

September 26, 1963

Zim Lines
42 Broadway
New York City

Gentleman:

I had hoped that it would never be necessary to send this letter concerning your new luxury liner, Shalom.

I believe you ought to know that not only I as a Rabbi, but many of our leading laymen are most deeply distressed over the terribly unwise decision to install two kitchens on the Shalom. We find this offensive to our religious sensibilities as Jews.

My congregation in particular consists of people who have for many years been staunch supporters of everything and anything connected with Israel. Our pulpit has urged them time and again to patronize Israeli firms and support Israeli projects. I feel quite certain, however, that if the Zim lines now proceed to put their plans into practice, thereby stigmatizing the observant Jew and forcing him into a "kosher ghetto" aboard an Israeli line, we shall be forced to re-think our entire position with regard to the preference we have always given to such concerns as Zim line and El Al.

We regard Zim's explanation of its position as totally inadequate and as offensive and insulting to religious Jewry. If this is the choice to be given to us then we shall by all means prefer a non-Jewish line, where the offer of kashruth is a gesture of courtesy and respect, to the Zim lines, where the presence of non-kashruth is a gesture of defiance and discourtesy.

I hope that your concern will consider this matter most seriously and not take the final irrevocable step, which will alienate so many otherwise enthusiastic advocates of everything Israeli.

Sincerely,

RABBI NORMAN LAMM

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CC: Rabbi Charles Weinberg - RCA
Haim Zohar - 27 West 96th St.