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PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T57Aii/90

ראש הממשלה  
THE PRIME MINISTER

Jerusalem,

March 28, 1990.

715-7

Dear Prime Minister,

I take the liberty of writing to you on an important matter, one which pertains to the *raison d'être* of the State of Israel and that is of cardinal importance to the Jewish people.

The opening of the gates of the Soviet Union to Jewish emigration is an expression of the great and positive changes that have been taking place in the world. It is an answer to our hopes and efforts, which were shared by a number of countries and leaders, including the United Kingdom, to allow Soviet Jews to fulfil their wish to be repatriated to the Jewish State. Unfortunately, these welcome and much desired developments have come up against unforeseen difficulties. While we receive reports about the unstable situation facing the Jews in the Soviet Union, Arab states and organizations are carrying out a coordinated international campaign against the Jewish immigration to Israel.

It must be noted that this campaign is not a new or a recent phenomenon. The Arab states have fought against Jewish immigration since the Balfour Declaration in 1917. The Arabs realized then that, without immigration, the Jewish State would never emerge. Even after they failed in their first attempt at preventing the emergence of Israel, they never gave up their resolve to stop Jewish immigration. During the twenties and thirties, the Arabs not only waged a violent struggle against the small Jewish community here, but they even launched a diplomatic campaign which resulted in the imposition of restrictions on Jewish immigration by the mandatory authorities.

The Right Honorable  
Mrs. Margaret Thatcher  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London

Eventually, the country's gates were shut to Jewish immigration just at the time when Jews were trying to escape the Nazi storm and reach safe haven. The end is known. Europe became one large graveyard for six million of our brethren. This tragic chapter is deeply engraved in the consciousness of the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

Against this background, Israel, with the help of its friends around the world, has consistently struggled to ensure the freedom of emigration to Israel of any Jew who wishes to do so. It has also kept its own gates permanently open to such immigrants and endeavoured to integrate them into its society speedily and effectively. This, of course, applies to the recent wave of Soviet immigrants as well. Like all Israelis, they are free to choose where to reside, and like the majority of Israelis, most of them have chosen to live close to sources of employment, in the big cities and in the center of the country. Less than one percent of them have chosen to settle in Judea, Samaria or Gaza. Nevertheless, our enemies have used this miniscule number as an excuse to resume their war against any Jewish immigration to Israel.

We appreciate the decision of the Ministers of the European Community Council at their recent meeting in Dublin, to welcome both the opening of the gates of the Soviet Union and the Jewish emigration to Israel and other places. We believe this resolution to be an expression of European understanding that the *raison d'être* of Israel is her role as the national home of the Jewish people and a potential place of refuge for every Jew. The campaign being waged by the Arab states against immigration to Israel strikes at what is most precious to our country. Unfortunately, it has already had some unfortunate results. This grave phenomenon has a most negative effect on public opinion in Israel and on the efforts to advance peace between Israel and her neighbors.

Dear Madame Prime Minister, Great Britain and you personally have been at the forefront of the international struggle for human rights in Eastern Europe. Your ongoing efforts to open the gates of the Soviet Union to Jews desiring to leave have borne fruit.



I would be very grateful if you would use your influence with the Arab countries so that they will desist from their war against Jewish immigration. A clear and determined stand on this humanitarian matter, on your part, will also have a positive influence on the Soviet authorities to facilitate the departure of Soviet Jews.

Sincerely,

  
Yitzhak Shamir

# OUT TELEGRAM

		Classification <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Caveat	Precedence <b>IMMEDIATE</b>
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TC	2	CONFIDENTIAL		
CAVEAT	3			
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AND TO	8	INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, MOSCOW, UKMIS NEW YORK		
	9	INFO ROUTINE JERUSALEM, CAIRO, AMMAN AND TUNIS		
	10			
	11	<b>MIPT : IMMIGRATION OF SOVIET JEWS : MESSAGE FROM SHAMIR TO THE</b>		
	12	<b>PRIME MINISTER</b>		
	13	1. Following is the text of Shamir's message to the Prime		
	14	Minister, dated 28 March:		
	15	BEGINS		
	16	I take the liberty of writing to you on an important matter,		
	17	one which pertains to the raison d'etre of the State of Israel		
	18	and that is of cardinal importance to the Jewish people.		
	19	The opening of the gates of the Soviet Union to Jewish		
	20	emigration is an expression of the great and positive changes		
	21	that have been taking place in the world. It is an answer to		
	22	our hopes and efforts, which were shared by a number of		
	23	countries and leaders, including the United Kingdom, to allow		
	24	Soviet Jews to fulfil their wish to be repatriated to the Jewish		
	25	State. Unfortunately, these welcome and much desired		
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//	27	we receive reports about the unstable situation facing the Jews		
/	28	in the Soviet Union, Arab states and organisations are carrying		
	29	out a co-ordinated international campaign against the		
YYYY			Catchword:	
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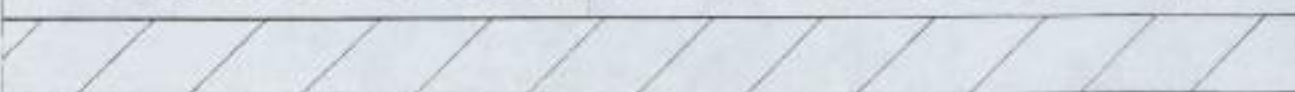
Jewish immigration to Israel.

It must be noted that this campaign is not a new or a recent phenomenon. The Arab states have fought against Jewish immigration since the Balfour Declaration in 1917. The Arabs realized then that, without immigration, the Jewish State would never emerge. Even after they failed in their first attempt at preventing the emergence of Israel, they never gave up their resolve to stop Jewish immigration. During the twenties and thirties, the Arabs not only waged a violent struggle against the small Jewish community here, but they even launched a diplomatic campaign which resulted in the imposition of restrictions on Jewish immigration by the mandatory authorities.

Eventually, the country's gates were shut to Jewish immigration just at the time when Jews were trying to escape the Nazi storm and reach safe haven. The end is known. Europe became one large graveyard for six million of our brethren. This tragic chapter is deeply engraved in the consciousness of the Jewish people and the State of Israel.

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We appreciate the decision of the Ministers of the European



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10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary* No Ack 10 April 1990

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I enclose a copy of a letter to the Prime Minister from Mr Shamir about Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. I should be grateful for advice and a draft reply.

C. D. POWELL

R. N. Peirce, Esq.  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office