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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן
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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
16th of Cheshvan, 5734
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. Ruth Benjamin
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Johannesburg, So. Africa

Blessing and Greeting:

This is to confirm receipt of your correspondence.
In the meantime, you no doubt received my previous letter.

With reference to your writing about the idea of settling in Eretz Yisroel in the near future, about which you ask my opinion -

I have often emphasized, as you may be aware, that a Jew considering emigration from any part of the world to any other, must not take a narrow view, but should consider it in broader terms. What I mean is that Jews are, of course, a minority among the nations of the world, and must therefore always think in terms of self preservation. Wherever Jews are they must consider themselves in a state of perpetual mobilization to protect their independence, not only insofar as they themselves are concerned, but also insofar as the Jewish people as a whole is concerned. This applies to all places, but the situation varies, for there are some places where the percentage of Jews is relatively smaller, and hence more vulnerable. And among the Jews themselves there are places where those who are active in the strengthening of Torah and Mitzvoth, the very foundation of Jewish existence, are very few, which increases their responsibility all the more, especially those who have been active and successful, whose departure would leave an irreparable void.

And as already mentioned, this is a question of survival not only for local communities, but for the Jewish people in general. Clearly, one's first responsibility is towards the community where one has been brought up, and to which one can contribute effectively.

Now, let us consider South Africa, where Jews originally came mostly from Lithuania and similar places, where Jewish life was flourishing. I do not have to tell you what the situation is in the R.S.A. in terms of true Yiddishkeit, even in JHB, which has the largest Jewish community in South Africa. Consequently, you and your husband occupy a very

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special place in the community, and must consider yourselves in the forefront of a farreaching endeavor to strengthen the true religious foundations of Jewish life in your community and in the country at large.

One can well understand the motivation and desire to help Eretz Yisroel. But it is sometimes overlooked that such help can often be even more effective when those who are responsible for their posts on the local front remain at their posts. If in the past this point might have been debatable, recent events have clearly shown how important has been the help of Jews in the Diaspora, through their contacts in the world's capitals, and otherwise, although it is premature to reveal the full extent of such help. Obviously it is such Jews who are deeply concerned for the survival of the Jewish people that have provided this vital help.

I am sure there is no need to elaborate to you further on the above.

With blessing, *M. Schneerson*

