

## **Senate Bars Denial of Visas on Political Grounds**

The New York Times

December 17, 1987, Thursday, Late City Final Edition

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**Section:** Section A; Page 27, Column 1; National Desk

**Length:** 527 words

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**Dateline:** WASHINGTON, Dec. 16

### **Body**

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The **Senate** approved and sent legislation to President Reagan today that temporarily prohibits the Government from denying **visas** to foreigners because of their **political** beliefs.

The provision, which overrides part of a highly restrictive 1952 immigration law, the McCarran-Walter Act, is included in the budget bill governing State Department operations. It was approved by a voice vote. The House approved the bill Tuesday.

Sponsored by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Democrat of New York, and Representative Barney Frank, Democrat of Massachusetts, the provision would be in effect from Jan. 1, 1988, to the end of February 1989. By then both Mr. Moynihan and Mr. Frank hope to win approval of new legislation that would permanently repeal the McCarran-Walter Act.

'Respect for Free Speech'

The act allows the State Department to deny **visas** to foreigners based on their **political** beliefs or associations. Among the people who have been denied entrance under the law are two Latin American Nobel Prize winners, a former general of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a Philippine priest and a Canadian naturalist and author.

In a statement, Mr. Moynihan said: "For the past 35 years, legislation to **bar** non-immigrant aliens on ideological **grounds** has exposed our nation to needless ridicule and undermined the respect for free speech we hope to promote around the world."

The temporary provision also bans any deportations based on **political** beliefs that are pending in 1988. The provision would allow the **denial** of **visas** to people suspected of terrorism.

The State Department authorization bill also includes a provision requiring the closing of the Palestine Liberation Organization's observer mission to the United Nations in New York and the organization's office in Washington. The State Department has already closed the Washington office.

The measure would allow for the full payment of the American contribution to the operating costs of the United Nations. The contribution has been limited in past years. It also requires the President to certify that steps are being taken to prevent the Soviet Union from using its new embassy in Washington, which is situated on high **ground**, to gather intelligence.

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The Administration has opposed some of the provisions in the bill, including the closing of the P.L.O. office at the United Nations. But Administration officials have not made clear their position since House and **Senate** negotiators agreed on this final version of the legislation.

The provision relating to the Soviet Embassy originally would have required breaking the agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union that allowed each country to build a new embassy, thereby preventing the Russians from using their new embassy here. This effort came in response to the discovery that the Russians had hidden high-technology listening devices in the new United States chancery in Moscow.

Senator Claiborne Pell, the Rhode Island Democrat who heads the Foreign Relations Committee, said in a statement that he believed that the prohibition on the P.L.O. office could be overturned if challenged in the courts.

## Classification

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**Language:** ENGLISH

**Subject:** LEGISLATION (93%); IMMIGRATION (90%); APPROVALS (90%); LEGISLATIVE BODIES (90%); PASSPORTS & **VISAS** (89%); STATE DEPARTMENTS & FOREIGN SERVICES (89%); UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTIONS (89%); US DEMOCRATIC PARTY (89%); EMBASSIES & CONSULATES (89%); ASSOCIATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS (88%); UNITED NATIONS (87%); INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (86%); AGREEMENTS (78%); IMMIGRATION LAW (78%); US PRESIDENTS (78%); FOREIGN RELATIONS (77%); FOREIGN POLICY (77%); NOBEL PRIZES (74%); FREEDOM OF SPEECH (74%); DEPORTATION (73%); PUBLIC FINANCE (73%); AWARDS & PRIZES (69%); WRITERS (67%); PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (64%); TERRORISM (50%)

**Company:** NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (55%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (55%)

**Organization:** NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (55%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (55%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (55%); NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (55%)

**Industry:** BUDGETS (72%); WRITERS (67%)

**Person:** RONALD REAGAN (79%); BARNEY FRANK (72%)

**Geographic:** MOSCOW, RUSSIAN FEDERATION (52%); NEW YORK, USA (92%); MASSACHUSETTS, USA (79%); RHODE ISLAND, USA (79%); DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, USA (79%); UNITED STATES (95%); RUSSIAN FEDERATION (92%); STATE OF PALESTINE (79%); LATIN AMERICA (79%)