

BOMBAY, INDIA

22 Tammuz, 5720
July 17, 1960

My Dear Dr. Weiss:

I am here now three days. I can't begin to tell you the story of India, I could already fill volumes.

I am somewhat depressed by the general scene in Bombay, but the Jewish community is a very painful experience to behold. They are really a darling community. Enthusiastic, warm and possessed with a tremendous thirst for knowledge.

Since I have arrived I have been working 18 hours a day. I have had about six committee meetings, 4 private sessions and I delivered lectures at 4 public gatherings. Thank G-d in the public gatherings I have made quite an impression on them. In the private meetings and committee sessions, and they are long, I am attempting to lay the ground work for a formal organization of a U.O.J.C.I. I have brought together the Iraqi leadership and the B'nai Israel and thank G-d succeeded in having them agree to a Union which will take in the Iraqi congregations and the B'nai Israel. Also a council of 5 men will be established to whom all matters involving ~~any~~ and ~~any~~ will be referred for them to contact either the Rabbinate of Israel, or the Chief Rabbinate of England or us in America.

So far 9 congregations have agreed to join representing about 10,000 of Bombay's 15,000 Jews. One of Mr. Benjamin's friends attended one of my lectures and when it was through he said "it looks as though you have begun to scrap the United Synagogues of India". If these congregations go through with what we have planned Mr. Benjamin will be left with a few small prayer halls.

Now comes the real problem. These people are suffering of the worst poverty I have ever seen. Families of 7 and 8 live in one room. It's simply heartbreaking. Religiously they are very enthusiastic but are completely ignorant. It's a terrible situation. We must find someone at least a teacher to come over here, at all costs, this is a real need. 15,000 Jews without a rabbi and without a teacher.

To combat the influence of the Conservatives and Reform, we must help them organize and then give them other aid. I have made no commitments to them of amounts. I however promised them I will move heaven and earth to help them and this we must do.

I must ask of you if at all possible, and I hope you will understand the urgency of the matter, that you wire me immediately one thousand dollars. This is to help them organize and to give them something to start on. No Synagogue has a room that could be used for an office for the Union. They can rent a room in an office building and get started from there. This is a must if my trip is to at all bear fruit. I hope you can do this without fail. I shall fill you in as we progress. You can wire me at Taj Mahal, Bombay. But this must be done before Tuesday the 26th of July. On that evening there will be a convention meeting to formally announce the establishment of the Union. This check can mean a great deal in the manner in which they will respond to the activities of the Union.

Please don't fail me on this. It is of utmost importance.

Looking forward to hearing from you. Best personal regards.

Sincerely,

(signed) Charles