments and nations, as well as our own people, the Jewish nation, and indicating the extent to which the vision of the revival of Israel had become an integral part of world culture in our generation. In the days preceding the battles the world's fear for Israel's existence became a mighty phenomenon which strengthened our position and will continue to do so in the political campaign ahead of us. It is not my intention to disprove false propaganda here, but for the sake of historical truth I would like to repeat that Israel stood alone in its battle for survival, aided by no military force of any country in any way.

I should note that throughout the period of preparation for the war by the Egyptian ruler and his allies, as well as during the fighting, one Power not only failed to condemn their aggressive actions but also aided them politically. On Saturday, 10 June 1967, the U.S.S.R. even announced the severing of its diplomatic relations with Israel, and was followed by Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria. Today this may not be of any great avail, but it is our international duty to ask the U.S.S.R. how, as a member of the U.N., its avowed policy of settling disputes peacefully fits with giving large quantities of weapons and military equipment to countries which have publicly declared their intention of using those weapons to destroy a sovereign country, and how it fits with its open support for the aggressor during the fighting.

Perhaps now the Soviet leaders will realize that it is their duty to help in the effort to bring true peace to the Middle East. During the last official contact between us we expressed the hope that there would still be re-

lations between our countries on the basis of a deeper understanding of Israel's problems on the part of the U.S.S.R.

When the State of Israel was born nineteen years ago the Arab armies sought to destroy it. When we fought and defeated them Armistice Agreements were signed. Those agreements stated explicitly that they were to be a stage on the path to peace. That is how Israel, and perhaps not only Israel, regarded them. Over the years, however, it transpired that our neighbors regarded those agreements as a way of gaining time in order to prepare renewed aggression, with the object of destroying Israel. The U.N. chose to ignore that Arab attitude. The U.N. Charter makes it incumbent upon the members of the U.N. to refrain from using force or threatening to use force, and to resolve disputes peacefully. Nevertheless, the U.N. did not condemn Arab hostility towards Israel which persisted over the years. Thus, for nineteen years that unique situation continued....All the nations, leaders and representatives of the world heard the incitement and sabre-rattling of the Arab leaders against us. They heard, saw and kept quiet.

To the nations of the world we say, do not assume that Israel is prepared to return to the situation which existed until a week ago. The State of Israel exists and was established by right, yet nonetheless it has had to fight repeatedly for its right. Alone we fought for our existence and security and we are entitled to determine what the true and vital interests of our country are and how its future is to be assured. The situation which existed till now will not be restored. Israel will no longer be wide open to acts of terror and murder. We have told the nations of the world that we look to the future, and to peace in particular, not to the past. We will observe the ceasefire faithfully, if the other side does so too.

Members of the Knesset, a new situation has been created which can serve as a point of departure in direct negotiations for a peace settlement with the Arab countries. The historic contribution which the nations of the world, led by the Powers, can make to bringing peace to the region is clear and unequivocal. They must direct their appeals to the Arab countries, which have made the Middle East a point of tension and a constant battleground for twenty years, rather than to Israel, which has always aspired to peace....Justice, logic and morality demand that after almost twenty years the Powers should muster their courage and tell the Arab countries that the U.N. Charter requires them, as it does every other member of the U.N., to solve disputes peacefully.

Today our region is at a crossroads. One road leads to peace and true cooperation deriving from the genuine desire and true interests of the peoples of the region. The other leads to the danger of continued hostility and all that is implied by the lack of a stable peace. The international community faces not only a moral test but also one of political sense. As soon as the arms race in the region ends—and we have seen what military equipment was prepared and built over the years by our

neighbors—the more that is done to bring peace in the Middle East nearer, the greater will be the contribution to reducing international tension in general.

To the Arab nations I would like to say: we were not eager for the fray. We acted because we had no choice but to defend our lives and our rights. Just as you have rights to your countries, we have rights to ours. The Jewish people's roots in this country are as deep as the ocean. Throughout the generations the Jews in the diaspora maintained their spiritual and material ties with this country, and were never cut off from it. Similarly, this country remained true to us, and never gave itself to any other nation. It continued to wait for its sons and the ingathering of its exiles. Today the whole world has seen that there is no force which can drive us out of this land.

This uniqueness of our nation and its ties with this country are unparalleled among the nations of the world. Perhaps our victories in the three wars which were forced on us will finally convince those who refused to acknowledge this basic truth that our ties with this country are deeper than the sea, because without it our nation has no life. Perhaps now, when the false hopes of destroying Israel have been dashed, the Arab leaders will reconsider their approach to Israel and reflect on the tremendous suffering and losses they have inflicted on their peoples and which we regret just as we regret our own losses; perhaps they will realize what precious resources have been wasted on instruments of war instead of being used for the economic and social advance of their peoples; perhaps they will ponder the benefit which will accrue to all the peoples of the region from sincere cooperation between them. It is only through this that the Middle East will take its rightful place in the network of world culture and human progress.

Mr. Speaker, when the state of emergency reached its height the Government was expanded and a National Unity Government established. I would like to note that the expanded Government, and within it the Ministerial Committee on Defense Affairs, has stood and is standing up to the test of national leadership. I am sure that through national unity we will come through the trials ahead of us, being prepared for the political campaign and seeking peace. May the days to come deepen the sense of dedication and unity, spiritual exaltation and the bond between the generations and the entire House of Israel. Israel has emerged from the trial of fire and blood stronger than before, true to ourselves and awaiting the future confidently. With the help of the Rock of Israel and its Redeemer Israel will dwell in safety.

Permit me, Mr. Speaker, to say a few more words. As I stand before you now I do not feel that I am a representative of my party, even though it is the largest in the Knesset, but that I am the Prime Minister of a Government which has conducted a war and achieved victory. The wings of victory may bring us a new era of changed values, relations and bor-

ders. Victory in war may lead to victory in bringing permanent peace. May we witness great times and be worthy of them. In our hearts we bear concern for all, not only for the individual.

Much has been said of late about the fact that we have forgotten the day we set out on our great battle. We thought that it was over and that we could each sit beneath our grape vine and fig tree in peace and security, and we demanded more for ourselves than we could and should have. We are on the threshold of a new era, albeit one full of difficulties. We were victorious only on the battlefield, the political battle is still before us. Nor have we yet won the economic battle to enable hundreds and thousands of immigrants to come. I believe that the period we have been through will speak to their hearts and bring them to us from all the corners of the earth, with their knowledge and initiative, out of a love for the country and an overwhelming desire to contribute to expanding our ability, increasing our population and bringing our number to millions in this country.

The Speaker, K. Luz: The Knesset sitting devoted to reviewing the war and commemorating the memory of the IDF's glorious dead is ended.

(All rise and sing the national anthem, "Hatikva.")

Attacks on Jews in Arab Countries

Introduction

The National Unity Government, which had come into being before the war partly in order to wage the war effectively, remained intact thereafter. It took the Knesset some time to adjust to the new situation, almost without any Opposition, except for the extreme, Communist left, whose role in parliament was accordingly enhanced. Some of the debates conducted during this period were intended to a great extent to demonstrate unity, for internal and external purposes. One example of such a debate follows. In the subsequent items, however, there are already signs of the underlying divergence of opinion between the major Coalition partners—a divergence which was to dominate the Israeli political scene for decades to come—concerning the future of the territories which had recently come under Israeli control. For the time being the divergence is low-key, being articulated primarily by the small factions which remained outside the Coalition, at both ends of the spectrum.

Sitting 186 of the Sixth Knesset

21 June 1967 (13 Sivan 5727)

A. Hassin (Ma'arach): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, almost 150,000 Jews still live in Moslem countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. When some of those countries became independent certain Jews left for other countries, while those who remained demonstrated their loyalty and expected to be given the same rights as everyone else....This, however, was not borne out by circumstances. The Jews were treated as second-class citizens...subjected to officially-sanctioned harassment and attack...and made a general scapegoat....

In the last few days two Jews were murdered in Morocco, others were tortured and a great deal of property was stolen. In Tunisia many Jews were beaten, including old people and pregnant women, stores were looted and the great and beautiful synagogue was desecrated and destroyed. In Egypt a large number of Jews were imprisoned. They were tortured in ways invented by the Nazis and no one paid any heed to the cries of the young and the old....In Libya Jews were beaten and slaughtered by mobs....We have heard disturbing rumors about the fate of our brethren in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, where they cower in fear and trembling behind the locked doors of their homes....We have heard that the Jewish community of Aden has been wiped out brutally....Meanwhile the world sits idly by, no country protesting or intervening or even displaying any pity or concern....

The strength of the mighty and glorious IDF does not reach Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, and the Jews there, who have no arms and are helpless, are persecuted mercilessly....All the Powers have representatives in the countries I have mentioned, and they undoubtedly saw what was being done to the Jews there...but they said and did nothing....Yet at the same time we are attacked in international forums by those countries, in words and deeds, we, who protect our citizens, who constantly extend our hand in peace, who respect others and do not interfere in the sovereign affairs of other countries....The riots and killings have never been placed on the agenda of the U.N. Assembly....We, the bearers of the vision: "and the wolf shall lie down with the lamb," "nation shall not lift up the sword against nation," and "they shall beat their swords into plowshares," are persecuted in the Moslem countries....The representatives of some of the Powers dare to place us in the dock. Blood has flowed like water, peace-loving youngsters and defenders of the Holy Land have been killed...but the U.N. has said nothing....It is blind and deaf when we are affected....

I know that the Government is concerned about this and is doing what it can at this fateful hour....But the rioters act faster and there is no one to put out the fire in the Jewish quarters in the Moslem countries. That is why the Government and the nation should take more vigorous action to place this subject on the agenda of the world and put an end to the suffering of our brethren....I must add a word of praise for King Hassan of Morocco and President Bourguiba of Tunisia, who condemned the rioters, arrested some of them and issued orders to guard the Jewish quarters. This had very little effect, for in the final event it is the voice of the people which decides....In view of the importance of the issue...I would like the Knesset to discuss it....

S. Cohen-Sidon (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, from the moment the Arab leaders regarded the Jewish people's liberation movement, namely, Zionism, whereby the return of the Jewish people to its ancient homeland and its redemption from the oppression of the diaspora is fulfilled, as a rival to the movement to liberate the Arab peoples from the yoke of foreigners, mobs have been incited from above and have vented their anger on the Jewish minority living in Arab countries. Our brethren there have suffered persecution, murder, rape and the burning of synagogues. Whenever the Arab leaders have been unsuccessful in implementing their threats against our state, and whenever they realize that there is an immense gap between their speeches and the results of their machinations against us, mobs are inflamed and sent to conduct pogroms against defenseless Jews.

Anyone who followed the official broadcasts emanating from Cairo, Damascus and Amman could not fail to notice that they called for the annihilation of the Jews because they were Jews, and it is hardly sur-

prising, therefore, that the Arab masses have translated that barbaric slogan into action. Thus, the events of the last few days, when Jewish property and synagogues have been burned and destroyed, as in Tunisia, Libya, Aden, Aleppo and Damascus, and Jews have been murdered or arrested and their property confiscated, must be regarded as being contradictory to the U.N. Charter. These actions must be condemned....

At the beginning of the week several Knesset Members, myself included, submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister which said, inter alia: "The State of Israel has absorbed some 750,000 Jews who resided formerly in Arab countries. These Jews, who...are full and equal citizens of Israel today and an integral part of the country's economic, political and social life, can easily be regarded as former residents of the Arab countries who have made room for the Arabs who lived in the territory of Israel prior to the establishment of the state and who live in Arab countries today, although still designated 'refugees.'

"Information has reached us of murders and damage to the persons and property of the Jews of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Syria. We appeal to the Prime Minister and voice our protest at these riots, demanding that the International Red Cross and the U.N. intervene immediately to rescue these Jews.

"Just as the international organizations came to the aid of the Arabs known as refugees and who live among their people today, the same international organizations should extend their protection to the Jews in Arab countries and transfer them to Europe, where they will be able to choose where to go next."...

Since the establishment of the State of Israel...the vast majority of the Jewish communities in the Arab countries has left...most of them being absorbed by Israel...and the great part of their property having been left behind and confiscated by the governments of the countries concerned....In effect, there has been a population exchange between the Arab countries and Israel, counterbalancing the demands made on behalf of the Arab refugees by the Arab governments....The Arab countries did not stand the test of minimal tolerance where a small Jewish minority was concerned....I note this with deep disappointment, because the Arabs, and the Moslems in particular, were noted for their tolerance and have played a distinguished role in the annals of Jewish-Moslem cooperation. I would like to use this opportunity to appeal to the Arab peoples to cease to be influenced by European Nazi theories of race, which fit neither the Arab character nor the principles of Islam....

By agreeing to the transfer of 750,000 Jews from the Arab countries to their ancient homeland of Israel, the Arab rulers recognized that Israel was the homeland of the Jews, yet they nonetheless continue to clamor that the Arabs must return to Palestine, and since no one takes any notice of them they incite the masses to attack defenseless Jews....

I therefore ask that this subject be placed on our agenda and that our representatives in the U.N. and the world be instructed to demand the evacuation of the Jews from Arab countries to places where they can be absorbed by the communities willing to do so. It goes without saying that we open our gates to our brethren who, for some reason, tarried in joining us....I ask the Knesset to transmit our protest against the aforementioned riots to all the parliaments of the world, the International Red Cross and the U.N. institutions. I would like our representatives to take this opportunity of stressing that for the last twenty years there has been a population exchange between the Arabs who lived formerly in Israel and the Jews who lived in Arab countries, and that the Arab countries must return the private and communal property of the Jews who lived there to their representatives in Israel or pay appropriate compensation for it....

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the two previous speakers did well to bring the plight of the Jews in certain Arab countries before the Knesset....There are approximately 100,000 Jews still in Arab countries, most of them concentrated in two or three countries....The attitude of the various Arab countries to the Jews residing there varies, and we should be careful not to make sweeping generalizations....

During the last few days several governments have begun to persecute the Jews and the Jewish communities....In Egypt Jews were arrested and deported. In other countries official broadcasts incited the public against Israel and the Jews. In others, including Libya, Iraq and Aden, there were attacks and pogroms. In some places the authorities acted to put a stop to these attacks and protect the Jews....We know from our long and bitter history that if a government wishes to stop attacks on Jews it can, and if it does nothing or encourages them, the attacks will continue....

Israel's ability to protect Jews in Arab countries is, regrettably, limited....Our activities in this sphere are usually conducted via outside agencies of various kinds, including those bodies which have been mentioned here....Needless to say, the nation, the Knesset and the Government are as shocked and distressed by the news as the distinguished Members of the Knesset who spoke on the subject....We are doing everything we can to prevent riots and the shedding of Jewish blood. For obvious reasons, I will not go into detail as to the situation and our activities in the various countries. I am prepared to discuss it and submit additional information in the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee if the subject is transferred to it....I propose that the speakers agree that the subject be transferred to the appropriate committee for further debate....

(The proposal to transfer the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is adopted.)

Preparation of a Peace Plan

Sitting 186 of the Sixth Knesset

21 June 1967 (13 Sivan 5727)

S. Mikunis (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, on behalf of the Israel Communist Party, I have the honor of proposing that the Knesset debate the preparation of a peace plan, a plan for permanent peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors. By this is meant a plan for a just peace, for that alone can bring genuine peace and security. The peace plan must be agreed, without any dictates or surrender, and must be based on the mutual recognition of the legal rights of both sides, for that alone can establish our country as a recognized, respected and sovereign state in the region. The peace plan must not involve any compulsion by either side, for that alone can prevent foreign intervention to benefit foreign interests and guarantee genuine independence to both Israel and the Arab countries. What is involved is replacing the 1949 Armistice Agreements with permanent peace agreements whose point of departure is not conquest and territorial annexation but ensuring peace and our national existence and future, which was the basic aim of the military campaign which was forced on Israel.

After the IDF's brilliant defeat of the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian armies, Israel has entered upon an international political campaign. It is only natural that this should also have given rise to a public debate within Israel as to the objective we seek to attain in the political arena....Certain political circles in Israel wish to exploit our joy at our military victory to replace the objective of peace with the objective of perpetuating the territorial conquests. The slogan "We won't return an inch" may bring those circles some temporary popularity but it will inevitably lead to disappointments and new dangers. If no political settlement is reached...the conditions will be created for another round of war. I am not saying that on this point everything depends on Israel, but a great deal does.

Right-wing circles in Israel who regard the territorial addition as a guarantee of peace, who speak of turning the West Bank, after certain adjustments, into an Israeli colony which may even bear the name of a "Palestinian state," who make rash statements about the occupied areas in the north and the south, are deliberately ignoring the political balance of forces in the region, the pressure of the Powers and world public opinion. Their evident reluctance to accept the positive and responsible line of thought derives from their desire to rule the country alone, a desire which they did not forget even when the entire nation was strug-

gling for Israel's very existence. Their approach contributed little to the military campaign, but may do great harm to Israel's political one.

A responsible approach to the political campaign requires sobering up from the confusion and ecstasy of victory. We cannot build our life here on continual war....We expect the Powers and all the international bodies to act in order to establish peace between Israel and the Arab countries. Maki believes that now that the aggression of the Arab rulers against the very existence of the State of Israel has been repelled, we should not return to the armistice lines but to agreed and permanent borders by means of negotiations between the sides....

A debate in the Knesset about preparing a peace plan is essential and urgent both because of the disinformation campaign throughout the world concerning the nature and causes of the war and because of the need to give a serious and peaceful response to the renewed statements being issued by the Presidents of Egypt and Syria about the continuation of the war and their intention of renewing it in due course....

What is new about the current situation is that most of Mandatory Palestine and the greater part of the Palestinian people is under Israeli rule in territory conquered by the IDF. This is an opportunity for a just and enduring solution of the Palestinian problem, the refugee problem and the Israel-Arab conflict on the basis of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. This is the opportunity to help the Palestinian people establish an independent country and elect national representatives by ensuring free and democratic elections....

A solution of this kind could also prevent imperialist intervention and patronage, while simultaneously putting an end to the plans for a joint settlement with King Hussein which are cultivated by right-wing circles in our country and preventing what is known as Pax America....A peace agreement between Israel and Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon is possible on the basis of the international borders prior to 1948. This agreement must, of course, include freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Suez Canal, complete security on the borders, the ending of the economic boycott and hostile propaganda and the assurance of mutual land traffic. Eventually it will also be possible to reach a regional economic development plan for the utilization of rivers, the irrigation of arid areas, the generation of electricity and the utilization of natural resources. This will help in rehabilitating the Arab refugees and advancing the social and economic interests of the peoples of the region. Solutions such as these will open the way for an international agreement involving the Powers for making the region neutral, ending the arms race, making the region a nuclear-free zone and even for obtaining international financial, scientific and technical aid for development schemes.

In order to avoid political failure after the military victory, assure permanent peace between Israel and the Arabs and respond to the su-

preme national interests of our nation, we must be patient, act judiciously and forego easy and transient benefits, replacing a policy of living for the moment with one which looks to the future. Although today the route to the U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries is closed...there is no doubt that this situation is temporary and relations will improve one day....We note with satisfaction that when he addressed the U.N. Assembly, the Soviet Premier, Mr. Kosygin, stressed the fact that the U.S.S.R. is not Israel's rival and that it supported Israel in 1947 because of its adherence to the principle of the right to self-determination....In any event, the West German "haven on a rainy day" and the "undisputable friendship" with France advocated by Shimon Peres, Moshe Dayan and others have not stood the test by any means.

The Israeli nation wants peace and good relations with the Arab nations. Peace, progress and independence are in the interests of both sides. The Government of Israel, for its part, must found its current political campaign on the basis of this interest of the Israeli nation and its neighbors. The military victory must be made into a lever for attaining peace. Today more than ever the unity of Israel's labor movement, of all the democratic forces, both Jewish and Arab, is necessary in order to intensify the struggle for a switch in Israel's peace policy towards neutrality, non-identification and full independence, towards Jewish-Arab cooperation and solidarity and social and cultural progress. During the weeks and days of our great trial the Israeli nation has proved that it is worthy of a leadership which will be able to take it to peace and security, to social and economic prosperity, and to a happy future.

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I think it is a well-known fact that since its establishment Israel has sought peace....Throughout our existence as a state we have repeatedly proposed direct negotiations with our neighbors. I believe that in the last few weeks we have received growing support for our position from the Powers. I would suggest that the previous speaker refrain from dividing us into militarists and pacifists. In recent weeks those categories have not been appropriate.

Our position is simple and unequivocal—we are ready and willing to sit down at the negotiating table with any of our neighbors in order to seek fitting solutions to the problems. If no solution has been attained to date, for almost twenty years, it is not for lack of opportunity but because of...the Arab leaders' refusal to accept Israel's existence. We hope that today, after twenty years of barren hostility and several bloody clashes, there may be a change....I am sure that if our neighbors evince readiness for peace it will be possible to reach an agreed solution between the two sides. The entire region is crying out for a solution to the problem. The region contains sufficient resources to assure all its inhabitants an adequate standard of living, development and progress....Israel is certainly prepared to contribute what it can to this....

I do not think that...there is any point debating the details of a peace plan publicly at this juncture. The problem was and remains the readiness of the Arab rulers to embark upon discussions with us and recognize Israel's right to exist. In discussing peace...I cannot refrain from referring to the attitude adopted by one of the Powers and which is utilized by certain Arab rulers in their refusal to accept the fact of Israel's existence....That Power encouraged them to fight, and despite their repeated declarations that they would use those weapons to destroy the Jewish people in its homeland, that Power supplied them with huge quantities of offensive weapons and even gave them political aid during the course of their aggression. I am sure you all know that I am referring...to the U.S.S.R.

Even now, after the military downfall of the aggressors, the U.S.S.R. continues to help them in their political struggle. Only two days ago the whole world heard an aggressive and hostile speech from the Soviet Premier, Mr. Kosygin, in which he deliberately ignored the statements made by the Arab rulers regarding their intention of destroying Israel. Over the years we have become accustomed to hearing such pronouncements regularly from the Arab leaders....Mr. Kosygin omitted to mention his Government's share in the responsibility for that aggression by extending military, technical and political aid. He made baseless accusations against Israel, and there is no doubt that world public opinion knows this. In that speech reality was distorted in the most shocking way.

It was horrifying to hear the representatives of the U.S.S.R. compare Israel's policy to that of Hitler's Germany. Our defensive war saved the Israeli nation in its state from the second Holocaust which the Arab rulers had been preparing for years....The U.S.S.R. had given them the arms. By his speech the Soviet Premier desecrated the memory of the many millions of Hitler's victims, whether Jews, Russians or the citizens of the various countries of Europe. Mr. Kosygin spoke of the way the soldiers of the IDF treated the Arab population, and he did not praise them. I maintain that what he said was based on erroneous information. Hundreds of journalists saw and are seeing how life is going back to normal with maximum speed wherever the IDF is to be found, and how the military governors are working unceasingly to accelerate this process.

The U.S.S.R. is one of the greatest Powers in the world, and it bears a heavy responsibility for peace. It should reexamine its policy, its assessments and the sources of its information, using its power and influence to persuade the Arab rulers to adopt a policy which is realistic and furthers peace. I believe that the chance of peace between the countries of the region could be nearer today than it has ever been. The U.S.S.R. bears a heavy responsibility for the tragic past. It can and

must act for a better future. History and the whole world will judge it according to its deeds in the coming weeks.

The State of Israel trusts in the justice of its cause and is ready for peace with all its neighbors.

I think that there is no need...for a public debate in the Knesset about peace plans now, because at the moment there is no readiness...on the part of our Arab neighbors to recognize Israel's existence and negotiate with us....The debate is very much with us, and I do not want MK Mikunis to think that the Government does not discuss it constantly and continually....I do not think there would be any benefit in making it public at this stage. The recent events are still too fresh....The Government will undoubtedly bring its conclusions and proposals before the Knesset or the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee when the time is ripe....

Since the subject is a weighty one, I would not like to propose merely removing it from the agenda. I hope the proposer will agree with me that at present it is better to leave the matter for several weeks...to be discussed in less public forums...and bring it before the Knesset at a later stage....

S. Mikunis (Maki): ...I agree that the vote on my proposal for the agenda should be postponed for a month, or five weeks, in view of the reasons the Prime Minister has given.

Treatment of the Arab Population in the Administered Areas and the Fate of Men in the Sinai Desert

Sitting 186 of the Sixth Knesset

21 June 1967 (13 Sivan 5727)

M. Wilner (Rakah): Knesset Members...on behalf of the Communist party group I propose that we debate the treatment of the Arab population in the conquered areas and the fate of the thousands of men in the Sinai Desert....After the Sinai Desert was conquered by the IDF many thousands of Egyptian soldiers remained there without food or water.... There have been reports in the Israeli and foreign press of how these thousands are wandering about the desert, dying. Time has passed, various people have approached the Government, but nothing has been done. Only after precious time had been lost and pressure had been exerted by the International Red Cross and public opinion did rescue operations begin. 11,000 men were returned, and according to their reports, the wounded were subjected to horrible treatment while prisoners of war.

We have heard and read reports that the Military Governor of the West Bank announced that anyone wishing to leave the area would be enabled to do so....This constituted pressure to leave an area under military occupation. The response from the other side was a call to the population not to leave their homes. According to reports in the Israeli press...100,000 people have already left, and this process is continuing....There have been reports of the blowing up of villages in the Latrun area, for example, for "strategic, tactical and security reasons"....

We have all heard stories from our soldiers about what was and was not done to the civilian population. Villages were destroyed not only in the Latrun area after the military operations had ended....Old and young, men, women and children, the sick and the feeble were moved out of the former Jewish Quarter of the Old City in a horrifying way....Houses have been destroyed in the area around the Western Wall and there seems to be general confusion and disorganization....

M. Hacohen (Ma'arach): Stop conducting this anti-Israel propaganda campaign!

M. Wilner (Rakah): I am saying these things for the good of the State of Israel....Anti-semitism never did any good when it was directed against the Jews, nor when it was directed against others by Jews.

The Security Council unanimously demanded that Israel adopt a humane approach to the inhabitants of the conquered territories, enabling those who had fled or been expelled to return to their homes....Leading Israeli intellectuals, academics and professionals have called for a stop to all the persecutions, deportations, and destruction of houses and property in the occupied areas and for medical aid to be extended to the population there immediately. We endorse that demand. I note with satisfaction that many soldiers refused to participate in action directed against the civilian population, and some even prevented action of this kind from being taken, while endangering their own lives.

Our behavior in the occupied territories has caused untold damage to Israel in addition to the actual waging of the war. As a Jew who lost all his family in the war, my heart is filled with pain and shame at the fact that it was the Government of Israel which initiated war for the second time, thereby endangering world peace, and which is taking shameful action against the civilian population of the occupied territories.

M. Cohen (Ma'arach): Shame on you!

M. Wilner (Rakah): Shame on the persecutors of the Arab population! Shame on the anti-semites in the State of Israel!

I propose that we debate this issue, and I would like to conclude with a few lines which Nathan Alterman wrote during the War of Independence. Some people are able to keep their heads even in stirring times:

A brave, armed boy crossed the conquered town in a jeep,
And an old man and a woman stood against the wall in the street.
The boy smiled, showing milk teeth, "I'll try the gun."
He tried, the man covered his face, didn't try to run,
Then his blood covered the wall....

We may talk of "sensitive incidents" which happen to be murder,
Then we smile apologetically, and the matter goes no further....
Because fighting men, us included, whether near or far,
Murmur "necessity," and "revenge," and are criminals of war.

If this was so in the War of Independence, how much more so today.

The Minister of Defense, M. Dayan: If MK Wilner...wanted to accuse Israel of starting the war, he should have said so openly and tabled a motion for the agenda...instead of slyly slipping it into his speech about thirsty Egyptians wandering about the desert....The Government of Israel did not start this war. The first act of aggression was the closing of the Straits and the blockade on Israeli shipping.

As to the other points raised by MK Wilner, one must have a sense of proportion when speaking of civilian casualties and soldiers wandering around the desert hungry and thirsty. I do not think there have been

many wars in which the civilian population suffered as little as in this one, as a result of the policy of the Government and the IDF. Jerusalem was shelled for days, but the IDF did not fire a single shell or drop a single bomb, on any civilian locality, not even on the Old City when Jerusalem was being shelled from there for days, neither on Damascus nor on Cairo, though we could have had we wanted to...

So, when you speak of harming the civilian population, kindly keep a sense of proportion....You were in Jerusalem, you saw what was inflicted on Jewish Jerusalem by the other side...yet there was no retaliation from our side....No one was even scratched in Hebron when it was taken. In Jenin two or three people were hurt, and there were a few casualties in Nablus. Is that what an army does when there is fighting—including Jordanian tanks—inside those towns? Do you know of any other army which would make its way right across a town, while clashing with the Legion, without harming a soul...?

As for the Egyptian soldiers in the desert...many of them refused to give themselves up either because of the instructions broadcast over Cairo Radio to continue fighting as guerrillas...or because they thought they could make their way back to Egypt....That is why many thousands of Egyptian soldiers are wandering about the desert....Those soldiers who lay down their arms and gave themselves up are not wandering around and are neither hungry nor thirsty....We did not prevent foreign journalists from entering the Sinai, the Syrian Heights and the West Bank and seeing the situation for themselves....We have cooperated with the Red Cross in assessing the situation...and hardly a single Egyptian soldier has been found wandering around, since they seem to have either found their way to Egypt or given themselves up....

The same applies to the accusations that we bombed hospitals in El-Arish and elsewhere. Red Cross representatives visited the hospitals and talked with Arab P.o.W.s. They found that no one had been hurt while in hospital and that the conditions in which the P.o.W.s were being kept in camps was in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

There may have been some discrepancy between the orders that were issued and the facts on the ground in the West Bank. When there is a war, especially one in which both regulars and reserves are fighting, with all the differences in their ages, backgrounds and mentalities, not every order is obeyed instantly, immediately and to the fullest extent....The inhabitants of the West Bank were not an objective, neutral population in this war. They constituted part of the Jordanian kingdom and of the forces which waged war on Israel on June 5 by shelling Jerusalem and its corridor....This war began with the closing of the Straits, and until the moment Jordan started to fight we did not think it would spread to the Jordanian front. No one thought that it would. But the civilian population there...in places like Latrun, Tulkarm and Kal-kilya was part of the military disposition of the Jordanian Army, which

was placed under Egyptian command...and was ordered to attack Israel....Jordanian cannon fired on Israel from there, not from the other side of the River Jordan...and the civilian population helped the Legion....It was not neutral in this war....

For the last twenty years the West Bank has belonged to Jordan. Many of the soldiers of the Legion came from there. Regrettably, I cannot distinguish between them and Jordan today, just as I cannot distinguish between Jordan and Egypt....The orders given regarding the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem...were to evacuate the people living in synagogues and holy places and offer alternative accommodation to anyone living in houses there....Are any of those people left out in the street...? The people living in the synagogues were not residents of Jerusalem before 1948. Most of them came from Hebron or elsewhere....If anyone is left without a roof over their heads we will see to it that they get one...but we will not let them continue living in synagogues in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. We intend to restore those synagogues so that they may serve as places of worship once more.

With regard to the refugees who left the West Bank—and who may or may not number 100,000, I have no precise figures on that—it is true that an order was issued to the effect that any inhabitant of the West Bank who wished to leave for Jordan could do so...and that a certain number of those inhabitants took advantage of that order, for a variety of reasons....Individuals and groups are still seeking to take advantage of the arrangement enabling them to leave, and we are not preventing them from doing so....I see nothing wrong in this arrangement and regard it as perfectly fair and humane....We are trying to attain the maximal normalization of life on the West Bank with maximum speed. There may be hitches here and there, and it is evident that this normalization will not constitute a return to the regime which existed there formerly. There will be no Egyptians in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank will be under Israeli rule. The normalization will not be political, and certainly not military. The IDF will be there, not the Legion, the Egyptian Army, the Fedayeen or those cannon. But from the point of view of the Arab individual living there, I assume that we will be able to attain normalization within a short period of time.

I propose that we remove the motion from the agenda.

S. Mikunis (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, I propose that we transfer the motion to an appropriate Knesset Committee...so that it is not simply removed from the agenda...because it is an important issue....The information we have received about certain Arab areas which were conquered by the IDF during the fighting arouses grave concern. I am talking about the demolition of several Arab villages in the Latrun area and the expulsion of their inhabitants by certain groups of soldiers....There are reports of collective punishment being inflicted on the inhabitants of certain villages, forcing men, women and chil-

dren to abandon their homes and possessions and leave without food or water. It appears that the soldiers who were ordered to do this were deeply shocked, and in some cases refused to obey that order....All these human tragedies are in complete contradiction to our moral superiority in battle, our advanced sense of justice and the basis of our very existence in this region....

Israel embarked on a war which was forced upon it in order to protect its existence in the face of the Arab leaders' intentions of destroying it and in order to attain permanent peace with the Arab peoples. Any harm inflicted on the civilian Arab population contradicts the defensive nature of the war and the objective of peace....The propaganda campaign currently being conducted against Israel obliges us to be doubly careful that no injustice is done...for injustices of this kind harm us as much as the Arabs...and hamper our political campaign.

I would like to express my reservations regarding the description of thousands of Egyptian soldiers wandering hungry and thirsty around the Sinai Desert given so graphically by the representative of Rakah. No one disputes that two or three days after the fighting began thousands of Egyptian soldiers were in dire straits in the Sinai Desert, but...in view of the anti-Israel propaganda being broadcast from Cairo, we should point out that it is the Egyptian rulers who were responsible for the fact that Egyptian officers abandoned their men and fled, because Egypt stopped the supply of water across the Canal to the desert. Israeli helicopters, on the other hand, located Egyptian soldiers and dropped supplies to them...sometimes at great risk to themselves....I therefore propose that the subject be transferred to the appropriate committee for further discussion....

(MK Wilner's proposal to debate the subject in the plenum is not adopted.)

(MK Mikunis' proposal to transfer the subject to a committee is not adopted.)

Statements by Prominent Persons Regarding the Return of Liberated Territory to the Enemy

Sitting 186 of the Sixth Knesset

21 June 1967 (13 Sivan 5727)

S. Tamir (Free Center): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, on June 12 this year Israel's ambassador to the U.S., Mr. Harman, is reported as having said: "It will be necessary to hold direct talks between Israel and the Arabs to decide on the future of the territory captured from Egypt, Jordan and Syria." On June 19 the Chairman of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is reported as having said: "The main point is not territory but peace with the Arabs, and the negotiations with them may oblige us to relinquish territory for permanent peace." On June 10 the Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. Adi Jaffe, reportedly said: "Apart from Jerusalem and Sharm el-Sheikh, we will agree to discuss all our territorial gains during the war." On the same day the Prime Minister said, in reply to a reporter's question about our retaining the Syrian Heights: "If we were alone in the world it might be possible. But we must remember that there is also New York...and the U.N...." We have also heard various suggestions about granting autonomy to the Arab areas now controlled by the IDF. Adi Jaffe's statement has been denied, though not the others....At the same time the Egyptian tyrant and the Hashemite king...announced unequivocally that their objective still remained the destruction of Israel.

Political statements at a fateful time such as this are acts, just as such important statements as the one made by the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense that the Armistice Agreements have collapsed and will not be restored, and the Minister of Defense's unforgettable assertion that we have returned to united Jerusalem and will never leave it again determine historical facts. Statements such as those reportedly made by Israel's ambassador to the U.S., the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and the Prime Minister take on a significance which I am sure are alien to those who made them and with which most people in this House and Israel disagree. They may also constitute an invitation to pressure from friendly nations...which, with all their good intentions, may constitute a greater threat to us at this point than our enemies. After all, we have proved that we can deal with our enemies....

This motion is being proposed by a party group...which was the first to demand a National Unity Government...and which, although not in

the Government, has stated that it has its full support...and that of the entire nation....This nation seeks to preserve the achievements of its Army, which smashed the enemy's aggressive power...and wishes to strengthen the security cordon of the Golan Heights over the northern settlements which have suffered so much, retaining the ridges extending from Ramallah, through united Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron as an integral part of Jewish sovereignty, and is resolved never to return to the abominable situation in which enemy artillery was stationed close to Afula, Netanya, Petah Tikva, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. It is by maintaining that security cordon that we will avert a fourth round, and Israeli lads will never again have to shed their blood in order to liberate Jenin or Gaza, break through Abu Ageila or the Mitla or ensure our freedom of navigation in the Gulf of Solomon and the Suez Canal.

We have always maintained that the aspiration for permanent peace must be the basis of Israel's foreign policy. Nothing brings peace nearer today than the fact that the IDF is 70 kilometers from Cairo, 50 kilometers from Amman and 60 kilometers from Damascus. In view of these facts, and the repeated threats of destruction being made by Nasser, Hussein and Attasi, we must remove any note of apology or hint of withdrawal from our vocabulary....Israel's representative at the U.N. must demand that any country which threatens to destroy a member-state should be regarded as an aggressor and expelled from the U.N. Our representative should also make it clear that Israel will not tolerate the prolonged blockage of the Suez Canal...and will, if necessary, open it by force....We must make it clear that the problem of the Arab refugees...will now be resolved by Israel in the liberated areas of the Land of Israel and the appropriate sections of the Sinai Peninsula.

We must liberate ourselves of the confusion which seems to have gripped some of us with regard to the large increase of Arab population within Israel's sovereign territory. Original Zionism...always foresaw a large Arab population in Israel's sovereign territory as an integral part of the Jewish state....Anyone who denies this, who hesitates to incorporate a large Arab population under Israeli sovereignty and is prepared to relinquish any part of our external or internal sovereignty over the Land of Israel may unwittingly be creating the framework which will gradually become the Arab state which is the most extreme in its hostility towards us.

We must return to our sources, wherein lie the roots of the solutions, and apply them to the new reality....I propose that we debate those statements...with which I am sure most of the members of this House disagree....

B. Azaniah (Ma'arach): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...our current political situation and the existence of the National Government...require the Government's supervision of everything connected with peace or a peace plan. If we felt that the Government was not deal-

ing with these topics I could understand a motion for the agenda on that point, but when we know that the Government is dealing with the matter, I see no justification for discussing statements which have or have not been made....I can only repeat what the Prime Minister has already said, namely, that the day will come when the Knesset will discuss whatever the Government sees fit to bring before it...regarding the political solution of the burning issues....Nothing is to be gained by debating the subject at this point....I therefore propose that we remove the motion from the agenda.

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I would have understood it had MK Azaniah proposed shelving the proposal, as the Prime Minister proposed shelving the previous one. But since he has not done this, and has proposed removing it from the agenda, I propose transferring the subject to a committee....

The Prime Minister said something which requires further thought, namely, that we propose peace to our neighbors and expect them to respond. The Prime Minister is forgetting one neighbor, the Palestinian Arab nation, almost all of which, one and a half million persons, is currently under Israeli rule....Anyone who claims that we are waiting for our neighbors to make peace with us is preventing the possibility of making peace with that nation, with which we are currently in a position to talk directly...as well as of creating facts which could completely change Israel's political situation in the world, the U.N. and in general. Why do we not immediately establish an official representation of the Arabs of Palestine, who are under our control?

Minister M. Begin: What is "Palestine?" Why don't you say "the Land of Israel?"

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): It's the same thing. In our language it is "the Land of Israel." I said "Palestine," in accordance with their definition. The terminology is irrelevant right now....We must help that nation, which is currently under Israeli rule, to set up its own elected institutions for the first time in history. A referendum could be held among those Arabs immediately in order to take the steam out of the claims made by the opponents and enemies of Israel....I fear that by delaying and deferring the debate time will pass and Israel's opponents will establish new faits accomplis....I do not endorse the views of the proposer of the motion, but I propose transferring it to a committee....

(The proposal to debate the subject in the plenum is not adopted.)

(The proposal to transfer the subject to a committee is not adopted.)

(The proposal to remove the motion from the agenda is adopted.)

Reunification of Jerusalem

Introduction

The reunification of Jerusalem was perceived as the culmination of the Six Day War throughout the world, not only in Israel, and by Jews everywhere, for whom the renewed access to the Western (Wailing) Wall was of supreme importance. It brought to the fore the question of the status of East Jerusalem. Whereas the Government of Israel was content to administer all other newly-acquired territories under military law, de facto within the context of the Geneva Convention, in the case of Jerusalem it was anxious to make it clear that the reunification was irreversible. At the same time, it was eager to avoid international complications, as far as possible. It was decided, therefore, to effect the incorporation of East Jerusalem into the territory of the state by means of an enabling law—an amendment to the Law and Administration Ordinance, a leftover from Mandatory times, accompanied by a corresponding Government declaration. The amendment was presented to the Knesset together with a new law concerning the holy places and proposing heavy penalties for violators of their sanctity. For the first time, three Cabinet members shared the Knesset podium in presenting legislation, whose thrust was to make the status of East Jerusalem, including the Old City, equal with that of the rest of the city, as an integral part of the sovereign territory of Israel.

Sitting 188 of the Sixth Knesset

27 June 1967 (19 Sivan 5727)

The Law and Administration Ordinance (Amendment No. 11) Law, 5727-1967

The Minister of Justice, J.S. Shapira: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the Government is bringing three bills before the House today, which together form three layers of the legislative edifice....What needs to be determined...after our victory over those who sought to destroy Israel...is that the IDF has liberated considerable, though not necessarily contiguous, sections of the Land of Israel from the yoke of foreigners....The juridical view of the State of Israel, which has always been an organic reflection of actual political facts, was based on the principle that the jurisdiction, law and administration of the state apply

to those parts of the Land of Israel which are actually under the control of the state.

It is the Government's view that...in addition to the IDF's control, an act of sovereignty from the state is required so that Israeli law will apply to territory of this kind....Consequently, the Government proposes that the Knesset pass the law I am bringing before you, whereby the jurisdiction, law, and administration of the state will apply to any part of the Land of Israel which the Government so designates....The Government shall be entitled to issue ordinances from time to time determining the areas to which the jurisdiction, law and administration of the state shall apply....

Municipalities Ordinance (Amendment No. 6) Law, 5727-1967

The Minister of the Interior, I.S. Ben-Meir: Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, one of the bases of a democratic society like Israel is the municipalization of all areas included within the territory of the state and to which the laws of the state apply. Most of the country has already been fully municipalized...enabling services to be provided to the inhabitants....

If alongside a municipal body there is territory which is not under the jurisdiction of any other municipal authority, under existing law, before the Minister of the Interior decides to incorporate that area he must appoint a committee of investigation to examine the situation and make its recommendations....If the bill the Minister of Justice has brought before us is passed, these areas may remain without any municipal jurisdiction. It is advisable that municipal jurisdiction be established with all possible speed, so that the inhabitants of these areas do not suffer from the lack of services. This will also bring normalization to this area....This bill will also empower the Minister of the Interior to expand the Municipal Council by appointing members to it from among the inhabitants of the area concerned....

Protection of Holy Places Law, 5727-1967

The Minister of Religions, Z. Warhaftig: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, the Land of Israel is the Holy Land and contains sites which are sacred to all the monotheistic religions....For the Jewish people the entire country is sacred, though some places are particularly so....Jerusalem, with the Western Wall at its center, is especially sacred to us....The Land of Israel also contains sites which are sacred to all the streams of Christianity and to Islam....

Respect for and protection of holy places is the duty of every civilized nation...and is part of the glorious tradition of the Jewish people and the State of Israel....During the nineteen years of the revival of the State of Israel...we have demonstrated our deep concern for the welfare of places holy to all the religions....The Government's policy regarding the holy places is based on three principles: a. the places holy to all the religions will be assured of protection from desecration and from anything likely to violate the feelings of the members of the religions to whom those places are holy; b. the members of all religions, wherever they may be, will be assured of freedom of access to the places which are sacred to them....Borders should not prevent people from sincerely observing the precepts of their religion; c. the internal administration of the holy places should be undertaken by the responsible authority of the religion to which the place is sacred. The Government wishes to give greater force to that policy by passing the law before you, so that in us may be fulfilled the words of Isaiah: "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."

M. Porush (Aguda): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, nine generations ago my forefathers came to Jerusalem, the Holy City, constituting part of the ten first families to return to the Holy City after the destruction of the Temple. In the light of our collective memory of living under foreign rule—first of the Turks and then of the British—this law takes on a special significance....Who among us dreamed even a month ago that Israel's sovereignty would extend over the entire Holy Land, the holy places, including the graves of our ancestors and all of Jerusalem, the Holy City, including the remnant of our Temple, the Western Wall....Just as we have reached this great day, we hope and pray for the great day of the coming of the Messiah, and until that day comes we will watch and guard the sanctity of the Temple Mount, not wishing to arouse dissent at this glorious time....

We say to you, Members of the Knesset, let us not be drunk with victory. Let us preserve our uniqueness, the uniqueness of Jerusalem. For us Jerusalem is not a town like any other, a capital like any other. For the Law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be a beacon to the nations of the world....Jerusalem is unique in its sanctity. We must not violate the purity of its sanctity and splendor.

We ask you to be careful in preserving the sanctity of the holy places. Why should not buildings in the Old City which were formerly owned by Jewish religious institutions be returned to them, just as Mount Scopus was returned to Hadassah and the University? We should remember our brethren who fell in the war to liberate Jerusalem and the rest of Israel. There can be no consolation for the bereaved fami-

lies...may God comfort you....We hope and pray that Jerusalem and the entire Jewish people will be blessed with peace, as our prophets have prophesied....

E. Shostak (Free Center): Mr. Speaker...the Area of Jurisdiction and Authorities Ordinance of 1948 states that every law which applies to the entire State of Israel will be regarded as also applying to...any part of the Land of Israel which the Minister of Defense defines by proclamation as being controlled by the IDF, and that any person or group of people empowered by law to act or serve within the entire State of Israel will be regarded as being empowered to do so also...in any part of the Land of Israel which the Minister of Defense defines by proclamation as being controlled by the IDF. By virtue of that ordinance the State of Israel has the authority to act within these territories if the Minister of Defense issues the required proclamation. Why, then, is the bill before us needed...?

I regret to say that it is my feeling that the object of this bill is merely to exclude all the municipalities and areas currently controlled by the IDF from the area of jurisdiction of the State of Israel, since by means of a proclamation issued by the Minister of Defense we could extend every authority to those areas....The bill derives from a sense of guilt or fear....Why do we have to justify ourselves or be apprehensive? Just imagine what would have happened if, God forbid, those blood-thirsty barbarians who sought to destroy us had been victorious. We are acting by virtue of our right to liberate parts of the Land of Israel by the IDF...and by law we are empowered to enforce that authority. Does not this bill indicate that we do not intend to extend all our authority to all the territories?

...Only today the Prime Minister of Israel said that he did not exclude the possibility of mediation by the U.S. and other countries. All the time we have heard that we are prepared for discussions solely within the framework of direct negotiations...and now the Prime Minister has said something quite different....Others speak of Arab autonomy in the West Bank, and yet others of federations....I have not yet heard a single Minister say that we will not give up any area...with or without a peace treaty....

The Prime Minister says that he is prepared to hold negotiations even with Nasser. I fail to understand how a Prime Minister of Israel can say a thing like that at a time like this....Should we encourage Nasser...and save his skin and his standing in the world? Would the Allies have considered negotiations with Hitler after his military defeat? Thus, everyone talks, and how, but the Members of the Knesset are expected to keep quiet.

The Knesset must make it absolutely clear that we have every intention of extending the authority of Israel's legislation to the entire area of the liberated Land of Israel....The proposed law means that each case

will be decided individually by the Minister....Although it is difficult to propose returning the bill to the Government, it is our national duty to state that if the Government of Israel is thinking about not applying Israel's legislation to all the liberated areas it will be acting in contradiction to the will of the entire nation, that it does not represent the Israeli nation in this, which has and will shed its blood and was about to be destroyed....

To date I have not seen the Minister of Defense's proclamation which, in accordance with his powers, should have been issued some time ago. We did it in 1948. We did it in 1956, but we have not done it now, when we needed it. Consequently...we must warn you not to interpret this law in such a way as to make it possible to exclude areas from the jurisdiction of the State of Israel. Only if the Government states explicitly that it intends to extend its authority to all the areas currently controlled by the IDF can we regard the bill before us as representing a trend which is desirable for the nation at this point, and vote for it.

...

S. Mikunis (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, Jerusalem, Israel's ancient capital, the city which is sacred to the three religions, was split nineteen years ago in the wake of the 1948 war, when the Jewish Yishuv had to fight for its defense and independence. The splitting of Jerusalem, this historic city, caused grief to our nation as well as to the Arab nation, and, one might add, to many nations throughout the world. Apart from the fact that during those nineteen years the Jordanian Government deprived the Jewish inhabitants of Israel of access to the Western Wall and other historic sites, the walls of the Old City often served as points whence attacks were launched and sniping directed against Jewish Jerusalem by the Arab Legion. As you know, on the morning of June 5, heavy shelling was directed at Jewish Jerusalem from positions in the Old City, despite the Prime Minister's statement that Israel had no intention of harming Jordan if it stayed out of the war against Israel....

The conquest of the Old City and its environs by the IDF constituted an integral part of Israel's war of defense and survival....Equally, however, the problem of the Old City is part of the overall problem confronting Israel after its military victory over Egypt, Jordan and Syria, namely, the problem of victory on the political front, the peace front....The assurance of peace and security was the avowed aim of the war which was forced upon us....The Israeli nation, the Jews of the diaspora, and world public opinion which supports Israel...expect Israel's battle for peace to be conducted as vigorously, responsibly and intelligently as the military campaign....

The two bills—with the exception of the Protection of Holy Places Law—which have been brought before the Knesset with such strange haste, in effect give the Government the right to annex territory. This

applies not only to the Old City of Jerusalem, which is their main aim, but to other towns too. This constitutes empowering the Government, without consulting or considering the other side, to take a unilateral step, which involves several dangers. Quite apart from this, it is possible and necessary to extend municipal services to the Old City of Jerusalem. Both bills...contradict the Israeli nation's objective of peace, will only benefit the campaign being conducted against Israel by Arab chauvinism...and may rouse other, formerly friendly, forces against us....

Israel's objective in embarking on the military campaign was not territorial conquest and annexation but the assurance of peace and our national existence and future. The vast majority of the Israeli public regards the occupation of the conquered territories as a temporary stage in the process of the struggle for a permanent peace which will benefit both sides...as statements made by various Ministers have demonstrated....

Our nation, which wants peace, senses that this can be achieved on an agreed basis, by doing justice to both sides, by assuring the just rights of both the Israeli and the Arab nations, without dictates on one side or surrender on the other....Any attempt to circumvent that, or to create a fait accompli which undermines peace, pierces the heart of the nation and prevents it from attaining peace and security....The nation entreats its elected representatives to see the situation as it really is. The nation wants us to do everything we can to turn relations of hostility between Arabs and Israelis into those of friendship and peace. We must not allow ourselves to be carried away by elation and must weigh our steps carefully....For these reasons we must reject the two bills before us, which seek to legalize the annexation of the Old City of Jerusalem....

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam HazeH-Ko'ah Hadash): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, the nation wants the unification of Jerusalem. I support the unification of Jerusalem. We thank the soldiers who fought valiantly to conquer the city. We thank the Government which gave the order at the crucial moment....Nevertheless, I doubt whether this is the appropriate way to implement the administrative unification of Jerusalem....It is no secret that my colleagues and I support the unification of the country within the framework of a federation between the State of Israel and the Arab state which will be established in the West Bank and Gaza and whose natural capital will be united Jerusalem, as part of the State of Israel....But the way in which these bills have been brought before the Knesset precludes the possibility of a frank and open debate of the fundamental and crucial issues facing the nation and deprives the Knesset of its true function...limiting the discussion of the issues to the Government....

This was not why we voted for the National Unity Government...not that we regret having done so now....At the moment the military censorship, which is under the authority of the Minister of Defense, is preventing any mention in the press of the differences of opinion within the Government....I support the content of these bills as regards Jerusalem and will vote for them, but I would like to express my reservations regarding the way this has been done...without a proper debate in the Knesset...and while determining a fait accompli in Jerusalem....We maintain that this approach does not hold for the other areas. Although the Land of Israel has been mentioned, I am not sure what this comprises by law. I know what it comprises as regards national and historic consciousness. But what about the Sinai Peninsula and the Syrian Heights? All these subjects should be discussed....

The Minister of Justice, J.S. Shapira: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I fully agree with MK Mikunis that the war should culminate with peace treaties without any dictates. I appreciate his position in view of the opposition of the majority of the Communist movement to this important and elementary idea....It was interesting to hear that...the Knesset does not represent the nation. One needs considerable audacity to tell 120 Knesset members that a tiny minority is unable to support the Government—which currently represents over ninety percent of the House—because the latter does not have the confidence of the majority of the nation....Why does MK Shostak prefer a proclamation issued by the Minister of Defense to a bill which requires the sanction of the entire Government...? Does this not make us a democratic and organized state...? One of the overriding aims of a National Unity Government in a time of emergency is to enable it to come to the Knesset backed by the support of ninety percent of the nation....I would like to tell MK Avneri that we are at war—formerly it was military and now it is political—with enemies who have no recourse to parliamentary debates, or even governmental consultations, and where there is no freedom of the press....Do you think we can allow ourselves that luxury...? There is a general consensus that this debate should be held *in camera*, as the Basic Law: the Knesset empowers us to do. What right do you have to complain if Government sessions where matters of the life and survival of the state are discussed are held *in camera*?

I therefore request that the three bills before you be transferred to the appropriate committees....

(The three bills are transferred to the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, the Internal Affairs Committee and the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, respectively.)

Arrangements for Appropriate Behavior at Holy Places

Introduction

The administration of and conduct at holy places is relevant not only to the relations between Israel and non-Jews, but is also of concern to Israel's Jewish citizens, whose ideas on the subject are not necessarily identical. One such example follows.

Sitting 191 of the Sixth Knesset

4 July 1967 (26 Sivan 5727)

S. Lorincz (Aguda): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, among the many gifts which the good Lord has bestowed on us as a result of our brilliant victory, the holy places take pride of place....Millions of Jews in Israel and the world over blessed the Lord for having preserved us in life till this day, when we can go and pray at the Western Wall, the Cave of Machpelah, Rachel's Tomb and the other holy places. Obviously, the fact that the holy places are once more in our hands places certain obligations upon us, obligations which are pleasant and sacred....

The Jewish people, which has given the somewhat strange and irrational concept of "sacred" to the world, has always known...how to treat things and places which are holy. It is a fact that in the battle for the liberation of the Old City the IDF increased the danger to our heroic soldiers—with the resultant casualties—rather than damage the holy places there, in contrast to our enemies, who made use of the holy places in their war against us....

We must examine how our forefathers treated holy places so that we may know how to behave there....I am glad to say that I am absolutely convinced that no Jew would want to deliberately violate the sanctity of the holy places or offend the feelings of religious Jews....This has been proved both by the Knesset's unanimous adoption of the Protection of Holy Places Law last week and by the apologies proffered by visitors to those sites whose improper dress was pointed out to them....The problem is, however, that because people have not been educated correctly they do not know what appropriate behavior is. That is why all the information channels, including the Knesset, must be utilized, to ensure that the general public knows what is and is not permitted at holy places. I congratulate the Minister of Religions on the efficiency with which he has issued regulations on this subject....I think, however, that in order to

prevent argument, "appropriate dress" should be defined. If one may not enter a Christian church without sleeves or socks, or with a low neckline, how much more so does this apply to places which are holy to us. I also doubt whether it is appropriate to ban beggars from holy places. I agree that visitors should not be pestered, but there is no reason why poor people should not request charity, even in holy places. I propose that we prepare scarves and skullcaps and instruct guides who will direct people in a pleasant manner....

The law and the regulations should be published on the radio, in the press and on noticeboards, so that the information may be disseminated as widely as possible....We hope and pray that no Jew is ever arrested and brought to trial for violating this law....What is needed is good will and the help of schoolteachers, youth leaders, organizations and political parties, particularly as regards the desecration of the Sabbath....The radio reports that last Saturday twenty thousand cars came to Jerusalem. This constitutes the desecration of the Sabbath by 100,000 people who came to the Holy City to visit the holy places....Although it grieves me deeply to say this, I would rather that the Western Wall were not in our hands than that the Sabbath should be desecrated in this manner....

A. Biton (Ma'arach): People gave their lives for that!

S. Lorincz (Aguda): Do not suspect me of failing to appreciate the sacrifices which have been made....I merely expressed my sorrow and pain...and uttered a purely abstract thought. Nothing practical, of course. For it is inconceivable that people should visit the holy places while desecrating the Sabbath....From this spot I appeal to all Jews not to visit the holy places on the Sabbath....I propose that the Knesset debate this subject, so that the appropriate behavior at holy places may be disseminated more widely....

The Minister of Religions, Z. Warhaftig: Madam Speaker, Knesset Members...the redemption of Jerusalem and the Western Wall have also brought us a great many problems, most of which I hope we will be able to solve....Control over the Western Wall was handed to the Ministry of Religions only the day before yesterday. We received a square full of stones and dust as the result of the demolition of buildings, and we must begin setting matters straight. We have formulated regulations but these have not yet been published. I hope that this will be done next week....We are currently organizing a body of people to ensure that these regulations are observed at the Western Wall....Naturally, the protection of holy places involves education, culture and an attitude of respect, veneration and sanctity, first of all....I believe that that attitude exists amongst Jewish youngsters. They endangered their lives in order to liberate the Western Wall because they have a feeling of veneration. I saw how deeply moved those youngsters were after the liberation of the Wall...and I believe that this feeling of sanctity will be re-

flected in their attitude towards the protection of these places....As far as education is concerned, we will do our best, whether by broadcasts on the radio, publishing pamphlets, and so on.

I know that there are problems which are not necessarily connected with the Wall, namely, the desecration of the Sabbath by people coming to Jerusalem. It is a very grave problem. I have discussed it with the Ministers of Transport and Defense, and we are looking for a way of solving it....I would like you to understand that these are just the first days in which this subject is under our authority. I hope that a great deal can be done by good will. Since the problem is largely one of education and culture...I trust that its discussion by the Knesset's Internal Affairs or Education Committee will help, and I propose transferring the subject to one of them...to which we will submit the plans and regulations and give full explanations....

(The proposal to transfer the subject to the Internal Affairs Committee is adopted.)

Questions and Answers

Introduction

The number of parliamentary questions submitted in writing and answered orally by the Minister concerned had increased steadily from one Knesset to another. They gained particular prominence at the time of the National Unity Government, since they are the exclusive responsibility of the Knesset Member concerned and are not usually subject to approval by his party group or the Coalition. Many questions deal with matters of detail. Below are some examples of questions on topics of more general interest.

Sitting 258 of the Sixth Knesset

26 February 1968 (27 Shevat 5728)

Press Reports of Israeli Espionage in Arab Countries

MK E. Shostak asked the Prime Minister on 10 October 1967:

In two articles which appeared in the supplement of *Ha'aretz* on 8 September 1967 and 15 September 1967, the author describes two instances of Israeli espionage in Arab countries, one in Syria, which came into the open in 1965, and the other in Egypt, which came into the open in 1954 and concerned acts of terrorism which our people were to carry out, inter alia, against institutions of Western Powers. The author of the articles is Dr. Bar-Zohar, the spokesman of the Ministry of Defense.

Some of the material in these two articles has already appeared in the foreign press but was prevented from being published here by the Censor on the grounds that this would constitute an indirect admission of the facts. Some of the information in the articles concerns what was known as the Affair, and could give rise to further revelations.

Amongst other things, the articles contain the following statements:

Eli Cohen was a spy. Important and highly-placed doors in the Syrian leadership were open to him.

One of the most well-informed people in Damascus, the confidant of ministers and generals, was a traitor.

Since 1951 Israeli secret agents, including Dr. Marzuk and Samuel Azar, an engineer, had been involved in establishing a center of espionage and terrorism in Egypt.

Zelinger was waiting for Eli (Cohen) in Munich. He gave him his documents and a varied range of espionage equipment: some papers on which the key to a cipher was written in invisible ink; books to be used in decoding the cipher; typewriters; a transistor radio in which a transmitter was hidden; an electric shaver whose flex served as the antenna of the transmitter; sticks of dynamite hidden in some Yardley soap; and some cyanide capsules, for suicide in case the worst occurred....

He was equipped with an extremely sophisticated camera so that he could photograph every important document that came his way. The microfilm was to be concealed in the box where he kept the backgammon pieces. These games were mailed to "friends in Argentina" and sent to Israel from Buenos Aires by diplomatic bag.

To this day Israel's secret services make use of photographs of top Syrian officials, some of them in extremely intimate situations. Cohen sometimes used these photographs to blackmail top people. The photographs may still be invaluable to Israel....

I would like to receive answers to the following questions:

1. Has any attempt been made to find out where Dr. Bar-Zohar obtained the above information?
2. What new instructions were issued to the Censor which made possible the publication of information which was classified till now?
3. Are the reasons for the Censor's policy till now no longer valid...?
4. Has Dr. Bar-Zohar any special immunity which enables him to publish previously classified material?
5. What steps will be taken to prevent the publication of material of this nature by civil servants in future....

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol:

To question 1: I am informed that the matter was examined and it transpired that Dr. Bar-Zohar's articles were based on the extensive information which appeared in the Arab and world press after the arrest and during the trial of Eli Cohen.

To question 2: There are no new instructions. The Censor generally allows the publication of material quoted from the Arab and world press...because the object of censorship is to prevent information from reaching the enemy, not the Israeli public. Only in special cases does the censor ask the editor of a newspaper to agree to delete one detail or another from an article, even if it has already appeared abroad.

To question 3: The Censor did not forbid the publication of material which had already been published abroad.

To question 4: The reply is negative.

To question 5: The existing guidelines are adequate and efficient and there is no need to take additional steps.

The Statement Made by Chief Rabbi Nissim Regarding the Territorial Integrity of the Land of Israel

MK R. Arzi asked the Prime Minister on 7 November 1967:

A religious judgement issued by Chief Rabbi Nissim states: "The Land of Israel is the heritage of every single Jew, and no individual or group, including the Government of Israel, may relinquish a single inch of it." I would like to ask the Prime Minister...:

1. Is a Chief Rabbi of Israel, who fulfills an official position in the State of Israel, entitled to determine what the Government may or may not do?

2. What does the Prime Minister intend to do to prevent further statements of this kind?

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol:

To question 1: The answer is negative, and in any event the Government is responsible only to the Knesset, and acts in accordance with its laws.

To question 2: The reply to question 1 answers this.

The Approval of a Budget for Demolishing the Road Built on Graves on the Mount of Olives

MK D. Levy asked the Prime Minister on 19 December 1967:

It was decided in the past that the road which crosses the Mount of Olives and which was built on the graves would be demolished. The Jerusalem Municipality asked the Prime Minister for a budget for this purpose and has not received an answer to date. I would like to ask:

1. Did the aforementioned Municipality ask the Prime Minister's Office for this budget?

2. If so, why has it not yet been approved, and when will it be?

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol:

To question 1: The answer is positive.

To question 2: The requested budget has been approved.

Municipal Services in East Jerusalem

Introduction

The reunification of Jerusalem gave rise not only to legal questions, addressed in a solemn sitting cited above, but also to a multitude of humdrum, daily problems. The Mayor of Jerusalem complained about the shortcomings of governmental machinery in tackling them. His criticism is reflected in the following debate on two motions for the agenda.

Sitting 261 of the Sixth Knesset

4 March 1968 (4 Adar 5728)

V. Shemtov (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, after twenty years of separation, we have once more come into contact with east Jerusalem....The Six Day War wrought vast changes in every sphere of our life, but I think that the most dramatic one was in Jerusalem on the day it was decided to open the city, tear down dividing walls, clear minefields, remove barbed wire fences and unite the city.

We all remember that morning, when we found thousands of Arabs, entire families, men, women and children, walking around the streets of Jerusalem, looking at the city. That was a stirring moment in the history of Jerusalem. It symbolized the start of a period of coexistence between Jews and Arabs in one city....We hoped that we would be able to prove that this unique experiment could succeed....During the past eight months there has been no violent clash between the Jewish and Arab inhabitants of the city....The Municipality, which was the first Jewish institution to enter eastern Jerusalem, acted humanely and responsibly, providing milk for children after the fighting had died down, food for the entire city, and a regular supply of water and electricity....But as the number of institutions dealing with eastern Jerusalem multiplied, the lack of coordination grew, bureaucracy increased and the situation deteriorated....

Although the overall picture is positive, there have been several negative incidents....Arabs who, for whatever reason, were not included in the population census have been unable to obtain identity cards and are therefore ineligible for membership in the Federation of Labor and for the allocation of work....The process of registering children in parents' identity cards has been made unnecessarily long and laborious....Arabs who applied for passes to enable them to go to Jordan were forced to stand in line for hours on end without being informed that

the Ministry of the Interior would not be opening its doors that day....To date the Ministry of the Interior has given employment to hardly any Arabs, it apparently being difficult to find Arabs who belong to the National Religious Party....Although the Municipality employs hundreds of Arab workers, none of them have tenure...and they have no social benefits....The Ministry of Posts has done nothing towards publishing an Arabic phone directory...and hundreds of the phones in east Jerusalem which were cut off eight months ago, during the war, have not yet been repaired....Post offices have not been reopened, making daily life very difficult for the local inhabitants....

I appeal to the Government to put an end to the problems caused in eastern Jerusalem by the bureaucratic machinery....One institution should be established...to undertake and supervise all the various activities....

S.Z. Abramov (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...by virtue of the two laws it passed on 27 June 1967, the Knesset extended the jurisdiction, law and administration of the state to east Jerusalem and its environs, and the Minister of the Interior annexed east Jerusalem to the Jerusalem Municipality's area of jurisdiction....Consequently, the administration of east Jerusalem is in the hands of the various Ministries and the Municipality....

Anyone who visits eastern Jerusalem cannot help praise the speedy and efficient action of the Municipality in providing all the municipal services...incorporating east Jerusalem's official institutions within the system...and doing all this in a spirit of friendship and cooperation. When we unified the two Municipalities we took upon ourselves the responsibility for a new population of many thousands....The same does not apply, regrettably, to the way the various Ministries have acted....It is not sufficient to announce that certain laws apply to a specific population....Steps have to be taken to apply them...while causing the minimum of friction....The proclamation of the unification of Jerusalem was a unique event, but bringing many thousands of people under Israeli jurisdiction is a lengthy and complicated process and should be undertaken with great care....

The eyes of the whole world are on united and Israeli Jerusalem....Its treatment of the city will serve as a test of our ability to make good use of the historic opportunity which has been granted us....Reports which have appeared in the press indicate that there was no planning or coordination in the imposition of Israeli law on east Jerusalem, and that the gradual method was not implemented....This was the result of inefficiency rather than ill-will....During the twenty years of our independence we have grown accustomed to living with a cumbersome bureaucracy and tend to regard it as a *force majeure*...but one cannot expect others to get used to it overnight....

On this point permit me to quote an interview with the Mayor of Jerusalem which appeared in *Davar* on 26 February 1968: "The Government's policy is also to...accustom the new inhabitants to the laws of the state gradually, taking their traditional habits into account. But there are strata of Government officials which are trying to impose Israeli rule on the Arab inhabitants all at once and in a hostile way."...It is the Government's duty to tackle this problem. If the Jerusalem Municipality and the Military Government in Samaria, Judea and Gaza have been praised both in Israel and abroad for the way they have dealt with the situation...there is no reason why the civil administration should not attain similar achievements in east Jerusalem. What is needed is proper planning and responsible implementation, with the minimum of bureaucracy and the maximum of efficiency.

There have also been complaints about the administration of the holy places...apparently arising from disputes between the various Ministries as to who is responsible for this....The Western Wall is sacred to the entire Jewish nation, in both religious and national terms, and it is intolerable that its upkeep should be neglected as a result of internal squabbles....As the symbol of our national unity, it cannot be run as if it were simply some Orthodox synagogue....The decision on this weighty issue must be the outcome of a responsible and democratic process, not of improvisation and struggles for power and prestige....

The Prime Minister, L. Eshkol: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I have listened with great interest to what the two previous speakers had to say....MK Shemtov would have us believe that he can arrange matters in Ministries within 24 hours....I have a feeling that we tend to put too much blame on bureaucrats....Even kibbutzim have offices, management procedures, rules and regulations....Bureaucrats are human beings, Jews, just like you and me....The various Ministries maintain that the complaints against them are on the whole greatly exaggerated....One cannot deny that each side tends to see things from its own point of view....

I do not know whether the Knesset is aware of the fact that for the past five months a Ministerial Committee for Jerusalem has existed...in order to discuss and deal with the various problems....Because of the complexity and delicacy of the situation, the decisions which have to be made by each individual Ministry are first discussed by this Committee....The Committee, which comprises ten Ministers, meets frequently and is often attended by the Mayor....The Committee's task is to coordinate between the various authorities and settle disputes which may arise....It surprises me that the Mayor saw fit to publish his complaints in the press rather than bringing them before the Committee, to which he has free access....

During the past few months a momentous change has occurred. The two parts of Jerusalem have been united, with all that this implies in po-

litical, historical, security and cultural terms. We have reached a situation in which we are free from fear in Jerusalem. There is no shooting or sniping and the walls and divisions have been removed, though the memory of them is still fresh in our minds....Buildings which have been neglected or destroyed are being repaired....Roads are being built....Cheap water is provided daily—and not twice a week as was formerly the case—to the inhabitants of east Jerusalem....A much-needed modern sewage system is being installed....The streets are being kept clean, despite the influx of tourists....All the schools are functioning normally...and transport is running as it should...although there were attempts to organize strikes....There is no doubt that the Mayor deserves a pat on the back for everything he has managed to do, but Ministries have also been involved in the successes....

Arab youth clubs in the Old City are being supported....The hospitals are functioning once again...and health services have been established....The state has accepted responsibility for anyone wishing to work...and persons unable to work receive unemployment benefits....Salaries have been put on a par with those in west Jerusalem.... And all this has been done by officials, bureaucrats....All the former Municipal employees have been reemployed...as have many policemen from east Jerusalem....Courses have been established to enable professionals to learn Hebrew and to retrain, during which time they are paid a salary....

Free access to the holy places is guaranteed...and each religion controls the administration of its own sites....An end has been put to the desecration of holy places and prevention of access to them which was rife under the previous regime....Despite the bitterness of the past and the fact that the two parts of the city were cut off from one another for twenty years, life is going on more or less normally....Neighborly relations are being established, and there has been no violence or clashes between the two communities. We hope to establish relations of respect and openness with the new inhabitants of Jerusalem, just as we have with the Arabs of Israel. Assertions that the Arabs of Jerusalem are treated as second-class citizens are unfounded....Certain problems—primarily economic ones—have not yet been resolved....There is no precedent in the whole wide world for what has happened here, for this encounter between two populations which have been totally separated from one another for twenty years, and matters are being resolved, not by themselves, but by people...by officials and bureaucrats....

Any complaint the Mayor has he can bring before the Ministerial Committee....If he requests it, it will be convened....I propose that the subject be transferred to the Committee for Internal Affairs...or to any other committee which the Knesset shall find appropriate.

The Speaker, K. Luz: The House Committee will decide on the committee. Do the proposers of the motions for the agenda agree to transfer their motions to the House Committee?

(From the floor: Yes.)

(The proposal to transfer the subject to a committee, which will be decided by the House Committee, is adopted.)

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, I abstained from voting because I disagreed with both the motions put forward by the proposers and the Prime Minister's reply....We have entered into a period of competition between Ministers for prestige and publicity. What is happening in Jerusalem is only part of the phenomenon. I am one of the few Knesset Members who has taken up residence in east Jerusalem, and I know that what the Mayor said is by no means exaggerated....We are missing a very important opportunity in Jerusalem....Over the last nine months the atmosphere there has not developed in a positive direction, quite the contrary....The bureaucratic issues raised by MK Shemtov have played their part in this. That is only a secondary problem, however....

A certain decision was made by the Knesset as regards Jerusalem, and I voted for it. Nine months after that decision the inhabitants of Jerusalem have not been granted citizenship and have no status whatsoever. Under the law of the state, all the property of the Arabs of Jerusalem is absentee property.

Proposal for Senior Council of State

Introduction

From time to time changes have been proposed in Israel's system of government. The proposal cited below had no practical impact, but sheds light on different views concerning the prevailing system.

Sitting 304 of the Sixth Knesset

3 July 1968 (7 Tammuz 5728)

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, a great wave of longing is sweeping the country—a longing for change, for transformation, for a change of the guard.

A well-run society requires a balance between the experienced older generation and the dynamic, innovative younger one. In the State of Israel, which is inherently dynamic and faces revolutionary challenges in virtually every sphere, this delicate balance should have been tipped in favor of the younger people. But the opposite has happened and the balance—if one can talk of such a thing—has been tipped in favor of the older generation.

The first generation, the founding fathers, a heroic generation in many respects, is not prepared to leave its posts. It identifies itself with the institutions of the state....Half the Members of this Knesset are over 60. Not one Minister was born after the First World War, while the average age in the country is 29 and 74 percent of the population is under 44.

Today's leaders did not always uphold the leadership of the old. David Ben-Gurion was 35 when he was appointed Secretary-General of the Federation of Labor, then a key position. At the age of 49 he was Chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive....Yigal Allon was Deputy Commander of the Palmach at 25 and its Commander at 27. Menahem Begin was the leader of Beitar in Poland at 26 and Golda Meir was 28 when she reached a key position in a company controlled by Solel Boneh.

Napoleon was 30 when he ruled France...and John Kennedy was 43 when he was elected President of the U.S. The current leader of most of the Arab world was in his early thirties when he gained supremacy....Only here do we have a Government with an average age of 61, where most of the key positions are held by persons of 70 or older, while people in their fifties wait impatiently for their turn...people in their

forties are considered babes-in-arms and people in their thirties are regarded as political embryos.

The entire country is waiting eagerly for the renewal of our political forces, for the infusion of fresh blood into the veins of the body politic. Our proposal is intended to serve that purpose....We will not go into the details of the proposal...requesting that it be transferred to a committee for fuller debate...but we would like the House to accept its two basic principles, i.e., the need for a change of guard in the Knesset and other institutions...placing a limit on the number of years a person may be a Knesset Member...and the need to find an appropriate way of continuing the activity of the older generation once its term in the Knesset is over....This is not merely a question of human justice, it is an imperative of political logic....Is not the balance which will be created between a Senior Council of State which is rich in experience and a young and dynamic Knesset whose Members will change frequently a vital necessity for the state?

We do not seek to dispossess the old guard, on the contrary...we want to enable it to continue to influence and advise, while younger people are also given a chance. One of the reasons for the excellence of the IDF is its institutionalized practice of constantly rotating people and positions and the fact that senior military personnel retire at an early age, thereby giving younger people a chance to advance....

There is no longer any genuine dialogue in the Knesset....The distance between the Knesset and the public—particularly the younger generation—is growing...and this bodes ill for democracy. In the West and the East young people are rebelling...and we must take note of these dangers....The youngsters want a share in running things, and this includes the institutions of government, not only the universities, for they are asked to shed their blood for this state....I ask the House to transfer this proposal to a committee so that it may be examined and discussed in full.

B. Azaniah (Chairman, House Committee): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I propose that the Knesset remove MK Avneri's motion from the agenda....A Senior Council of State is not required in order to give the younger generation a share in the running of the country, and the creation of a constitutional body...should not be based on this kind of consideration....I suspect MK Avneri of analyzing the historical facts in a superficial way...and of ignoring the reasons for the phenomena he described....I protest at the meaningless accusation constantly being hurled at the House by people who have been elected by a tiny minority, namely that "the distance between the Knesset and the people is growing." This is arrant nonsense. Israel has one of the highest percentages of active voters in the world....Nothing proves the tie between the Knesset and the people more clearly than the visits paid to the Knesset by hundreds of thousands of members of the public and the lively interest

displayed in our work....But the entire issue is on a different level. What will the Senate which MK Avneri proposes do?

E. Shostak (Free Center): He's not proposing a Senate. He's proposing an Old-Age Council.

B. Azaniah (Chairman, House Committee): If I substitute a familiar expression for a strange one that does not alter the idea. What is proposed is a Senate.

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): On the contrary, that's exactly the idea.

(From the floor: He's proposing a Retirement Home.)

B. Azaniah (Chairman, House Committee): I do not think that in any democratic country a Senate has been established whose authority has not been properly defined....Various historical reasons have led to the establishment of Senates...whether to placate and represent the aristocracy in a country where democratic elections are introduced...or to ensure adequate representation for individual states in a federative government such as that of the U.S...in which case its powers to appoint certain office-holders are clearly defined....

MK Avneri's proposal contains no clear-cut definition of the Council's functions, speaking merely in terms of "discussing," "dealing with"...and "making recommendations."...In other words, it will be a "parasitical" institution with no real power of any kind....MK Avneri has improvised a proposal, making use of ideas which have not been thought through to the end, attempting to benefit from the student riots and claiming to represent an innovative way of thinking. But all this is merely an empty facade behind which there lies nothing....I therefore propose that the Knesset decide not to waste the committee's time with an improvised and immature proposal.

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, MK Azaniah's proposal to remove the motion from the agenda came as no surprise because I am aware of what took place in the Labor Party between the moment when a majority supported the motion and the moment when it was regarded as worthless. There are a few points in his speech, however, which merit some attention.

First of all, MK Azaniah contends that the institution we propose establishing would have no real authority. This was done deliberately, so that the committee could discuss the proposal and decide for itself what authority the institution should have....Secondly, one should not belittle the importance of discussion and debate, even if this is the case here in the Knesset....In his brief lecture on the history of senates MK Azaniah relied on Montesquieu and others. This proves that in this House we are losing touch with reality, because since Montesquieu a few things have happened in the world. Only this week there was a debate in

England about the future of the House of Lords...and despite proposals to restrict its powers, no one proposed abolishing it altogether....Moreover, the composition of the House of Lords is changing, and the proportion of Life Peers, whose titles have been granted them by virtue of their achievements rather than their lineage, is increasing....Thus, its character is gradually coming to resemble that of the institution I am proposing....

If this House rejects reasonable proposals like this one, which seeks to find a logical solution to a problem, the only result...will be greater pressure for more radical surgery...and less reasonable proposals.

(The proposal to transfer the motion to a committee is not adopted.)

(The proposal to remove the motion from the agenda is adopted.)

A. Ben-Eliezer (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the proposal to establish a second House in a democratic regime is one which has withstood many tests in various countries...and there may well be something to be said for an institution of this kind....What is unacceptable is that we should ever establish a national institution which is not elected...as MK Avneri proposes....That is why we reject MK Avneri's proposal and have abstained on the vote....The day may yet come when we will submit a proposal for the establishment of a second House, but one which will be based on democratic principles, and whose functions will be clearly defined....

E. Shostak (Free Center): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members...we abstained on the vote because we think that MK Avneri's proposal is not worthy of discussion. If he had proposed a second House which would be elected and have the power to make decisions that would have been a different matter....That is the pattern in the U.S., for example....MK Avneri's proposal to establish a Council of Elders, as it were, simply indicates how young people who claim to be progressive in their views can reach outdated and reactionary conclusions. Even in England there are certain criteria for membership in the House of Lords, while MK Avneri proposes that anybody who was once somebody—a member of some institution, municipality, the Army, the Knesset or anywhere else—should automatically become a member of this Council of Elders....

His proposal is completely reactionary. All over the world countries are trying to get rid of their Houses of Lords....

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): That's not true!

E. Shostak (Free Center): ...As it stands, MK Avneri's proposal is not worthy of consideration....Churchill was not so young when he conducted the war against people who were younger than he was and Kennedy was not so old by the time he had served eight years in the Senate. Where and when are statesmen judged by age...? We know that in pre-

vious generations much younger men were active in many countries. Consequently, if MK Avneri had proposed establishing a Senate there would have been some point in holding a debate. Israel may well need a second elected House. As it stands, however, the proposal does not constitute a basis for a debate....

Beginning the War of Attrition

Introduction

A few months after the Six Day War the heads of Arab governments, meeting in Khartoum in September 1967, had agreed on a policy of "no peace, no recognition, no negotiations (with Israel)." In an effort to recoup his prestige, President Nasser had outlined a three-phase strategy: steadfastness; active deterrence; liberation. In September 1968 he felt he was ready for the second phase. Egyptian artillery opened up massive fire against Israeli forces all along the Suez Canal, causing a considerable number of casualties and damage to the thin line of fortifications which had been established along the east side of the Canal. One of the first debates on what came to be known as the War of Attrition took place at the end of October 1968.

Sitting 329 of the Sixth Knesset

29 October 1968 (7 Heshvan 5729)

H. Landau (Gahal): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the struggle to settle and build Israel has exacted a high price in blood, sweat and tears....We will do our utmost to preserve life, but if sacrifices—including loss of life—have to be made, we will make them.... Now our best sons are falling in defense of the liberated areas of the homeland....Together with the entire nation, we bow our heads in memory of the fallen and extend our condolences to the bereaved families....

There are ups and downs in the war which has been waged on us since the Six Day War, but we must realize that it is a war and that its object is not to alter the military situation, because our enemies are unable to do that, but to serve their foreign policy interests in the U.N. and elsewhere. Its object is to put pressure on Israel to withdraw first from its political and then from its security positions, to raise the rock-bottom morale of the defeated Arab armies and to bolster the shaky positions of the Arab rulers.

Along the Canal the Egyptians have initiated the massive bombardment of our positions, perhaps with the intention of attempting to cross it in the future...inflicting serious losses on our forces. We must react in such a way as to deter them from attacks of this kind....We know about and are sensitive to the Russian presence in this region, to its military presence in Egypt, Syria and the Yemen, as well as its attempts to exert political pressure in every international forum....All this is intended to frighten us and bring about our political and military

retreat, perhaps along the lines of what happened in 1956. This time, however, they will fail, provided we stand firm. I do not think the Russians will risk active involvement in a military operation in the region...for a variety of reasons...but they can make our situation difficult by increasing the flow of arms to our enemies, for example....

Another new development in the region is the attempt at revolt through demonstrations and strikes in Judea and Samaria, spearheaded by schoolgirls and resulting from the failure of the terrorist organizations there....This trend—even though appearing only to involve schoolgirls—must be stopped. In our relations with the inhabitants of Judea and Samaria we have used the carrot—providing services and employment and ensuring the standard of living...and they know they can live with us and live well. But if the circumstances require it, we will also have to use the stick....

We all want peace...and we deserve peace, as every nation does. But those among us who claim that our neighbors, Egypt, Jordan and Syria, seek peace are deluding themselves....They want war and they are preparing for war....Our enemies want Israel to “disappear from the face of the earth”...regarding our very existence as aggression...and are prepared to achieve this by stages...the first being the “political solution.”...This was decided on at Khartoum...and its object is to force Israel to withdraw so that Arab attacks can be directed against a more vulnerable target....They know that if a war breaks out they have no chance of defeating us on the basis of the current map....Thus, their aim is first to attain a more comfortable strategic map and Israel's withdrawal from its lines, then to wage war on us from a superior position, in order to remove Israel from the Middle East.

We must draw the appropriate conclusions from this plan. In military terms we must maintain and enhance our supremacy and deterrent power....In political terms...we must continue to entrench ourselves along the ceasefire lines, and settle in all the areas under our control, not as punishment for their refusal to make peace with us, but in fulfillment of our right to dwell in the liberated areas because they are ours....I propose that the House debate the aggression of our enemies.

S. Tamir (Free Center): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, the war launched against us by Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Algeria in May 1967 continues....It is being conducted on four fronts: the Egyptian front; the Jordanian-Syrian front; the front of the terrorist organizations; and the attempt to incite to rebellion in the liberated areas. On the first three fronts the enemy is encouraged by Israel's political concessions, which are interpreted as arising from weakness and weariness, while the rebellion in the liberated territories is the direct result of the Israel Government's policy....

In June 1967, after the shock of the Six Day War, the Arabs of the Land of Israel were ready for any political solution we would have pro-

posed....At that stage, and even today, a combination of a liberal regime in the territories, the assurance that we were remaining and the absorption of the Arabs into every aspect of our lives would have determined their attitude for decades.

(From the floor: Have you asked them?)

I have asked them and I know that this is the case. But the Government of Israel acted unwisely....With our own hands we are undermining the impressive achievements of the Military Government, the achievements of an enlightened and liberal policy in the territories....Some of the achievements of our wise policy have been lost in the last few weeks as a result of reports—for which the Government is responsible—that we are about to withdraw, even from parts of Jerusalem.

Rebellion, demonstrations, strikes by schoolchildren in Ramallah, Jericho, Hebron, Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarm, Gaza and Jerusalem—brazenness is raising its head....And all this is a direct result of the reports about the view crystallizing in the Government of Israel...of the various Government plans, including the one known as having been devised by the Deputy Prime Minister and which has been submitted to international bodies and is accepted by most of the Government....A regime of conquest, however liberal, especially when it is openly pronounced to be temporary, is asking for opposition, especially in our day and age.

I would like to ask the Government...what is the difference between Nazareth and Ramallah? Why was Israeli law imposed immediately on Nazareth, which was not included in the Partition Plan of 1947 and was populated solely by Arabs when it was liberated by the IDF, while Jordanian law remains in force in Ramallah? Why was it immediately made clear to the inhabitants of Nazareth, and they grasped this fact, that we were here to stay, and why are the inhabitants of Ramallah able to entertain the hope that we are just temporary rulers and occupiers? The difference in the behavior of the two sets of population derives from the differences in approach of the Government of Israel.

In May this year we said: “In political and other senses, we cannot remain forever as occupiers in territories which we ourselves define as alien and subject to negotiation, retaining our supremacy by force of arms....We can remain there forever if we go there as a nation returning to its land, to settle and build it, together with its present inhabitants. Furthermore, it is dangerous to delude ourselves that we will be able to retain east Jerusalem as an integral part of Israel while transferring its natural hinterland—Ramallah, Bethlehem, etc.—to foreign rule.”

We must make it clear that we are here to stay, impose Israeli law on all the liberated territories, support widespread civilian settlement activities, extend Israeli citizenship to the entire population of the new territories and initiate a solution to the refugee problem, in other words, not an alien rule of occupation but the incorporation of the territories

and their inhabitants within the State of Israel....The current policy has caused the extremist elements among the Arab population to come to the fore, pushing aside the moderates who were prepared to cooperate with us....Only by making it absolutely clear that we intend to remain permanently will we secure the cooperation of the Arab population, which will not then fear retaliation from the Arab ruler to whom we will hand the territories....

Thus, the problem is political, not military. Once Israel has a clearcut policy such as the one we have proposed, the Army, the Police and the security services will have far less to do than they have today. That is the way to true peace....The Government's fine phrases will not bring peace. They invite opposition, rebellion and aggression and encourage the enemy. They could eventually lead to a renewed, bitter and cruel military campaign. I propose that because the subject is primarily political, the plenum debate it.

The Minister of Defense, M. Dayan: Madam Speaker, Knesset Members, although the subject is political it also concerns defense, and I therefore propose that it be transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee....Two topics have been raised here, the Egyptian aggression at the Suez Canal and the demonstrations in the territories....

I would like to make a few things clear to the Egyptians: first, we are making use of the time that is passing to strengthen ourselves...and entrench our positions along the Suez Canal....Second, despite the losses we have incurred, along both the Canal and the Syrian line...we will not agree to anything we do not want....The ceasefire agreement can be replaced only by a peace settlement which will be achieved through talks, not tanks, cannon and commando operations....Third, if the Egyptians think that the huge forces they have massed on the other side of the Canal make them immune to military operations on our part they are mistaken....We are interested in maintaining the ceasefire, which they asked for...but if they do not observe it, neither will we....

To ourselves I say almost the same things. Obviously, remaining on those lines for a long time and under present conditions...stems from the Arabs' failure to observe the ceasefire...on both the Egyptian and the Jordanian borders....The leaders of Al-Fatah...have publicized the high percentage of their losses—almost 90 percent of their fighting forces—the reason for their doing so being, in my estimation, that they thereby prove that they are fighting. For the Arabs feel a great sense of shame at the fact that little Israel is on the Suez Canal, along the River Jordan and in Kuneitra, and regard the mere fact that they are fighting as their principal achievement....This frame of mind also explains the Arabs' failure to observe the ceasefire....Nonetheless, my assessment is that we can remain on the lines where we are currently situated, and even strengthen our position....

Naturally, every attack hurts us, whether at the front or at the rear. 52 people were hurt in the attack on the Central Bus Station in Tel Aviv, and 45 at the Cave of Machpela. All it takes is for one person to throw a hand grenade into a crowd to get casualty figures like these....But pressure of this kind...will not induce us to relinquish one iota of our present objective, namely, peace on our terms. Thus, we must be strong both at the front and at the rear....

The objective of the Six Day War was to break the stranglehold around us and crush the military forces which sought to destroy Israel. But after our victory, a new war began: the fight for peace, for a peace agreement....This has been going on for a year and a half and who knows how long it will still continue....I have no doubt that we will be able to withstand the second war, just as we did the first....The only way whereby the ceasefire agreement can be replaced by a peace settlement is through talking to us about the conditions to which we will agree....

I would like to say to MK Tamir that...to the best of my knowledge, his information is incorrect....I have kept track of the mood of the Arabs in the territories...since the war ended...and I do not think that there was any time when we could have achieved any settlement we wanted with the Arabs of the West Bank, as MK Tamir claims....I do not think that we have missed any opportunity....I think that the Arab population of the West Bank has always regarded itself as part of the general Arab nation....And because the last war was fought against several Arab countries...these Arabs, whom one might call Palestinians, would be extremely cautious about making a partial agreement which might, in their view, harm other sections of the Arab nation, with which they also have to reach an arrangement....Because several Arab countries are involved, we will have to reach separate agreements with each of them, and that complicates matters....

MK Landau said that till now we have bestowed only benefits on the Arabs of the territories...and now we must begin imposing punishments....I suggest that MK Landau refrain from exaggerating about what is happening now and from forgetting what has happened until now. To date we have blown up houses, imposed punishments, and deported people. Nablus was under curfew for a very long time....The current situation is not as bad as it is made out to be....Life in Jerusalem is continuing normally, and the stores are all open....At present most Arab activity is currently taking place in Samaria, not in Judea or Gaza....But even in Samaria life has returned to normal, stores are open, the schools are functioning and the demonstrations have stopped....The majority of the population, as well as the leadership, was against the demonstrations....

Daily life concerning us and them is extremely complex....It is now the Government's policy to permit them to work in Israel...as well as in Jordan and Kuwait without losing the right to come back....We

also permit them to sell their produce both here and there....I don't know if this can be called a liberal arrangement, but it is certainly complex and new for us...and represents a certain policy line....We all know that this arrangement could disappear overnight, the minute either they or we no longer want it....All these arrangements depend on a peaceful situation, and the minute there are disturbances the arrangements and freedoms will inevitably crumble....I trust they realize this as well as I do. I imagine that this is one of the reasons for the fact that most of the population and leadership in the West Bank and Gaza do not want the demonstrations....

I would like to add that even if this liberal arrangement is upset, this will not bring us one iota nearer to accepting arrangements we do not want. We are currently in the territories as occupiers, a situation we do not want....But this regime can be replaced only by peace, negotiations and dialogue....I propose that the two motions be transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

M. Wilner (Rakah): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, my party group proposes that both the motions be removed from the agenda....We are all aware of the deterioration of the situation both along the ceasefire lines and in the occupied territories, and we all want this situation to end....The proposers have not offered any solution. They were even more extreme than the Minister of Defense, who is considered to be the most extreme member of the Government. What they suggest to end the bloodshed is a full-scale war and intensified repression in the occupied territories.

We think that these proposals, which the Minister of Defense agreed to transfer to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, make matters worse and are not in the interests of either Israel's security or the perspective of peace....Anyone who truly wants—as we all do—to put an end to the situation of incessant bloodshed should agree to implement the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967...which enables the Arab countries to stop fighting Israel, assures Israel's freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal, and recognizes Israel's right to sovereign existence and security, within the framework of recognition of the rights of all the countries of the region. In return, Israel must agree to the IDF's withdrawal from the territories which were conquered in the June war and the solution of the refugee problem on the basis of the U.N. resolutions.

The only thing preventing an end to the bloodshed and the attainment of a peace settlement is the aspiration for conquests and territorial annexation, as is reflected in the speeches of the proposers and the Minister of Defense....It is imperative that the Security Council resolution be implemented to the full, as regards both Israel and the Arab countries.

The Speaker, T. Sanhedrai: Do the proposers agree to accept the Minister of Defense's proposal?

(From the floor: Yes.)

(The proposal to transfer the two motions to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is adopted.)

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, naturally we could not vote for MK Wilner's proposal not to debate the base Egyptian attack of a few days ago, but neither could we vote for the other two proposals....The House is united in its participation in the grief of the bereaved families...but it, and the entire public, is divided when it comes to answering the fateful question: how can further casualties and attacks be avoided in the future?

One camp thinks that the ceasefire will be observed if we constantly reiterate our decision to annex the Sinai Peninsula...to Israel...abandoning any hope of ever attaining peace with the Egyptian people....The other camp, to which we are proud to belong, says that this belligerent-fatalistic approach, which has gained preeminence in Israel since the Six Day War, is bankrupt....It is a horrifying fact that 503 days after the Six Day War, a war which could and should have been a turning-point in our history, our enemies killed twenty of our soldiers along the ceasefire lines, from the Sinai to Syria, that the killing goes on every day...and no one in the Government has any proposal for changing this situation.

The approach whereby the huge and diverse nation known as "the Egyptians" is regarded as a homogeneous mass...gives rise to extremist fatalism and a lack of political initiative. But anyone who is at all sensitive to what is happening in the region, and does not base himself solely on the boastful babble emanating from Cairo Radio, knows that the situation in Egypt is quite different. Nasser's power is extremely limited. There are various streams of thought within Egypt...including those who feel that the time has come to end the military escapades and focus on building Egypt itself. There are people who from time to time oblige Nasser to speak of a political settlement, and even to hint at its form in secret contacts....

I find support for this in what the Minister of Defense said today. He did not say that peace is unattainable...but that we will not accept a peace "with which we do not agree." That is very important....I would like to ask, do we have to strengthen the most extreme group within Egypt, the fascists, the supporters of "Greater Palestine," or should we act to support the moderates...those who are making their way towards the revolutionary idea of a peace agreement? There is close cooperation between the Egyptian fascists and those in Israel who advocate annexation...and anyone who speaks of "never returning an inch of the Sinai"...provides ammunition for the Egyptian cannon directed against

us on the other side of the Canal....Just as MK Tamir asks what is the difference between Nazareth and Ramallah, with the object of annexing Ramallah, there are people in Egypt who ask the same question, with the object of obliterating Israel. We must beware of them both. The opposite is also true. Any Egyptian bombardment across the Canal harms the forces of peace in Israel as well as the soldiers of the IDF....

Thus, while expressing our sorrow and anger, while indicating our readiness to defend ourselves...we say, we must not let feelings of revenge, however justified, dictate our actions....Our precious casualties oblige us to act logically to attain the only solution which will end the bloodshed: peace.

N. Peled (Mapam): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, we abstained on the vote not because we do not think the subject should be discussed by the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee but...because we disagree with the reasons put forward by the proposers...and the imbalance between their concern for Israel's security and the search for peace. We will give full expression to our position on the issue of peace and security in next week's political debate.

Political Affiliations of IDF Officers

Introduction

As the Sixth Knesset was coming to an end the approaching elections came to dominate its deliberations. With the prestige gained by the IDF and its commanders in the course of the Six Day War, political parties had a particular interest in attracting active and reserve officers to their ranks.

Sitting 372 of the Sixth Knesset

5 February 1969 (17 Shevat 5729)

I. Klinghoffer (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, approximately two weeks ago the general public was informed that the Secretary of the Labor Party, Minister Pinhas Sapir, had initiated the establishment of a special discussion group of IDF officers in his party.... This action...can be regarded as a link in the expansion of party-political activities during this election year....What arouses our concern and disapproval, however, is the fact that the body involved in this case is the IDF....Many officers have mixed feelings about being invited to participate in a group of this kind....

A large part of the general public is disturbed by this attempt to connect a political party with senior Army officers. To date the IDF has remained outside party disputes, but now a step has been taken—by the largest party—to introduce politicization into it....The discussion group may be used to obtain information...about the political views of soldiers. Officers who fail to cooperate with it might fear that their promotion would be affected....The group may be used to attract IDF officers and soldiers into the ranks of the Labor Party....These possibilities concern the nature and essence of the regime in this country. A serious warning must be issued from this podium against any action which could turn the Army or its top echelon, or even any part of it, into an extension of a party...especially one which is the largest and strongest in Israel....

The power of the largest party also obliges it...to restrain itself and refrain from abusing its authority, otherwise the situation could gradually deteriorate into one where that party has total control over political life...as the Communist Party has in the U.S.S.R....It would be a national tragedy if the IDF, which is perhaps our greatest national treasure, were to be politicized and become the arena for political dissension...eventually harming the unity of the IDF and the security of the

state....The Chief of Staff's order to soldiers to refrain from active party-political participation was issued in response to the Lavon Affair....Although the Labor Party's discussion group may be legally permissible, in my view it is politically unacceptable...and if necessary new orders should be issued....I propose that the Knesset debate this subject.

M. Unna (Mafdal): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...the subject of party-political propaganda within the Army is of the highest significance as regards both our public life and the democratic principles according to which we conduct it. I would even go so far as to say that the subject also has important implications in the area of defense....There is a need for political information within the IDF. The senior officers need it, because the IDF needs a deep political awareness as well as a defense awareness. It is natural that everyone in the Army sees political matters first and foremost from the security viewpoint....If we wish to benefit from the considerations of the Army in our political assessments, we must make sure that it has political knowledge which is based on political understanding and facts. Defense and security are our highest concerns, and we must therefore rely on the views of the IDF commanders in many crucial decisions....The political information which the senior officers require should not reach them through party channels, however, since this involves the danger not only of lack of objectivity but also of the penetration of the IDF by a political party....

This information should be disseminated by an official Government agency, which should try and impart matters in as objective a way as possible....The Knesset should be aware of this subject, whether the topic under review concerns matters of general policy or good citizenship. In both cases there should be political information, but it should be imparted in such a way as to exclude undue party-political influences....

The Minister of Justice, J.S. Shapira: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...there is no doubt that discussion groups of the kind under review are permissible under the orders issued by the Chief of Staff. Consequently, in order to prevent them, the existing order has to be changed or a new one issued....The Prime Minister has asked that the discussion group refrain from meeting until the subject has been examined more closely, when Pinhas Sapir returns from abroad....Two main considerations are involved in the subject under review. Firstly, every effort must be made to ensure that the IDF is not involved in any political dispute. Second, we must remember that the IDF is not cut off from the public, quite the contrary....I therefore propose that the two proposals be transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee....

(The proposal to transfer the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is adopted.)

S. Mikunis (Maki): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I abstained from voting...because I simply could not understand what was said or take this debate seriously....We all accept the principle that senior civil servants and Army officers are not active in election campaigns, so as not to influence those beneath them. This does not mean, however, that they should not have the right to participate in the political life of the country....We know that all the newspapers which are published in Israel are supposed to be distributed in the IDF. No one thinks that the IDF should be cut off from the rest of the nation, and anyone who says that politics must be kept out of the IDF insults that body....

All the political parties operate in all parts of the nation, including the IDF....On no account can anyone—and certainly not the largest party in the country—make the claim that there are no politics in the IDF. That party controls information, education and culture....Are national issues not politics? Are defense problems not politics? When we send soldiers to the ceasefire lines to defend the State of Israel is that not politics? It is very positive politics. The soldiers must know that. We impart politics to our soldiers. We impart national and social knowledge to them. That is why a book of discussions held by soldiers appeared after the Six Day War, reflecting the thinking and ideas of the soldiers. Is that not politics? Did they not receive political, social and national education?

That is why I fail to understand all this fuss. If Herut wants to hold a meeting of officers tomorrow, will it be forbidden to do so? Of course not. If I could hold a meeting of communist officers would I not do so? I am permitted to do so. This is permitted in a democratic country. Anyone who says that politics must be kept out of the IDF ignores the fact that the whole IDF is politics, all Israel is politics, and there is no human society without politics. The IDF is a popular army, and just as there is politics within the nation, there is—and should be—politics within the IDF, naturally, subject to the Chief of Staff's orders....

Death of Prime Minister Levi Eshkol

Introduction

Levi Eshkol had been ill for quite some time but few people realized the seriousness of his illness. Thus, his death from a heart attack on 26 February 1969 came as a shock. Only after his death was it learned that he had suffered a first attack three weeks earlier. Eshkol was the only Israeli Prime Minister to die while in office. Some of the vagaries of his career are reflected in the Memorial Sitting, seven days after his death: picked by Ben-Gurion to be his successor, he subsequently came under bitter attack from him; having borne responsibility for preparing the IDF before the Six Day War, he was compelled to relinquish the Ministry of Defense on the eve of the war. What comes through most clearly is the genuine affection and human warmth he had radiated and evoked.

Memorial Sitting

6 March 1969 (16 Adar 5729)

The Speaker, K. Luz: I hereby open the Memorial Sitting on the seventh day after the passing of the Prime Minister, L. Eshkol.

(The Knesset Members all rise to honor the memory of the late Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol.)

...

The Acting Prime Minister, Y. Allon: Mr. Speaker, bereaved Knesset, we have gathered here in the Knesset building to pay tribute to the late Levi Eshkol, one of the founding fathers of the state and one of its most devoted servants. There is no need for words to tell of Levi Eshkol's deeds and achievements. If we keep quiet we will hear the water gushing through the pipes and the sprinklers in the fields; we will hear the electricity humming through the wires and the wheels turning in factories; we will hear the laughter of children in schools in Dimona, Beit Shemesh and Kiryat Shmona; we will also hear the roar of jet engines and the thunder of the tanks of the IDF. All these sounds tell of Levi Eshkol's deeds better than any words. Nonetheless, we must ask ourselves what Levi Eshkol has left the nation and the state, which he served for fifty-five years.

Eshkol brought his special contribution to the pioneers who came here with the Second Aliya, a generation of giants...Into the emotionally and intellectually turbulent world of that Aliya the young Skolnik

brought his simple faith in doing things, not because he despised the intellectual struggle but because, with the natural instinct of a village boy, he sensed that the fate of the revival of this nation would be decided by facts, facts called Petah Tikva and Degania, Tel Aviv and the Jezreel Valley, the Negev and Galilee, Lachish and the Besor, the Jordan Valley and Jerusalem.

This was the credo adhered to by Eshkol, the artist of facts, from the pump on the banks of the Yarkon River to the elevated position of Prime Minister of Israel. It enabled him to unite the nation for the sake of the cause. In 1965 there were four labor parties in Israel. Within three years three of them had united to form one party and an alliance had been made with the fourth. When he was appointed Prime Minister in 1963 the country was rent by internal and long-established dissension. From his first day in office he brought an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect to this House. At the end of his life Israel was more united than it had ever been before.

He did not twist the meaning of things—that was the secret of his success as a unifier. Beliefs and opinions, ideas and dogmas, slogans and phrases—he examined them all in the cruel light of the Israeli sun, the light of reality....Like all the members of his generation, he also had great dreams, but he was a practical dreamer. If we add to his practicality, his Jewish wisdom, the big heart of someone born in the plains of the Ukraine, the earthiness of a Hassidic family, his rich experience of life and, above all, his unique sense of humor, we begin to approach the secret of his smiling pragmatism and the riddle of the affection in which everyone who knew him held him....

Eshkol was known as a man of compromise. What a mistake. He did not compromise on principles, even if he did try to find the common basis for implementation. He had clear views on such basics as his worldview as a proud Jew, a Zionist, a socialist and a member of the kibbutz movement. He knew instinctively where he wanted to go, but because he was not content merely to define his object verbally, seeking to fulfill it in practical terms, he was ready to forego the secondary aspect of formulation to achieve the primary aim of fulfillment. This quality enabled him to unite a wide range of people and ideas, getting them to work together in a spirit of friendship and cooperation. He was a past-master of the art of collective action and team leadership. One day the tale will be told of the real and decisive role he played in leading the Six Day War. He knew that moderation did not signify weakness, just as consideration is the complement, not the opposite, of audacity. This ability to lead from a sense of caution and mutual respect, to cooperate while maintaining individuality, is very rare....The Eshkol style of action will be remembered as one of his major contributions to Jewish etatism.

Eshkol was healthy in body and mind. He knew how to enjoy the good things of life...and was at peace with himself, without any inner schisms....In him were expressed the redemption of the individual, the nation and the world as a place of freedom and social justice. Without going into the ins and outs of things, he knew that Israel would rest on a firm foundation only when our political independence was combined with economic independence, and that the latter would be achieved only when our people became a working nation, undertaking every kind of manual and intellectual labor. He harnessed public and private initiative in Israel and the diaspora to the work of economic development....

Because he respected himself and his nation, he respected other nations too. With his openheartedness, he sought to speak in a direct and human way with every person and nation, with senior statesmen and simple folk. Without any pretensions to being a diplomat, through his spontaneity, he succeeded in raising the relations between Israel and the U.S. to a high level of understanding and trust. That Power occupies a special place in our world not only because of its strength and influence but also because of the concept of freedom which it advocates, and because of its large and distinguished Jewish community.

To his last day he hoped to build bridges to the Russian people, with which a large part of our nation is still linked. As a pupil of the pure tradition of the Russian Revolution, he persisted in the hope that...there would one day be a change in that country, and that the regime of repression and distortion would be replaced by a society based on freedom and justice, and that the gates would be opened to the Jews of silence....

Despite the bitter history of our relations with the Arabs, our neighbors, his attitude to them was one of natural respect, and his encounters with them were undertaken in an attempt to understand, without any feeling of superiority or inferiority. He knew that the two nations were destined to live together in this region...but he could also distinguish between desires and reality...and hence his wonderful ability to combine a constant search for peace with the constant strengthening of our defensive force....The day will come when his endeavors in these fields will be made known. This combination played a great part in enhancing the world's understanding of Israel as a peace-loving country even when it had to fight for its survival.

He represented the combination of the immediate and the distant desire, the path and the horizon. Fate has destined us to live in both those spheres simultaneously, in present-day reality and the dream of tomorrow, in the tension between cruel reality and the hopes of the future. If we ignore this situation we are threatened with physical destruction; if we cease hoping for peace we are threatened with moral distortion. We must learn to live with this perpetual tension, which constitutes the essence of our existence.

His world was governed by the fact that he was a Jew in the fullest sense of the word, by fate, tradition and choice. His relations with Jewish communities abroad were remarkable...and he managed to bring the link between Israel and the diaspora to a new, higher level of cooperation and alliance....He was a good listener, and knew when to speak and when to keep quiet...even when he was subjected to scathing and hurtful criticism....He was young at heart and was therefore able to attract young people and enjoy their company. By his actions he taught them the secret of continuity...regarding himself as a link in the chain of the generations....

By virtue of his faith in human beings and his clearheadedness, he...advanced from the plains of the Ukraine to the long furrow he plowed in this country, extending from the fields of Degania, via the dunes of Tel Aviv, the heavy soil of the Jezreel Valley and the loess of Lachish to the hard rocks of Jerusalem. Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city which he united, in whose stones his grave is dug. In the light of that spirit we, his colleagues, children and pupils, will continue to advance towards the desire of his heart—a land of peace which dwells in safety; a human society based on social justice; a nation which is constantly renewing itself and remains faithful to its sources and its mission, as he was all his life. May his memory be blessed. His living memory will remain with us.

M. Baram (Ma'arach): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, we are gathered here like orphans following the death of our Prime Minister, the late Levi Eshkol. The grief which is the lot of all the citizens of Israel is reflected in the crowds coming from every section of society and every part of the country to pay him their last respects. We always knew how much Eshkol was loved by all those who knew him....Eshkol was a man of action, a man with a broad vision, with an ear for everyone and an open mind. Throughout his life in this country he was involved in every sphere of production—defense, economics, settlement, labor, development and immigration....In everything he did he was hardworking and dedicated....

It has been said that he was born lucky, that whatever he touched succeeded...and this was proved when he served as Minister of Agriculture...as Head of the Jewish Agency's Settlement Department...and as Minister of Finance...when he fought against waste and an exaggeratedly high standard of living...and for self-restraint, increased productivity and economic independence....Although Eshkol imposed a heavy burden on the taxpayer and withstood pressure for higher wages, he was widely liked and respected. The extensive development schemes throughout the country are living proof of his activities....

It was no secret that Eshkol did not want to be Prime Minister...and accepted the position at a difficult time for the country....Nonetheless, he improved our international standing, establishing particularly good

relations with the U.S....Eshkol headed the National Unity Government which was formed when the state was threatened by its neighbors, and it was his ability to unite opposing groups which made that Government possible. Eshkol was Prime Minister when our Army was victorious and Jerusalem was united....From the moment Jerusalem was liberated Eshkol was foremost among those acting to develop, populate, expand and unite it in practical terms. He was instrumental in populating the Old City, encouraging extensive construction programs in the eastern part of the city, moving Ministries there and, above all, rehabilitating Mount Scopus, the University, establishing the Hadassah campus, etc....

Eshkol was a true democrat and participated actively in the life of the Knesset and his party....He was a good friend, a warm-hearted man....Our loss grieves us all. We offer our condolences to his family. May they be comforted in his achievements, which will be his lasting memorial. Israel and the diaspora mourns the loss of a great man and a great leader. We will continue along the course he has set for us. His memory will remain with us forever.

J. Serlin (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, what can one say that has not already been said....We have suffered a great loss. Levi Eshkol fell at his post....He was a human being, and as such had advantages and disadvantages....Despite his proven ability to manage the country, he was unable to manage his own life and fell at his post....He was a human being, and was liked for that. Despite the fact that as Minister of Finance he afflicted the nation with taxes, he was regarded with affection, criticism being directed at him in the form of humor. He did his utmost to eradicate hatred and sow amity in our lives. He was always ready with a joke or anecdote, which he employed to relieve tension, whether between parties or within his own....

He was the embodiment of the history of Zionism in our time. As a youngster he dreamed of Zion and as a young man he fulfilled his dream, his footsteps in this country constituting milestones along the road of every area of Zionist achievement....One sometimes wonders from where Eshkol and others like him drew their boundless faith in the vision of the return to Zion when this country was an empty desert ruled by the Turks...bringing us to the point where we have a state, a population of two and a half million Jews, and Jerusalem is united under our rule....Then one wonders if this nation has lost its faith in that vision....

We have suffered a great loss. The song of Eshkol's life has been cut short, but his faith, which accompanied him for fifty-five years of achievement, will inspire the hearts of this generation and those to come....

M. Unna (Mafdal): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, at this moment, as we assemble to pay homage to the memory of the late Levi Eshkol, we remember his varied talents. He was a down-to-earth man reared on the spiritual bases of Jewish tradition; he was a pioneer and a builder; he built irrigation projects which made deserts bloom; he was a man who did a great deal to settle the country; his life reflects the achievements of this nation's revival in its land....During his term as Prime Minister he did his utmost to heal rifts and find amicable solutions to disputes....His way was to emphasize what was shared, rather than what distinguished one group from another, and in this he set an example for us all and the entire country....His role as Prime Minister was a difficult one, especially since he followed heroic figures in our recent history. Nevertheless, he fulfilled it successfully and deserves his place among the leaders of our nation, as well as the gratitude of us all. We will remember him with affection and respect.

G. Hausner (Independent Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, Levi Eshkol was one of the founding fathers who paved the way for those who followed....As Prime Minister, Eshkol hoped to devote his energies to settlement and development, but as fate would have it he led the country at a time of war and ultimate victory....Those of us who knew him in later life will remember him as a leader and a man...as a friend and a colleague....He respected others and loved the people. He could distinguish the wheat from the chaff, reveal what individuals and groups had in common rather than what divided them from one another and always sought to settle disputes in a spirit of friendship....The defense of the state was of supreme importance for him....

His simple and direct approach gained him the friendship of world leaders...including the President of the U.S...and also endeared him to the nation, which he united in its hour of need, when he formed the National Unity Government....By these deeds Eshkol will be remembered and honored, and his work in bringing differing groups together will continue....

M. Porush (Aguda): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, as we stood by Levi Eshkol's death-bed last week, the jealousy and competition of the recent past vanished...and what we remembered was the glory of his term of office as Prime Minister when our enemies were repelled, our borders expanded and our holy places returned to us, with God's help. We were all stunned by his sudden death....To his dying day he was full of life, alert and fresh. No one suspected that he was ill....He was always open and friendly to everyone, a man of peace, and a man who was responsible for a great deal of the development of the country....Although he came under attack, he did not reply harshly, for he truly loved his fellowmen....His Orthodox education as a child always stood him in good stead, helping him to find bridges to people with views

which differed from his own....On behalf of myself and my party group I offer condolences to his family....May God bring you comfort, as he will comfort us all and all those who mourn for Zion and Jerusalem....

...

M. Wilner (Rakah): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I hereby express my own and my party group's participation in the grief of Levi Eshkol's family and party group. We did not agree with him on political matters. Many people have said that he was a man of compromise, but in politics this was not the case. What is true, however, is that he always treated everyone—including his political rivals—with respect.... Life goes on, and we must look to the future. The political and defense situation is extremely complicated and dangerous. A new war might erupt. In these circumstances what is important is not who heads the new Government but what policy he represents. Let us hope this will be a wise one, bringing Israel peace and security.

...

J. Mu'adi (Israel Druse Party): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, it is with respect and admiration that I come to pay my respects to our leader, the Prime Minister of Israel, Levi Eshkol. His death has brought sorrow to the entire country as well as to all those throughout the world who knew him....During his term as Prime Minister this country underwent severe trials, emerging from them triumphant and more united than ever before....Levi Eshkol's death is a great loss not only to the Israeli nation, world Jewry and all lovers of peace wherever they may be, but also to the Arab governments, for he was the leader of those who sought to extend the hand of peace to them. He did a great deal for the Arabs of Israel, and the Druse community in particular....His death has left a great gap in our lives, and requires us all to unite....In my name and that of my party group I extend our condolences to the bereaved family, the Government and the entire nation....

The Speaker, K. Luz: Mr. President, Knesset members, many important things have been said and written about the late Levi Eshkol during the past week....Eshkol was a man of the kibbutz movement...his guiding principle was always that ours should be a working nation...and to this end he was prepared to make every effort....He always recalled projects he had implemented with affection and excitement, keeping a special place in his heart for people who had worked with him and the places where they had operated. He was a man of the people and was unable to keep himself at a distance from them. He loved to tour the country and meet people who were involved in the actual implementation of the development and settlement of the country, as he himself had been...placing special emphasis on the redemption of land and the development of irrigation projects....

He was, above all, a modest man....When he first presented his Government to the Knesset some members of his kibbutz, Degania B, came to Jerusalem to congratulate him. When we met to drink a toast in his room afterwards he said: "I was just lucky." I remembered then how we had worked and sweated together in the early days, when we were building the kibbutz, and I knew that the secret of Eshkol's luck was sheer hard work...till he dropped. May his soul be bound up with the souls of all Israel....

Composition and Program of the New Government

Introduction

There was no apparent heir to Levi Eshkol to head the Labor Party and the Government, but the number of potential candidates was limited. At the initiative of Pinchas Sapir, the Minister of Finance, Golda Meir was selected, and accepted. She had previously served as Head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, first Ambassador to Moscow, Minister of Labor and Minister of Foreign Affairs. At the time she was Secretary-General of Mapai—the Labor Party. Golda Meir was the first—and to date the only—woman to be chosen to lead the Labor Party and serve as Prime Minister. In view of the proximity of the elections, all the partners in the Coalition agreed to continue with the existing partnership and honor the Coalition agreement which had served as the basis for Eshkol's Government. These included the religious parties, some of which, several years earlier, when Golda had been considered as a candidate for the mayoralty of Tel Aviv, had stated that they would be unable to join a coalition headed by a woman.

Sitting 388 of the Sixth Knesset

17 March 1969 (27 Adar 5729)

G. Meir: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, as I come to present the Government to the House and ask for its confidence, I know very well before whom I stand and what may confront the Government in the future. I also know in whose place I stand. Only a few days ago this House expressed its sorrow at the untimely death of the late Levi Eshkol, one of the people who, by their vision and hard work, helped build this country and make it what it is today....I, personally, have lost a good friend....We will honor his memory by continuing to build and create, and by maintaining the country's security.

One week ago the President of the state charged me with forming the Government. My aim was once again to unite all those forces which had participated in the outgoing Government, and I am glad to inform you that all the parties I asked responded positively. Yesterday I informed the President of the composition of the new Government, which includes the Ma'arach (Labor-Mapam), Herut-Liberal, Mafdal, Independent Liberal, Po'alei Aguda, Progress and Development, Cooperation and Friendship, Israeli Druse and Arab-Jewish Friendship party groups.

We have not found it necessary to draw up new guidelines for the new Government. The previous Government, which was presented to the Knesset on 12 January 1966 and expanded on 1 June 1967, had the confidence of the vast majority of the Knesset. The need to form the present Government arose solely from the tragic death of the Prime Minister. Although this Government will base itself on the guidelines of the previous one...since January 1966 there has been a tremendous change in Israel's situation as a result of the Six Day War, and we felt it necessary to amend certain sections....

The principal objectives confronting the country today, as in the past, are, first of all, ensuring our security and endeavoring to attain peace, developing the country and the economy, increasing our ability to absorb immigrants, settling desolate areas and improving education and culture....The security of the country must be foremost among our concerns....The secret of Israel's ability to withstand the attacks of those who seek to destroy it is...our knowledge that we must win or perish...that we have no choice but to be victorious. We are in this part of the world to stay. We are not an alien element here, and we cannot be driven out of our homeland. We have always aspired to prevent wars...but we have proved that when we are forced to fight, we can win. I have no doubt that if we are forced to fight again we will win once again....When the Six Day War was nearly over the Government issued a statement which included the following passage: "The IDF...has fought those who attacked us and defeated them. In the course of the fighting the siege was broken, the land of our forefathers liberated and Jerusalem redeemed and reunited."

After the Six Day War we had high hopes that our neighbors would finally realize that they had no alternative but to decide to live in peace with us. They know perfectly well that we are where we are after the Six Day War because of their scheme to destroy Israel, not because of our expansionist intentions....We sincerely sought peace after the Six Day War...but the Arab leaders rejected our proffered hand....In fact, the war is not yet over. Each day our sons fall at their posts, paying the highest price of all for the nation and the country....We take this opportunity of extending our condolences to the bereaved families....Every soldier who falls is the son of all of us, and in everything we do we will always remember them.

The actions and words of the Arab leaders do not presage a time of peace....They are increasing their support of terrorism...while simultaneously violating the ceasefire agreements....No political element has the moral right to deprive us of our right to defend ourselves....The Arab countries must be made to realize that the ceasefire lines will be quiet only if the peace is kept on both sides....We want quiet...but it is for the Arab countries to decide what they want....Achieving permanent peace in the region depends on the Arab countries and their decision to

conduct direct negotiations with us....An attempt has been made to get the four Powers to meet to discuss and make recommendations on the Middle East. One cannot help be surprised by the fact that one of them considers itself fit to discuss the Israel-Arab dispute neutrally even though it bears a large portion of the responsibility for the aggressive preparations which led to the Six Day War. The sole constructive contribution of another of the Powers was to impose an arms embargo on Israel....

Although we believe in the good intentions of our friends...we must make it clear that just as they do not permit others to solve their problems...Israel must be a party to any attempt to solve its problems....It is a dangerous illusion to assume that a solution can be found through settlements of various kinds without genuine peace between the parties involved....Since the establishment of the state we have experienced several international settlements which have let us down....The assurances we were given after withdrawing from the Sinai in 1957 that Israel's freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran would be upheld were not fulfilled in 1967....We can rely solely on our own ability to defend ourselves from aggression....As long as the Arab leaders are not prepared to make peace with us, of what use are formulae of one kind or another...? All we want is peace, based on mutual recognition and negotiation....All talk of an imposed settlement merely encourages the Arab leaders to refrain from negotiating with us and making peace....

The Government of Israel has resolved that we want peace and peace treaties which will assure agreed, secure and recognized borders...and that we are ready to discuss peace with our neighbors at any time....On 1 August 1967 the Knesset resolved that "as long as peace has not been attained, Israel will maintain the existing situation, which was determined after the ceasefire resulting from the IDF's repulsion of aggression." The Arab leaders' reply to our constant readiness to negotiate with them was given at the Khartoum Conference....We are resolved to continue to seek peace...but we are equally resolved not to return to the lines and conditions which existed prior to the Six Day War, which made it easy for our enemies to threaten to destroy us and tempted them to act upon that threat. We do not want to put temptation in their way again....We have helped U.N. Ambassador Gunnar Jarring in his peace-making mission, and will continue to do so....

One of the problems which is a direct result of the aggression of the Arab countries is the refugee problem. Since our state was established we have shown the world how to solve a refugee problem...absorbing a huge influx of penniless immigrants, many of them from Arab countries....Later they, in their turn, helped to absorb more recent immigrants....Together with the help and solidarity of the Jews of the diaspora, we all shared what little we had with one another. The Arab countries, on the other hand, treat the Arab refugees as a weapon in their war

against us, completely disregarding the human aspect. Neither their huge territory nor their immense resources have been used to help their Arab brethren....

I will do my utmost, with the help of my colleagues, to ensure that this Government, like its predecessor...continues to unite the various groups without impairing its democratic authority to decide....We must continue to build, settle, cultivate and create, despite the everincreasing burden of defense expenditure....We must reduce expenditure and...all do our share to strengthen the economy....We are all proud of what our younger generation has done since the Six Day War in volunteering to set up new settlement points in order to bolster the defense of the country while undertaking the pioneering work of expanding agriculture....

We must do all we can to encourage new immigrants to come here and share in the challenge of building the country....That objective is second in importance only to defense....After all, the main point of our existence as a state is to serve as a home for the Jewish people....We have absorbed hundreds of thousands of Jews from Arab countries, and the few who remain there are persecuted....The Government will do everything it can to save them....Neither Israel nor the Jewish people can accept with equanimity a situation in which the three and a half million Jews of the U.S.S.R. are cut off from us. We will not cease to protest at this bitter fact. We sense that they yearn for their people and the State of Israel, and we will continue to work for their release. The day will come when those who want to, will be able to join us here. Our main appeal for immigration is directed now to those Jews who are free to come here...and there has indeed been an increase in their number since the Six Day War....We call on the entire nation to help in their successful integration into our society....

The Six Day War brought home to our fighting youth the sense of unity of the Jewish people in Israel and abroad. The danger of May 1967 and the experience of the unification of Jerusalem showed the diaspora how closely it is tied to the state. We saw our brethren's anxiety for and identification with our fate. That was no passing sensation, and its continuation encourages us to hope that more Jews from the diaspora will come here to settle. We must ensure that Jewish education in Israel and abroad is not neglected and that Jewish consciousness is raised....

I call on the nation to remain united....We will continue to reinforce the IDF, which is the guarantee of our defense. Disappointments will not deter us from seeking peace. We will continue to build and develop our country and will be ready for the tests which await us. I thank the outgoing members of the Government for their contribution...especially during the difficult days of the Six Day War. I am glad that all the groups which participated in the previous Government are participating in this one...representing the widest cross-section of the nation....

I.M. Lewin (Aguda): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...we are in the midst of a fierce and bitter war, with hatred for us increasing in the Arab world....We are dealing with savages who, if they were to defeat us, God forbid, would show us no mercy....The victory of the Six Day War showed us that God is with us...and that we should draw closer to Him....It also showed us that we must make every effort to ensure that we are strong and able to defend ourselves, while constantly endeavoring to attain peace....We must cease seeking to resemble other nations and return to our ancient and holy sources....We disapprove of the fact that a woman is to head the Government of Israel, in direct contradiction of our age-old tradition...and we will vote against the Government, though not solely for that reason....

...

Y. Bader (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...Gahal feels it is our duty now, as in May 1967, to participate in the Government in this hour of grave emergency for the state...although we do not necessarily accept all its guidelines....We are greatly encouraged by Mrs. Meir's speech today as regards the direction which the Government she heads will take....Mrs. Meir reiterated the important phrase that as a result of our victory in the Six Day War the land of our forefathers has been liberated...and Gahal regards this phrase as an indication of the contribution it wishes to make to the new Government....

Esteemed Mrs. Meir, we sincerely wish you and the Government you lead success in your task, and hope that with your acknowledged perseverance, logic and spiritual strength, you and the Government will ensure that the land of our forefathers which has been liberated with the precious blood of our heroic soldiers will never again fall into the hands of strangers.

M. Ya'ari (Ma'arach, Labor-Mapam): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...we do not ignore the contradictory trends arising from the interpretation of certain phrases by the various groups within the Government. But we regard the wisdom and responsibility of the Prime Minister-designate, as well as the statement she has made, as a guarantee of the fact that the majority of the Government and the nation will unite in seeking peace, while constantly ensuring our security....As for the "land of our forefathers"—there are varying geographical interpretations of this. Jabotinsky regarded it as including both banks of the Jordan...while the poet Uri Zvi Greenberg saw it as extending from the Nile to the Euphrates. I, too, dream of restoring the unity of the Land of Israel one day, but as the joint homeland of two nations—the Jewish people, which has returned to its historic homeland, and the Arab people, which has lived here for over one thousand years....It is not the phrase "the land of our forefathers" which we reject, but the principle of not re-

turning an inch, which lurks behind Gahal's interpretation of the Government's guidelines....

There are those among us who are not only pessimistic about the chances of peace, but even fear it....We must do more in order to attain the peace we all need....We are still in a state of emergency. The acts and speeches of the Arab leaders do not augur well. Despite the contradictory trends I mentioned earlier, this situation requires us to support a National Unity Government. We support the Government headed by Golda Meir, in the firm belief that she will steer our ship to a safe and secure harbor. We have entrusted to her capable hands our most precious treasure—the maintenance of a regime of democracy and social progress and the strengthening of the pioneering hegemony in building the country.

...

I. Raphael (Mafdal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the principal tasks of the Government are to guarantee the defense of the country and its citizens, develop the country and its resources and encourage the growth of the Jewish population through immigration and natural increase....We must rely on our Father in Heaven and our own strength....We do not know what the future will bring...though we all aspire for peace and an end to bloodshed...which is in our neighbors' interests as much as our own....We have proven that we can deal with attacks upon us, whether perpetrated by regular armies or by terrorist gangs...and no world Power can help the Arabs when it comes to this....Consequently, the efforts of the new Government, which has the support of the majority of the country, should be directed towards finding a way to open peace negotiations with the neighboring countries. We wish Mrs. Meir luck in this undertaking...and take issue with the distinguished Rabbi Lewin as regards the ban set by Jewish tradition on placing a woman in a position of authority....Our ancient sources offer contradictory evidence on this subject...but the main point is that Mrs. Meir was successful as Minister of Labor and of Foreign Affairs and that distinguished rabbis sat in those Governments with her....Our party group will participate in the National Unity Government, which is still an emergency Government....

...

M. Wilner (Rakah): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset...even were the new Government merely a continuation of the previous one, that would be sufficient reason to vote against it....The previous Government did not do Israel any good, quite the contrary...it aggravated its security situation, isolated it internationally and confronted it with the gravest dangers. It failed abysmally in both its foreign and defense policies. It pinned all its hopes on the U.S., thereby entrusting the fortunes of our region to the interests of billionaires, capitalists and impe-

realists...and undermining our economy....It had no peace plan...bas- ing its activities on the principle of territorial annexation....Unfortu- nately, the present Government is even more extreme than its predeces- sor...making any political settlement with our Arab neighbors virtu- ally impossible and laying itself open to pressure from the right....

The extremist tendency of the Government could lead to the in- creased influence of extremist elements within the Arab world, ele- ments which deny Israel's right to exist and use methods which we re- ject....The current situation is one of occupation imposed through war. The occupation is a tragedy for both the Jewish and the Arab peo- ples....Israel should implement the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967, which could lead to a peaceful solution of the dispute in the region....Even the Foreign Minister, Abba Eban, has complained of the McCarthyist atmosphere in the country regarding anyone whose views are not sufficiently right-wing...and Gahal does not hesitate to threaten anyone who disagrees with it....Consequently, we will vote against the new Government, believing that thereby we will best serve the interests of the workers of Israel, the security and independence of the state and the true national interests of peace in the country and the region....

...
U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): Madam Speaker, distin- guished Knesset, let it go on record that we have raised our voice against this Government and have warned the nation....This is a bad Govern- ment...headed by the person least fit to do so....This Government is a cork in the bottleneck of the changing of the guard in this country...its youngest Minister being in his fifties, and the average age being over sixty. The generation which has reached political maturity, which runs the IDF and has proven its worth in many spheres...is not represented in this Government....Hardening of the arteries is endemic every- where...everything is stale and hackneyed....

We are facing a defense challenge unlike any we have ever faced before, when terrorist organizations are managing for the first time to establish an underground which must be taken seriously...but the Gov- ernment's response is an old-fashioned one, using out-dated methods. We are facing a political challenge in the form of the national awaken- ing of the Palestinian people, which is becoming a central factor in the Arab world. Here, too, the Government's attempt to ignore it is inappro- priate....We are facing an international challenge, as the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. combine to confront the threat posed by China and prepare to impose settlements on areas of conflict in the world....The Govern- ment's response is to continue with the monologue to which no one lis- tens....This Government lives in a world of its own, a world of mum- mified ideology....It speaks of peace but does nothing to attain it....The choice it must make is between peace without annexation or annexation

without peace. But not one Minister is prepared to forego annexation, not even for complete peace...and since no Arab leader will accept peace on those terms, what remains is Begin's plan, i.e., remaining in all the territory and abandoning any peace initiative.

All this means that the occupation situation will become a perma- nent fixture, our internal security situation will decline gradually, but inevitably and bloodily, the gulf between us and the Arab world will widen and the Arab revolution will intensify and endanger our future existence. The hands are the hands of Begin, but the voice is the voice of the Third Aliya, of MK Golda Meir....Not a single Minister advocates the establishment of peace with an independent Palestinian repub- lic...an idea which has fired the imagination of the world....Although we cannot prevent the formation of this Government...we can warn against it and hope that the good sense of the nation and the younger generation will put a speedy end to it....

...
Diav Ubeid (Cooperation and Friendship): Madam Speaker, distin- guished Knesset, in recent years the Arab citizens of the state have been incorporated in its activities as a result of the Government's positive policies towards them....The Arab citizens of the country were grieved by the death of Levi Eshkol...but are relieved by the appointment of Golda Meir as his successor, regarding this as a useful, successful and appropriate decision. Her great personality is capable of uniting all the ideological and political trends within the Government and outside it and putting an end to disputatiousness.

We know Mrs. Meir, as the world does, as a brilliant politi- cian...and a persuasive orator...who is well able to present Israel's de- sire for peace with its neighbors. We also know her as someone who is dedicated to the principle of labor and has made a great contribution to the building up and development of the country. We applaud the deci- sion to place the leadership of the Government in Mrs. Meir's capable hands...and express our party group's complete and unhesitating sup- port for her. We hope that her Government will follow in the footsteps of its predecessor in developing the Arab sector and incorporating it in the life of the country, and that the period ahead will be one of peace and prosperity for us all....

...
G. Meir: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, with your permission, I will just say a few words. First of all, I would like to thank all the Knes- set Members who have wished the new Government success. Let us hope that all their wishes will be fulfilled. I extend special thanks to the Arab Members...for their kind thoughts....It is true that the Arab masses need peace at least as much as we do. We all hope that the Arab leaders will come to realize this....

One more thing. Certain Knesset members claimed to speak on behalf of the younger generation....After one hears their views—I am referring to MK Avneri, inter alia—one can only thank God that our younger generation is what it is, and not as some would seek to represent it....I thank you all again for your generosity and hope that, with your help and support, we may yet reach our objective.

The Vote

Those in favor of expressing confidence in the new Government	84
Those against	12
Abstentions	1

The Speaker, K. Luz: Confidence has been expressed in the new Government. I congratulate the Government and wish it success in its activities....I give the floor to MK Ben-Gurion.

D. Ben-Gurion: Mr. Speaker, Members of the Knesset, I did not vote against the Government, because it contains several talented and loyal members who deserve this position. I abstained on the vote because the Prime Minister-designate—who is a very able and talented person—has concealed from the nation the serious moral defects and the crime which led members of Mapai to demand the deposition of the previous Prime Minister, thereby leading to dangerous moral corruption at the top....If this corruption continues, it could bring disaster on this country and the Jewish people.

Public Financing of Election Campaigns

Introduction

The day-to-day administration of political parties, and particularly the running of election campaigns, became increasingly expensive, and political parties found it more and more difficult to raise the required sums from members or other contributors. Suspicion grew that some lists or parties accepted politically and morally dubious commitments to corporations and individuals in order to secure financial support. On the premise that parties and campaigns are essential for the maintenance of a working democracy, the Knesset decided to finance a major part of campaign expenses (in the first stage) out of the public purse on certain conditions, at the same time imposing certain restrictions on the acceptance of contributions. Henceforward, Treasury financing of campaigns—and of parties—was to become a permanent feature of Israel's political scene, despite recurrent criticism and the continuation of mutual suspicions and accusations amongst parties, lists and candidates.

Sitting 351 of the Sixth Knesset

18 December 1968 (27 Kislev 5729)

Knesset and Local Authorities Elections (5730) (Financing, Limitation of Expenses and Audit) Law, 5729-1968/9 (Preliminary Reading)

I. Kargman (Labor): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, on behalf of Knesset Members Bader, Baram, Golan, Hazani, Shemtov and myself, I have the honor of bringing before you the above law, which is unprecedented in the history of the Knesset....If it is adopted, as I hope it will be, the Sixth Knesset will be responsible for an important reform in our democratic regime and public life....

The sociological point of departure for this idea and the ensuing proposal is that the existence of political parties is essential for a democratic society....In order to conduct their various activities the parties need financial resources....This need is particularly acute when their activities reach a peak, at election time, since their information and organizational activities are most intensive then. I am glad to note that, under another law, the period of the election campaign is shorter now than in the past, and will be even shorter. Experience has taught us that membership dues and personal contributions have never sufficed for

the parties' activities, however modest. As a result, various economic companies, whether private or public, as well as wealthy individuals were asked to donate money for election campaigns...making the parties dependent on these bodies or individuals to some extent and depriving the state of income through taxes....

The object of the proposal now before you is to grant the Ministry of Finance funds for that kind of expenditure, without the Government having any right to intervene, thereby enabling the parties to run their activities in appropriate and modest circumstances and freeing them of the need to solicit contributions from companies or individuals....Similar laws have already been introduced in Sweden and Germany...but our proposal is more advanced, since it also involves auditing....Another object of the proposed law is to limit maximum expenditure on an election campaign by a party. The logical and public conclusion from all this is control of the implementation of the law...which will be done by the State Comptroller....

Under this proposal...the sum of IL 14.6 million will be divided among the parties represented in this House...this being less than the amount spent by all the parties on the last elections....This law is experimental, and naturally the Seventh Knesset will be entitled to amend it if it sees fit to do so. The time may yet come when there is a TV set in every home, in which case that medium will play an important role in election campaigns, thereby leading to a reduction in expenditure.... We propose that the sum should be allocated to the parties on the basis of their representation in this Knesset...and that this should also apply to new party groups formed by Knesset Members who have left their original party group and formed a new one which has been recognized by the Knesset....

I move that the proposal be transferred to the Finance Committee...and I would like to thank all those who have helped us to formulate it....

Sitting 369 of the Sixth Knesset

29 January 1969 (10 Shevat 5729)

(First Reading)

I. Kargman (Chairman, Finance Committee): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, I bring before you today the proposal of the joint committee appointed by the Finance Committee and the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee which, in accordance with the decision of the House Committee, undertook the preliminary discussion of the proposal. The

new proposal, which is not significantly different from the former one, is for a trial period of the coming election year, i.e., 1969, as is noted in the title of the law....

The basic principle underlying the proposed law is that it prepares the way for determining appropriate criteria for financing the parties in their political and social struggles at the peak of their activities—election time....Some people may question the appropriateness of allocating money to the parties at a time like this, when there are many worthy causes in need of the state's limited financial resources....This approach is somewhat simple-minded, since it tends to disregard the fact that the parties raise huge sums of money for the elections which in the final event come from the public purse—in the form of an income tax exemption, albeit obtained in a roundabout and not strictly legal way—and constitute a burden on the general public....

This law is not an Israeli invention. A law of this kind was introduced in Sweden in 1965, although it does not include any reference to supervision of any kind....Proposals of a similar nature have been made in the U.S., but have not yet gained acceptance. It is interesting to note that on 24 January 1969 an article appeared in *Time* based on the work of a group of intellectuals who are preparing a new constitution for the U.S. One of their proposals was that all election mechanisms should be financed from public funds rather than from contributions, which lead to conspiracies, limiting the candidate and binding him to the contributors....A similar law has been in existence in Germany since 1967, although there the allocation is determined in accordance with the results of the next elections, not the previous ones....

The proposed law paves the way for the future as well as determining better standards than in the past....From studying the issue and consulting various people, including the State Comptroller, who will deal with the subject, I know that no country has a law which can compare with this one as regards auditing....The principal complaint made over the years concerned the waste of money. Our proposal...would impose supervision as well as limit expenditure....It will be to the credit of the Sixth Knesset if it concludes its term by passing this law....I move that the proposal be referred to the committee for preparation for a second and third reading....

S.J. Gross (Aguda): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, my party group supports this proposal, regarding it as something...which will strengthen our democratic society and clear the air before, during and after the elections. Our party group is not one of those which initiated this proposal...we are anyway modest in our election campaign expenditure....It is indeed a bold step, undertaken so far by few other countries, as the Chairman of the Finance Committee has pointed out....Let us hope that we will be able to make a joint effort to prove that the not inconsiderable investment is worthwhile....We know that it will not be

easy for the general public to understand this idea, and it is therefore our duty to explain its usefulness and positive aspects to it as well as to ourselves....

The ability to associate freely is the expression of a democratic society. The existence of political parties is the basis of popular rule. The will of the people is expressed via the party. Naturally, there are defects in the system of rule by parties, but to date no better system has been found to maintain democracy, i.e., the rule of the people by means of an elected parliament. We see that in countries where there is no freedom of association and government through parties, there is inevitably a dictatorship which represses the will and freedom of the people....Despite the multiplicity of parties in Israel...this country is a bastion of democracy and can serve as an example to others....

In requesting financing for the parties, we can tell the Israeli taxpayer with a good conscience that the object is to preserve the will and right of the people, of the voters, enabling them to express their wishes and views. This can be done only by free association within a framework of political parties....It is through the party that the individual functions and participates in political and ideological struggles....I think this law will also make a significant contribution to clearing the air around election time, particularly through its mechanism for limiting and supervising expenditure....There has been justified criticism by the public of the waste of money on general and local elections in the past...and this law will set matters on a healthier footing in that respect....It is equally important that the parties be independent of private sources of finance....

I should point out that the basis on which funds are to be allocated to the various parties does not seem to me to accurately reflect the composition and views of the public. I do not think that a party which has forty or fifty Knesset Members deserves funding which is ten or twenty times as large as that of a party with two, three or four Knesset Members. The elections are not merely a political struggle for power or representation in the Knesset, they are essentially an ideological struggle....By voting, the individual expresses his ideological affiliation with the party or group to which he wants to belong....We know that large parties with ample funds can easily hold meetings all over the country, print publicity material, hire activists, make promises, etc. Other parties, with limited funds, cannot do all those things.

If we really want to preserve democracy, allowing the will of the people to be expressed at election time, we must enable the small parties to expand their activities....The proposed law will not do this....I presume that amendments designed to achieve a fairer distribution of resources can be introduced in the committee. In any event, we welcome the law to finance the elections, regarding it as a way of strengthening

democracy. I do not think the voter will lose by it, but we must wait and see how the law will be implemented.

...

Y. Bader (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I had a part in preparing the proposed law, and I naturally share the responsibility equally with the representatives of the important, historic, well-established party with which we signed the proposal. The problem I had to grapple with was the funding of breakaway parties...but my party decided that we would not be the ones to withhold funds from them...though we will do our best to defeat them at election time....

The proposed law will reduce expenditure...which I have had occasion to examine from time to time....I know that the amount one party spends forces the others to spend accordingly...or lose their influence on the public....Thus, the proposed law, which will reduce expenditure by all the parties and prevent one party from obliging the others to overspend, is a good one. It undoubtedly places a certain burden on the budget...but if the sum of IL 14.5 million is divided over a period of four years, as it would be under normal circumstances, it comes out as IL 3.8 million per annum, constituting a minute proportion of our annual budget...and a tremendous annual saving...in real terms....

I believe that in principle there are many doubts as to the desirability of having the State Comptroller audit public bodies of any kind, since this constitutes an attempt to enable the State Comptroller to supervise what is done in the parties....Nonetheless, I think that in this case it is advisable. I would not have agreed to it had not every party been given the alternative of rejecting the State Comptroller's supervision...and not receiving public funds....The proposed law absolves the parties, to a certain extent, of having to solicit funds from public and private donors...thereby increasing their freedom....I have read enough to know what party funding means in America, England or elsewhere....I think that an arrangement by which this dependence can be overcome is highly beneficial....

MK Baram was correct in saying that the existence of political parties is essential in a democracy...as long as no better method has been invented—and none has....

...

M. Hazani (Mafdal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...this proposal was discussed at great length in its preliminary stages...partly because of myself and my colleagues in the Mafdal....In the final event, we decided that, despite its many defects and dangers, it may yet prove to be beneficial....Consequently, if someone attacks the principle underlying the law, I will defend it, but if someone...opposes the actual structure of the law, I will tend to agree with them....Thus, our support for this proposal is given provisionally, since we regard it as a one-time

arrangement. Afterwards, once we have learned from the experience of these elections, the Seventh Knesset may consider in what ways to amend the law, and whether it should be passed again....The title of the proposed law specifies the year 1969, i.e., the law refers to the approaching election year, after which it will be reviewed once more....

The defects of the proposed law are...first, that it breaks the existing numerical framework of the Knesset, in that it allows for more than 120 Knesset Members....That is a compromise solution to the specific problem of the breakaway parties...and arises from the difficulty in deciding whether to allocate funds on the basis of the number of party groups entering the Knesset or leaving it....Secondly...the point of departure for support for election finances is the situation in the departing Knesset, regardless of what the situation of the Seventh Knesset will be. In other words, the state is not prepared to support new forces which could develop in the elections and appear as a new party group....This subject has not been given sufficient attention...and in my view, the Seventh Knesset will have to reconsider it.

Thirdly, I would like to refer to what I regard as a potential defect, namely, the section dealing with expenditure and auditing by the State Comptroller. I regard this as a potential defect because it depends on the goodwill of the parties....I therefore appeal to all the parties, including my own, but first of all to the major parties, to accept that limitation willingly, not because of the section in the law, but because in the final event, it is for their own good. Because our election experience has shown that all the expenditure on organizing huge meetings, transporting voters, etc. makes no difference to the outcome...while forcing the smaller parties to attempt to compete with the big ones. Even if less is spent on election campaigns by each party, the results will still be the same...though attempts will doubtless be made to overcome the restrictions on expenditure fixed by the law....Nonetheless, my party group feels that the advantages of this law outweigh its disadvantages...and we will vote for its referral to the committee, particularly in view of the fact that it reflects the importance the Knesset attaches to political parties in a democratic society...as the representatives of the various groups within it....Even if this were the only purpose of the proposed law, that would be sufficient....

In conclusion, I would like to say that there are defects...in the proposed law. But when I consider the advantages and disadvantages, both in practical terms and in principle, the former outweigh the latter. We were among those who helped formulate the law, and will also vote for it now, though on the clear assumption that the law is temporary and will be reassessed and amended, if necessary, by the Seventh Knesset, on the basis of the lessons of the forthcoming elections.

V. Shemtov (Mapam): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, as one of the signatories to and initiators of this proposed law, I would like to state

that I am aware of the fact that it is not perfect. I do not know how many perfect laws there are. I agree with MK Hazani that there are aspects of the proposed law which require amendment. All those who initiated and prepared the law were aware of this. Nonetheless, we submitted this proposal, taking into account the fact that it is experimental. It refers solely to the elections to the Seventh Knesset and will doubtless be reviewed in the light of that experience....The question we must ask ourselves is: does this law really serve to strengthen the democratic, parliamentary regime of this country or does it weaken it? I believe that despite its deficiencies...in the final event...it strengthens it....

The proposed law strengthens the democratic regime because for the first time we will...prevent waste during the election campaign, shorten its duration and enable the State Comptroller to audit the parties' accounts while it is being conducted....I regard this as a very important step towards auditing the parties' finances in general. The subject may be discussed again in another few years and the auditing extended. I regard those three elements as the principal points in favor of the proposed law....

The question of why the public should pay for election propaganda has been raised. I think that even as things stand at present the public pays for election propaganda...in one way or another....As a member of a parliamentary delegation which visited various countries, I saw that in democratic countries it is taken for granted that the election campaign is part and parcel of the parliamentary regime. Thus, just as it is natural that the Knesset pays the Knesset Members a salary from public funds, it must also finance the costs of the elections to parliament, in accordance with democratic principles....

In conclusion, I would like to say that there are shortcomings in the proposed law, but in general it serves to strengthen democracy. It is the first legislation in this sphere, an experiment which will be amended prior to the elections to the Eighth Knesset, and as such I think it should be transferred to the committee.

I. Golan (Independent Liberals): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, as one of the signatories to the proposal and a member of a party group which helped initiate it, I would like to say first of all that the people who worked on preparing the proposal spared neither time nor effort to produce the best possible proposal....I have no doubt that this law is extremely constructive and will make an important contribution to strengthening democracy in Israel, because the atmosphere in Israel is anti-party. This may be due in part to the intensity with which the members of the various parties debate issues...as well as to criticisms levelled by the larger parties at smaller ones, thereby serving to undermine the legitimacy of their very existence....

It may well be that, in addition to the Elections Financing Law, we need a Parties Financing Law, such as exists in Germany...but we

have not yet reached that stage. The proposed law before us is just a beginning, and at present we are trying to finance only the elections, because that is when the financial situation is most acute.

The initiators of the law were concerned not only with how to supply the parties with money, but also how to restrict the amounts spent on election campaigns....The State Comptroller demanded a document signed by the party representatives testifying that the election accounts submitted to him reflected the situation accurately....We must all see to it that the election campaign becomes a great act of political education, thereby strengthening democracy. Past election campaigns have been accompanied by criticism in the press of the waste of money....We regarded it as our educational objective that every four years the voters should be shown all the various programs and alternatives which exist in Israel...so that they may choose whom to support....All the parties must be enabled to reach the voter. One means of doing this is by means of a budget, if it is not too exaggerated....

I think it is worth the taxpayer's while to do this...and I agree with the Chairman of the Finance Committee that in this way we will save the taxpayer's money....There were various proposals as to how to divide the money up and amongst which parties, whether the outgoing or the incoming ones. All that was discussed at length. The proposal suggests basing the distribution of funds on the structure of the incoming Knesset...which was considered to be the best solution, but after this approach has been put into practice it may be reviewed and changed.... There is no doubt in my mind that the actual idea of funding elections and the parties' expenses through the national budget is a constructive one, and that this law will contribute to improving the general atmosphere.

...

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): Distinguished Knesset and Speaker...we do not object in principle to the idea of the public funding of the election campaign, provided it is clean, economical and egalitarian. The proposed law before us is basically unacceptable, and I will vote against it today, as I did at the preliminary debate. The proposal reflects the character of Israel's establishment more than any other proposal ever brought before this Knesset, and this has been reflected in the sublime wall-to-wall harmony displayed in the debate till now....This establishment is based on a federation of party functionaries, on the cartel of the machinery, on "bosses." This proposal serves to perpetuate this cartel, or what MK Bader called "the historic party groups." And all this is brought here under the facade of...: "Democracy is the parliament, and the parliament consists of the parties, and the parties are us." It is true that democracy is the parliament and that the parliament consists of the parties. But not these parties, and not this regime....

The principle of funding the parties' election finances is an objectionable one. The appropriate way for the country to fund the parties is the one used for radio broadcasts. The state should place the means of conducting an election campaign at the disposal of the lists of candidates, i.e., radio, television, noticeboards, halls, etc., on a basis of equality, like the rules implemented with regard to the radio. If the television operates appropriately during the elections, i.e., during the last two weeks before the elections it is placed at the disposal of the various party spokesmen each evening, the entire IL15 million will be unnecessary. Then we will have a genuine election campaign, with people appearing on television, airing their views and arguing with one another, and the nation will be able to decide. That is national funding of genuinely democratic elections.

If the decision has been made to distribute money to the parties, is this the right way to do it? The proposal before us means perpetuating the existing establishment, not only the existing parties, but also the relations between them, because the larger parties will receive more funds....This constitutes a combination of the distorted key of allocations plus a ban on additional expenditure....If a small party may not spend more than it receives, plus one third, that means that it is predetermined that a small party cannot spend more on its election campaign than the limit decided for it by the two giant parties, while a newly-established movement cannot receive anything....Thus, we have the perpetuation of the existing party relationships through the allocation of funds...regardless of where the voter wishes his money to go....

The conspiratorial nature of the proposal is reflected in the fact that it acknowledges the existence of 122 Knesset Members. What is particularly scandalous is that MK David Ben-Gurion remains outside the framework! The framework which has been determined is completely arbitrary and is based solely on horse-trading....That accounts for this astonishing harmony, and for the fact that MK David Ben-Gurion is left out in the cold....The actual sum cited is out of all proportion. It is unnecessary. It is possible to manage with far less, if the state places the appropriate measures, such as the television, at the disposal of the parties....

What the previous speakers have said, in effect, is...: "We have stolen, lied, broken the law and evaded paying income tax. So that we won't have to do all that in the future, give us that money."...That is a very strange argument. But the proposed law does not limit contributions obtained by those improper ways hinted at here....If you simply wanted to limit expenditure you could have brought a proposal to limit election expenditure....The proposed law, as it stands now, is neither appropriate, necessary, hygienic nor clean. It does not guarantee any aspect of democracy and I will not vote for it.

S. Mikunis (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...I oppose this law....There is no doubt that there are various groups in this country which are dissatisfied with the fact that we have a party system, and are always ready to set the Knesset and parliamentary methods at naught, but they are few and weak....Those who have tried to introduce reactionary-fascist changes in other countries do not last long, because as long as society and the nation consists of different social groups and classes there will be parties. The existence of a party system is perfectly natural and essential for the life of a given nation. As long as we have parties, representing different interests within the nation, there will be a Knesset and there will be parliamentary procedures, of one kind or another....

There is a difference between wanting to criticize, improve or destroy something....We must also bear in mind that there is always a majority and a minority....If I agreed with MK Kargman that this law was necessary, I would be in favor of funding those party groups which exist in the Knesset, not those which will appear after the elections...because we know the Israeli public...and we know that there will be no miracles....I would also be in favor of giving each of the existing 120 Knesset Members an equal allocation....The various splits and reformations should not concern the Election Law....That would be more correct and more democratic....I also think that party groups consisting of one person should get a larger proportionate allocation than that proposed....

If I supported the law I would say all that, but I oppose the law, for various reasons. Democracy is reflected primarily by the rich paying more and the poor less, not by funding party groups....At a time when our national finances are badly strained, when security expenditure accounts for 39 percent of the national budget, when the welfare budget has been reduced, do we need to spend IL 15 million to finance the elections? What's the hurry? Do the large parties, which have financial resources, need that IL 7 million for the elections...? Are we living in a fool's paradise...?

The timing is very bad. This additional burden on the taxpayer will not lead anywhere. The larger forces in the Knesset, the country and the Federation of Labor have various ways of influencing the public....That is why it is superfluous. At this time, in this situation, and especially today, when there is snow in Jerusalem, and the Ministry of Agriculture will have to compensate the farmers for the damage to crops...our minds are not free to deal with this....It would be more useful to spend the money on helping people who have suffered because of floods....That would be more valuable and more significant in terms of the nation and the labor ethic than imposing an additional burden of taxation on the nation to finance the elections. I am convinced that in this year of 1969, of all years, there is no need to spend more on suppos-

edly "strengthening Israeli democracy." For all those reasons, I will vote against this law.

...

I. Kargman (Labor): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I stand before the Knesset and the nation to say...that I am convinced that the law which we have initiated and brought before the Knesset is an important one which will serve to fortify and deepen the foundations of Israeli democracy. This law is also fair...despite the criticism which has been levelled against it here and in the press....The significance of the law will not be evident immediately, but this will appear after or during the elections. It has been claimed that the timing is inappropriate...but if the eventual outcome is that less is spent on the entire election campaign than would otherwise have been the case, the economy will gain, not lose, from it....

I thank MKs Hazani and Golan who noted the efforts invested in preparing the law....There were doubts and hesitations throughout the process, everything was discussed in full...and decisions were made. ...MK Avneri claimed that the law was not clean, and that was why he opposed it...but omitted to specify the criteria which led him to make that assertion....Apart from anything else, I fail to see how MK Avneri, who represents a publication and movement of questionable taste, is in a position to determine whether anyone else is "clean" or not....

We proposed that the grant or allocation should be proportionate to the parties' representation in the current Knesset....Anyone may say that he disagrees with this and propose a different system...but there is no moral basis for rejecting one system or another. During the next year or two we may decide to change the method of allocation....The overriding argument in favor of basing the allocation on the outgoing rather than the incoming Knesset...is that we do not wish to encourage the formation of additional parties....All those who scorn the "historic" parties are making a big mistake, because those parties have deep roots in the nation....People who believed in those parties built the country and the state, fought for it and ran it. They did what they did and they have been criticized. There are various parties. The nation decides. Those are the historic parties. I do not think that the country needs more parties...though it is the voters' right to establish them if that is what they want....

As for the claim regarding the 122 Knesset Members...the fact of the matter is that parties which entered this Knesset have split since the last elections, and must be funded accordingly....At present we have proportional, not personal, elections....Perhaps that should be changed, perhaps the Seventh Knesset will do that, but at present the situation is otherwise....The present structure of the Knesset reflects the various groups within the nation...and all the remarks about 122 Knesset Members are unnecessary. We could have said that the splinter parties will

not receive anything...but the various parties which prepared this proposal felt that we could not ignore the fact that there is a certain internal mobility within the Knesset, that a new party group, the Free Center, has arisen, and that it should be entitled to funds...The Seventh Knesset may well change this arrangement...and we might reach a point when there are two major parties, not many small ones...and that is certainly something to be desired....

This proposal is built in such a way that the allocation is granted to a party, not individual Knesset Members...as determined by the House Committee...The auditing of the parties' election finances by the State Comptroller is for moral, public and political, not financial, reasons... The nation will judge the parties according to the State Comptroller's findings, and not whether one party received IL 500,000 or not. There is no doubt that the parties which were instrumental in preparing this proposal will obey both the spirit and the letter of the law.

The Vote

Those in favor of transferring the law to the joint committee	24
Those against	2

(The proposal to transfer the law to the joint committee is adopted.)

Introduction

As a part of Israel's "evolving constitution," a number of basic laws had been enacted over the years. With a few exceptions, they had not been accorded a privileged position vis-à-vis regular laws. One of these exceptions was clause 4 of the Basic Law: the Knesset, which provides, inter alia, for "equal" elections. A private citizen appealed to the Supreme Court against the Election Financing Law (see immediately above) on the grounds that it contravened the principle of equality. According to the law, financing was to be proportional to the number of members which a party had in the outgoing Knesset. This, it was argued, gave existing parties an unfair advantage over new parties (lists) which might decide to run. Although the Supreme Court had not been authorized to pass judgment on the constitutionality of laws—since there was no formal constitution as yet this would in any case have been premature—in what was to become something of a cause celebre, the court reviewed the issue on basically procedural grounds, since the law had not yet been adopted at all readings with an absolute majority, as was required in this case. The Government accepted the Supreme Court's "proposal," and submitted an amendment by which financing

would be based on the proportion of members in the incoming Knesset, to be calculated retroactively in accordance with the outcome of the elections.

Sitting 426 of the Sixth Knesset

14 July 1969 (28 Tammuz 5729)

(Amendment)

The Deputy Prime Minister, Y. Allon: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, it has fallen to me to present this proposal instead of the Minister of Justice, a task which I am happy to undertake....On 19 February 1969 the Knesset adopted the Knesset and Local Authorities Elections (5730) (Financing, Limitation of Expenses and Audit) Law, 5729-1969, whereby allocations will be granted from public funds to existing party groups in the Knesset for organizing their campaigns for the elections...to the Seventh Knesset and the local authorities which will be held in 5730 (1969).

The funding granted to the parties...is based in general terms on an allocation of IL 120,000 per Knesset Member. The law...also determines the maximum a party may spend on elections...which consists of the sum allocated by the state and an additional sum from its own funds, which should not exceed one-third of the allocation. This will help to achieve one of the main objectives of the law, the limitation of election expenses.

The law enables the State Comptroller to audit election expenses...and obliges parties to keep their accounts in the appropriate manner....An existing party will receive 70 percent of its allocation as an advance. After the elections the State Comptroller will submit a report on the parties' accounts to the Knesset Speaker. If the audit shows that the party conducted its election campaign accounts in accordance with the Comptroller's instructions and its expenses have not exceeded its permitted maximum, the Knesset Speaker will transfer the remaining 30 percent to it.

It is worth noting that the system of funding determined by the Knesset is very similar to the one employed in Sweden...though there only parties with more than one member in parliament are eligible for government funding. Our law contains sections regarding auditing and limiting expenditure which do not exist in the parallel Swedish law.

In Supreme Court Ruling 98/69 (Bergman v. the Minister of Finance and the State Comptroller), the Supreme Court examined the law

under review and ruled that depriving new parties, i.e., lists which are not represented in the present Knesset, of funds, impairs the equal chances of the lists competing in the Knesset elections and opposes the principle of equality underlying clause 4 of the Basic Law: the Knesset, which determines that "The Knesset shall be elected in general, countrywide, equal, secret and proportional elections, in accordance with the Knesset Elections Law."

In that ruling the Supreme Court stated, inter alia: "In Knesset debates on the Elections Financing Law the system of funding on the basis of the balance of forces in the outgoing (Sixth) Knesset and the incoming (Seventh) Knesset were compared. The Knesset preferred the former system, one of the principal reasons for this being the danger of the temptation to create ephemeral lists in order to receive an advance on the allocation. That danger can be avoided without causing that inequality which we find unacceptable. A new list can be assured of funding, but only retroactively, without the advance payment, after it has passed the test of the elections and received at least one Knesset seat, provided it has accepted auditing by the State Comptroller in advance, in accordance with the Financing Law, and has also met the other conditions stipulated by law. It seems to us that instructions of this kind may still be added to the Financing Law without undue difficulty, without changing its existing stipulations regarding the parties represented in the Sixth Knesset and without upsetting the existing arrangements, thereby preventing the aforementioned inequality."

The Government decided to adopt the Supreme Court's proposal, and hence the amended form of the law now before you....One of the bases of the proposed law is determining a limit to election expenses....If any party exceeds that limit it will receive only 70 percent of its allocation....I assume that in the coming debate the question of basing the entire funding arrangement solely on the results of the elections to the Seventh Knesset will be raised. The Government believes that the acceptance of this alternative arrangement, which would serve to "upset the existing arrangements," as the Supreme Court put it, could defeat the objectives of the law as regards auditing and limiting election expenses. Furthermore, even those who propose funding on the basis of the election results do not disregard the need to make advance payments. In those countries where funding is provided on the basis of the election results, as in West Germany, for example, the advance is allocated only to existing parties. Since in our case only part of the amount is paid as an advance, the alternative proposal is not so different from the one put forward by the Government as regards the crucial stage, i.e., funding before the elections. Thus, the alternative proposal does not constitute a substantive amendment....

S.J. Gross (Aguda): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the amendment to the Elections Financing Law apparently arises from the

Supreme Court ruling, which seeks to ensure funding for new lists too. We support that amendment as it stands, but I would like to make a few remarks about the law in general....We all know that it is not perfect...and that we are funding 124 Knesset Members rather than the actual number....That defect should have been amended at the same time....We also take issue with the basis of IL 120,000 per Knesset Member. The basis should be allotted per party group, with a progressive addition according to the number of its Knesset Members....

...

Y. Bader (Gahal): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, I would like to begin by making a few things clear....First of all, there is no constitutional or other dispute between the Knesset and the Supreme Court.... Secondly, I certainly do not need to be told to respect the Supreme Court....I know several Supreme Court judges personally, and know about others, and I respect them as jurists and human beings. I am acquainted with Supreme Courts elsewhere...and I know that we can be proud of ours. For me, a High Court ruling is not something abstract...I read and study them...and it is a libel to say that the Supreme Court ruling contradicts the Elections Financing Law....

S. Tamir (Free Center): It only destroyed it....

Y. Bader (Gahal): Nonsense. Not only does the Supreme Court not reject the funding of the parties, it even demands wider funding....It is also untrue to claim that the Supreme Court ruled that basic laws take precedence over other laws. The Supreme Court did not and could not say that....The Supreme Court decided not to discuss the question of whether or not it was authorized to review the Financing Law...and although this appears to have been based on a misunderstanding, the Attorney-General did not query this, which I find unfortunate...especially with regard to possible future repercussions....

The problem the Supreme Court encountered was...how to fund a new list and...whether every list submitted should be funded....The Supreme Court ruled that the parties should receive an advance...which is a reasonable arrangement and one to which I do not object....New parties receive free radio and television time, as well as other material aids....We should not attach too much importance to new parties. I have been doing some research and have discovered that between the Second and the Sixth Knesset 26 new lists were submitted...and all of them failed except for one....

...

S. Tamir (Free Center): Madam Speaker, Knesset Members, the Election Financing Law was not initiated out of pure motives...though some of the Knesset Members involved in its preparation may have believed in the principle of limiting election expenditure and making the parties

independent of donors. But the eventual form taken by the law has created deficiencies and absurdities which are unacceptable. And so, when the law came under the criticism of the Supreme Court, it was given the only possible sentence—death.

That law is, indeed, dead. It no longer exists, despite all the argumentation and casuistry. The Treasury has been instructed not to allocate funds on the basis of that unacceptable law....The Supreme Court made it perfectly clear that the law runs counter to the principle of free and equal elections...and I maintain that even in its present, amended form the law is unacceptable...since inequality is endemic to it, regardless of the proportionate sums allocated to the party groups per Knesset Member....

This inequality applies among other things...to access to television time. Let us not delude ourselves, elections consist of an idea, candidates and a mighty machine which manages the elections. All that comprises money and propaganda. Since television was introduced into this country the significance of public assemblies and house meetings has declined tremendously, and television has become the principal instrument of election publicity. If one person is given preference over another in television exposure...the election results have been predetermined to a certain extent. To this must be added the Federation of Labor's party tax and the Jewish Agency's annual allocation to the veteran parties. Then how can one speak of democracy and equal rights...?

The justification...for holding elections now...is to allow the voter to have his say on the subjects which are on the public agenda today...: the territories and Israel's security and existential problems....Should the criterion be the election results of the prehistoric era before the Six Day War? What relation do they have to the subjects on the public agenda today? The Supreme Court ruled as to the injustice of the law... and the attempt it constituted to strike a blow against democracy...but the Knesset is seeking to block the Supreme Court's authority to rule on matters such as these....

From the outset we proposed that funding should be allocated on the basis of the elections to the next Knesset...and that the advances should be paid equally to everyone...thereby preventing injustice....The public would understand this, as well as the positive intention of restricting waste by limiting expenditure. There would also be equality in radio and television time, and in every sphere. What kind of elections are you proposing? The number of competitors is immaterial, but anyone who competed four years ago will have a head start over anyone else....That is what you are proposing to the public—Democracy Bader-style.

I know that I have been warned that if I say what I am saying here today sanctions will be imposed on us and we will be excluded from the

funding framework....This was done by people who, for the last twenty years, have mouthed statements about "the supremacy of the law"...but whose fine principles vanish miraculously when they see money or a Knesset seat in the offing....The Supreme Court's ruling should make it clear to all that this law contradicts the foundations of democracy. We will oppose it, the public will oppose it vehemently, knowing that the day it is passed by the Knesset equal opportunity to compete in elections will be dead and the elections will become a fiction organized by two parties—a cartel, not elections....

E. Habibi (Rakah): Madam Speaker, distinguished Knesset, our party group approves of amendments to the Elections Financing Law...which will assure maximal equality of opportunity to the lists competing for the electorate's votes. We do not find that the amendments proposed by the Government assure this. We will submit proposals of our own to the committee and will support those of other party groups which aim at guaranteeing equality....Our party group noted with approval the Supreme Court ruling which determined that the original law contradicts the principle of equality in clause 4 of the Basic Law: the Knesset, and forbade the Minister of Finance to implement it....

The people and groups who were surprised by the Supreme Court's decision and questioned its authority are those who belittle the need for a constitution and who think that by coalitionary combinations, ensuring a mechanical majority in the Knesset, drowning the truth of certain laws in a sea of words and empty phrases...they can turn black into white, and represent a law which is against the workers as one which is for them, occupied territories as liberated territories, a policy of dictates from a position of strength as one which aspires to peace negotiations, and so on. They think that they can disregard Israel's Declaration of Independence, the guarantee of equality for its inhabitants and the basic laws of democracy....

All those who oppose the Elections Financing Law...for various reasons of their own...are concealing the fact from the public that the state would anyway fund the ruling and the bourgeois parties, either directly or indirectly, without any limitation of control....What is new in this law is that...there is a slight possibility that the workers' parties will receive part of what is their due...and that it might be possible to control and restrict expenditure which was uncontrolled and unrestricted in the past.

We are in favor of allocating radio and television time to the parties during the election campaign, so that the media are not monopolized by the ruling parties....Our aim is always to increase the possibilities of the working class to fight for its daily and historic rights. While supporting the democratic idea of funding the parties' election campaigns, we oppose the inequality of the Government's proposal. We propose that the allocation should be based on the results of the elections to the Sev-

enth Knesset, with an advance to be paid to lists represented in the outgoing Knesset, in accordance with the present number of their members. We oppose...allocating funds on the basis of a fictitious number of members of a party group....

We know that no court of law in a bourgeois regime can guarantee genuine equality of opportunity between a party which controls an immense political machine and represents huge economic interests and one which represents exploited workers and a repressed population which controls only its working potential. There is no genuine political equality without genuine economic equality. Genuine political equality exists in a different, socialist regime, and the Supreme Court cannot step outside the bourgeois regime based on laws which maintain the social and economic inequality of the bourgeois regime....The Supreme Court's ruling should serve as a warning to all those who think that they can act arbitrarily against my party group...We do not have only the Seventh Knesset ahead of us. We wish to live together, in peace and equality, forever and ever. Inshallah.

...
The Deputy Prime Minister, Y. Allon: Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...I have long favored restricting and controlling election expenditure...as well as limiting the duration of the election campaign....I would like to point out that the original proposal was brought before the Knesset as a private bill initiated by several Knesset Members from various party groups, not by the Government....I will not go into the constitutional dispute between the legislature and the judiciary, and I propose that we do not hasten to jump to conclusions....Nonetheless, allow me to quote the Supreme Court ruling, which states: "Needless to say, in suggesting this (i.e., the amendment I am proposing today), we in no way wish to impair the sovereignty of the Knesset as the legislature." Knesset Members, while disagreeing, let us not destroy the great principle of the sovereignty of the Knesset as the supreme legislature....The court intervened as it did in accordance with laws which we promulgated. It is not the legislature....Consequently, after consulting the appropriate authorities...and to ensure that the Knesset elections are held in the State of Israel...it is necessary to amend this law, which is in any case a one-time law....

Audit experts tell us that...it is easier to conduct an effective and serious audit by the State Comptroller on the basis of the proposal submitted by the Government, which is based on the one submitted by the Knesset Members. This is the first time the State Comptroller will be obliged, not merely permitted, to examine the parties' election accounts. I would like to make it clear to MK Tamir that if he disagrees with certain sections of the law, and the law is passed, that does not mean that his party group will not be entitled to receive what other party groups get....Over the years it has become clear to me...that where election campaigns are

concerned, with all one's aspiration for maximal equality, there cannot be absolute equality....This was borne out by the Supreme Court, which stated: "Everyone agrees that one cannot place all the parties in completely equal positions by giving each one an equal allocation, regardless of their size."...The Government has proposed its amendment with the intention of gaining maximal equality in the circumstances....

No one disputes that the Knesset is the State of Israel's supreme legislature. Everyone wants it to continue and flourish. But there is no Knesset without political parties and we cannot know what the will of the people is, in accordance with representative, responsible and...supervised democracy, without holding elections for the components of the Knesset, namely, the parties. By allocating sums of money, according to criteria determined by the Knesset through legislation, we are bringing about a revolution in enhancing the democracy, purity and equal opportunity of the Knesset elections. We are entitled to ask the state, which funds the existence of the parliament, also to fund the existence of the parliamentary regime by granting the money required for holding fair and orderly elections....This will cause tremendous savings as well as having the added benefit of control....

I think that this law, with amendments of one kind or another, will serve as an example for other parliamentary regimes in the world....I therefore hope that the entire Knesset, regardless of party differences, will explain this point at least to the general public...and point out that henceforth not only those who have financial resources of their own will be able to hold an election campaign....This law raises democracy to a higher stage....In conclusion, I propose that the Knesset transfer the proposal to the Finance Committee....

The Vote

Those in favor	80
Those against	6
Abstentions	1

(The motion to transfer the proposal to the Finance Committee is adopted.)

Statement by the Minister of Defense Regarding Israel's Refusal to Withdraw from Sharm el-Sheikh Even for Peace with Egypt

Introduction

While the War of Attrition continued unabated, indeed, at an intensified level, Ambassador Jarring continued his mission on behalf of the Security Council, seeking a basis for peace, but to no avail. Discussions concerning the prospects of and conditions for peace abounded. The following debate—one of many—has been selected in view of the fact that a decade later Moshe Dayan was a principal architect of the peace treaty with Egypt, which entailed withdrawal from the whole of the Sinai Peninsula, including Sharm el-Sheikh.

Sitting 427 of the Sixth Knesset

15 July 1969 (29 Tammuz 5729)

M. Wilner (Rakah): Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset, at the Council of the Moshav Movement in Tel Aviv which was devoted to settlement in the occupied territories, the Minister of Defense, M. Dayan, said in answer to a question...: "If Egypt were to agree to make peace with us on condition we returned to the borders of June 4, I would prefer life without peace provided we remained at Sharm el-Sheikh." This statement and others made by the Minister of Defense indicate that he assumes that there is a possibility of peace, if we do not insist on territorial annexation, but he prefers life without peace to losing control of Sharm el-Sheikh and other Arab territory.

That is a very serious view. It implies that even if Egypt agrees to permanent peace with Israel, the end of the state of belligerency and recognition of Israel's sovereign right to existence in secure and recognized borders and to freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal...the Minister of Defense, Moshe Dayan, will reject peace. The timing of this pronouncement is not coincidental...He knows, as I do, that there are real chances of a genuine, lasting and stable peace with the Arab countries...

The U.S.S.R.'s new peace plan, which contains all the elements I have mentioned and which was submitted to the four Powers, was pub-

lished in the papers today. When I brought that plan before the Knesset two weeks ago some Knesset Members expressed the view that it was not so bad and that it merited discussion...This is an historic opportunity of attaining peace with the Arab countries after over twenty years... Anyone who rejects it proves...that he is concerned with territorial expansion and serving the imperialist Powers rather than with Israel's security...The peace plan which was published today has the approval of Egypt and other Arab countries...I am sure that when the general public realizes that there is a chance of genuine peace with our neighbors the majority will not agree to the continuation of the bloodshed because of the territorial expansionism of chauvinistic circles...which may lead to a deterioration in the situation and even to further war or wars, the results of which only people who are cut off from international and regional reality think that they can foresee...It is hardly surprising, then, that the Minister of Defense is constantly exhorting us to prepare for the next war with Egypt and the other Arab countries rather than to prepare peace initiatives of our own...

The object of the Minister of Defense's extremist statements is to exert pressure on the Government...By means of extremist militarism he hopes to reach the premiership and conduct the elections. Yesterday he proposed including the territorial annexation of Jordanian, Egyptian and Syrian land in the platform of the Labor Party...But a new war is not an election campaign, sir. It costs too much in blood and money. A new war might bring you the premiership, but the nation will not forgive you and all those who rejected the chances of peace...The Prime Minister seeks to neutralize Moshe Dayan and his extremist supporters, rather than arguing with them...If Moshe Dayan continues to determine the Government's policy, this Government may yet bring a national disaster on Israel. We therefore propose that the Knesset debate Moshe Dayan's statements...and the question of peace and war...

The Minister of Defense, M. Dayan: Mr. Speaker, distinguished Knesset...the U.S.S.R. and the Arab countries may well regard MK Wilner as their loyal representative, but the Arab countries and Egypt are not prepared to make peace with Israel...and the three noes of Khartoum—no negotiations, no recognition and no peace—are still in effect as far as they are concerned...The U.S.S.R.'s "new plan" does not speak of peace but that "each side will submit a declaration to the Security Council regarding its readiness to end the state of belligerency." That is very far from being a peace treaty...As to my remarks about Egypt, what I said was: "I prefer to remain at Sharm el-Sheikh without peace than to have peace, give Sharm el-Sheikh back and return to the previous borders. Our problem with Egypt is...that their minimum conditions and our minimum conditions are very, very far removed from one another." I do not often have the opportunity of identifying with and quot-

ing statements made by the Foreign Minister, Mr. Abba Eban, but I am glad to be able to do so now.

T. Toubi (Rakah): The Foreign Ministry denied that quote.

The Minister of Defense, M. Dayan: The Foreign Minister said...: "Any settlement must assure Israel's control of Sharm el-Sheikh so that it can protect its freedom of navigation...." He also spoke of a peace agreement, but did not make one dependent on the other...and also recalled that the Six Day War had begun in effect on 22 May 1967, when Nasser declared war by closing the Straits of Tiran...without any prior provocation by Israel....At that point it became clear, Eban pointed out, that all the international guarantees were worthless, while the U.N. Force fled on the basis of Egypt's decision. The Security Council and the world Powers prevaricated...and only two or three of the 80 maritime countries which had originally undertaken to do so, were prepared to even sign a document regarding our freedom of navigation....

I would therefore like to remind MK Wilner that if he seeks to avoid the possibility of another war he should not rely on Egypt, international guarantees or the U.N. Force at Sharm el-Sheikh, because they are what brought about the Six Day War. I therefore move that the proposal be removed from the agenda.

S. Tamir (Free Center): Mr. Speaker, Knesset Members, I propose that the subject be transferred to a committee, for reasons which are diametrically opposed to those brought by the original proposer....MK Wilner's assertion that there is a genuine chance of peace with the current Egyptian regime is mistaken....There have been peace offensives in the past....Hitler promised peace if his dictates were accepted....There is such a thing as a graveyard peace, and that is what is currently being prepared in Cairo and Damascus, with the support of the U.S.S.R....Under the sign of the fallacious Soviet dove a great deal of blood has been shed in the world of late....Why should we be impressed when MK Wilner tells us that he knew two weeks in advance what scheme the Soviets were hatching against us and the free world...?

We maintain that Israel must entrench itself in all the liberated territories, that being the best way of preventing further war. The Minister of Defense asserts that Israel must remain in certain territories from which the Government has decided not to withdraw....This approach requires that practical conclusions be drawn as to the areas from which the majority view is that we must not withdraw on any condition, because they are the guarantee not only of peace but of our very existence. This view must crystallize not only within the Labor Party and other parties, but within the framework of parliamentary debate...and specifically within that of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee....It is important for our settlement policy...and all that this implies...as well as for preventing another war and paving the way for

real peace, when this becomes possible....I therefore propose that this important subject be transferred to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

(The motion to debate the subject in the plenum is defeated.)

(The motion to transfer the subject to the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee is defeated.)

(The proposal to remove the subject from the agenda is adopted.)

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset, I am not prepared to accept MK Wilner's basic assumption that the U.S.S.R. has become Israel's friend and that everything it does is for Israel's benefit...but neither can I identify with the views of the Minister of Defense...which are clearly tending in a certain direction...that of annexation....He has disregarded the American peace proposal, which involves placing a U.N. Force at Sharm el-Sheikh which is subject to the Security Council, where the U.S. has the veto.

N. Eliad (Independent Liberals): When did America use its veto for you and me?

U. Avneri (Ha'Olam Hazeh-Ko'ah Hadash): It used its covert veto only last week....For whenever America indicates its intention of using its power of veto, the subject in question does not come before the Security Council....I know for a fact that the leaders of the U.S. Administration have promised to use the veto against any attempt to impose sanctions on Israel....

I would like to conclude by asking the Minister of Defense not to tell the public stories about peace...and latch onto the decisions of Khartoum, which have been a dead letter for a year and a half, as everyone knows. Do not give guarantees, on behalf of America or Russia, of what they do or do not agree to. They are still negotiating....My complaint against you is that you do not come out and say clearly that we do not agree to peace which does not involve certain annexations, so that the public can decide whether it agrees with you or not....Secondly, if the U.S.S.R. agrees—as the U.S. thinks it does—to a lasting peace treaty...you can accept it or not...but you cannot say that it does not contradict Khartoum completely....These decisions are undoubtedly taken with Cairo's agreement....Thus, the first two "noes" of Khartoum are overthrown. Finally, I suggest that the Minister of Defense sticks to what he said, namely, that he is not prepared for peace if we do not remain in Sharm el-Sheikh...a view with which I disagree....

S. Mikunis (Maki): Distinguished Speaker and Knesset...I abstained from voting on MK Wilner's and the other proposals because I do not agree with either side. The proposer spoke in a style which I know of old, and from which I have freed myself. He spoke of a "historic opportunity." I prefer to deal with contemporary affairs rather than with his-

tory. I do not see any "historic opportunity" for peace between Israel and the Arab countries...and anyone who maintains there is simply deluding himself and others....

"Peace" is a very relative concept today. I believe that the U.S.S.R. wants peace in the Middle East...but that peace does not satisfy Israel or accord with Israel's concept of peace....The peace the Powers want for the Middle East is at the expense of Israel and the Arab countries....In order to attain a just and lasting peace there must be negotiations between Israel and its neighbors...the term "recognized and secure borders" must be defined...and each side must recognize the legal national rights of the other....

What we need now are actions, not pronouncements like the one made here today by MK Wilner....These actions must be taken by the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A., Britain and France, and must bring the Jews and the Arabs to the negotiating table....Syria, Iraq and Algeria have openly stated their intention of destroying Israel by war. Consequently, we must not delude ourselves about "Egypt and other Arab countries." Egypt, followed by Jordan, has spoken of accepting the Security Council resolution, but they also speak of destroying Israel by stages....Even so, what hope is there of ever reaching the negotiating table if our Ministers declare that we will never leave Sharm el-Sheikh, or the Golan Heights or the Gaza Strip...? And without negotiations and mutual recognition there will never be peace....Instead of making declarations of various kinds after the Six Day War, what Israel should have done was declare its readiness to withdraw...in return for peace and recognition....

Because I prefer peace to territory...I maintain that Israel should draw up a detailed peace plan of its own, based on recognized principles and secure and recognized borders, and express its readiness to withdraw to those borders....The plan should also propose a solution to the refugee problem as well as freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal....

Speaker's Address at the Conclusion of the Sixth Knesset

Introduction

After ten years as universally respected Speaker, Kaddish Luz decided not to stand as a candidate in the forthcoming elections and to return to his kibbutz, there to do whatever work he was assigned. In his typically self-effacing manner, he barely mentioned this fact in his brief final speech, which was also his own farewell to the Knesset.

Sitting 429 of the Sixth Knesset

17 July 1969 (2 Av 5729)

...

The Speaker, K. Luz: Members of the Knesset, in view of my impending departure from the Knesset, I will make matters easier for myself and you if I refrain this time from making concluding remarks, marking changes and suggesting improvements, as has been my custom at the conclusion of every term.

I will note only the great day for Israel and the Knesset of the start of the Six Day War. I will note the two sittings held in this chamber with the sounds of explosions and bombing in the background; the address given by the Prime Minister, the late Levi Eshkol, at that sitting; the formation of the National Government and the promulgation of the three laws.

On the Monday of the following week I opened the Knesset sitting in united Jerusalem. We mourned those who had fallen in the war.

The Sixth Knesset was privileged to be party to one of the greatest events in the history of the Jewish people.

Knesset Members, if nothing extraordinary occurs requiring a special sitting of the Knesset during the recess, this is the last sitting of the Sixth Knesset.

I congratulate the entire Knesset family, its members, employees, guards and correspondents. On behalf of all of you I wish you all good health and productive work.

We extend our good wishes to the President of the State and his household, the Prime Minister and her colleagues, the citizens of the state, the Jews of the diaspora, and especially the Jews of the U.S.S.R. We welcome the new immigrants, may their number increase, and congratulate the border settlements which stand firm in the face of

shelling and attacks. Last, but by no means least, we congratulate the soldiers of the IDF.

I and my colleagues the Deputy Speakers thank the Knesset Members for the trust they have placed in us.

In another few months, at the time determined by law, the citizens of Israel will vote for the Seventh Knesset. We wish the Seventh Knesset success in its labors and hope for it and for Israel that during its term there will be a lasting peace between our country and people and the Arab countries and peoples, if not in the term of this Knesset, which will continue for another four months.

May there be peace in Israel and the entire world. Farewell.