

# ISRAEL TO CENSOR IMMIGRATION STORIES

St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)

March 4, 1990, SUNDAY, LATE FIVE STAR Edition

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**Section:** NEWS; Pg. 8A

**Length:** 560 words

## **Body**

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JERUSALEM - Israel has announced that journalists will be required to submit to military censorship articles about the immigration of Soviet Jews. The policy announced Friday apparently is in reaction to U.S. criticism of Israel's settlement policies. Both the United States and Soviet Union have expressed concern that many Soviet Jews eventually will be settled in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Robert Slater, head of the Foreign Press Association, said the new policy appeared to be an effort to control the reporting of political developments. Israeli law gives the army authority to censor any information considered vital to the security of the state. Avi Pazner, media adviser to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said, "This is not a new regulation, but one that was not enforced. Now it will be." Pazner said that the change in policy reflected threats by Palestinian organizations against the immigration process and the immigrants themselves. He would not provide details of the threats. The censorship announcement came one day after Secretary of State James A. Baker III's toughest criticism to date of Israel's settlement policies and his warning that the future of the peace process depended on Israel. Baker told Congress that he would support providing Israel loan guarantees to build housing for immigrants only if Israel promised that the money would not be used to build or expand Jewish settlements. In recent days, Israeli officials announced ever higher figures for the number of Soviet Jews expected this year.

The latest projections, published by the Israeli press and attributed to immigration officials, put the number at 230,000, double the estimate of a month ago. In Nazareth, Israel, about 1,000 Israeli Arabs signed petitions Saturday urging the Soviet Union to halt the Jewish emigration for fear the new immigrants will take away Arab jobs. Mohammed Kayal, an Arab journalist and organizer of the petition drive, said that 4,000 had signed in three days and that the petition drive would continue for another two weeks. He said the petitions would be sent to Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev.

## **Classification**

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**Language:** English

**Subject:** IMMIGRATION (88%); CENSORSHIP (86%); JEWS & JUDAISM (86%); JOURNALISM (69%); MILITARY OCCUPATIONS (68%); HEADS OF STATE & GOVERNMENT (66%); GOVERNMENT ADVISORS & MINISTERS (66%); NATIONAL SECURITY (63%); ASSOCIATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS (61%); PRIME MINISTERS (61%); PEACE PROCESS (50%)

**Company:** PRESS ASSOCIATION LTD (57%); PRESS ASSOCIATION LTD (57%)

**Geographic:** JERUSALEM, ISRAEL (79%); ISRAEL (98%); STATE OF PALESTINE (92%); UNITED STATES (79%)

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**Load-Date:** October 14, 1993

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