

UNION OF ORTHODOX JEWISH
CONGREGATIONS OF AMERICA

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

OFFICE OF
EXECUTIVE VICE PRES.

ALGONQUIN 5-4100

24 Tammuz 5723
July 16, 1963

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Dear Dr. Wahrhaftig:

Mr. Max Stern, the distinguished Chairman of our Overseas Commission, received a letter from the Kol Torah Yeshiva in Jerusalem, dated Tammuz 9, in which he is informed that [REDACTED] of Bombay has reached the conclusion of his studies at this institution. He should now be trained as a Shochet, Mohel and Sofer. The Hanhalah of Kol Torah recommends that the young man now undergo appropriate training through courses sponsored by either the Sochnut or the Misrad Hadatoh.

As you surely know, our Overseas Commission and Mr. Stern, personally, are deeply interested in this student and in the other Bene Israel students whose coming to Israel has been due in some measure to efforts initiated by us in India.

We shall deeply appreciate all possible assistance your Ministry can extend to this young man, so that he may undergo the proper training. His return to India upon the completion of his training will bring great benefits to the Bene Israel community.

Yesterday morning, I spoke to Rabbi Gotthold in Bombay. We had received no direct reports from him since he left London on May 26th. Last week, in quick succession, two cables arrived, the first one asking for an additional \$1,000, and the second one, two days later, announcing the termination of his mission due to our uncooperativeness. Since we knew that no other rabbis had joined Rabbi Gotthold in India, we were unable to understand the sudden need for additional funds. According to Rabbi Gotthold's initial and in our opinion rather high cost estimate, the first \$1,000 we sent him should have been sufficient for at least two months of his maintenance.

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Rabbi Gotthold told me on the phone that he is utilizing local persons instead of the expected rabbis and that he must pay their expenses. He assured me that he would send a detailed report to Mr. Stern. In my letter to him of today, I again pointed out the absolute need for detailed reports, including information on the persons he is employing. I trust that you have been kept fully informed by Rabbi Gotthold and that your Ministry has approved this substitution.

We are, of course, very disappointed that Rabbi Kushelevsky did not go to Bombay. We learned from Haham Gaon that he endeavored to obtain the services of some Sephardi rabbis, both in Israel and in England, but without success. He has the impression that their refusal is due to their reluctance to become involved in a controversial issue. From Rabbi Gotthold, on the other hand, I learned that Rabbi Kushelevsky was refused an Indian visa. We here do not know who could possibly substitute, in this so highly sensitive situation, for recognized rabbinic authorities backed by Jewish leaders in Israel, England and the U.S.A.

As I have written to Rabbi Gotthold, we have extended our fullest cooperation to his mission and shall continue to do so. We expect in return not the unloading of responsibility but rather a measure of reciprocal confidence which we believe to deserve.

I hope to be in Israel, please G-d, from Elul 5-11. I shall be in South Africa from Av 15 - Elul 4, leaving Johannesburg on Motzoe Shabbat and making connections in Athens. I expect to arrive in Jerusalem on Sunday evening. I shall phone your office to find out whether and when we could meet during this week for 20 to 30 minutes. I shall stay at Yeshivath Mir. I can also be reached through Dr. Falk Schlesinger.

With kindest regards and all good wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Dr. Samson R. Weiss
Executive Vice President

SRW/sd

Dr. Zorah Wahrhaftig
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