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Q: Some Ulema have spoken about the matter of naturalization, that is adopting the nationality of another country. They hold that it is forbidden. Your Excellency has issued a fatwa permitting naturalization....

A: Yes, Ulema of old forbade adopting the nationality of the Occupier. Some of the Sheikhs of Tunisia in the days of the resistance of Tunisia to the French Occupation issued a fatwa that whosoever adopts French nationality is an apostate. In nationalist language they called him a traitor, and in the language of fiqh [Islamic jurisprudence], they called him an apostate. This is reasonable. Only if things weren't like this could a man adopt another nationality. We allow the Muslims in Europe and America to adopt the nationality. Those against my fatwa are Imam Hassan al Banna [founder of the Muslim Brotherhood] (May God have mercy on him) who went to extremes in this matter. He said that it is a mortal sin, and a great crime. He didn't allow this under any circumstances. Perhaps he was affected by the resistance to colonialism, and thought that all these countries were colonialist countries. I believe that if the situation were laid out for him so that he could see Muslim minorities adopt nationalities; that there are four or more million Muslims in Germany, most of them Turks; and similarly in Britain, most of them Pakistanis and Indians. There are more of them in France including Moroccans, Algerians, Tunisians, Libyans, Mauritaniens, and Senegalese. Shall we declare all of them infidels?

Q: Iraq is now occupied by America; are Iraqis when they leave their homes, whether compelled to or not, not be allowed to adopt American citizenship?

A: At this very time we do not allow it, but there are Iraqis who took this citizenship previously in the time of emigration from the country, when they were fleeing from persecution and prosecution. There's no problem with these people. Only now is it not allowed for Iraqis to become American citizens.

Q: Is it the same ruling for Afghanistan?

A: Yes. It's the same thing.