

India

UNION OF ORTHODOX JEWISH
CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA

84 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 11, N. Y.

OFFICE OF
EXECUTIVE VICE PRES.

ALGONQUIN 5-4100

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

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Av 8, 5722
August 8, 1962

Ref. No: 9714/62

Dear Mr. Kelman:

Thank you for sending me the copy of your letter to Rabbi Norman Lamm, dated July 27, 1962. Rabbi Lamm and I discussed the subject matter of your communication and, since Rabbi Lamm is still on his vacation, I take the liberty of replying.

We are most hesitant to agree to a procedure which would involve the collection of funds by an individual for the purpose of sending a rabbi to India. The reasons are obvious and even under the best of circumstances, the choice of the rabbi and his future relations to the responsible organs of the Jewish community would be open to grave questions. We agree, therefore, wholeheartedly to your suggestion to Mr. Manashe not to write to Rabbi Halberstein.

To the best of our information, Chief Rabbi Nissim is presently not inclined to send a rabbi to India. His feelings have been understandably bruised by the violent attacks directed against him by some members of the Bene Israel community in recent months. Still, we believe, people close to him should impress upon him that the situation calls not so much for the in principle very justified protection of the dignity and authority of the Chief Rabbi and the Chief Rabbinat, but for a great deal of forbearance and statesmanship. Possibly the plan you outline in your previous communication to the effect that a qualified rabbi be sent periodically to India, for one or two months twice a year, to take care of Gittin and kindred problems, would be acceptable to Chief Rabbi Nissim. The Orthodox Union, through its Joint Overseas Commission would, of course, cooperate financially.

With kindest regards and all good wishes, also in behalf of Rabbi Lamm, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Dr. Samson R. Weiss
Executive Vice President

Mr. I. Kelman
The Jewish Agency
P.O.B. 1979
Bombay 1, INDIA