The ideas surfaced in me again in 1968 when I read an important paper by M. Bixon and J. Jortner. In this work they describe the decay of excitation in large molecules in terms of an initial state and a range of nearly equi-energetic final states, without specifying the nature of the latter states. Surely, I said to myself, these are the states that come out from the normal-mode analysis, and I wrote down the formal expression for the decay rate, applying techniques also used by R. Kubo and W.E. Lamb. I also wrote to Jortner (who was abroad) describing my ideas and to the organizers of the 20th Farkas Memorial Symposium (at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem) asking them to let me speak after the paper by Bixon and Jortner. In 1969 the Farkas symposium, always an august occasion, was honored by the presence and lectures of (now Sir) G. Porter and E. Teller, but this did not deter me from improvidently rising after Jortner's lecture, presenting the normal-mode analysis formalism, and incidentally claiming that the Bixon and Jortner theory did not belong to the limit ("high-level density") that it was stated to be. On this point I was wrong because of my unjustified use of a high-temperature approximation to evaluate the essentially correct formula. This was recognized during our collaboration by Jortner and his students and coworkers in Tel-Aviv (notably, Nitzan and Mukamel). The success of the law gave me much satisfaction, and I was pleased that the subject featured in the judges' decisions to award the prestigious Israel (1982) and Wolf (1988) prizes to Jortner. Less favorable were receptions of our paper by the original referees, one of whom wanted a shortened version and the other, none at all. (In a letter to me, Jortner called the latter critique "deadly." Ultimately, we got by with amputation and plastic surgery.)

Why is the article popular? I have been told that it is among Sir Nevill Mott's favored papers because it explains things in simple terms.