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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
18th of Adar, 5734
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. Pinchus Meir Kalms
45 Sheldon Avenue
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London N. 6, England

Greeting and Blessings:

This is to acknowledge with thanks receipt of your letter of March 4th with all the enclosures, which I just received.

Needless to say, I read with interest both your letter and the enclosures.

With regard to the essential points of your letter, specifically in regard to the activities of Shamir, I agree of course with all you stated in your letter. However, I believe one essential point, and perhaps very essential, is missing. This is not surprising, inasmuch as it is perhaps the most difficult one to cope with, and it is also complicated by the fact that it might create certain suspicions and prejudices on the part of persons connected with the various departments. Consequently, what I am writing to you here (with a copy to Prof. Branover), may be premature to be brought out into the open for the time being.

I have in mind the economic problem of new Olim, and what should be done about it. As in the case of everything, there are effects and symptoms, and there are causes which bring them about. While the reason why many of the Olim have not been absorbed into a religious atmosphere is that they have not been approached and taken care of immediately, or soon after, their arrival, or for lack of an adequate budget and the like - an important reason, and perhaps the main cause, is the fact that in the final analysis every new immigrant becomes involved with the problem of Parnasso, a suitable job and a suitable apartment, and in some cases there is the problem of a job not only for the head of the family, but also for his wife and grownup children.

is preparing for it

Now, the distribution of apartments and jobs, etc., like everything else in Eretz Yisroel, is in the hands of certain parties, representing certain ideologies. Even those Olim who have no desire to fall under the influence of the party (and ideology) from which they receive economic assistance, it is inevitable that they should indirectly be so influenced, and, considering human nature, it is inevitable that direct influence should ~~not~~ be brought to bear.

Needless to say, the responsibility to provide a job rests upon the government, and upon state and municipal offices, all of which, as mentioned above, are involved in politics. And it is not for Shamir to become a political activity; on the contrary, as often emphasized, it should steer clear from party politics. However, what can be done, and very effectively, is that when an individual has to negotiate for an apartment, etc., it should not be done by the individual alone, or even by a friend or relative, but through the organization. And if this were to be done, the above mentioned undesirable sad effects and influences on the part of those who dispense economic assistance, could be largely curtailed.

if possible
In view of the above, I had occasion to discuss the above with Prof. Branover, and I believe also with you, and I have often emphasized that Shamir should become a place where Olim could also receive help in their economic problems, and in due course, not only helpful, but it should become a force to obtain better conditions, etc., for the Olim in whose behalf Shamir would act as their representative.

As indicated above, this problem requires a discreet approach, in order not to get involved in politics. However, with good will and determination, this matter could be put into effect. If the administration of Shamir will make this one of their important goals, even if at the beginning it has to be handled with discretion, without coming out with it at full blast, it would nevertheless immediately provide new guidelines for many branches of Shamir's activities. I need hardly add that time is an important fact in this area, for such matters as housing and earning a livelihood are pressing needs, and naturally preoccupy the minds of the new Olim from the moment of arrival, even though the first few months are spent in an Ulpán. But the anxiety is there, and the sooner it can be alleviated, the better it is from every viewpoint, including, above all, the main point that they should not have to feel that they are entirely dependent upon persons and departments who are, unfortunately, more interested in party politics, than in the spiritual well-being of the people depending upon their good graces.

With blessing,

M. Samir

P.S. For various reasons, I have not written to you my observations in regard to the memo of our conversation which you sent me. I must say at once, however, that the purpose of putting it down on paper is not, as you assumed, in order to make it available for distribution. My remarks to you during our conversation when you were here were primarily intended for you, and therefore I felt that I could speak to you more freely. Otherwise, many matters would have been discussed in greater detail, in order to preclude any misunderstanding on the part of others who are not so well orientated in these matters. Furthermore, since our conversation, conditions in the Holy Land have changed in many aspects.

/omitted
or

However, inasmuch as you took the trouble to write down the main points of our conversation, and to send it here, I am ~~enclosing~~ my notes to the best of my recollection. I repeat that it is not necessary that this should be published or made widely available, except, of course, to very close associates. As for making it more widely available, I must leave it to you and your associates, who are well acquainted with the local situation.

/sending
separately

Needless to say that frank comments to me are not only desirable but very necessary and eagerly expected.