

My Encounter With The Rebbe שליט"א

by Zalmon Jaffe

11th Instalment

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INTRODUCTION

I have been writing these instalments of my personal experiences and my encounters with the Rebbe for the past ten consecutive years.

The first instalments each contained an average of twenty five pages: the Ninth edition consisted of sixty five.

The Tenth instalment, last year's edition was a bumper one of one hundred and forty five pages. This was due in no small measure, to the fact that the Rebbe told me to write at least Ten pages for each of the ten years - a total of One hundred. (The extra forty five pages were a reprint of Instalments No 1 and No 2)

One would have imagined that by now all aspects of my encounters with the Rebbe, and of "Life at 770" would have been covered. There could be very little new material, and my next editions should become progressively smaller.

I have been contemplating for some time that I should combine and concentrate all my instalments into one large book - bound and printed professionally and with some photographs. It could be entitled "My BEST Encounters with the Rebbe Shlitah"

However, to my utter amazement, the Rebbe has instructed me to "keep on writing" - that is the top priority, and that this edition should contain Two hundred pages!! It seems a sheer impossibility - but so it seemed last year too.

This is what the Rebbe wrote to me in a P.S. (postscript) to one of his letters:

"With regard to your Diary, it certainly makes a strong impression, as anticipated. Hence, it is to be expected - in accordance with the sayings of our Sages, "He who has 100 desires 200" etc. - that your next year's Diary will be even better, not only in quality, but also in quantity, especially as next year is a year of Shemittah, "a Shabbos unto Hashem. I am confident that this assignment will not "frighten" you, especially as you have seen how well this year's assignment has turned out, when I suggested to you last year that this year's Diary should have at least 100 pages and you produced 145.

To refer to the conclusion of your letter of the 11th Sivan, in which you ask whether the new edition should be some sort of anthology of previous Diaries - although I do not believe that it will be difficult for you to find new material, but in view of the fact that you have the Zechus and incentive, it would be appropriate to publish it as a special festive edition, not as Volume Number 11. Needless to say, I expect that it will be followed, of course, by an 11th, 12th and further annual volumes.

I reiterate prayerful wishes for a Refuo Shleimo for Mrs. Jaffe, and all good wishes to all the family, including, above all true Yiddish Chassidish Nachas from each and all of your children and grandchildren (Sh'ch)."

It seems that my orders were quite straight forward and unambiguous.

Thanks to My Readers

I now wish to thank all those readers who have taken the time and trouble to encourage me by writing and praising my work. It was very gratifying, and I shall include extracts from some of these letters, all unsolicited and spontaneous.

My two most loyal and staunch fans - Walter Hubert and Peter Kalms lost no time in forwarding their congratulations, which I received by return of post. I remonstrated with Walter - how could he have read it overnight? Well - of course, he had. He had perused it at one "sitting", he just could not put it down (he said). Many of my readers have expressed this same idea, which certainly gave me much pleasure.

Walter wrote:

"May I take this early opportunity of expressing my thanks, admiration and pleasure to you for sending on to me your beautiful written book, which was a joy to read. May you continue to write your Diaries for many years to come."

Yecheil Vogel complained that although the first hundred pages were very funny indeed, the second part had little humour. I realise that my diaries do contain a certain amount of witticisms, as I prefer to look at the bright and funny side - but I do not profess to compete with "Punch", the English National humorous magazine.

On the other hand, I had a rather unusual experience with Mrs. Bluma Feld, who is the owner of the Cumberland Hotel in Bournemouth, which is the largest Jewish Hotel in this country. (I would wish that all Israeli Hotels could boast the same high standard of Shabbos observance). I had presented Bluma with a copy and next morning I encountered her in the hallway. Her eyes were brimful with-tears. All night she had been perusing my Diary - and crying. She was enjoying it so much, and reliving her own childhood experiences.

This was the first time that I had ever met anyone who actually shed tears when reading my book.

Mrs. Shandel Wilhelm of London was inspired to write to me as follows:

"I came across your book "My Encounter with the Rebbe Shlitah" entirely by accident - What a wonderful accident! (or should I say Hashgocho Protis). I spent an extremely entertaining evening reading about your vivid and humorous visits to "770" and had a good many laughs. It also provided me, however, with some serious food for thought, and I would like to thank you for having put your experiences down on paper. I can't wait to read the next instalment P.S.

The Book, I found, had only one disadvantage, namely, that it wasn't written in Yiddish, so I had the laborious task of having to translate interesting parts to my husband while I was reading!

On the other hand, we didn't have the usual fight about who was going to read the book first!

Thanking you in appreciation for having written such a wonderful book...."

Another devoted fan of long standing is Rabbi Daniel Kahn, late of Amsterdam and now living in Milan, Italy. He wrote:

"... I took your latest (9th) instalment with me on a railway journey, and had to stay longer than I intended at my destination. In this way your book gave me the possibility to fulfill the Mitzvah of Talmud Torah, since it also included some HOLY SICHOS . Really thank you very much On page 44 you promised Mr. Waxman to have the whole set. I do not mind at all that he gets a set, but I have been begging you already for a long time to send me what I missed - namely Number one and Number two, but you always told me that you have "absolutely none left". (Now, after Mr. Waxman has received his copies, this is probably even more true!) In any case, since I really use your books a LOT, and as you can see, study them very thoroughly; therefore please be so kind and send me what I missed..."

His wife Rochel, nee Carlebach from Montreal also wrote:

"... I was nursing our baby while reading and I am sure your encounter made Yaakov's milk richer and better. (Z. J. note - I assume that Rochel was shaking and rocking with laughter) You have a marvellous talent in writing - so please keep it up and NEVER FORGET to send us a copy, since I really enjoy it and benefit from it a lot "

Shimon Levy (I should say Professor Shimon Levy) wrote me a scholarly epistle - short and to the point:

"... What an informative, interesting and stimulating publication - Well done! It expresses most lucidly your diverse natural gifts as autobiographer, diarist, humorist and poet, and we recognise also the time and effort spent in its compilation!!"

From "out of the blue" I unexpectedly received a nice note from Rabbi Modcha Sufrin from London:

"...You must be surprised to receive a letter from me, but-I have just finished reading your latest edition of "My 'Encounter with the Rebbe Shlitah" and wish to congratulate you on a wonderful publication. I have a queue of people waiting to read it - and other editions are lent out too.

As everything that one sees and hears etc. is by Hashgocho Protis, I find the accounts of your "Yechidus" and the letters from the Rebbe Shlitah contain wonderful instructions for all of us to learn and apply.

Carry on with the good work and may Hashem give you and your wife (and children and grandchildren) the health and strength to continue to be true soldiers in the Rebbe's army."

Naftoli Cohen from London says:

"... One of the main reasons I am writing to you, is to ask whether or not the suggestion of incorporating photographs in these "Encounters" was ever mooted; if only a few. I was taken up so much with the events and things they described that it only needed just a few pictures, of 770, a farbraingen, or anything relating to the event described, to virtually take me those 3,000 miles. Anyway, I nevertheless enjoyed it very much and look forward to many future issues..."

From Malka Rosner of Belgium:

There has been murder over your diary. Everyone wanted it first and if it was left for a minute, it was, "chapped up" by someone else. This one is a real masterpiece and we have all enjoyed it. May you keep making them until 121 years. This diary is super..."

My niece Malka Edery from Kfar Chabad, Israel, has been promising me for over ten years now to translate my Diary into IVRIT. In fact it was her own suggestion.

Here is a paragraph from a recent letter she sent me:-

"... Your Diary, Uncle, is fabulous. I really have the will to translate it, but it is such a masterpiece, I don't know whether I can do it justice."

Amongst my correspondence, I found one that meant business; from the Jewish Youth Library in Boro Park, Brooklyn. It was nicely typed on imposing notepaper. There was a list of Twenty five Rabbonim, together with their 'Yichus' printed down the left hand side of this memorandum, followed by the names of Six "Doctors of Philosophy", who acted as a "Professionals advisory committee," At the bottom of the page were listed Twelve organisations who "endorsed" the work of the library - for instance, The Union of Orthodox Rabbis of U.S.A. and Canada and so on.

The letter itself was signed by Yitzchok Ginsberg, the Executive Director. The layout and design were extremely impressive. I couldn't wait to read the contents which read as follows:-

"We are a Public Jewish lending library with thousands of books in Hebrew, Yiddish and English. Since our doors were open to the public, thousands of young adults and children have benefited from its wide range of reading material. I need not elaborate on the importance of such an institution in the largest Jewish community in the United States of America.

I am writing you in reference to your interesting book "My Encounter with the Rebbe Shlitah." We would greatly appreciate it if you would be able to donate a few copies to enrich our collection. Since we are a lending library, we can use 10 (ten) copies. Due to our limited budget, we are sorry that we cannot purchase them."

The last paragraph definitely contained the "Punch Line". (But - you will read later on that I did forward him some copies.)

On the other hand, Yaakov Kind, writing from Australia did not have any sponsors, advisors or committees - but wrote very sincerely as follows:

"Hello, I hope everything is B.H. by you. You don't know me - but I know of you. I learn in the Lubavitch Yeshiva in Melbourne and I'd like to ask you a favour. I have seen one of the "My Encounters with Chabad" No. 8, and I find it very interesting. Unfortunately, being so far away from 770 and the Rebbe Shlitah (in the physical sense), we don't get to hear too much of what goes on, so therefore I've written to ask a favour, if it is possible to send the rest of the series, by ship (air fare is too expensive) to this Yeshiva; the other Bochorim and I are very interested in them, especially since we heard the Rebbe Shlitah gave a Brocha to you that one shouldn't be less than 112 (?) pages.

I would gladly pay the cost of shipping and cost of books themselves.

If you could, please write a letter saying what's doing etc.

P.S. I heard from Rabbi Gutnick that you couldn't make it to New York this year, since your wife is sick. Please wish her a Refuo Shleimo. "

Another Yeshiva boy, Mr. Y. Maiteles from Brooklyn wrote in a similar vein:

"I am a student in the Lubavitcher Yeshiva in Morristown, New York, and recently I came across your very interesting diary which you sent to the Yeshiva with Reuven Perrin. I started reading it at 7p.m. one night, and I didn't go to sleep that night until I finished it from cover to cover

I would greatly appreciate it if you would send me two copies of your latest diary and I will gladly pay for them and for the mailing expenses..."

Yosef Yitzchok Shagalow sent me a short note - in Yiddish. It was an exact replica of the Rebbe's letters. It read (in Yiddish):

"Greetings and Blessings.

I am sending you a "kuntriss" which I have published recently and I am asking you whether you will send me your (in English) "My Encounter with the Rebbe" which you have published this year."

A short note from a London address just stated:-

"Dear Mr. Jaffe,

I wondered whether it were possible to obtain a copy of your book entitled "Encounter with the Rebbe".

All the best.

M. Toperoff. "

Mrs. Miriam Slater and Rabbi Sholom Yisroel Hodakov both of Brooklyn, and Rabbi and Mrs. Sender Liberow all sent beautiful letters, and are impatiently waiting for the next publication.

My dear friend Sarah Shemtov of Lefferts Ave., Brooklyn, whom I mentioned quite a lot in My Encounter No. 10, wrote me a very emotional and warmhearted letter. Sarah hardly ever writes - so Roselyn and I were extremely and suitably impressed.

The above are just a few extracts from some letters. I have been offered many cash incentives from boys at 770 who wish to purchase a copy. I have never sold any, and I DO NOT INTEND to sell any. They are for FRIENDS. I hope to print just a few more this time to enable me to satisfy those outstanding and sincere boys who were prepared to make some personal sacrifice in order to obtain a copy.

Zalmon.

Chapter 1: The Rebbe Opens the Proceedings

The Rebbe has often emphasised the fact, that before commencing a meeting - words of Torah should be spoken.

I assume that the same applies to a Book. I am therefore pleased to start the proceedings with a letter which the Rebbe wrote to me on the occasion of my birthday in 5722.

Whenever the Rebbe writes, even a short note, there is always included a quotation or saying from the Torah:

4th of Adar 1, 5722

"Greetings and Blessings:

Your letter of February 5th was just received. I note the 7th day of Adar is your birthday, and I send you my prayerful wishes for a successful year in every respect, including a substantial improvement in Parnosso without mental distraction. As you may know, the well know passage, "If you eat of the toil of your hands, happy are you and it is good for you" is explained in Chassidus that although "Man is born to toil" and Parnosso is connected with a certain amount of strain, the strain has to be confined to the "toil of the hands, but not the toil of the head." This means that while it is necessary to use one's hands as well as one's head, the mental preoccupation should not be in matters of Parnosso but rather in spiritual matters and in communal affairs, and in your case for the benefit of Lubavitch in particular, for which you have great potentialities.

It is customary in Jewish life to connect everything with the weekly Sidra. At present, we are beginning a series of Sidras dealing with the construction of the Mishkan. Here we see that G-d desired that material things such as gold, silver and copper, etc. should be converted into a spiritual and Holy Cause, namely the Sanctuary. At first glance, it would seem difficult to understand why G-d should require a special sanctuary, since it is possible to worship G-d in the open field, or to contemplate in complete withdrawal from the world, etc. Nevertheless, G-d insisted on having a Mishkan and Mikdosh, offering every Jew an opportunity to participate in its building and thereby to convert

the material into the spiritual. In the merit of this, G-d gives the Jew material blessings in order to provide him with the means and vessels to create ever more spirituality and Holiness and thus make an abode for Him within the material and physical world. May this be so in your case in an ever-growing measure.

"Hoping to hear from you good news about your personal as well as communal affairs.

With blessing,

(signed) M. Schneerson.

Why We Missed Our Regular Shovuos Visit To The Rebbe

At the beginning of Chapter 9 (Page 71) of "My Encounter with the Rebbe Shlitah No. 10", I wrote, "Since 1964, this Shovuos trip has become an annual event for Roselyn and me to visit the Rebbe in Brooklyn. (This year 1979 will be the 16th consecutive Shovuos - kane Yirbu)"

A friend mentioned that this was unusual wording for me, because I had omitted to put the abbreviation P.G. (Please G-d) at the end of the sentence. However, I did not pay any particular attention to this fact, nor was I unduly worried, - But I should have been, because, well - it is a long story: -

Four years ago, Roselyn began to suffer severe pains. She was told by the specialist that her gall bladder would have to be removed. There was a very long waiting list for this type of operation, and as Roselyn's case was not an emergency, she would have to wait her turn.

The months - and the years were rolling on; and Roselyn was still patiently awaiting her turn to become a patient. She was fortunate in that the pain came only spasmodically. However, last year, in January 1979, Roselyn became much worse. She suffered continuous and excruciating pain. Mr. Hartley, the surgeon, agreed that it had now become an emergency and the operation should be performed at once.

Unfortunately, the government was having trouble with its "Pay Policy". The Union bosses ordered all workers to go out on strike. Even hospitals were affected, and it was not until over three months later - on Monday April 23rd that Roselyn was instructed to report to the hospital.

Thursday May 31st was the first night of Shovuos, so there were about five weeks before our intended departure to New York - a tight schedule, but not an impossibility.

I took Roselyn to the hospital - and I brought her straight back. There was now an UNofficial strike of porters, and all operations were cancelled.

Meanwhile, keeping up with Lubavitch tradition:

(1) I had not quite completed writing my Diary

&

(2) None of our friends nor agents in Crown Heights, had, as yet, been successful in hiring for us an apartment for Shovuos. This was our normal experience, so we were not unduly worried. (Very much worried, of course, but not unduly, because it happened every year.)

At long last, on Sunday May 6th, Roselyn was tucked, safely, into bed, in Ward B.5. The operation was arranged for the following day, Monday, but - wait for it - it coincided with a Bank (Public) Holiday and Mr. Hartley, our surgeon, had left for a long weekend holiday. He returned on the Tuesday and announced that "in two days' time", Thursday, he would definitely operate.

When Avrohom and Shmuel heard this news, they went almost beserk - so did Hilary. How could we even contemplate to have an operation on a Thursday - two days before Shabbos - especially in view of the fact that the Rebbe had given a Sicho (talk) on this very subject at a recent Farbraingen.

I am greatly indebted to Shmuel, my son-in-law, for his invaluable help in-translating and composing the Rebbe 's Sicho into the basic English language, which my readers will easily and readily understand.

Rebbe Advises “No Operations Three Days Before Shabbos” Except In Emergencies

During the summer months, schools are closed and businesses operate at a slower pace. Therefore, whenever possible, medical treatment is put off until this period.

When a doctor advises surgery, one wants it to take place at a time of minimum inconvenience. However, few pay attention as to which day of the week is fixed for the surgery.

I speak from personal experience - someone wrote to me that he will be having medical treatment on a certain date, and would like my Brocha for success. The date fell on a Friday. I answered that I would pray for its success immediately (although the operation was to be held two or -three months later), but, at the same time, it is my obligation and privilege to call attention to a fundamental point, connected with a clear Psak Din.

As a preface: The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim 248) states that one may not embark on a sea voyage during the 3 days preceding Shabbos, for travelling by ship places one in a changed, less relaxed state, and being so close to Shabbos, would force him to experience a disturbed Day of Rest. If, however, he embarks on his journey at least 4 days before the weekend, he will have become accustomed to sea travel by Shabbos and will be able to enjoy his Day of Rest properly.

Now, the discomfort of sea travel is not connected with Pikuach Nefesh (a question of life or death), but when one enters hospital the disturbance is far greater. Immediately on entering hospital, one must change one's garments and forfeit one's independence - one awakens and goes to sleep when told and so forth. Obviously, then, just as one must not embark on a sea journey within 3 days before Shabbos so as not to disturb one's Day of Rest, how much more so when one plans and fixes a day in the week to begin medical treatment, that it should not be during the 3 days preceding the weekend.

In addition, there is a much more serious halachic consideration. If surgery is fixed for Friday, Shabbos desecration becomes inevitable, including categories of work which are forbidden by

the Torah. For even the most successful surgery must be followed by examinations which are recorded in writing etc., and although the writing can be done by non-Jewish helpers, there are some examinations which entail drawing blood - a Torah prohibition (on Shabbos). Even handing over one's hand for a blood test is a prohibition, as the Gemara (Makkos 20 b) tells regarding one who removes the corners (peyos) of another, that even the one whose hair is being cut, also transgresses, since he has to move his head closer etc. It is similar with a blood test on Shabbos. This is certainly so with giving a specimen, where one does the whole act, after which he gives it for tests and writing.

Once the operation has been performed, one could perhaps claim that the tests fall into the category of Pikuach Nefesh (saving a life), thus allowing Shabbos to be abrogated. However, it is clearly undesirable to fix an operation in advance for a day which will make Shabbos desecration inevitable.

This is even more serious in view of the fact that in many parts of the U.S.A. the majority of doctors are Jewish and so are most of the surgeons. In other words, one is causing a Jew to desecrate Shabbos.

Even if an operation is not bound with danger - it is still part of the hospital schedule which entails examinations and so on.

One in ten would not have the courage to oppose the hospital rules and postpone these to after Shabbos, especially if he is surrounded by relatives who pressure him, and are worried lest the doctors go away.

Why do very frum people not avoid such a state of affairs? Because "Habit becomes nature".

In generations bygone, it was impossible for one to fix an operation so far ahead - say a month because they didn't have such instruments which can predict a condition in advance, and people went to doctors for operations - when the pain- became acute, and not before.

In other words, in those days, operations were connected with Pikuach Nefesh, consequently the day of the week was irrelevant. This led to the habit that where an operation is concerned, Shabbos desecration becomes irrelevant.

But, obviously, where life is not at stake, this would allow the operation to be postponed and fixed for a month or so later. Therefore, one puts off surgery until the holidays, in order not to lose a few day's work and a few dollars. But, it is of much more vital importance to make every effort to avoid Shabbos and even the 3 days preceding Shabbos.

Hashem has made our task easier in negating Friday and Shabbos for surgery as the doctors leave the hospital for the weekend and go to the country, leaving the detailed case in the hands of their juniors.

It is therefore logical to have the operation earlier in the week, when the specialists are in the hospital.

This question is similar to the problem discussed many years ago, about Israeli ships. when I argued that running a ship on Shabbos inevitably entails Shabbos desecration, with Torah-forbidden categories of work, as is known to those acquainted with running ships.

At that time, someone argued that I exert myself with Messiras Nefesh for the sake of Shabbos, while he uses the same dedication for the cause of Israeli shipping.

I answered him with the famous parable of my father-in-law, the Rebbe, when he made exertions for Kosher Chinuch, someone asked him as follows:

When you drink water, you must be meticulously certain that it is pure, but when you have to put out a fire, you overlook how clean or dirty is the liquid. In the same way, the fire of assimilation is burning, so how can you worry whether or not the Chinuch is kosher? The late Rebbe answered, that the analogy is an apt one, but irrelevant here. For, the reasoning only stands in so far as water is concerned, but when the liquid is kerosene (parafin), it will not put out the fire, even though it is a liquid which can be poured just like water - it will only intensify the flames.

Similarly with desecrating Shabbos - this cannot lead to monetary gains. On the contrary, monies earned on Shabbos drag down also ones "kosher" profits; and, we can see – physically - not on spiritual grounds - how many hundreds and thousands of billions of Israeli pounds were lost through those ships which also sailed on Shabbos

The question was asked then, too - why did so many very frum Jews pay so little attention to that? The answer, again, is that in bygone days there was no such thing as a Jewish ship, a Jewish captain or seamen who would have to do all the tasks connected with Chilul Shabbos. The only way to avoid desecration of a Jewish ship is to stop it completely over Shabbos. As mentioned then (years ago) it would be impossible to travel in a ship for 7 (seven) consecutive days without being able to stop at some port or island.

To revert to the question of surgery, it is therefore a great Mitzvah to promulgate what I have stated with the greatest publicity. It is particularly relevant in the summer vacation, because many operations are delayed until then.

The argument that this is the only day on which the surgery can take place is false, for this is the country where "the customer is always right," and if many people will insist on having their operation on Monday or Tuesday (G-d forbid to tamper with Sunday), they will succeed.

May Hashem help that all Jews be healthy (and also non-Jews), and may all our discussions

centre around the theory of the question, but not the practice.

At the end of the farbreng, the Rebbe Shlitah added 2 points:

(1) In the case of the ship, only the passenger is affected and made uncomfortable, whereas with surgery, the Shabbos peace of his whole family is disturbed.

(2) Even one who is not always so careful in Hiddur Mitzvah, will understand that in a situation where one is hospitalised and requires surgery and special blessings from Hashem, one should be all the more meticulous, even beyond the strict requirements of the law.

Chapter 4: Roselyn Makes Good Progress

In view of what the Rebbe had said on the previous pages - and under these new circumstances, I telephoned to the Rebbe and explained the whole position, and asked for guidance. The Rebbe stipulated that if the doctor advised an immediate operation, then it should be performed without any delay. The Rebbe added a Brocha that it should take place at the right and auspicious moment.

However, the prayers of Avrohom and Shmuel – and of Hilary were answered - for when Mr. Hartley returned on the Tuesday, it was discovered that all Roselyn's X-Rays and other essential details had been mislaid - so- once again there was to be another postponement.

I immediately telephoned 770 and spoke to Binyomin Klyne. I urged him to inform the Rebbe at once - without fail - that there would be a further delay - and there would be no news until the following Monday. I did not want the Rebbe to have any undue worry about Roselyn.

After more X-Rays were taken and further tests made, at long last - and after four years - the operation was actually performed on the following Monday.

When Roselyn was returned to her bed in the ward, and I saw that her condition was satisfactory - I immediately telephoned to New York, in order to advise the Rebbe of the good news.

One can imagine my surprise and consternation, when one hour later, Label Groner phoned me from 770. He transferred me to Rabbi Chodakov, who intimated that the Rebbe had been expecting to hear from me, and was very worried and anxious to learn how Roselyn was progressing!!

It was very kind and considerate of the Rebbe to phone me from New York to ascertain personally from me Roselyn's precise condition.

Four days before Shovuos, on the exact day on which we had originally intended to travel to Brooklyn - Sunday May 27th, Roselyn returned home. Her first action was to telephone herself, personally, to our Rebbetzen to tell her that she was making satisfactory progress. The

Rebbetzen would naturally convey the good tidings to the Rebbe. There should be no failure in communication!!

Roselyn urged me, very strongly, to travel alone to Crown Heights for Shovuos, but - she needed attention and quietude - and studying her poor wan face, I decided to put Roselyn's health before my own pleasure.

Chapter 5: Shovuos In Crown Heights And What We Missed

Miraculously, "My Encounter with the Rebbe" No. 10 was ready-for distribution. I was lucky that my friend Bernard (Perrin) was flying to Brooklyn for Yom Tov. My Diaries were heavy (in weight) and I was delighted when Bernard promised to take with him Ten copies - at least it would ensure that the Rebbe and our Rebbetzen would receive theirs in time for Shovuos, as usual.

Bernard also promised to deliver my usual five bottles of Vodka to the Rebbe "for his pleasure". Hilary, too, travelled to Brooklyn for the Festival. She was accompanied by four of her daughters. Golda Rivka, Channah, Zelda Rochel and Shaindel. My friend, Matty Brennan also made the trip together with his wife Nancy, so altogether I managed to get across to New York thirty copies of my Diary. At least I would have thirty satisfied American customers.

I had to rely on Bernard and Hilary for some of the following information.

Bernard travelled to New York with his son Reuven, whom he intended to leave at Morristown Yeshiva in order to study.

When he arrived at 770 on the day before Shovuos, he was being constantly greeted with "Shalom Aleichem and is Zalman coming?"

On replying that "Zalman was not coming", he was immediately asked "Why not?" Bernard had to admit that Roselyn was not yet well enough to be left alone. (On his return home, Bernard confided that he had brought regards for me from at least 500 people - but he admitted that he could not remember their names!!)

At 9.30p.m that evening, there was a large crowd of people at the Rebbe's Maariv service. Visitors were arriving every minute from all over the world by air, bus, train and car. Amongst them was a party of twenty-eight boys - nine and ten year olds - from London. These lads were all from one class at the Lubavitch School in London. Aaron Cousins was the Headmaster, Moishe Levy and Dovid Karnowsky were teachers.

They were very good boys (my grandson, Pincus was amongst them), and they had done exceptionally well in their recent examinations.

Mr. Goldberg, the father of one of the boys wished to reward the scholars. He asked them what present they would like, Spontaneously and unanimously they shouted out, "We want to see the Rebbe". Mr. Goldberg donated £1,000 (one thousand) to subsidise their flight and there was great excitement in the school. The day of their departure drew near - and it was found that Goldberg's own son had contracted Measles, he was covered all over with spots. It seemed that Mr. Goldberg would not be able to enjoy the fruits of his generosity.

However, with the Rebbe's brocha and with the help of the Almighty, the boy made a rapid recovery and just managed to join the flight.

These boys were a Kiddush Hashem. All dressed alike in their smart uniforms, well behaved, good mannered and in marked contrast to some of the American young boys.

At this Maariv service they all stood near the Rebbe, who watched them closely to confirm that they answered Amen and Yehai Shmai Rabba at the appropriate times.

Subsequently, the whole group went on the Shovuos march to Bore Park: they visited Morristown Yeshiva: and spent a little time sightseeing - for example - the top of the Empire State Building. Wherever and whenever they went, they were constantly repeating aloud the Twelve Torah Sayings which the Rebbe had requested all young children to learn by heart. I was told that when they were travelling on the Subway (tube) trains, and reciting these verses, many Jewish passengers joined in too.

They all went together into Yechidus with the Rebbe. I discovered that each Siddur which the Rebbe had presented to them was signed - autographed - by the Rebbe. That is what is called a Memento!

I shall now return to the Maariv on the day before You Tov. Immediately after the Service, Rabbi Chodakov announced that there would be a Farbraingen straight away. The Rebbe had been to the Ohel that day, and, for the past year or so there had never been a Farbraingen after such a visit. Bernard had reckoned out that there had to be one that night - but everyone else was "caught on the hop" - it took everyone by complete surprise. So that when the Rebbe walked into the main shool at 10.05, there was still room to sit in comfort, which was rather unusual for a Farbraingen. Of course, many people had gone out for the evening and could not be reached.

After the first Sicho the Rebbe declared that he wanted all the boys who were under Bar-mitzve , to say Lechaim - no one else. After which he told all the girls under Bass-mitzvah to come forward to the front of the Ladies Gallery to say Lechaim through the glass aperture.

Whilst all this was going on, everyone carried on singing.

Towards the end of this Farbraingen, which lasted two hours, the Rebbe asked all those boys who were under Bar-mitzvah to come along to him on the platform and they would receive a Siddur, plus a one-dollar note. The Rebbe then announced that all those girls who were under Bass-mitzvah should also come downstairs for a Siddur and a one-dollar bill.

Suddenly the hall began to empty very rapidly. Bernard could not understand why this should be so - but he very soon got the answer. All those who had left in a hurry - mostly young married men, began to return. They brought back with them, their children whom they had taken from their cots and beds in order to receive their gifts from the Rebbe. When it seemed that the queue was coming to an end, another batch of parents would arrive, carrying their children in their arms - some were still in their night attire. The Rebbe handed over, personally, 1500 Siddurim that night! It was tough assignment - Bernard said he became tired just by watching.

Before he had left Manchester for New York, Bernard had assured me that he would fulfill all my Shelichos at 770. (He did deliver the Mashke for the Rebbe and the Diaries). One of my usual activities was to sing Hoaderes during the morning service on Yom Tov. Bernard affirmed that he would co-operate with Tzvi Fisher. They would not let me, nor the Rebbe down. When that paragraph was reached, he whispered to Tzvi to commence the singing, "just as if Zalmon was present". Tzvi hesitated, vacillated and waited to see whether the Rebbe would nod or turn his head, wave his arm or give some sort of signal and - all was lost. They had missed their cue - there was no singing.

T.G. there are always many weddings the week after Shovuos. All Chassanim were entitled to Aliyas. Lubavitch do not add to the prescribed number of Aliyas, so LOTS had to be drawn for the privilege of being called up on the first day of Shovuos, the second day (Shabbos), or at the Shabbos Mincha service.

The main Farbraingen was, as usual, on the second day of Yom Tov. It commenced at 8.15p.m. ALL seats and places were filled an hour and a half beforehand. At the end of the third Sicho, the Rebbe suddenly jumped up and began waving his hand, faster and faster so that everyone present jumped up too. For five minutes, the whole congregation was also jumping and clapping and banging on the tables and on the benches. Cups, books and even bottles were flying all over the place. It was really terrific, but very exhausting.

After Maariv and Havdalah, the Rebbe distributed the wine from the Havdalah - Kos Shel Brocha. Only those people who had not received any of this wine for over a year, were allowed to proceed to the Dais - and they were only permitted to accept for themselves or on behalf of their own family.

When Bernard's turn arrived, he, like a magician, produced three empty cups which he had

hidden in his breast pocket. One was for himself and family; the second one was for "Zalmon and Roselyn" - the Rebbe splashed a big dose into the cup; and the third cup was for "Avrohom and family" - the Rebbe again splashed into the cup a large helping; - all this whilst Label Groner stood nearby, glaring, glowering and gnashing his teeth, powerless to intervene.

The Kinus Hatorah took place the following day. Tzvi Fisher had persuaded Bernard to read out a few pieces from my memoirs. Rabbi Mentelick considered that it was an excellent idea, because the boys always looked forward to hear me reading excerpts from my Diary.

My friend, the Rabbi from Israel, was addressing the assembly. He seemed set for the evening, when - suddenly and without warning he left the lectern in a huff and disappeared. (You will recall that he did the same thing last year, when he could not tolerate the constant heckling and questioning by the boys).

I have discovered the reason why he did leave so suddenly this time. Bernard and Tzvi were sitting together. The air conditioning was turned on full blast. Bernard remarked to Tzvi that "it was cold - terribly cold". Tzvi agreed and said - "It's very bad - no warmth at all". This Rov imagined that they were discussing his talk - and he left in a huff!

Before Rabbi Mentelick introduced Bernard, he explained to the gathering that he had heard the good news - that Roselyn was making excellent progress, because Tzvi Fisher had telephoned to Manchester. Everyone present extended their good wishes for a speedy "Refuo Shleimo". Bernard then made his way to the microphone, and stated how proud he was to be my Sheliach on this occasion. The boys laughed heartily at the first story, and the Ode to the Rebbe was exceedingly well received. When he concluded, they gave him a most unexpected round of applause - "much more than any of the other speakers had received". He was then inundated with requests for my book, of which, unfortunately he had none left. Rabbi Gutnick said that my Diary "was terrific", and asked Bernard to post a copy to him to Melbourne, Australia.

As you have read, Tzvi Fisher phoned from New York to enquire about Roselyn's health.

We also subsequently received a letter from him too, it stated:

"....Just to let you know I followed your instructions. I gave your very best regards to the following, The Rebbe Shlitah and our Rebbetzen, Rabbi Rashag and his Rebbetzen, Rabbis Chodakov, Mentelick, Klyre, Krinsky, Groner, Harlig and Raskin and Professor Branover. As Zalmon would say "all the top brass". In maintaining tradition, I asked Rabbi Mentelick if Mr. Perrin could read parts of the Diary. With a smile he said "of course", so Mr. Perrin did an excellent job I wrote all this into the Rebbe and told him Roselyn was much better.

.... Zalmon, you have left a very deep and everlasting impression here. When I gave

everyone your regards, their faces lit up like the sun

Love Tzvi

P.S. We **all** missed you."

On Monday morning, Bernard took Reuven to Morristown Yeshiva. I have personally never yet visited this place. I believe it is a wonderful centre. This is how Bernard described it to me:

"Morristown is a small town of 18,000 population, about two hours journey by car from 770. The Yeshiva stands in 16 acres of grounds. Until 8 years ago, it was a Catholic girls college. The Shool used to be a Chapel and has lovely stained glass windows down each side. In the centre of each window is now portrayed one of the 'Rebbe's Mitzvah campaigns.

The Yeshiva is divided into two. One part is for the regular students, as in any other Yeshiva. The other part is for (mostly) University graduates, who have "become Baalei Teshuvo".

Rabbi Herson, formerly from Brazil, is in charge. The buildings and grounds are very impressive. There is a large open-air swimming pool and a net-ball court. In hot weather the boys study outside under the trees.

Inside, there is a gymnasium; also a Mikveh. There are many study rooms for large and small groups, and the dormitories are luxuriously carpeted. Boys have every facility for learning in comfort, and the food is of the same high standard".

Bernard concluded his report by telling me that before he left for home, the Rebbe gave him a message which had to be delivered to Hershel Gorman in London. As he was travelling direct from London to Manchester, he was considering the best means of contacting Hershel, when - lo and behold - there he was at London Airport waiting for his son to arrive from New York - together with twenty seven other boys.

"A Brief Summing Up"

I wrote a letter to the Rebbe the week after Shovuos, which briefly summed up our feelings on missing our usual Simchas Yom Tov at 770:

".... T.G. Roselyn is making excellent progress and is getting stronger and better every day. It is a great pity that we missed our usual Shovuos visit by just over a week.

I was thinking of coming over this week, but it seems rather like an anti-climax, - just as the saying goes, "after the time for sacrifices has passed, they then become nullified (do not

Count)".

Therefore, we are planning to come for Simchas Torah - It will be a change! It was very encouraging to receive your personal telegram with Yom Tov good wishes - it really "made our day".

I have just seen Bernard Perrin. He brought me some wine from Kos Shel Broche, which the Rebbe asked him to deliver to me. It was most thoughtful and considerate of the Rebbe to remember me. He also handed me some bread which Rabbi Mentelick had given him from the Kinus Hatorah.

Bernard gave me a report of some of the happenings at 770 over Shovuos. He read excerpts from my Diary to the boys at Kinus Hatorah. He had Yeehidus for ten minutes. He did NOT sing "Hoaderes Ve'hoemuna", neither did Tzvi Fisher - Tzvi telephoned me and said he did not have the nerve to start the tune.... I am told that T.G. the Rebbe is marvellous,- wonderful-active - energetic - happy - freilich and very friendly - and - I missed a Happy Yom Tov.

Hilary and Pincus have also confirmed all the above, and each one has good tidings to relate. Roselyn was particularly moved to learn that at Yechidus, the first thing the Rebbe asked Hilary was, "How is your mother?" Have you spoken to her today?" Have the stitches been taken out and when will she be checking with the doctor?"

.....

I conclude with the repeated and sincere heartfelt thanks for all that the Rebbe has done and is doing for me and Roselyn and for all the family"

Chapter 6: A Holiday In Eretz Yisroel

After Roselyn's traumatic experience in hospital, it was decided to take a short holiday in Eretz Yisroel, so that she could fully recuperate. Hilary was expecting a baby in about four weeks, at the end of July, so the best time to travel would be straight away - June 20th.

We phoned Hilary on the eve of our departure in order to say farewell - and, as a Joke - we told her to try and wait for our return home before having the baby,

Next morning, Avrohom was loading our luggage into his car, prior to his taking us to the Airport, when Shmuel phoned with the news that Hilary did not want to keep us in suspense, and had brought forward the delivery date. She had T.G. now presented us with our Ninth grandson - our Eighteenth grandchild KAH. Number eighteen in Hebrew is "CHAI" - which also means LIFE - very lovely indeed. It was very sweet of Hilary to hurry matters along - although we would have to miss the Briss. The baby was named Ben Tzion after our old friend Rabbi Shemtov, whose Yahrzeit was just a day or so previously.

Every year, when we visit Jerusalem, we purchase a pair of Tefillin for one of our grandsons. Two sets each are required. (Rashi's and Rabenu Tams) P.G. eventually they will be needed for one of the boys, when they will become Barmitzvah.

We called at our old Lubavitcher friend's shop, Gershon Henoah Cohen, in the Mea Sheorim. Today's price for the best pair of Tefillin, one set, was £140.

"O.K." said I, "I will take a pair, a set, for Levi Yitzchok, Avrohom's next Barmitzvah boy".

"But" Gershon Henoah added, "If you want a pair similar to those which you buy for Shmuel Lew, they will cost £170".

"Why is that?" I demurred.

"Because" Gershon Henoah confided, "He is a Tzadik, A Lubavitcher Tzadik. He is the biggest Tzadik in London, no - in all England."

I reprimanded him for making silly jokes - they were not in good taste.

"Oh no" he protested, "I am not joking at all, I am very serious". So - I had to pay f30 more because Shmuel is a Tzadik!!

In this shop, we also encountered Yossi Gerlitzky from Safed, and Velvel Slavin from Jerusalem. Yossi confessed that he realised that I was not at 770 during Shovuos, because there were no Rashi questions at the Farbraingen. He requested of me a copy of my diary, which I had left at the hotel. He promised that Velvel would call for it next morning at 10a.m, and at the same time to show us around some of the Chabad Mosdos (Lubavitch Institutions).

At 9.55a.m in the morning (5 minutes early, yes, it's true), Velvel called with his car. First of all we visited the Tzemach Tzedek (Lubavitch) Shool in the Old City. It is 140 years old. When the Arabs captured Old Jerusalem in 1948, they completely destroyed every single Synagogue in the Old City - all - except this Tzemach Tzedek Shool, which was converted into a bakery. After the reconquest, the Israeli Government announced that all the recaptured Old City now belonged to the whole Jewish people and nation. No one could now claim for the return of any property or land EVEN with the justification that it was an inheritance. Lubavitch-Chabad insisted upon the return of this Shool, but the Government could not or would not make any exception. It required the direct and personal intervention of President Zalman Shazar to enable the Shool to be given back to Lubavitch.

We then drove to see the schools.

The Rebbe is continuously impressing upon Educationalists, the importance of providing separate schools for boys and for girls.

The modern trend in secular non-Jewish educational establishments is to increase the number of comprehensive and co-educational schools.

Our own so-called experts insist that we should emulate this example. They know from experience, what is best for the child and for the community

A most remarkable tribute to the ideas and convictions of the Rebbe, on this subject, was published in the "Daily Express" of last March 5th. This "popular" newspaper has a circulation of about 6,000,000 (six million) copies a day. It is an influential part of the English media.

The Editor wrote a leading article (an editorial) which was entitled "Indiscipline in the Schools" and went on to state:

"When boys and girls get together in the classroom, they often pay more attention to each other than they do to what is being taught.

This unsurprising piece of information comes in a report on school discipline from the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers.

Further; "Men are usually better at dealing with the disciplinary problems of boys - and women with girls."

True enough and entirely predictable. As is the conclusion that in many big comprehensives headmasters are often unaware of uproar in some of the classrooms, and that teachers do not like to admit that they have difficulty in keeping order.

Our educational system, if it can be called such, is obviously in a poor condition. Employers have often borne eloquent witness to this fact.

The way back to sanity will be hard. But if we go for smaller schools, and keep boys and girls separate during the school day, we will surely be on the right path."

This was unexpected corroboration and support for the Rebbe's opinions on this vital matter.

Back to Jerusalem – We then visited the Girl's compound, which consisted of the School, High School, and Seminary, Four hundred girls attend these schools. One hundred and seventy of them aged 14 to 18 years old study to be teachers. Although it is vacation time, most of these girls were still at school studying for their examinations. They were all lovely "Bachaint" and "Aidel" (refined) girls - good material for religious teachers. The basis of Judaism is education, and this depends upon the character of the teachers. The future of the Jewish nation is assured if we possess girls of this caliber. As a matter of fact, this school is acclaimed and is recognised as providing one of the highest standards of education in Israel.

We next visited the Boys department. The Yeshiva was a new modern impressive looking building. There were 170 boys (including 60 boarders), who learned all day from 7.30a.m in the morning until 9.30p.m at night. I noticed Moishe Meir Vogel from Manchester, and the Goldsober and Pecker boys from London. One class was studying Chumash. All the rest were learning Gomorra - and yet our CRITICS allege and MAINTAIN that our boys only learn Chassidus!! A teacher had left his class of 24 boys for a few moments. In spite of his absence, the boys continued to learn Bobbo Metziah (Gemorra) in very loud voices, each one trying to outdo the other. Thus was created a very big din, but it was very good to hear.

The next step on our round of inspection, was the Communication Centre. It was the last word in electronics and telecommunications and technology – much more advanced than the one at Crown Heights, but – it was not yet completed. They still manage to receive the "Shiddur", the broadcasts from Brooklyn via London and transmit them to eighteen centres throughout Israel, from Safed in the North, to Eilat in the South, and embracing Tel Aviv, Bnei Brak, Nazareth, Kfar Chabad, Netanya, Beer Sheva, and so on.

We then examined the huge kitchens; Velvel offered us a cold drink. The cook did better; she offered us a hot chicken dinner (with-all the 'frills'), which was simmering in a Ten gallon pot upon the cooker. We once had a four course meal at a similar place, the courses were taken out of the same pot, and served together on one plate.

Before I left, they begged me to introduce them to my brother Maurice, who might be of assistance to them. I make the Shidduch.

Subsequently, Maurice's son and my namesake, Shneur Zalmon Jaffe, also arranged for a very nice Shidduch with Debbie Hubert, Walter and Rebecca's lovely and pretty daughter.

Roselyn and I attended the Tenoyim reception, and, being a member of the family, and intending to stay the whole evening, I decided to relax and wear only my Yarmulka on my head. I handed my hat to Zallie, the Chosson. It was a new type of trilby, made of Polyester and Viscose, It would always keep its shape and could be rolled up and packed into a suitcase without any ill effects to the hat.

So - first of all, I had an exhibition. I twisted it and folded it - rolled it and jumped on it - and the hat reverted to its original shape, presumably unharmed by the rough treatment which it had received.

At the conclusion of the celebrations, I asked Zallie for my hat. He brought it in the room, and Said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, please take particular notice of this unusual and unique hat. I can twist it - like this, I can fold it and jump on it - like this, and"

I suddenly realised that it was not my hat at all. I interrupted his "spiel" and told him so.

An old man had been taking photographs all evening - and - it was his hat. He snatched it quickly from Zallie. It had NOT reverted to its original shape, but it remained battered, twisted, folded and crumpled.

"Oh dear" he cried, "my poor, poor hat, how awful, how terrible" and some other unprintable epitaphs in Hebrew were heard, in between his heart-rending sobs.

Was Zally's face red!!

This photographer had been working all evening. He always attended all the best Simchas. The flashes from his camera were intermittent, but no one had as yet seen any photographs. It is said that he only goes for the food!!

Chapter 7: A Musical Interlude

Zalliet's twin brother, Ellie, is an accomplished musician. He has already made a wonderful reputation for himself as a brilliant international conductor. I attended one of his concerts. He has conducted the London Symphony Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall, London. It is fascinating to watch him working. He keeps the orchestra, of well over a hundred players, in strict tight discipline with his baton. Yet, at those particularly exhilarating and stirring movements, Ellie would jump up, as high as two feet, and right down again to add emphasis to his conducting.

Meanwhile, he would be clutching his Yarmulka, which had a tendency at those exciting moments, to want to leave his head, whilst his Tzitzis would be flying about in all directions. One piece took over, 11 hours of non-stop playing, and Ellie refused to have the written music placed in front of him. He maintained that it would distract him and he knew it by heart (or head). All the non-Jews were terrifically impressed with his outstanding performance. They were certainly not bothered by Ellie's Yarmulka and Tzitzis. It was a real Kiddush Hashem.

Ellie is intensely religious and a CHOSSID, but he had a problem. In his profession, nearly everyone worked on the Shabbos and on Yom Tov. He was constantly refusing offers which entailed desecration of the Shabbos. He begged me - appealed to me to write to the Rebbe on his behalf. He fervently desired a Brocha from the Rebbe. He maintained this would be an Insurance for him. I seldom write to the Rebbe for others. If one required something very urgently, one should make every effort to obtain it, oneself. However, in this instance, I was persuaded to write on his behalf.

Almost by return, I received the following letter from the Rebbe which I was requested to transmit to Ellie. The Rebbe wrote to me because I had omitted Ellie's address.

It read as follows:

By the Grace of G-d

24 Tammuz, 5739
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Ellie Jaffe

Jerusalem

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to see from the report in “Maariv,” supplemented by the report from your Uncle, our esteemed friend R’ Schneur Zalman Jaffe, that the concert you **conducted** in London was a great success, not only from the musical viewpoint, but also in having impressed the audience with your personal **conduct** – in fulfilment of the imperative, “Know Him in all your ways.” I have in mind, of course the fact that you appeared with your *Tzitzis* showing and with head covered, with dignified Jewish pride.

Since *Tzitzis* is a reminder of all G-d's Mitzvos, and head-covering symbolizes *Yiras Shomayim*, as our Sages declare, the impact on the audience, and subsequently on the readers who read about it, could not have been more fitting.

All the more so, as it was linked with music, which touches most deeply the heartstrings of human beings in general, and of Jews in particular. Or, as my father-in-law of saintly memory expressed it, that *Neginah* is that medium which puts a person in direct communication, by way of the heart, with the inner soul – much more readily than the spoken or written word, since the latter involve attributes of the cool intellect, and certain things can be better perceived emotionally than intellectually.

May G-d grant that the above mentioned influence on your Jewish audience will be translated into practical effects, in terms of strengthening their commitment to Torah and Mitzvos in the everyday life, and that you should continue to enjoy *Hatzlocho* in all above, and in a growing measure.

As for the non-Jewish audience, there is the well-known instruction of the Torah (= meaning, “teaching”) that a Jew is also obligated to encourage gentiles in their observance of the Seven Laws given to the children of *Noach* (i.e. to all humanity) in respect of justice, morality, kindness etc., which – with all their ramifications – constitute the very basis of any human society. Thus, your personal conduct at these public appearances helps to promote also the above.

Knowing of your family background no further elaboration is necessary.

While on this subject, I would like to add that I trust you have regular daily *Shiurim* in Torah. I mention it only in compliance with the principle, “Encourage the energetic,” for there is always room for advancement, either in quantity or quality, or both. This would also be in keeping with the spirit of the *Chag Hageuloh* of my saintly father-in-law on the 12-13th of this month. The history of this anniversary is surely known to you, as also its significance for all of us, in terms of increased activity in all matters of Torah and Mitzvos, both in the personal life as well as in promoting *Yiddishkeit* without compromise in one’s surroundings, by example and precept.

Wishing you continued *Hatzlocho* in all above, with blessing.

I forwarded this to Ellie and expressed my opinion that he was a very lucky boy indeed, to

receive a reply from the Rebbe - and so quickly too.

A little later, I got a letter from Ellie. He wrote:-

Dear Uncle and Auntie, I hope this letter finds you all well.

I can't say how grateful I am to you for what you did. I agree with you! I'm really lucky! I feel it! The letter is impressive and most inspiring!

As you've suggested, I've written back and I told the Rebbe Shlitah that I had to write a letter to France telling them I'll not take a part in the international conducting competition. I cannot accept because of Shabbos (the event is taking place in 2 weeks time) but Boruch Hashem, I'm a Jew and a Chossid

Love Eli.

And - it's hard to believe, but Ellie received yet another reply from the Rebbe. This letter was most encouraging. It reassured Ellie that he should have no fear about keeping the Mitzvahs. It is sometimes a test of one's faith. G-d will help those who trust Him, and P.G. Ellie will have a successful career.

The Month of Tisrei 5740

"Before Yom Kippur"

Last year, Yoseph Yitzchok Lew, my eldest grandson, who was aged 14 at that time, spent the whole month of Tishrei at Crown Heights. This enabled him to be near the Rebbe during Rosh Hashonah, Yom Kippur, Succos and Simchas Torah. He was the guest of Nechama and Mendel Baumgarten. He was overjoyed and thrilled with his experiences over these Yomin Tovim. He felt he had gained a tremendous spiritual uplift, that would fortify him, not only throughout the following year, but throughout his whole life,

Shmuel and Hilary encouraged him to repeat last year's experiment and persuaded Yossi to take with him his younger brother, Menachem Mendel, who was one and a half years his junior. Again they stayed with the Baumgartens.

Yossi related to me that the Rebbe himself blew the first, the main, thirty notes of the Shofar on the Bimah. The Rebbe took with him three large paper sacks, which were crammed full with Pidyonus - entreaties -- which had been sent to the Rebbe, begging for Life, Health, Nachas, A Good Livelihood and so forth. The Rebbe placed these sacks on top of the Shulchan (table) of the Bimah, and they almost covered it. The Rebbe then drew up his Tallis right over his head and enveloped the whole table and contents with it. He then bowed his head onto the table, meditated, preyed and wept - he was appealing to the Almighty to bless all the Jewish people, everywhere with a Good and happy New Year - and that the desires of those, who had sent him petitions, should also be fulfilled.

After which, the Rebbe commenced to make the Brochos prior to the blowing of the Shofar. It was a very solemn and awe-inspiring moment, and Yossi admitted that he very nearly fainted. I agreed and remarked that stronger men might have fainted in similar circumstances.

"Oh no," retorted Yoosi, "It was not the solemnity of the occasion. It was the terrible crush of thousands of man and boys who were all trying to get nearer and nearer to the Rebbe, and which almost crushed my ribs and broke my back."

That was the reason why he nearly fainted.

Just before Yom Kippur, I received several reports from 770, to the effect that Crown Heights was full to overflowing; that there were 2,000 visitors from Israel and 1,000 from France. Furthermore, that there were 1,000 children from France, already ensconced in Brooklyn. In addition, Chassidim, together with their wives and families were streaming in from every corner of the U.S.A. and from all over the world.

Special cooking facilities and kitchens, which were situated in the New Yeshiva premises in Kingston Avenue, provided meals for visitors who had arrived to spend the month of Tishrei with the Rebbe. Although they worked to full capacity, a considerable number had to be turned away, "One cannot put a quart into a pint pot". Sleeping accommodation was at a premium, and I heard that many were lying on the floor of 770 in sleeping bags.

I was becoming a little anxious about our own accommodation. Our friend Raizie (Minkowitz) had already promised me, many months previously that she expected us to be her guests - full board and lodging - free of charge - for Simchas Torah. When I heard how crowded Crown Heights was, I immediately telephoned Raizie. I need reassurance, and it was a great relief to learn that she was expecting us and everything was in order.

Lubavitch families in Brooklyn are providing a tremendous and invaluable service by generously opening up their homes to the visitors. It is a pity that there is not even one Hotel in Crown Heights at which one could stay. But - of course, even Hotels are limited to a certain number of rooms (more or less).

Last year, Shabsi Gordon approached me with a proposition. He wished to open a hotel - and that I should be his partner. I was interested and asked for the Rebbe's opinion. I was told that, "It is not your business and don't bother".

The Rebbe M'arash (Z.T.L.)

The Yahrzeit of the Rebbe Maharash takes place around this time. This gives me the cue and the opportunity to relate a little story about this Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe (Z.T.L.)

It concerns Rabbi Rivkin, a Lubavitch Rov who lived in Manchester many years ago. He was also a Dayan of the Beth Din.

The mother of Rabbi Rivkin had given birth to two boys, both of whom had died at a very young age. When she was pregnant with Rabbi Rivkin, she was sorely afraid that the same thing would happen again - as with her other two unfortunate sons.

She contacted her Rebbe, a previous Lubavitch Rebbe, for help and guidance, for she was extremely worried.

The Rebbe advised that she should have an earring made from the Silver Atarah (crown), which is affixed to the collar of a Tallis. This earring should be worn by the new baby throughout his life.

She obtained this small thin, round earring, and in due course, placed it in the left ear of the young "Rabbi" Rivkin. He wore this for many years and enjoyed good health.

Just once, in the course of his sojourn on this world, did he remove this earring - and he became so ill, that he replaced it immediately.

One Erev Yom Kippur, I, together with a good friend of mine, Motel Jaffe (no relation) went to visit Rabbi Rivkin and to extend to him our good New Year wishes. Motel gave Rabbi Rivkin malkas (the symbolic strapping), and we took our leave of him. Rabbi Rivkin made his way to the Mikveh, after which he went to Shool for the Kol Nidrei service. He was half-way up the steps, when he collapsed - and died - and - it was discovered that the earring was missing!! He was 77 years of age.

A thorough search was made of the Mikveh. There was no sign of it - and it has never been seen since!

Preparation to Visit 770 for Simchas Torah

We had decided to visit the Rebbe on Simchas Torah this year. This would be the first time that we would have the pleasure of spending this Yom Tov at 770. We have celebrated Shovuos there on numerous occasions, and we were now looking forward to some new experiences. Incidentally, Simchas Torah and Shovuos have very much in common.

Some opinions even maintain that Simchas Torah should be celebrated on Shovuos. After all, G-d gave us the Torah which we all accepted on that day, and all anniversaries should be celebrated with Simcha - for example - birthdays. We do, of course, keep the anniversary of the acceptance of the Torah with Joy - but the actual Simcha and rejoicing takes place on Simchas Torah.

The Rebbe explained in a subsequent Sichon, why we had to wait until Shemini Atzeres for the Simchas Hatorah.

"It was ordained that the Torah was to be given to us on the Sixth day of Sivan - Shovuos". It must have been a wonderful sight. The Jewish nation - millions of men, women and children gathered all around Mount Sinai - spontaneously and emotionally shouting "We will do and we will listen, understand". It was an awe-inspiring moment; the deafening noise of the thunder, and the brilliant flashes of lightning - and - Moses, accepting the Torah on our behalf.

Unfortunately, this inspiration did not last. On the 17th of Tammuz, Moses returned to the

people, after spending 40 days and 40 nights being taught the Oral Law (Torah) by G-d himself, He discovered, to his great dismay, that the Jews had made for themselves an idol - a Golden Calf, - which they were worshipping. Moses was carrying the two tablets (Luchos) which G-d himself had made and written. He was furious when he saw the frailty and the fickleness of the multitude, and flung the Luchos onto the ground in his anger and rage - and they were broken into many pieces.

G-d then wanted to destroy the whole Jewish nation - they were unworthy and unfaithful. He intended to establish a new Jewish Race direct from Moses. Moses spent the next 40 days and 40 nights pleading with Hashem to rescind this decision, and, finally, on Rosh Chodesh Ellul, he did persuade the Almighty to do so.

But, firstly, Moses was instructed by G-d to make another set of Luchos, and this time to write, engrave, them by himself. Moses spent another 40 days and 40 nights in seeking a complete forgiveness for the Jewish people, who-were now in the category of Baalei Teshuva. On the 10th of Tishrei, the Day of Tom Kippur, Moses prevailed and G-d said:

"I forgive them their sins, according to your words, your pleas".

(This second bestowal of the Torah, which took place quietly and unostentatiously was permanent, has passed the test of time, and will last till the end of Eternity.)

"The people were happy and full of joy; and wished to rejoice with the Torah. But, this was not possible on a Fast Day – since true Simcha means “eating and drinking wine” – and for the woman- “new dresses” and so forth.

As a matter of fact, it did happen once, during the course of our history that Yom Kippur was transformed from a Day of Fasting to a day of Feasting and Rejoicing. This was the time when King Solomon consecrated and dedicated the Beis Hamikdosh - and - it coincided with Yom Kippur - But - it has never happened again:

After Yom Kippur came Succos. It was again not possible to have complete rejoicing when we had to live in a Succah.

So - Shemini Atzeres was the first real opportunity on which Simchas Torah could be celebrated".

Incidentally, I know of many other similarities between Shovuos and Simchas Torah. For example:

- (1) Both Yomin Tovim are called Atzeres.
- (2) Tikun is said through the whole nights of Shovuos and of Erev Simchas Torah.

- (3) A Kinus Hatorah is held on the day after both Yomin Tovim.
- (4) The same portion in the refer Torah is layenned on both Shovuos and Simchas Torah.
- (5) These are the only festivals when one may eat what one desires, and where one wishes. (For example, on Pesach one may only eat Matzo and other certain foodstuffs, whilst on Succos one may only eat in a Succah)
- (6) I have a Yarhzeit a few days after both Shovuos and Simchas Torah.

On the second day of Choil Haimoed Succos, I wrote the following letter to the Rebbe, which I intended to take with me and to deliver personally into the Rebbe's Mail Box at 770.

"My Dear Rebbe Shlitah,

I am writing this letter at home, and I hope P.G. to bring it with me tomorrow. So, when you receive this note, then you will realise that B.H. Roselyn and I have arrived, together with Chaim Dovid (Avrohorm's eldest son, aged 14) and Yenta Chaya (Hilary's eldest daughter, 12 years old). Yossie and Mendel - Hilary's eldest sons have been at Crown Heights for the past few weeks. We are staying with Myer and Raizie Mincowicz. - for one week. We would have liked to have stayed longer but we do not wish to impose upon friends.

I do know that Crown Heights is packed to overflowing. I hear that people are sleeping on the floor of 770 in their sleeping-bags. Yehuda Kramer wanted to go to 770 for Succos with his wife and child. There was definitely nowhere for them to stay!

I have been warned by Dovid Abenson to take my oldest suit, my most battered hat, and if possible - steel-toed boots - for the Farbraingen and for Simchas Torah. "I will be crushed from all sides and my ribs may be broken. The heat will be stifling and I should also take a bottle of oxygen". It sounds terrible. In fact I do not think I will actually enjoy myself - I may not even be in a position to see or hear what is going on! But maybe I will be able to write a few pages in my next edition.

I have heard that the whole Seder is different than on Shovuos - the seating arrangements in particular.

Roselyn, as I have mentioned, will be with me. I surely cannot imagine what she will do all the time. To find a place to see or even hear in the Womens Shool will be a sheer impossibility. It is bad enough on Shovuos.

However, it will be a new experience - to which I am looking forward - with some little

trepidation.

Anyway here I am

I wish you a Happy and Freilechen Yom Tov. We all missed you Shovuos."

I also wrote another note about certain Manchester Lubavitch cash problems - more about that later!

Chol Hamoed Succos

It was a beautiful hot "summer-like" day, when we left Manchester for New York. We were dressed for the part, in lightweight suits and clothes. I carried my Esrog and Lulov.

Once again, all seats on the British Airways direct flight to New York were fully booked. Dovid Abenson recommended a unique way. Instead of travelling forward to New York (via London), we could fly with KLM from Manchester and back-track to Amsterdam, and then travel from Amsterdam to New York. We would also save £20 (£80 for the four of us) and have a longer ride!!

Our plane left Manchester at 9a.m for the one hour's journey. We were immediately served with a Kosher breakfast. The stewardess took one look at Dovid - and brought him a five course dinner. This consisted of grapefruit, chopped liver, chicken, dessert, coffee and cake. Poor Dovid!! He could only manage the liver he had already eaten a whopping big breakfast at home. So we took the remainder of the dinner with us - to keep in reserve - together with the sandwiches which Roselyn had made "in case of emergency".

The Jumbo Jet to New York left Amsterdam at 1 p. m, so there was a three hour wait. By 12 noon, we were all starving, so we started on the sandwiches and on Dovid's Polka. It is a very good idea to travel to see the Rebbe on Chol Hamoed Succos. One is "potter" - absolved - from eating in a Succah if on the way to see the Rebbe. After lunch, we desired cold drinks, but we needed Dutch money. So, I had to walk to a Bank kiosk to change my English pounds into Dutch guilders. Yenta Chaya, always a little busy madam, insisted on going for me. She took my £10 note - and brought back - two five pound notes!!!

Half an hour before departure, the Airport lounge was full of men carrying Lulovim. I have never seen so many outside a Shool.

We were all enjoying a very pleasant flight - until the Captain announced over the loudspeakers, that it was actually snowing in New York and the temperature was minus Two!! !! FREEZING !! I did not relish the idea of benching Esrog in the Snow.

We eventually arrived at 770. The snow had given way to sleet and then had settled down to a

heavy drizzle of rain. It was most depressing after the lovely hot and sunny weather which we had been enjoying in Manchester. All families in Crown Heights seemed to have their own Succahs, but I was surprised to note as far as I could ascertain - that none of them possessed any type of protective roof-covering in case it rained. (Obviously it seldom rained in Crown Heights during Succos, and, as far as snow was concerned - that was unheard of.) I did notice two exceptions:

(1) The Rebbe's own Succah at 770. This was situated on the front lawn and was made up of solid heavy and thick wooden walls. This had a device affixed to it, which towered high above one side of the Succah, and which was similar to a shop blind. When it rained, all that was required was to lower this blind, which covered the whole Succah roof.

& (2) Lippy Brennan's Succah. Lippy had lived all his life in England and knew full well that it was NOT a luxury to have a roof protection - but it was an actual necessity.

The communal 770 Succah ran adjacent to the whole side of the Beis Hamedrish and covered all of the "yard" area. It was very huge - and very wet. It was open to all the elements.

Our host - Myer Mincowicz, had a most luxurious Succah with highly polished walnut wooden walls. But - we could not sit down - not until we had dried the chairs and benches with towels.

The following day, Thursday, was still Choil Hamoed and I had ascertained that Shacharis would be at 10a.m. In fact all the morning services, including that of Simchas Torah, commenced at that time.

My main preoccupation before davenning was to bench Esrog with the Rebbe's own Esrog and Lulov.

I was told that it took well over two hours for everyone to bench Esrog with the Rebbe's "Arba Minim" on Yom Tov. It was not expected that there would be so many people during Choll Hamoed because there were some men who had to leave early for work.

I still considered that there would be a huge queue of people waiting for the Rebbe's Esrog. So, next morning, I arrived outside 770 at 8.15a.m. I found NO queue - NO line - NO people - NO Rebbe's Esrog. The whole business seemed rather odd until I discovered, that to save everyone having to wait a long time in the queue, each person was given a numbered ticket. Mine was 672, but as the first number that morning was 570, this indicated that there were only 100 before me.

The Rebbe arrived at 9a.m, and the Esrog and Lulov was taken into his own Succah. After six minutes, Myer Harlick appeared with the Rebbe's Arbo Minnim and conveyed them to the main Succah.

It had been raining all night long and the Succah seemed a shambles. Every bit of furniture

was wet through and rainwater was still dripping very quickly through the roof. It was not possible to sit down. Label Groner transferred the Esrog and Lulov to Myer Harlick, and Myer handed the set to the person holding the first available number.

This man made the Brocha, shook the Lulov and handed it to the next person. It took exactly two seconds for each turn, so the line moved very quickly.

After I had benched Esrog, I noticed a queue of, about 100 people. They were waiting to be served with coffee which was being served from a huge urn on a table, and cake which was set out in large piles on the same table. It was like an old-fashioned "soup kitchen", where the clients walked past and received their rations.

After the davenning - breakfast was served - then luncheon - on the menu were fish, herring, eggs, cole-slaw, potato salad, kuggel, plenty of bread and margarine, plus coffee and cake. As many as four thousand meals were served every day.

The originator and the man in charge of this wonderful scheme, was a very fine gentleman whose name is Moishe Yeruslavsky, who upholds the Mitzvah of Hachnosus Orchim (looking after guests) during the month of Tishrei. He provided these meals free, to the thousands of visitors who have come from all over the world to visit the Rebbe for the High Festivals, (Yomim Tovim) and for Yom Tov - for women and children too. During Succos, he serves the food in the Succah.

Once during Yechidus, someone indicated to the Rebbe that he had seen Avrohom (our forefather) at work giving food and drink to those passing by and to wayfarers. The Rebbe commented that Avrohom gave hospitality only to Arabs; whereas, Moishe Yeruslavsky provided refreshments to Jewish men, women and children.

I will admit that the food looked very appetising, but it needed much patience to stand, waiting in the long line.

(After davenning, I took Roselyn and Yenta Chaya to the "Ess and Fress" restaurant around the corner, and left them there to order and eat their breakfasts. I bought a couple of Mezonos sandwiches and a coffee, took them back to the 770 Succah, where I ate and drank upstanding. The roof, the walls and the seats were wringing wet.)

Meanwhile, the Shacharis service started promptly and took place downstairs in the Shool.

The Rebbe stood in his usual place in the top right-hand corner of the Shool (hall). During the whole of this month, this area, about 20 feet long by 20 feet wide had been raised to a height of about 3 feet, and four steps led up to this large raised platform. This ensured that the Rebbe was isolated, but could be seen by everyone. More important was the fact that no one was allowed on this platform, so that no one could encroach upon the Rebbe and breathe down his

neck. With such huge numbers of people having arrived for Yom Tov, it would have put the Rebbe in danger of being crushed. Every-one was looking after the Rebbe and his health. I do not blame anyone, but some men did take these precautions to absurd limits - more about that later on.

During the morning service, on Chol Hamoed, one circuit of the Bimah is made with the Esrog and Lulov by all the worshippers in procession....

First of all went the leader of the Band - the Chazan. He was pulled and dragged along by Label Groner because the Chazan wanted to savour every single moment - and he wished to sing - whether he could or couldn't. Our Rebbe - the General followed - and behind in ranks of three or four abreast marched his troops. Every soldier, including the General held a drawn bayonet and a hand grenade. The Jewish Army!! It was a wonderful sight - a forest of hundreds of green bayonets and yellow hand grenades.

The Rebbe would not allow the service to continue until every single person had completed the circuit.

Financial Advice

During the course of the day, I received two replies from the Rebbe to the letters which I had delivered the previous evening. The first was a "Thank you, Thank you" and a reciprocation of our good wishes for a Happy and Freilechen Yom Tov and that I should have no fear because it would not be necessary to bring old clothes.

The second was an answer to my query regarding Manchester Lubavitch. Our problem - and it was a common these days - was that, although we owned extremely valuable property, we suffered from an acute cash flow shortage - mainly because we were heavily overdrawn in the Bank, and with interest at over 20% -?!

It was suggested by one of our supporters and sympathisers that we could sell our premises - and rent them back again. By these means we would receive a big cash intake which would enable us to repay our Bank overdraft, and - leave a considerable balance that could be invested. The income from this would enable us to pay for the rent and there would be a considerable amount still available for routine expenses. Our supporter guaranteed that we would always enjoy a larger in-come from this investment than we would expend on the rent and other disbursements.

I had asked the Rebbe for advice and guidance. The Rebbe's reply stated.

(1) If we sold our premises, it would be a public admission that our strength in Manchester was being eroded - even though we would still possess a place for learning Tanya and davenning.

(2) In these difficult days and times in England, it was most unreasonable to assume that our income would always be more than our expenditure.

& (3) A common sense and business approach would suggest that we should try to obtain a mortgage on our property from a Building Society. In this way our borrowing would be - in the course of time - ultimately repaid.

The above was certainly a very straightforward reply to my queries.

It is remarkable how the obvious things are overlooked. Once we did have a mortgage with a Building Society. This had been repaid.

In these stringent times, we never even considered the possibility of having any success getting a loan, however, on my return to England, I commenced to make enquiries about getting this mortgage. In general, Building Society's loans are only given to householders - and hardly ever to Synagogues or Organisations such as ours. They are not keen to sue the trustees - and they would never have the audacity to foreclose or dispossess a religious association. They, therefore have one simple formula - "Keep off - Keep away from this type of Business".

Well - by some miracle (!) we did obtain this mortgage from the largest Building Society in the world, The Halifax. They assured us that they do not normally accept business from Synagogues and so forth, but, in this instance, they were prepared to have just one customer of this type on their books. The mortgage was to be repaid in a Ten Year period, and the monthly repayments were actually less than the present bank interest, charges alone!! It did not seem possible or feasible - but it was!!

Hoshana Rabba With Esrog And Cake

Maariv - the evening service, was as usual at 9.30p.m and it took place in the Beis Hamedrash. A new system was in force - ONLY a very limited number of people were allowed to daven in this room with the Rebbe. They were very strict about this, because otherwise, the place would become too oppressively hot and stifling for the Rebbe.

The result of all this was that the Hallway and corridors became jammed and packed full of boys. Roselyn who normally always stood outside in the hallway and waited to see the Rebbe when he passed from his study to the Beis Hamedrish, was pushed and shoved back further and further by the press of boys - until, she found herself right outside the building - and of course - never saw - and was not seen by the Rebbe.

That night was Hoshana Rabba, and one should stay up all night reciting TIKUN. At 1 a.m, the Rebbe arrived and we all said Tehillim, the whole book of Psalms which took one hour and fifty minutes - quite slowly for 770.

During Shacharis (the next morning), we needed "Hoshannos" to bang on the floor (a symbolic gesture of discarding one's sins)

We had bought ours on the previous day. These were being sold everywhere. Outside 770, they were asking \$5 for a set. Roselyn and I bought ours from a shop around the corner, we paid \$1.50, for a nice set which had ZIGGELS - serrated edges. Yossi was most annoyed, and we returned to the shop and exchanged these for perfect ones - NON-ZIGGELS - which cost \$2. What a lovely business - one could make a fortune! Next morning, prices dropped rapidly - to \$1 - to half a dollar and then even to 25 cents a set. At 11.30a.m - all those that were left unsold - serrated and perfect were thrown into a heap - together with those that had already been banged and clobbered on the floor. All were swept into a large pile - together with - Lulovim and some Esrogim that had not been retrieved for jam-making - and which cost anything from \$10 to \$80 per set.

What a terrible business - one could lose a fortune!!

To revert back to Shacharis: On this day of Hoshana Rabba, the procession makes the circuit around the Bimah not once - but Seven times. With so many thousands of people wishing to take part, there would soon be an impasse. So - Label Groner made the following clear and unambiguous announcement. The Rebbe, followed by just seven or ten distinguished Rabbonim, only, would go around the Bimah with their Esrogim and Lulovim the whole seven times - all at once. Afterwards, everyone else would have their turn. The service would not be continued until all had completed the Hoshannos.

The Chazan led the way - then the Rebbe - and a few Rabbonim joined the procession. Label Groner signalled that I should follow too. I felt a little - a lot - unworthy. I am certainly not an illustrious Rabbi - not even an undistinguished one.

However, Label insisted very strongly - so I succumbed - and off I went. At the third round, the number had increased to thirty. By the time we had completed the seventh and final circuit, there were over a hundred distinguished Rabbonim in the procession (less one "Non-Rabbi").

After which, literally thousands marched and charged around the Bimah the seven times. To conclude this part of the service, the Rebbe took his Hoshannos, bent right down, and banged them on the floor five times.

The Sefer Torah was taken out in order to layen. Before the Chazan had the chance to say "Gadlu", and to move towards the Bimah, the Rebbe clapped his hands vigorously together, and in quick tempo, proceeded to sing very furiously "ANA AVDO". All joined in and this went on non-stop for about 3 or 4 minutes.

I received another unexpected honour that morning. I was called up for an Aliya, there was

only one to spare - Kohen, Levi, The Rebbe - and I got - the fourth. It made me feel very humble and grateful.

Every Hoshana Rabba, after Shacharis, the Rebbe commences to distribute Lekach (cake). He stands at the door of his own Succah, situated in the front garden of 770 - a queue is formed and everyone is personally handed a piece of Lekach by the Rebbe

On this morning, there was already a good crowd waiting when the Rebbe came along. He entered the Succah and I could see through the doorway, tray upon tray of ginger cake stacked upon the table.

Label Groner took hold of me and led me to the front of the queue. I was therefore the first to be served. The Rebbe, with a happy smile, handed me a piece of Lekach and wished me "LeShone Tovo Umsucco" (a blessing for a good and sweet New Year). I asked for a piece for Avrohom and his family - and received the same for him, including the Brocha for a good sweet year for him too.

There were now two lines in existence one to receive the cake from the Rebbe who was standing at the doorway of his own Succah, and the other for benching Esrog with the Rebbe's Arba Minnim in the large communal Succah - and - both lines were using the same route. A plan was quickly devised whereby the first queue would enter 770 from the rear - the East, from Union St., and continue right through the large Succah until it came to the Rebbe, whilst the second queue congregated at the front of 770, the West, and almost walked past the Rebbe and duly arrived into the large Succah to bench Esrog.

Throughout the time we spent at 770, there were strong arguments and counter-arguments going on continuously. The subject matter was the health of Our Rebbe, and the debate centred upon the following THEORIES. Was it right and proper to save the energy and health of the Rebbe by discouraging people from collecting Lekach and also Koss Shel Brocha on Motzei Yom Tov (at the end of Simchas Torah).

One of our Rabbonim had actually persuaded Label Groner, that, for the Rebbe's sake, people should not actually be forbidden G-d forbid - but, at least should be strongly dissuaded from IMPOSING upon the Rebbe's time and energy. He had a very good point. The Rebbe would normally be handing out Lekach all day long, and if one could save the Rebbe even an hour or two of work, then it was well worth the effort.

This campaign had a very marked effect - 3.30p.m, after Mincha was the time when the Rebbe served the Ladies - and - there were very few clients. The small pitiful queue was nearing its tail-end. It seemed a real shame and a disrespect to the Rebbe that there were so few ladies willing to take advantage of the Rebbe's hospitality, generosity and blessings. Roselyn was standing nearby - so I shouted to her to join the end of the line. She did so and took with her Yenta Chaya. The Rebbe gave Roselyn some cake and a nice Brocha, and asked: "Where is

your grand-daughter?"

"Here she is", declared Roselyn, and indicated Yenta Chaya, who had been partly hidden by Roselyn. The Rebbe beamed at her and also handed her a piece of cake.

That was the end of the queue - and the next unusual occurrence was the sight of poor Label appealing to some women to please come for the Rebbe's Lekach".

I was told that the Rebbe had asked Label why there were so few people. Label had related the story - that someone had persuaded him to discourage people from coming forward. The Rebbe commented that:

"Whoever gave you that advice is a TIPPISH (a fool) and a CHOSSID SHOTAH (a stupid Chossid). Nay," added the Rebbe, "I would say, he is not even a Chossid".

(Definition of a Chossid Shotah: He is the man who is walking along the river bank. He hears a woman screaming and shouting for help, because she is drowning. This Chossid Shotah dare not eve' look at a woman, so he hurries and rushes away.)

Incidentally, and significantly, this Rabbi, who had given this advice, had himself gone personally to the Rebbe for Lekach.

His excuse was that he represented hundreds of people and he wanted the cake for them. This same Rabbi's daughter had a similar excuse - her classmates had begged her to bring home the Rebbe's Lekach – what a lovely and lucky coincidence!!

Meanwhile from 1p.m. and onwards, the women were benching Esrog with the Rebbe's Arba Minim for the first time. They also had a queue and are given numbered tickets. Roselyn complained that it did not work, as too many ladies tried to "jump the queue". Some imagined that number 504 came immediately after 303 and so forth..

The women did not need a Succah, so their line went through the womens Shool and ended outside on Eastern Parkway. The ladies line took much longer than the men's. Some women and girls had to be shown and instructed on what to do and to say. Others made the most of it and gave the Lulov a few good extra shakes.

A big bully of a fellow arrived at 2p.m and snatched the Esrog and Lulov away from the women, He maintained that there were many men who had not yet benched with the Rebbe's Lulov. – And it was a much more important Mitzvah for the men.. I was very annoyed, bounced upon him, dispossessed him and gave him a piece of my mind in exchange. I had the backing and support of a few hundred screeching and screaming ladies, and so it was not too difficult.

At 4:30p.m, the Rebbe had completed the Lekach distribution. He descended the steps outside

770, in order to enter his car and leave for his home. I commenced a lively Nigun – everyone joined in – and so did the Rebbe. When the Rebbe drew up alongside me, he halted and smiled.

"Where are your Ainiklech?"

(He was referring to Dovid – Avrohom's son, and to Yossi and Mendel – Hilary's sons).

Waving my arms about rather vaguely, I stuttered that:-

"They are around here somewhere".

"Why did they not come for Lekach?" interjected the Rebbe.

I was thunderstruck - and replied - a little hesitatingly that they had received their rations on Erev Yom Kippur, and were told that they should not trouble the Rebbe for anymore. The Rebbe was not very pleased... I think that he realised that they had NOT collected their Lekach on Erev Yom Kippur - and for the very self-same reason that they had abstained today.

I did find my grandson's shortly afterwards, They were all in their shirt sleeves and were pulling, shlepping and dragging all the benches, tables and forms from the Shool of 770, and making a huge heap of them outside. They looked like a PILE OF FIREWOOD. I considered that this was a very good idea, to burn all the old furniture and have it replaced with nice new equipment. However, I had erred a little. They were denuding the Shool hall of every bit of furniture to enable all the extra people who were expected for the Hakofos to be accommodated. Dovid Mandlebaum was screaming and screeching instructions and getting in everybody's way.

Simchas Torah Ato Horaiso

The custom of Lubavitch was to have Hakofos on three occasions over the two day period of Yom Tov (Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah). The first time would be on that very night of Shemini Atzeres, and the other two would take place on the following night and during the morning service - of Simchas Torah.

Maariv was at 7:10p.m, after which, everyone went home to make Kiddush and to partake of some food. ALL returned for the Hakofos at 9p.m. The Shool was jammed tightly with about Seven Thousand men and boys. The women's Shool was also crowded - with not an inch to spare.

Before dancing with the Torah for the Hakofos, the Seventeen sentences of ATO HORAISO are recited. According to our Minhag we say this verse three times. On this first night, various people were called up and given the honour of reciting, aloud, one of the sentences.

The first Possuk and the last were always recited by the Rebbe, on all the three occasions. The Gabai shouted out in a very loud voice:

"Is min mechavid Adoneinu Moreinu Verabeinu mit der ershter Possuk "Ato Horaiso".
(Thereby calling up the Rebbe to recite this first sentence)

To my utmost astonishment and surprise, I heard my name being called for the Possuk "Malchusscho". The next sentence was Ki Mitzion - the last - but lo and behold, they returned to the 14th Possuk again. They must have been short of sentences.

For the second and third rendering of the Ato Horaiso - except for the Rebbe's first and last Posukim - men were called up in batches, for instance, "all the workers of Kfar Chabad together", - "all the Roshei Yeshivos", - "all English people", and so on.

On the following night of Simchas Torah, I was informed that each individual Posuk would be sold by auction. All the proceeds from this night's business were to be in aid of the Lubavitch Yeshiva in Brooklyn. But, to save the Rebbe's time, it seemed that all the sales (or purchases) were completed before-hand.

Because, straight away, the Gabai called out in Yiddish, with the usual sing-song intonation:

"The first Posuk Ato Horaiso has been bought by Avrohom Katz for \$5,000, and he desires that the Rebbe will say this Posuk"

Then:

"The second Posuk has been bought by Shmuel Myer Silberstein of Antwerp for \$3,600 (twice Chai - Life), and he wishes that the Rebbe will recite this Posuk"

Then again:

"The third Posuk has been bought by - (and mentioned two men) - who have paid \$1,800 each, and they are desirous that the Rebbe will say this Posuk"

And so it went on - and on - till the whole 17 sentences of the Ato Horaiso were said for the first time.

The second Ato Horaiso started in the same manner; again it was obvious that all the sentences had already been sold by private treaty.

But, I was also interested in purchasing some of these extra-ordinary and unique goods...

So, I called over the Rashag, the Rebbe's brother-in-law, who is in charge of this Yeshiva, and told him that I was interested in buying a Posuk. He asked me how much I was prepared to pay. I, in turn, asked what was the price. He informed me that the prices ruling at this moment varied from \$1,800 down to \$500. I gave him a buying commission to spend \$1,000 on my behalf.

(The Rebbe had given a Sicho at the Farbraingen. He had maintained that people should have trust and confidence in Hashem, who had asserted that for every one unit which we would donate to Tzedoko, He, the Almighty would repay us with four or-five units. The Rebbe had urged us to try it - so - I thought - what could I lose? - right - \$1,000!! but, in any event, a deserving charity would certainly benefit.)

However, the Rashag had forgotten all about my paltry \$1,000. Prices were maintaining their high level and partnerships were buying a Posuk for friends to recite. It became almost too casual and lackadaisical, so I requested the Rashag to cancel my order - and I would make another attempt next morning.

On the following day, prices were even tougher. This time, all the money went to the funds of Mercos. Whereas, on the previous evening these sentences were bought by partnerships of two men - for the last Posuk of Ki Mitzion and of each of the three Ato Horaiso's, there were as many as twenty and even of thirty partners. I was fortunate that my bid of \$1,000 was accepted, and I was joined together with the other twenty-nine partners. I will admit that everyone's name was called out, loudly, so that the Rebbe could hear - I purchased on behalf of myself, my wife and all my children and grandchildren.

(Incidentally, I paid up straight after Yom Tov. Hashem also paid up as soon as I returned home to Manchester. It is no small wonder that everyone is so keen to be connected with the Rebbe's business Enterprises and Trust.)

The amount of money donated on the evening of Simchas Torah was about \$140,000 (£70,000). The mornings proceedings brought in very much more.

Hakofos

Well - to revert back to the first night of Shemini Atzeres - Friday evening. The Ato Horaiso had been concluded, and it was time for the Hakofos.

Except for the 20 feet by 20 feet platform on the top right-hand corner, on which the Rebbe stood, this HUGE terrific hall had been completely cleared of all furniture. There were however, four tables which had been chained together and placed in front of the Oran Hakodesh to act as a partition and barrier so that those honoured gentlemen who were called up to collect a Sefer Torah would not be crushed or stamped upon.

There was also a very tiny platform in the centre of the auditorium, on which the Rebbe would be dancing together with his brother-in-law, the Rashag, during the first and the seventh (the last) Hakofa.

Label Groner, Meyer Harlick and Binyomin Klyne escorted me - and two or three others onto the Rebbe's platform, and we stood leaning against the side wall -. I then understood why the Rebbe had assured me that I should not be afraid of the crush of the people.

The Gabai sang out:

"Is min mechabed Adoneinu Moreinu Verabeinu mit de ershter Hakofa" (The Rebbe was called for the first Hakofa)

One of the wardens took the very tiny Sefer Torah up to the Rebbe. Another small one was presented to the Rashag. I heard my name called - it was hard to believe - but it was correct. I collected the fourteenth Serer Torah - and the procession marched off.

I got half way to the centre, when I heard a Nigun started - then the sounds of 7,000 throats all shouting and singing together - faster and faster. The Rebbe must have been dancing with the Rashag. I think that was so! but - all I could see was the back of the fellow who was in front of me - with Sefer Torah No. 13. And, everyone was dancing. None of the 7,000 could move even a quarter of an inch in any direction - only upwards and downwards. That is how the crowd danced - up and down, and up and down. (I met Dovid after the service. I demanded to know why he had not taken off his clothes before having a dip in the Mikveh! His suit was soaking wet with his own perspiration and with the sweat of others.)

The Nigun and the dance ended. It was time to return the Sefer Torah to the Oren Hakodesh, so I just turned around and followed the gentleman who held Sefer Torah No. 15 back to the Ark. That was the sum total of my Hakofas - a two minute slow walk and push through a solid wall of people for about 20 yards. A four or five minutes wait in this tunnel - and finally another walk back for one and a half minutes.

The Rebbe returned and re-ascended the platform. By this time, there were about twenty five of us leaning against the wall. Each Hakofa took about eight minutes from start to finish. The Rebbe himself set the tempo for the Nigunim. He clapped his hands furiously and vigorously non-stop, and jumped up and down for the whole four minutes. I tried on every occasion to emulate the Rebbe's action but it was just impossible. The Rebbe had set a much too high standard.

We had by now reached the Seventh Hakofa. The Gabai then announced that all those men who had been honoured and privileged to take part in the first Hakofa should now come forward for a Sefer Torah and participate in the last round.

I did not relish another "fiasco" as at the first Hakofa, besides which, I would rather watch the Rebbe dancing with the Rashag, a scene which I had not been able to witness before.

Standing on the platform, where I was now joined by another hundred people - I could just about see the Rebbe and the heads of those men who were carrying the Sifrei Torah.

The Rebbe had reached the small platform for the dancing, and I was preparing to enjoy a spectacle to which I had been looking forward since I had left Manchester - when **Whoosh-** everyone had stood up on the edge of the platform in order to obtain a better view. All I could see was - once again - a solid wall of peoples backs. Some of my more athletic friends had pity on me. One put his left arm around a pillar, and his right arm around my waist - yanked me upwards, so that my feet were resting on another friends neck. In this way I could just manage to see through a gap.

I saw the Rebbe dancing with his brother-in-law. A small Sefer Torah was held on each right shoulder and each left hand rested on the left shoulder of the other. They danced round and round even faster - the Rebbe forcing the pace all the time. Looking down, all I could see was what looked like a thick black carpet, moving up and down with quick rhythmical movements. From every pillar in the hall, which supported the roof and ceiling, hung four or five boys. They resembled Palm Trees with hanging bunches of Coconuts or clusters of Dates.

(On Simchas Torah morning, when the Rebbe wore a Tallis - it happened quite often that the Rebbe seemed to disappear and all one could see was a flying, whirling Tallis.)

The Hakofos concluded at eleven o'clock that night. The Rebbe left, but the boys continued until the early hours of the morning. On Shemini Atzeres morning some of the benches and tables were brought back into the Shool for the services. Yossi, Mendel and Dovid were again in great demand - imported labour!!

When the Kohanim had to 'Duchen,' the Rebbe descended from the large platform - and about 90 Kohanim ascended thereon in order to bless the congregation. Another 100 or so 'Duchened' from ground level. I noticed that about a dozen young boys, just under the age of Bar-mitzvah accompanied their fathers in this "Priestly Benediction".

There was to be a Farbraingen at 6p.m, therefore ALL the forms and tables were brought in and set out for this function. The Farbraingen concluded at 10.30p.m. The Hakofos were scheduled to commence at 12 midnight. The reasons being:

(1) To give all those men and boys who had gone to make "freilech" (happy) those Jews who davened in other Shools, a chance to return to 770 in time.

& (2) To give Yossi, Mendel and Dovid, my grandsons, (and a few other boys) plenty of time to clear out all the furniture again to make room for the people and the Hakofos.

Services on Simchas Torah

Next day, being Simchas Torah, everyone had to ensure that he would receive an Aliya (a call up to the Sefer Torah). Dovid Mandelbaum warned me that I should be at 770 at 8.15 in the morning - almost two hours before the Rebbe's service for Shacharis was due to start and he, personally would ensure that I would get an Aliya. There would be many groups layenning "here, there - and everywhere"..

I duly arrived at 8.15a.m. There was no Dovid Mandelbaum. (He arrived at 10a.m and confessed that he had overslept). However, a Minyan was just starting upstairs in the Beis Hamedrish, and I was invited to join. They intended to hold the whole morning service, not just to layen. As I wished to daven with the Rebbe's Minyan, I had to refuse, but I did accept their offer of an Aliya.

At that moment, there were just ten men, although there were eight boys fast asleep on benches, and another two were stretched out - out to the world - on the tables. Within thirty minutes, there were another two Minyanim davenning in the adjoining rooms.

I was only an onlooker waiting for an Aliya. But - THEY went through the lot! Hallel - Ato Horaiso (three times) and Hakofos. These latter were gone through in exceptional quick time - No singing and dancing - just a "Rush Job" - They also wanted to be in time for the Rebbe's Minyan downstairs. I had my Aliya. Rabbi Dvorkin, Caplan and two others shared Chosson Torah and Chosson Beraishis.

After the layenning was concluded, I descended to the main Shool. I was surprised to find groups layenning in every nook and cranny. I could well imagine that, after all this, there would be very few men who had not been called up.

Yet, during the main layenning in the Shool, eight Kohanim went up together for the first Aliya, and about a dozen Leviim for the second. When it came to the third Aliya - for Yisroelim (plain, ordinary Jews), I did not notice how many ascended the Bimah. I was too much distracted and disconcerted by the sight of, literally hundreds of men and boys who had stood up, all around the Shool, and in loud voices made the Brocha on "being called up to the Torah". They all remained standing until that portion of layenning was concluded, and then again - they all made the second Brocha - in a still louder voice.

I had never, in all my life, seen this done before. I was told that:-

(1) Only on Simchas Torah groups of Men have Aliyas together.

&

(2) As they cannot all fit onto the Bimah at one time - and even if they could, it would not be possible for all of them to see the words of the Sefer Torah, or even to kiss the sacred scroll, -

so they consider that they are all connected with the Torah and therefore make the Brocha as if they were standing on the Bimah.

Of course - this only occurred on Simcha Torah, but it seemed rather odd.

Avrohom Parshon was honoured with Chosson Torah. The Rebbe was Chosson Beraishis.

Before the laying, we recited the Ato Horaiso (3 times) as mentioned before, and also proceeded with the Hakofos. In this instance, the fifteen Sifrei Torah were all taken out from the Ark - the Rebbe led the procession and the same fifteen men encircled the Bimah seven times. A very hectic Nigun was sung - concentrated and furious - the whole Hakofos took fifteen minutes - and that was that! The whole service had taken from 10a.m. till 1.30p.m - a total of three and a half hours.

After the service, the furniture removers returned to work and brought back all the tables and benches into the Shool for the Farbraingen which was due to commence at 9p.m on that evening.

Simchas Torah Farbraingen

Before the Rebbe was due to enter for the Farbraingen, Rabbi Kunin from Los Angeles jumped upon a bench and made an impassioned speech. No-one should go up for Koss Shel Brocha who had been within the past few months. He shouted and screamed that we had to spare the Rebbe; we had to look after the Rebbe; we had to consider the health of the Rebbe; and so on and so forth. He spoke in Yiddish.

I was not quite certain whether he was discouraging everyone from going for Koss Shel Brocha, or only those who had been recently.

So - I asked one fellow what he had heard. He replied "DABER IVRIT", he only understood Hebrew. The next one insisted that I "parlez Francais", the third person I asked, had not been present - the fourth was present, but was not listening - so - I gave up!

Some Simchas Torah Sichos

The Rebbe related the Sicho regarding the similarities between Shovuos and Simchas Torah, which I have mentioned at the beginning of this Simchas Torah section.

He also stressed again, the importance of giving Tzedoko, and to have trust and faith in the Almighty. If one will donate a unit, then the Almighty will repay 4 or 5 units. The Rebbe added that it was wrong that a man should retire from work. Besides leaving him very little to do, he would always have a good excuse when approached to give a donation - to assert that, "I am a retired man and I cannot afford to give Tzedoko".

The Rebbe then gave a Sicho in which he explained that, in every month of the year, we had a reason, cause for rejoicing - for Simcha.

TISHREI This is self-evident with the High Festivals and then the great Simcha of Succos and then even greater rejoicing of Simchas Torah.

CHESHVAN At first glance, there seems nothing to celebrate in this month. But Rabbon Gamliel tells us that the days up till the 7th of this month are reckoned to be still connected with the Yomim Tovim of the previous month. At this time of the year, all Eretz Yisroel needs rain, but because of Ahavas Yisroel (Love of one Jew for another Jew, we do not pray for this until the 7th. Why? - Because it has been reckoned out that this is the latest possible date that it would take for even the last Jew to return to his faraway, outlying home - after spending the Yomim Tovim in Jerusalem; and, no Jew would desire that a fellow Jew should be uncomfortable and to travel home in wet, inclement weather. So we still have the connecting link to Simcha, the joy of Yom Tov, until that day.

KISLEV Includes Chanukah - and Yud Tes Kislev, so we have much about which to rejoice.

TEVES We find in this month only a Fast Day - the 10th. But our Sages tell us that in the future, in the time of the third Beis Hamikdosh, all fasts will be celebrated as Simchas.

SHEVAT The 15th is the New Year for Trees, whilst we also have Yud Shevat, our own Lubavitcher Yom Tov.

ADAR We celebrate Purim, and

NISSEN We enjoy Pesach.

IYAR Every day is a Yom Tov. We count the Omer each day, with happiness and anticipation until we come to

SIVAN When we celebrate Shovuos and Mattan Torah.

TAMMUZ We encounter the fast on the 17th, which, as I have stated overleaf, will be commemorated, in the future as a festival together with

AV The 9th of Av. Even now, this day is a semi-Yom Tov. We do not recite Tachanun and so forth. In addition, we also celebrate the 15th, which used to be a national day of rejoicing. And finally

ELUL When on every single day, the Shofar is blown and we are brought daily ever nearer to G-d.

The Rebbe related another Sicho (which I have obviously very much abbreviated). A man goes to the market, to do his annual shopping. He purchases goods here, there, and everywhere.

He seeks the best bargains. However, it is not until he returns home that he is able to fully examine all his goods, and comprehend exactly what he has bought. The proceeds – the profits - from these goods have to keep him throughout the whole year.

Similarly, the month of Tishrei, which included the prayers of Rosh Haashanah, the solemnity of the Yom Kippur services, and the Simcha and joy of Succos and of Simchas Torah, has to support and inspire us right through the year.

Another analogy: - A person who goes into a shop where perfume is sold will have the scent clinging to him for quite some time. So too, will the inspiration and purpose of Simchas Torah be with him for a considerable period.

Maariv took place at 12.30a.m. After midnight. The Rebbe made Havdolah, drank a major portion of the wine, refilled the glass (the Becher) and commenced the distribution of Kos Shel Brocha. When the glass became only a quarter full, Myer Harlick, Label Groner or Rabbi Mentelick would top the Becher up again - and so it went on - all night - there was always some of the original Havdolah wine remaining in the glass.

The Rebbe's face was beaming and a happy smile lit up his whole countenance in anticipation of handing out the wine. It was beautiful to behold.

It was then my turn to receive my rations. The Rebbe poured me out the wine into my paper cup and handed me, also, a small bottle of Vodka. I thanked him profusely for everything, and wished him well, with plenty of good health, and hoped P.G. to see the Rebbe next year at Simchas Torah. The Rebbe observed that, "it will be even better next time" and added that, "you will be able to write about it in your Diary". (This was indeed great encouragement.)

Roselyn confided that Simchas Torah is not a Yom Tov at 770 for women - at least, not for my woman. She received "hacked" legs and shins - even a kick on her cheek, which left a nice bruise as a memento.

On the day after Yom Tov, there took place the usual Kinus Hatorah, at which I was given the honour of addressing the boys.

Again, I took the easy way and read excerpts from my recent Diary. The boys seemed to relish it, so everyone was happy.

Yechidus

That Monday evening was to be a Yechidus night. Wednesday was to be another one too - and, because of the unprecedented number of applications, there was to be further Yechidus - on Friday afternoon, Erev Shabbos. This was most unusual and unique. There was a list of 150 names already for that afternoon, so the following Sunday was also reserved for Yechidus night. As we were leaving Brooklyn on the Wednesday, we chose the first night of Yechidus. Label (Groner) expected about 500 people that evening - actually 450 attended. Label predicted that our appointment would be very late - maybe around 3 in the morning. It was a very good approximation, because at 2 .50a.m. - ten minutes earlier than anticipated - Roselyn and I entered the Rebbe's study. We took with us our grand-daughter (Hilary's eldest girl) Yenta Chaya, because the Rebbe did not interview girls of Twelve years old on their own. The Rebbe greeted us with Sholom Aleichem and remarked: -

"Ah, it is ladies first".

Actually, it was the little lady first for the Rebbe addressed himself to Yenta Chaya, because she would be leaving us as soon as she had received the Brocha from the Rebbe.

The Rebbe asked her if she was already Bass-Mitzvah. Yenta Chaya replied in the affirmative. The Rebbe continued:

"May the Almighty bless you; you should go from strength to strength; you should have good middos (attributes); give Nachas to your parents and to your grandparents and to all Israel; here are two, one-dollar bills, before you light the candles for Shabbos, give one dollar for Tzedoko, the other dollar you should change into local currency and give that money for Jewish education; give your name and address into the Office and they will send you a Siddur - which I will have autographed (signed) It is not quite ready".

I interrupted at this point and suggested that as Yossi and Mendel would not be leaving until the following Sunday, they could collect it for Yenta Chaya. The Rebbe enquired:

"Do you trust your brothers?"

Yenta Chaya replied that she did trust them. The Rebbe then concluded by saying to her:

"Goodnight and may the Almighty bless you". As she neared the door, the Rebbe added,

"If the photographs you took of me do come out, be good enough to send me a copy".

The Rebbe laughed as Yenta Chaya departed. (Yenta Chaya declared later, that she never knew that the Rebbe saw her taking the pictures. She also confessed that this was the finest and best Yechidus she had ever experienced. Normally she accompanied her parents and the conversation was generally in Yiddish. This time it was held in English. She understood and imbibed every single word. This can be readily seen from the above, because Yenta Chaya

herself dictated to me exactly what the Rebbe had said to her at this Yechidus.)

Roselyn had remained standing during these exchanges. She would never sit, unless the Rebbe invited her to do so. The Rebbe requested Roselyn to:

"Please take a seat Mrs. Jaffe. You will be much more comfortable - and so will I."

The Rebbe then asked Roselyn about the effects of her operation and her general health in particular. He wanted to know whether Roselyn had a check-up and was she on a diet? Roselyn replied that the doctor had given her a clean bill of health, and that she kept to a diet. The Rebbe wanted to know whether Roselyn was on the diet because her husband required this, or whether the doctor had ordered it. Roselyn replied that the doctor had advised this diet, but not on account of her operation - just for her general health's sake.

The Rebbe then declared that he had a very serious complaint to make against Mr. Jaffe. He did not wish to talk "Loshea Horah" behind my back, so he was telling me this in front of Mrs. Jaffe. (I was becoming extremely worried. I felt like a prisoner in the dock, and was feeling a little apprehensive. I could not think what I had done (or not done) to upset the Rebbe. Roselyn confided to me afterwards, that she was also terribly worried. In what way had we distressed the Rebbe? Her mind was a complete blank as far as that was concerned.)

However - the Rebbe was still talking, and said that, the serious complaint was that Mr. Jaffe - Mr. Manchester, never helped the Rebbe. I never sang or danced unless and until the Rebbe gave me a signal or set an example. It was up to me to save the Rebbe the effort of having to clap his hands, and yes - even to nod his head. I should set an example to the boys and to those around me. This was particularly relevant to Farbraingen and to other joyous occasions when everyone waited for the Rebbe to give the signal either to start singing - or to sing faster and faster according to the Rebbe's beat. This burden should be taken off the Rebbe's shoulders - and - **MR. JAFFE** should take the lead. Furthermore, MRS. Jaffe should use her influence with Mr. Jaffe. The Rebbe added:

"Everyone around is waiting for you to commence. This is a "Chok Velo Yaavor" - a statute for ever - for all time. You must help me and sing before I give the signal. This will conserve my energy and make everyone very happy."

I remonstrated with the Rebbe and said that during the Hakofos on Simchas Torah, the Rebbe sang and clapped his hands so energetically and quickly that it was impossible for me to keep up with him. Furthermore, the Rebbe continued in this vein for many more minutes, whilst I could only stand there gaping and gasping.

The Rebbe interjected and said:-"You don't try hard enough".

I then handed over to the Rebbe our Tzettel - a piece of note-paper, on which we usually wrote

our special requests. I had written upon this, ONLY our Hebrew names and the names of our mothers. The Rebbe looked surprised and queried:

"Is that all?"

I explained that all we wanted was a good Brocha, and that we had seriously considered not coming for Yechidus. We did not wish to waste the Rebbe's time. The Rebbe remarked that:

"Time belongs to the Almighty".

"Yes, that is so", I commented, "but if we would not have come along, then the Rebbe could have gone home a little earlier".

"Oh no", objected the Rebbe, "if you would have stayed away, someone else would have come instead".

The Rebbe then made this very profound statement:

"I want everyone to come and see me: I want everyone to come for Koss Shel Brocha: I want everyone to come to me for Lekach: and I want everyone to need their Rebbe - and then - the Almighty will give me strength to carry on".

Well - this really was explicit and left no cause or loophole for misunderstanding.

The Rebbe then requested, my new book, my diary. I maintained that I had sent it with Bernard Perrin at Shovuos time. The Rebbe confirmed this. He wanted another one. I protested. I explained that I only write and published this once every year, just before Shovuos, and I always made quite certain that the Rebbe would be presented with the very first copy. The Rebbe observed that it was a long time since Shovuos, and that I must have written something. I admitted that, although I had taken notes about various happenings, I had not actually written anything yet, although I had many ideas in my head.

"Then why have you been wasting your time", demanded the Rebbe. "I want 200 pages in the next issue".

(This seemed to be a rather tall order, but I did keep quiet - especially in view of the Rebbe's instructions last year, that I should write 100 pages, which, at that time seemed rather too ambitious. However, because I incorporated my old number 1 and 2 Diaries, and brought in such unpublished material, I did manage to produce 145 pages. But - these old "reserves" have all been consumed. I would consider that fifty or sixty pages would be a good effort!? - well, we shall see)

The Rebbe averred that my fears about my clothes had been proved unfounded. It certainly

was not necessary to bring an old suit, because I had an excellent place where to stand during Simchas Torah. I commented that this was thanks to Label Groner, Binyomin Kline and Myer Harlick, who looked after me like a long-lost favourite son - "probably at the request of the Rebbe".

Rabbi Yaakov Rappaport told me that it was not necessary to bring along an old suit.

"Just wear a new one, once, at Hakofos and it would become an old shabby suit".

Dovid Abenson also told me that there is only one person in all 770 who wears a new suit on Simchas Torah - and that is the Rebbe. He is well protected.

The Rebbe remarked that, he did notice during the Farbraingen that I was pretty well jammed tight and I could not move!

The Rebbe then asked me whether I had addressed the boys at the Kinus Hatorah, and was delighted when I replied that I had done so.

The Rebbe wanted to know whether I had received his reply to my letter regarding Manchester Lubavitch. I answered that Label Groner had shown me the half-page reply in the Rebbe's own handwriting. He was now preparing a copy for me, so that we could study this reply more carefully and in detail when we returned home to Manchester.

The Rebbe enquired regarding the date and time of our departure for home. He made a note of this and gave us a Brocha for a good and safe journey.

He then handed to both Roselyn and me, a dollar each. This was to be changed into English currency and given to the cause of Jewish Education. Roselyn would also receive a Siddur, signed by the Rebbe, whilst I would be presented with a Tanya also autographed.

On a number of occasions, the door handle was shaken and clattered by Label - a plain hint to us that we should leave the Rebbe's presence - at once or even sooner, if possible. Once this occurred when the Rebbe was speaking. The Rebbe just finished his sentence and declared:

"And don't take too much notice if Label Groner rattles the door handle".

I informed the Rebbe that I hoped to come for Yud Shevat. The Rebbe said that 770 will not be so crowded at that time. (What a prophetic understatement!) I mentioned that I was searching for apartments for Shovuos - not only for ourselves but P.G. for all of Avrohom's family too.

Our Rebbetzen had been slightly indisposed. I enquired of the Rebbe regarding her health. The Rebbe answered, that she was doing fine, very well indeed, but was worried because she could

not look after him as well as she usually does.

We thanked the Rebbe for all he was doing for us - and for all our family and then - the Rebbe thanked US (for What?!?!)

It was now 3.05a.m. The Yechidus had taken 15 minutes, and we took our leave of the Rebbe. It had been worth all the inconvenience, trouble and travelling to New York just for these 15 minutes. All the rest was extra profit.

Our grandson Dovid (Avrohom's eldest boy) followed us into the Rebbe's sanctum for his Yechidus - alone. The whole Yechidus concluded that night at 4 in the morning.

The Rebbe was back at 770 at 9.30a.m as usual.

Life In Kingston Avenue

The area around 770, and in particular Kingston Avenue seemed to me much more affluent, prosperous and brighter these days. Many Jewish people, especially Lubavitchers were returning to Crown Heights in order to live near the Rebbe. This automatically brought about a reduction in the number of coloured people in this neighbourhood.

Kingston Avenue runs at right angles to Eastern Parkway, at the corner of 770, and is the principal Lubavitch shopping centre.

Anything and Everything can be bought in this street, from:

Hats to Hardware & Foodstuffs to Footwear

Live Fish from the Tank a Crockery from the Mikveh

Meat and Cake & Keys and Coke

Barbers and Hairdressers & Chemists and Fruiterers

A Place to Buy Books, & A Place to Read Books

Teffillin and Tzittis & Suits and Ladies Dresses

Vodka, Chocolates and Cans & Toys and Baby prams

Yes, just mention it and Kingston Avenue will have it, including:

Doctors, Estate Agents, & Shool & Mikvehs, Yeshivos & Schools

The main attractions as far as we were concerned were the restaurants which were sited in that Avenue.

(1) The Ess and Fress was a small busy place. There were three tables which would accommodate fifteen people if they were sitting as they do at 770 Farbraingen. The food was good and was served briskly, at the counter. Most patrons, for obvious reasons were compelled to eat - and drink upstanding.

One evening a party of French women monopolised the whole restaurant for about 2 and a half hours. They had nowhere to go, so they sat and sipped a cup of coffee. The proprietor of the restaurant pleaded and begged them to take their leave so that other customers could be served. Whenever this happened, a French lady would order another coffee.

It was really outrageous, but we should also feel sorry and have pity for these women, for they had no place to go to relax. During the day, they competed with Roselyn for space on the benches on Eastern Parkway, facing 770.

(2) The pizza Pozza. As its name implied, their specialty was Pizza. One could order fried or boiled eggs, but - one would not get them - unless it was before 10.45 in the morning.

(3) A different couple had taken over the old meat restaurant. It was almost self-service, with excellent food, served with good portions. It was Chol Hamoed, so I took my meal into the Succah and enjoyed a wonderful repast. After Yom Tov, we decided to patronize this restaurant again, they deserved our support - but they were "closed for lunch". We returned later, and we found a notice pinned to the door which proclaimed that they were "closed for the Holidays". That night, we saw the Boss and his wife doing a "moonlight flit" - they were loading into their-large estate car, an old stove, some old pots and pans, and sticks of furniture. The restaurant never opened again under this management - a pity - they gave good portions!

Once we were in a hurry, so we purchased a school-boys lunch from Kahans (it used to be Lipskers). It consisted of a bar of chocolate, a carton of ice-cream, a packet of potato crisps, and a bottle of Coka Cola. We ate and drank these on a bench outside 770. It was very satisfying ----- to see the children enjoying it.

There was a small shop which had a notice on the window which proclaimed to all that it was a TONSORIAL PARLOUR. This really intrigued me - I was perplexed. The windows were blacked out. No-one could see what was being done or produced inside. However, on very close examination, I realised that the windows were not really blacked out they were just dirty. I could just make out a shadowy figure of a man sitting in a chair and - having his hair cut. I suppose they wanted privacy, so the windows were never cleaned.

I met Fishel Katz. He lives in Miami. He said he was a Cold Chossid in a Warm Country. His

uncle is Abraham Katz from Chicago - a Hot Chossid from a Cold Country. He needed encouragement. He had read parts of my Diary and considered that "Maybe your book will make me a Mench". He was extremely grateful to me that I was prepared to write down on paper my own personal and private memoirs so that others might read and learn. I was persuaded that he really needed a copy and I promised to leave it for him in the Office at 770. I did so - and so did he. I found it four months later still lying in the Office of 770!!!

Yenta Chaya and Dovid travelled with us to New York. Yossi and Mendy had been well-established in Brooklyn when we arrived. Naturally we all had our meals together in a restaurant whenever it was convenient or possible. Yossi & Mendy never joined us for Breakfast- They never finished Davenning before 1 p.m - how could they? When they did not start till 12 noon!

One day, just before we were due to leave for home, the four of them jointly presented us with a gift. It resembled a Solid Silver Bowl, and attached to it, was a beautiful letter of thanks. Roselyn and I remonstrated with them for spending so much money on a present for us. The lovely note itself was quite sufficient.

"Oh", interjected Mendy, "it was only \$10 - that is \$2.50 each".

Well, I hastened to pay up - and everybody was happy.

Our Rebbetzen was still slightly indisposed. Roselyn telephoned every day, but could not make contact. We were in Crown Heights for only a week so we were not fortunate enough to have the pleasure of seeing her this time.

Subsequently, on our return to Manchester, I phoned at 9.30a.m New York Time - and - Our Rebbetzen herself answered. She was under the impression that we intended to stay in Brooklyn for two weeks. I told Roselyn that in future, when we wanted to talk to the Rebbetzen, it would be easier from Manchester. I assured the Rebbetzen that we had enjoyed our visit and observed that the Rebbe had given me much Kovod, (honour) and showed me great friendliness. The Rebbetzen remarked:-

"You deserve it Mr. Jaffe". I was taken aback and said:

"(1) I really do NOT deserve such commendation, and

(2) Even if a person does deserve something - they don't always get it."

We left Brooklyn on the Wednesday, Yossi and Mendy were travelling later on - they intended to fly home on Sunday evening. Yossi was very reluctant to leave, he maintained that it was doing him the world of good, spiritually. Besides which, there was to be a Yechidus night on that Sunday, and a Farbraingen on the following night - Monday. Still if he had to go home -

then he had to go home;

That Sunday night, Yossi and Mendy were in good time at the airport. They went through emigration, customs, security and were handed their boarding cards and seat numbers. They sat in the lounge and waited for the call to board their plane.

Yossi decided to have a wash. He retired to the Rest Room, flung his jacket nonchalantly on to a locker which was situated against the wall. He dried himself and put on his jacket. He then realised, with a start, that it was not an ordinary locker on which he had placed his jacket - It appeared to be a Garbage Bin. When Yossi had flung his jacket on to this bin everything had fallen out of the pocket. Whilst Yossi was enjoying a good splash - a coloured gentleman arrived and emptied the garbage - together with Yossi's money, passport, tickets and boarding card. Of course, he was stopped from boarding the plane. He could not be identified. The only person on the plane who could vouch for him was Mendy. It took Mendy all his time to vouch for himself.

Anyway, the plane took off and left - without Yossi. He was stranded in J.F. Kennedy Airport in New York City. He was isolated, deserted and penniless. He was very FORTUNATE that a Jewish fellow at the airport, saw his predicament and took him to 770 in time to mix with the crowds who were waiting for Yechidus. He also enjoyed his extra Farbraingen on the morrow. Lucky Yossi!! But not so lucky Shmuel and his sister who lived in New York. It took her a week of hard work and plenty of money before she was successful in obtaining a new passport for Yossi.

Is it not peculiar that all of those people who wish to stay in New York, are not allowed to, whilst those who want to go back to England are forced to stay in the U.S.A. - for example, Johnny Hackner and Yossi!!!

As soon as Roselyn and I returned home, we immediately telephoned to 770 and also to the Rebbetzen to confirm that we had T.G. arrived safely in Manchester.

A short while later I received the following letter from the Rebbe:

"Mr. Shneur Zalman Jaffe

4th Cheshvan 5740

Greetings and. Blessing

This is to confirm receipt of your correspondence, and no doubt you have been able to rest up from your travels and share your good impressions and benefits from your visit here with Anash in Manchester.

Especially as our meeting and parting were in connection with, and in the spirit of Simchas Torah, which sets the tone for the entire year, in keeping with the imperative of "serve G-d with joy". May each and every day of the New Year be filled with true joy in every respect materially and spiritually, and that you and Mrs. Jaffe should enjoy true Yiddish Chassidish Nachas from each of your children and grand-children, in good health and happy circumstances.

With blessing,

(Signed) M. Schneerson."

This made the perfect ending to our Simchas Torah visit to the Rebbe.

On my return, I was invited by Gigi Weiss, the Chairman of Lubavitch Women's Organisation, to address their ladies and to describe to them my visit to the Rebbe during Simchas Torah. This would take place in three weeks time.

I am not a good orator, I like to write out my speeches, so this was a good opportunity to start the Simchas Torah section of my Diary. I was pretty busy all day, at work. If I had time in the evening, I had to concentrate on writing my paper which I intended to read to the ladies.

On Cheshvan 24th, November 14th, I had just returned from a business trip to London. It was 7p.m at night - 2p.m on the afternoon in New York, when the telephone rang. It was Label Groner calling from 770. He informed me that the Rebbe was very worried because he had not heard from me. Label added that the Rebbe goes through ALL his mail every day and is continually looking for and seeking a letter from Zalmon Jaffe. It was four weeks since I had left New York and the Rebbe was anxious to know what was the reason why I had omitted to write. The Rebbe did know that I had phoned 770 and also spoken to the Rebbetzen as soon as we arrived home. But, I generally write to the Rebbe every two weeks, so this lapse was unusual, the Rebbe was becoming very concerned, because he heard that Roselyn was unwell!? I felt terribly guilty and annoyed with myself for causing the Rebbe aggravation, but fortunately I had written a letter three days previously which would probably arrive at 770 in the course of the next day or so.

It was a most unusual coincidence that the Rebbe should have phoned me on this day the 24th of Cheshvan, because the Shiur, (the section) of TANYA which we learn on this very day commences at Chapter 30 of Agerres Koodesh. It states (the English translation) "It is known that our sages, of blessed memory, said, (in' Berochos 6B) that "Whoever is accustomed to come to the Synagogue, and one day did not come, the Holy One, Blessed is He makes inquiry about him"

Chapter 9: Avrohom And Shmuel Venture Into The Sicho Publishing Business

“Sichos - Not For Golda Rivka”

Golda Rivka (Lew) is one of my favourite Granddaughters. She confessed to me one day, that she found my Diary boring. She loved the stories, such as "Mammy and Tatti's Chassunah (wedding)" and suchlike, but, she could not concentrate on the long Sichos and the "Words of Torah".

"Would it be possible, Zaidie", she asked, "to publish a Diary and omit those parts which I find boring".

Golda Rivka is a sweet dear little girl, but she is only eleven years of age. Shmuel predicted that in ten year's time, Golda Rivka will love these Sichos, even more so than the stories. Therefore, for the time being, I would advise Golda Rivka to skip over the following few pages. I have quite a few readers who already do circumvent my words of Torah. On the other hand, many do read and thoroughly enjoy them.

Shmuel, my son-in-law, in London and Avrohom, my son in Manchester have become partners in a new venture.

Straight after the world broadcast of a Farbraingen, Shmuel immediately records a whole synopsis - a resume of the Sichos and Maamer which have been given over by the Rebbe through the Shiddur. Avrohom had arranged for these to be typed, duplicated and circulated to all of our members and to those other interested parties. This is completed within a day or two of the broadcast.

I have previously written about Shmuel's exceptional and marvellous prowess at the simultaneous English translation. In this instance, he has excelled himself. I do envy and admire Shmuel for this gift of being able to convey so very succinctly what the Rebbe has related at these Farbraingens. He does it all so well - and so quickly. Poor me! I have to plod on - and on and on!!

I shall now append in full the very first effort of this partnership of Avrohom and Shmuel. It is an example of the very high standard attained. It is written in basic, down to earth, English, so it is easy to read and simple to understand.

I once complained to the Rebbe that, although the Rebbe's letters were wonderful, the "Free Renditions" were, in many instances, extremely difficult to understand. I had to refer to my dictionary on many occasions. The Rebbe protested and said that the object of his letters was not that we should have to learn the English language.

I have taken the liberty of using these Sichos which Shmuel has translated, on a number of occasions in this edition - notably the one entitled "No operations three days before Shabbos" printed near the beginning of this diary, and all those which I shall be using henceforth, from now onwards. Shmuel and Avrohom have certainly saved me much work and research.

First Report: Farbraingen On Shabbos Mevorchim Shevat, And on The Yahrzeit of the Alter Rebbe

This is a resume of some of the points in the Farbreng of Motzei Shabbos Shemos, which is the Shabbos Mevorchim Shevat, and also the 24th Teves 5740, which is the Yahrzeit of the Alter Rebbe, the first Lubavitcher Rebbe.

In the first two Sichos, the Rebbe spoke of the lesson one should derive in one's life from the work of the Alter Rebbe, who himself wrote in Tanya (part 4, Chap. 23) about the significance of the day of the Yahrzeit of a Tzaddik. This is the culmination and elevation, of all the work for which he toiled throughout his life, and therefore, by attaching ourselves to his work, we are able to achieve great salvation on this earth.

In considering the life of the Alter Rebbe, there are an infinite number of points that one can seize upon, and therefore, in order to be able to derive a lesson, one will attempt to extract lessons from the main works of Torah of the Alter Rebbe, and as is known the Tzaddik "gives himself over" in the Torah he writes. The Alter Rebbe wrote the Book of Tanya, which is a guide to "the average" in his spiritual life. There are fifty-three chapters in the first part of Tanya, preceded by a preface, which in turn is preceded by a title-page (Sha'are), which was composed by the Alter Rebbe himself. The strongest lesson we can learn in a general sense is what the Alter Rebbe wrote on the title-page. There he explains that this book is based upon a verse in the Torah, which says "...for this matter, (the fulfilment of the Torah) is very near unto you in your mouth and in your heart to do it", and that this book (Tanya) will explain in a long and short way how this is very near, with the help of G-d.

From this, we can already derive a number of lessons. Firstly, that it is within the scope of every individual to realistically fulfill all of the Torah; secondly that this is not a general directive, but one which applies to each individual, and that is why in the Torah it says "for the matter is nigh unto thee" (A lecho - singular), just as the Ten Commandments begin with the singular "I am the Lord Thy G-d", similarly this verse says that each individual can fulfill

it. Also, the Alter Rebbe stresses the importance of appreciating and involving G-dliness in one's study of Torah, and that is why he says immediately "with the help of G-d". Finally, he emphasises that it is within the scope of every individual to serve Hashem with his mouth (speech), and with his heart (thoughts), but ultimately everything must be expressed in "to do it", that is in practical deeds in the physical world.

The second major work of the Alter Rebbe was the Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, which is organised like a set-table before the person. The Alter Rebbe, when he wrote this work, specifically included within it, not only the laws but also the reasons. The very first words of the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch (because the preface and title-page were written by his sons) are "Yehuda Ben Taima omer (Yehuda the son of Taima says) Be brave as a leopard, light as an eagle, fleet as a deer and strong as a lion, to do the will of our Father in Heaven". The question here arises - why does the Alter Rebbe begin his whole work with attributing the statement to its author, which is not done through-out the Shulchan Aruch. We are forced to say that the name itself contains within it, one of the two principles of the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch (i.e. the Halacha and its reasons). The explanation is as follows:- Yehuda, as every child studying Chumash knows, means praising, submission, subservience, thankfulness to Hashem. The Shulchan Aruch is telling us that a Jew should know that the first thing in the way of serving G-d is to bend oneself, to submit oneself with proper subservience to the Almighty. This is why the day begins with "Modeh Ani", being the first words uttered - thankfulness and submission to the L-rd. Lest a person feels that this is something beyond his scope, the Shulchan Aruch continues by saying "Ben Taima" which means that every Jew naturally says and submits himself to this principle; "Ben" meaning someone who has a certain quality; "Taima" meaning something which says of itself, as it were. Just as the Rambam says that a Jew, by his very nature is wont to submit himself to the Will of G-d, and it is only that his evil inclination tarnishes and blemishes and covers over his true desire, in the same way as the true desire of the Jew is to be submissive to G-d, to be Yehuda - this is a natural thing.

Furthermore, "omer" which means that this deepest expression, which is natural for the Jew, has to be manifest in his speech, and not remain hidden in his heart or thought-powers. Ultimately it also has to be expressed in action as mentioned before in the lesson from Tanya, when he comes into contact with the world itself, by his behaviour "brave as a leopard", etc., in doing the Will of G-d.

The third major work of the Alter Rebbe was his Siddur, the Nusach HaTefillah, the form of prayer, which he sifted and gleaned from sixty various Siddurim and other Nusachos. First of all, this teaches us that all the sixty deemed that they were worthy to be sifted from, must be holy and great expressions of Yiddishkeit. G-d forbid, to belittle or down-grade any Minhag or Nusach, or Derech within authentic Torah-Judaism. From these sixty, the Alter Rebbe chose a special Nusach, and within his Siddur before Ma-Toivu, which is the beginning of Tefillah proper, he instituted that one should accept upon one-self and indeed say "I hereby accept upon myself the Mitzvah of Love your fellow as Yourself", to show that Ahavas Yisroel is the key and the way for a person to come closer to Hashem.

These points, amongst the major ten merits which the Alter Rebbe enumerated in his lifetime (the Tanya, the Shulchan Aruch and the Siddur) all show the Jew how he can serve Hashem in a way which will bring him closer to those things which the Alter Rebbe gave his life for, namely, to realise that he, as an individual can come closer to Hashem, and that this must be expressed down to action, that it is in his inner-most nature to be submissive to the L-rd, and he must see that this should express itself in his day-to-day life; that ultimately we must incorporate ourselves with every Jew. The Baal Shem Tov says, that Ahavas Yisroel refers even to a Jew of whom one has never heard until this moment; the whole intensity of Ahavas Yisroel is applicable to him.

In the third Sicho, the Rebbe told the story which has been transmitted from generation to generation by the Lubavitcher Rebbes concerning the second Rebbe (the Mittler Rebbe) and his father, the Alter Rebbe. The Mittler Rebbe had a dream which disturbed him greatly. The Alter Rebbe asked his son what the dream was, and his son said that he dreamed he saw a river with a raging current, and over it there was a board, and the Mezeritcher Maggid (the Rebbe of the Alter Rebbe) was crossing it, and the board was wobbling, and it seemed that he was about to fall into the water. Then, the Alter Rebbe himself passed over the same board, over the same river, and the board did not wobble but was strong. The Alter Rebbe interpreted the dream thus "My Rebbe serves G-d by making Tazddikim, but I have made many Baalei. Teshuvah. Because of this, when one goes over a river, and there is only a board over it, it is that much firmer and stronger as a result of making Baalei Teshuvah". This story is told by the Rebbes on the 24th Teves, which shows that this is the essence of the Alter Rebbe's life, namely to make Baalei Teshuvah. This can apply both in terms of those who still have imperfections in their lives and perfect themselves, to improve themselves and other people around them, and to do Teshuvah in the literal sense, gives one a strength and intensity and a firmness in one's life. In addition, even he who is perfect, by doing Teshuvah in the full sense, by returning to his ultimate Source, he has the same power and strength as, the Alter Rebbe, whose life was to make Baalei Teshuvah.

The Rebbe then said a Maamer, the first verse of Shemos, in which he explained the greatness of service of this world, and the response it evokes from Above. Then there was a fourth Sicho in which the Rebbe spoke on the Rashi of Shemos, Chap 5 verse 4, about Moishe and Aaron and the tribe of Levi being free from the normal burdens of the Jewish people which they had to carry in Egypt, and in the comments to the notes on the Zohar by the Rebbe's father. The Rebbe spoke about what his father writes on the name "Shneur Zalmon", the name of the Alter Rebbe. It is written that Shne-ur refers to the two lights of the revealed and the hidden Torah, whereas Zalmon refers in the same letter to the word Lizman (to "time"). In other words bringing down the light into the world of time and space. The Rebbe asked, why is the name Zalmon and not Lizman if that is the case? The Rebbe explained that the service of Shneur is to bring the light from Above to below, whereas Zalmon is serving G-d with the lower world, and the purpose here is to elevate the lowest to Above. Therefore, the gematria of the four letters in the name Zalmon are mentioned in an increasing order the Zayen being seven, the

Lamed thirty, the Mem forty, and the Nun fifty.

The Rebbe spoke at great length about the beautiful lesson to be derived from the life of Moishe Rabbenu. We find that the very first act that he did when he achieved maturity, was that he went out amongst his brethren, as it is written, "...and Moishe grew up and went amongst his brethren, and saw their burdens". The Rebbe drew a picture of intense comfort, richness and amenities that Moishe must have enjoyed in the Palace of Pharaoh, who was the king of the greatest super-power of that time. Nevertheless, the moment he felt that he was grown-up enough, the first thing he did was to go amongst his brethren to see what he could do, not only as a passerby, but one who became intensely involved in their suffering. This was so, to the extent that Moishe risked all of his amenities and comforts, (and he knew of the dangers involved as we see, he looked from side to side before he smote the Egyptian, because of the danger that he knew might come out of it), and ultimately he did have to flee from the Palace as a result of this act. What did Moishe see that disturbed him that a Goy is striking a Jew? What sort of Jew was it? The husband of Shlomit Bas Dibri, who was the only person amongst six-hundred thousand families, who was less than perfect in her modesty. It was not immodesty in action but in speech. Even for such a Jew, Moishe risked everything in going out to save that Jew.

Moishe is called "Our Rebbe" and the greatest teacher that one can learn from is that of the example of his Rebbe. Moishe showed us that no matter how comfortable a person might be, the moment he has attained maturity, all of this is meaning less if he does not seek out Jews who are in a corner of the world (i.e. Egypt), who are being "beaten" by a Goy, or by Goyishkeit, i.e. by a non-Jewish way of life, and do not have the benefit of being able to enjoy their Jewishness. This obligation is incumbent upon every person who wants to learn from our First Leader.

At the end of the Farbraingen the Rebbe mentioned that there are many people who study Tanya and other Chassidic works of the Alter Rebbe (Torah Or, Likutei Torah, etc.), but comparatively few who have actually studied Shulchan Aruch. He called upon people all over the world to begin to learn regularly the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, either on their own, or as part of a group. He asked that this should begin on the actual 24th Teves itself. Through this, one will bring great blessings upon the world.

At the end of the Farbreng, the Rebbe himself sang Tzomo Lecho Nafshi

Chapter 10: Yud Shevat 5740

Yud Shevat is a very auspicious date in the Lubavitch calendar. It is the Yahrzeit of the Previous Rebbe (Z.T.L.), therefore, our present Illustrious Rebbe Shlitah inevitably assumed the mantle of Leadership on this self-same day. The Rebbe's loyal and devoted subjects enthusiastically commemorate and celebrate this Anniversary every year.

Yud Shevat this year, 5740, was a historical occasion. It marked the 30th year since the Rebbe's coronation. Whereas 30 years ago his subjects were counted in their hundreds, today they are numbered in their tens of thousands.

A good many of the Rebbe's staunch and faithful followers fully intended to be present on that day at 770 (Eastern Parkway), the Lubavitch World Headquarters, to pay homage, and respect and allegiance to their Leader and Guide. Many were prepared to travel over 3,000 miles from England in order to spend just this one day with the Rebbe. Some came from as far away as Australia more than twice that distance.

I had planned to go with Avrohom, my son, for five days, from Sunday to Thursday. Yud Shevat was on a Sunday night and the special Farbraingen would take place on Monday evening.

Poor Shmuel, who had looked forward with such eagerness to being present with the Rebbe, had to remain in London. He is the Head-master of the Lubavitch Girls High School and Government Inspectors were due on just that Monday of Yud Shevat. Hard luck!!

I realised that Crown Heights would be tremendously overcrowded - in spite of the Rebbe's assurance to me, at Simchas Torah, that there would be fewer people present during Yud Shevat than at Succos.

I did not wish to take any chances of having nowhere to stay, so I phoned our good friends Raizie and Myer Minkowicz and appealed to them, once again, for their help, to provide us with a bed in which to rest - there does not seem much time or inclination to sleep whilst on a visit to 770! I had to stake my claim quite early - before they became committed to others.

Riazie replied that it was with deep regret that she had to refuse my request for the use of a bed for a few nights. As usual, she stipulated that it had to be full board - bed and all meals - or nothing! We were happy to accept this very generous hospitality.

There were no more Stand-by tickets available direct from Manchester, so Avrohom and I, together with Bernard Perrin and his son-in-law Warren Bergson, booked our flight with EL AL. This was due to leave from London at 2.15p.m Sunday afternoon, and would enable us to enjoy a good nights sleep at home in Manchester. We would leave next morning at 8.30a.m by car and have a relaxed and comfortable journey to London, because, in any case, we knew from past experience that we could absolutely rely on E AL to leave later than scheduled.

Just before Shabbos on Friday at 4p.m, we received telephone calls from both our travel agent and direct from EL AL to inform us that the time of our departure had been changed. This was typical and we had expected this - Well! What was it to be?! - a five hours delay?! - No ! - not at all the plane was to leave 5 and a half hours EARLIER - at 9a.m and we had to report to London Airport at 7a.m on Sunday morning. (It seemed that a 24 hours general strike had been called in Israel, which was due to commence on Sunday morning - so the plane had to leave before it started (the strike).

It now became necessary to depart from Manchester at 3.45a.m - and - forget all about our good nights sleep at home, and our relaxed and comfortable motor journey to London.

At, 4a.m Sunday morning, we were on our way. We encountered thick fog and ice on the motorway, and, Avrohom, who was driving, admitted that he could not see very much. Fortunately, at that time, and in such weather, there was hardly any traffic - at least I never saw any.

Perhaps it was due to a Benign Providence; together with our Rebbe's Brocha; or superb driving; or maybe it was a combination of all three, but we duly checked in at the Airport at the remarkable hour of 7.30a.m.

We were then directed to the Top Security Room of Her Majesty's Customs and Excise, where we found, gathered together, another dozen or so Jewish people. Most of them were in disarray, over-coats and jackets were strewn over tables and chairs. We had nothing to declare but our prayers, so we all joined together for the Morning Minyan.

The plane left almost on time. We knew that we were on a Jewish plane, because the Stewardess announced over the loud speakers that a pair of a pair of Tefillin Covers had been found in the aisle.

Before we had booked the plane in London, Avrohom had ordered a car from Avis, which was to be made available to us on our arrival at Kennedy Airport.

We collected this and arrived at Crown Heights in good time for lunch.

A new restaurant had opened in Kingston Avenue, on the same premises that used to be the old Meat restaurant, and which had closed down over 3 months ago. Only milk meals were now served, so there was no place in Crown Heights where a flaishik meal could be obtained.

The new management had gone to great pains to make one feel at home - they had engaged all the old waitresses (yes, I mean old) from Spitzer's milk restaurant, which had closed down the previous year.

Mincha was to be at 3.15p.m as usual, upstairs. By 2.45p.m, it was crammed full of people, absolutely jammed so tightly, that it was impossible to hold another single person. The Packers and Pushers then arrived. (led by Label Groner). They worked well, and another 100 people were rammed into the Beis Hamedrish. At this moment there was no room for the Rebbe at all. Even the hallway and passage outside were just a solid mass - a phalanx of men and boys. I could visualise that it might even be dangerous if the Rebbe attempted to walk from his study to the Beth Hamedrish.

A quick decision was then taken - the only one in the circumstances. It was to the effect that the Mincha service would now take place downstairs in the Shool.

There was a good deal of heaving and jostling – pushing and shoving, and I eventually found myself downstairs.

A little more prodding and poking and I found myself in my usual position just behind the spot where the Rebbe davens. This exercise took nearly 20 minutes of extremely hard work, and the Rebbe was due at any moment.

The sibilant and urgent cries of Shush, Shush, Shush warned us that the Rebbe had now arrived in the Shool. Within seconds, and in complete silence, the Rebbe emerged from the solid human wall. With his head held erect, he walked briskly up to the Oran Hakodesh -- lightly caressed the Poroche (the Curtain of the Ark) with his fingers and continued on his way to his shtender (stand), where he was to daven. I was tremendously pleased to see that the Rebbe looked so well K.A.H. Just like old times.

After the conclusion of the service, I caught the Rebbe's eye as he turned towards me. I hesitatingly raised my right arm, as I normally do before commencing a Nigun. The Rebbe's reaction was swift and very unambiguous. With a wonderful smile, he raised HIS right arm and brought it sweeping around in a downward curve to confirm that I should start to sing - which I did at once. Most of those present immediately joined in, and it was heart-warming to see the Rebbe making his exit to the happy singing and dancing of the huge gathering.

On the Yartzet, the Rebbe davens at the Omud (acts as reader), and recites the Kaddish for the Previous Rebbe (Z.T.L.).

This Maariv (evening) service, was also held downstairs in the Shool. Most people had been waiting for about 1 and a half to 2 hours, to ensure that they had a place to stand. The Ladies Gallery was also packed almost to suffocation.

I have never seen so many men and boys at 770. In my opinion, there may, I repeat may, have been more people during Simchas Torah, around 770. That would have included wives and daughters, because most men brought their families along with them for Yam Tov. But, on this day of Yud Shevat, there was definitely record number of males present.

The Rebbe davened at the Omud and recited the Kaddish,- no one else said Kaddish - only the Rebbe alone. (I would imagine that those Availim who were obliged to recite Kaddish, did so either before or after the Rebbe's minyan).

Once again, after Maariv, the Rebbe departed amidst the fanfare of a rousing Nigun.

We now possessed our own hired car, so there was no great problem about getting to the Cemetery the next day. All we had to arrange was the time. We assumed that if all these thousands of people intended to visit the Ohel - all on one day, it would be policy, and to our advantage, to go when there were fewer persons anticipated. When better than very early morning. So - next day at 6.30a.m., after having our dip in the Mikvah, Avrohom and I called for Rabbi Zalmon Shimon Dvorkin and then for Bernard Perrin, Reuven his son, and Warren his son-in-law. We had to be back at 770 for the Rebbe's minyan at 9.30a.m.

Well, it seemed that we were not the only ones with that very bright idea. On our way to the main entrance, we encountered dozens of boys and men clambering over an 8 foot high wall. They could have walked further on for a few hundred yards and entered by the main gate, but if they left their cars at this spot outside the cemetery, they would have less distance to walk to the Ohel.

This reminds of the story was told - Many years ago the Rebbe used to go to Botanical Gardens for Tashlich on Rosh Hashanah. One year, it was pouring with rain. The Rebbe headed the huge procession marching to Botanical Gardens. On arrival there, it was found - by some mischance or other - that the Gardens were closed - the gates were locked. Without any hesitation, the Rebbe at once climbed up an 8 foot high wall, and jumped down upon the other side. Obviously, everybody else followed his example.

Well - we entered this huge cemetery and drove along many avenues. We ultimately parked our car behind half a dozen others, quite near to the Ohel.

It is customary for Chassidim to visit the previous Rebbe's grave on the day of the Yartzet. It

seemed that everybody and everyone had decided to come at exactly the same time.

Normally, when one arrives outside the Ohel, one is confronted with a small stone edifice or building about 9 foot high. One enters through a narrow doorway, and finds oneself on a pathway about 6 foot wide just in front of the grave. The grave is encircled on three sides by a 3 and a half foot stone wall. At the fourth end is the simple headstone with the inscription in Hebrew. The path-way narrows to about 4 foot wide and surrounds the graveside.

There is no roof to this building. It is open to the sky and all the elements. For 30 years our Rebbe has been coming to this sacred place scores of times during the year, standing sometimes the whole day long; in the stifling heat of the summer, and in the snow, frost and ice of the winter. Only during the course of the past few years has the Rebbe been provided with some little protection of a permanent shelter. I recall the innovation - and what a joy it was - when a rusty old stove was installed. I think it was heated with paraffin. One day Yudel (Krinsky) tried to light the stove and it exploded in his face.

There are special prayers which may be recited at this holy place, and these are compiled and printed in booklet form. It is also usual for the visitor to write a Pidyan - a supplication - for special requests on a sheet of notepaper. This is headed with unique and distinctive wording in Hebrew. His name and that of his mother are then added together with the names of his immediate family - after which, the Pidyan is written. At a certain point in the 'service', this sheet of notepaper is torn into many parts and the pieces are scattered all over the grave.

There was no normality about this day - many hundreds of people were doing their best to get inside this Ohel through this one small entrance - and hundreds were trying to get out through the same and only doorway. We had all taken off our boots and put on the canvas shoes which we had brought with us from England.

All one could do, was to lean upon the back of the person in front. Slowly but surely - it took about 20 minutes - step by shuffled step, I made progress, until, suddenly, I found myself leaning against the low wall at the graveside. I then made room to tear up my Pidyan - paper and scatter the pieces. I recited as much as possible from the special booklet, looked at my watch, and was surprised to notice how much time had elapsed since I had entered. I therefore, turned around and shuffled and pushed my way back to the car. I noticed the little groups of 'ringed' Kohanim making their way towards the Ohel. (Kohanim are not allowed to visit any gravesides - except those of their Parents and Tzadikim, so friends of the Cohen completely encircle him and all walk together in this manner, until they arrive at the Ohel of the Previous Rebbe Z.T.L.)

We did not wash our hands inside the room at the cemetery provided for this purpose. Rabbi Dvorkin told us that one had to be outside the cemetery before washing one's hands.

We arrived back at Minkowicz's at 9.15a.m. I grabbed my Tallis and Tefillin and rushed along

to 770. The Rebbe commenced Shacharis at 9.30. It was Monday so the Rebbe had an Aliya.

I hesitated about going up to the Sefer Torah in order to bench Gomel (to give thanks to G-d for my safe arrival after the long flight from England). There were hundreds of others with the same idea - but, we all desisted rather than keep the Rebbe waiting for everyone to make their Brochas.

Immediately after the Service, the Rebbe carried on with his usual daily work and routine. I noticed about 250 letters and cables had arrived by post and were lying in the Rebbe's tray in the outer office, ready for attention. This tray was emptied quite frequently during the course of the day, but no sooner was it cleared, then it was again filled to overflowing with a similar number of correspondence.

During the day, 30 Mitsvah Tanks were assembled outside 770 in the Rebbe's honour. One for each year of the Rebbe's reign. Each one had a metal plate attached with the number of the year 5710 - 5711 - 5712 - and so on till 5740.

Mincha at 3.15p.m was again held downstairs, but by Maariv time, the large Shool had been set up for the Farbraingen, due at 9.30p.m. It was already almost filled to capacity. So, it was decided that Maariv should be davened upstairs. It was fully realised that most of those already seated or standing in their places downstairs would be reluctant to move. In fact, I was fully convinced that nothing whatsoever would have persuaded these people to leave their chosen spots, even although it was 2 and a half hours before the start of the Fabraingen.

Needless to state - there were still many hundreds of people anxious to daven Maariv with the Rebbe. The Beth Hamedrish was still packed to overflowing. Every minute visitors were arriving from all over the globe - 3 coach loads had come from Canada. Zusie Williamofsky from Kfar Chabad was arranging with Avrohom to sing a rousing Nigun as soon as the Rebbe made his entrance, and to keep on singing in spite of the usual hushing and Shushing. I was given the honour of starting the tune.

Suddenly, I saw a familiar face. I had to look twice to make certain who it was. Yes, it was Shmuel - not a figment of my imagination, but actually Shmuel in the flesh. He had just arrived, and he intended leaving for home within the next 24 hours.

Aaron Coussins did even better - he arrived from London at 9p.m, half-an-hour before the Farbraingen, and left for England together with Shmuel on the following evening.

At 7p.m, even before the Rebbe entered the Bet Hamedrish, the 'rousing' tune was started, and every single person joined in with alacrity and enthusiasm. The Hushing and Shushing commenced, but no notice was taken. When the Rebbe entered, it was a signal for even more impassioned and ardent singing. Everyone was carried away by the excitement of the moment, and the wish to show the Rebbe how pleased we all were to celebrate his Yom Tov with him.

The singing was accompanied by frenzied dancing and jumping up and down. What a thrilling, emotional and breathtaking scene. Unfortunately, it could have provoked a dangerous situation, because, this small overcrowded room was beginning to shake and tremble - and - there was no solid foundation underneath, only a cellar. We stopped in time, of course, but we were advised not to sing so enthusiastically in this upstairs room, because the Sifrei Torah in the Oran Hakodesh had been joining in our dance.

Label Groner once confessed to me, that, the only time he could rest a while was during a Service.

Immediately after Maariv, I made my way downstairs to claim my seat. There were still over two hours before the Farbraingen was due to start, but, I wasn't taking any chances of losing my regular seat. I was prepared to sit down and wait for the next couple of hours. During the Simchas Torah Farbraingen, the Hall was so overcrowded that three people wished to sit in my place. tonight - there were six claimants.

From past experience, I knew that when everyone stood up to greet the Rebbe upon his arrival, it was just possible to slide or sidle onto the bench. After all, if everyone of the 20 or so persons who were, sitting on this bench would squeeze up only ONE inch each, it would give me sufficient room to sit - even in discomfort.

But, tonight, there were too many of us to be squeezed in. I stood in the passageway alongside the table - dejected and forlorn. It seemed an absolute impossibility. I looked around and planned my 'next move'.

Just then, Label Groner arrived on the scene and immediately summed up the situation. He insisted that I had to sit in my usual place. The Rebbe expected to see me there. The conductor of a large orchestra needed to know exactly where each instrumentalist was sitting, so that he could be called upon when required; similarly, the Rebbe also expected to find his (players) in their usual positions.

Label then announced that visitors should be given preference and that boys who were sitting at a table should get up and leave. This did not help matters at my table. However - a giant of a fellow was keeping a seat for his Old Dad who arrived at that moment. It was a great relief to find that his father was a thin little man, so we gained another few inches. Label then started his game of 1 - 2 - 3 - HEAVE (not exactly but it sounded like that). When he shouted the word, "HEAVE" (!) he would push and Heave everyone further down towards the end of the table.

I was surprised to note how good natured and helpful everybody was, and ultimately, I found that I could settle down onto the edge of the bench and well - it was a start.

The hall rapidly filled and one can imagine those men, illustrious Rabbonin, Senators,

Billionaires, Industrialists and distinguished and outstanding Personalities, who, at home, possessed their own luxurious and spacious offices, being crushed and almost trampled underfoot at 770 - and enjoying it, and thankful to be there.

The Rebbe had received a telegram which read:

"Roselyn and I extend warm greetings to Rabbi Schneerson on the occasion of the 30th Anniversary".

It wasn't signed by me - but by President Jimmy Carter.

It was a wonderful tribute to the Rebbe's leadership, and to the love and esteem in which his Talmidim held him, that so many hundreds of Chassidim were prepared to make great sacrifices, and to travel 3000- 4000 miles just to be in the Rebbe's presence for a few hours only.

By 9p.m, 770 was filled to its fullest extent - it had Chassidishe wall-to-wall carpeting - a covering of Chassidim right from the Mizrach, the Eastern wall, to the Western - from North to the South, and from the floor going upwards right to the ceiling and roof.

The press and police estimated that between 3,000 and 10,000 people were present - all in an area of 150 feet by 60 feet (excluding the Ladies Gallery).

My immediate neighbours proved the point that this gathering certainly had an international flavour. At the end of my row sat Yossef Neymotin, who had recently arrived from Russia. He had voluntarily undertaken to look after and attend the grave in Russia of the Father Z.T.L. of our dear Rebbe Shlitah, and did so for many years. The Rebbe wanted Rabbi Neymotin to be the first in this centre row. I, an Englishman, sat next to him. On my right was Rabbi Schneur Chaim Gutnick from Australia, and next to him was a Rabbi from South America. Opposite to us, was a Rabbi from Eretz Yisroel, then Rabbi Gorodinsky from France, Dr. Nissan Mindel from New York, and then a Rabbi from Canada. Standing in between those people opposite, was Rabbi Caplan from New York. He had been standing for two hours and was waiting for the arrival of the Rebbe in order to put into motion "Operation Squeeze-in" (as mentioned above).

Rabbis Myer Harlik and Yoel Kahn always stood at the end of this table almost in front of the Rebbe. Our view of the Rebbe was not obstructed however because the platform was quite high.

Reporters and technicians from the CBS and other TV companies were busy setting up their cameras, microphones and tackle.

A reporter wished to discover who, of all those Rabbonim present was the Rebbe. He just

happened to ask Shmuel and Avrohom Gluck (a Mazel!) The reporter was told that when the Rebbe arrived he would be easily recognised, even by people who had never seen the Rebbe.

(All Lubavitch institutions have photographs of the Rebbe in their offices - Manchester is no exception. One morning a gentleman from Her Majesty's Ministry of Labour visited us regarding a certain matter. He looked at the Rebbe's photograph. He could not take his eyes away from it. "What a lovely face, who is it?" he enquired. We told him that it was our Rebbe - our leader, he was most impressed.)

The reporter wanted to know what were the words of the Nigun we were singing. Shmuel told him that they were "we are soldiers of the Rebbe", and it was a tribute to the Rebbe, our leader. He stood next to Shmuel during the first Sicho, and Shmuel translated and explained various matters to him. I was told afterwards by Yoseph Segal, who had listened to the main 6p.m news of the days, which coincided also with the TV news, that the report of the Farbraingen lasted for 4 and a half minutes and was 'terrific'.

Many notables and distinguished visitors had come specially for this occasion. Amongst them were Rabbi Solovechik (a boyhood friend of the Rebbe. This was the first time he had honoured the Rebbe with his presence), the Israeli Ambassador, the personal representative of President Carter, and many other Rabbonim and Senators.

The top platform, which ran along the whole length of the hall, was even more crowded than the well of the Shool. The only clear space was around the Rebbe's own special chair. I wondered how would the Rebbe get through the crush. My Antwerpen friend Myer Zilberstein arrived at 9.20 and spent the next 5 hours listening to the Farbraingen in the Beth Hamedrish together with scores of others. The Farbraingen was relayed to every room in 770 and outside too, together with close circuit television.

At 9.50, there was the usual Hushing and Shushing, and we understood that the Rebbe had arrived downstairs.

Everyone stood and waited - it took much longer than usual, but, here at last came the Rebbe. He stood and waited, unhurried and with dignity whilst a pathway was cleared. The Rebbe took another 3 or 4 steps and again waited. In all my years at 770, I have never witnessed such an occasion when the Rebbe had to stand - quite still - literally unmoved for seconds at a time, whilst a passageway was opened up for him.

The Rebbe, on his way to his chair, passed by Rabbi Solovechik.

His eyes lit up with pleasure and he shook hands with him amidst a huge gasp of astonishment from the assembled Yeshiva boys. Rabbi Solovechik stayed for 3 hours until 12.30 after midnight. (On leaving, he shook hands again, and praised the Rebbe who was a 'fountain of Torah pearls and jewels').

The Rebbe sat down, made a Brocha on the wine and drank a Reveis (a major portion), after which, everyone present wished to take the opportunity of saying Lechaim to the Rebbe, and to receive the Rebbe's reply Lechaim Velivrocha (to life and for a blessing). I waited a little while and then stood up with my glass held aloft until I caught the Rebbe's eye and wished him Lechaim. He gave his customary reply, but I had been a little premature - I did not receive my usual smile from the Rebbe. He was much too busy - he had thousands of customers waiting. Later on, I tried again and this time I was lucky. I received the full impact of the Rebbe's gorgeous smile.

I normally wished the Rebbe Lechaim three times during the course of a Farbraingen. As one can imagine, on this unique occasion, the demand on the Rebbe was enormous. In between the Sichos, his eyes were roving non-stop round the hall and he was nodding his head in acknowledgment to the thousands of people who were standing up with their glasses of wine held high. I therefore had pity on the Rebbe and resisted any further temptation to bother him, when - lo and behold - suddenly - from out of the blue, the Rebbe called on me to say Lechaim to him with a large glass full of wine - and drink the whole lot, all at once, I felt greatly honoured that I should be one of those chosen out of so many thousands. It seemed obvious to me that the Rebbe realised that I had not yet fulfilled my normal complement. Amazing!!

It was a very happy Farbraingen. The Rebbe spurred me on to sing and to dance. I had the enthusiastic support of Dr. Ira Weiss, who had been looking after the Rebbe, together with Dr. Larry Raisnick - they were top specialists in their field in the U.S.A. - throughout the Rebbe's indisposition. Dr. Weiss was extremely happy with the Rebbe's progress. Dr. Larry Raisnick had been married that week and was expected back at New York - to be present at the Farbraingen a little later on. His bride was Molly Siddi, a very sophisticated and charming young lady. She had visited Manchester during the summer, and had been our guest at Shalosh Seudos. Molly had a fascinating tale to recount. She had known nothing at all about Yiddishkeit, and had lived in the Arab quarter of Jaffa in Israel whilst a young girl. She became connected with television, was a typical playgirl, and subsequently arrived at South America. By some extraordinary and unique occurrence, she came under the influence of Lubavitch and became a Baalas Teshuva.

I have given only the outline of her story, but, she had interposed it with many miraculous happenings. She read and enjoyed "My Encounter No. 10" and wanted me to write her full life story in my next edition. But - as she was in T.V., she decided that she might want to write her own autobiography. Then she met Dr. Larry - and the Rebbe had encouraged the Shidduch.

Before midnight Dr. Larry arrived. He wore a New Black Kapota and, of course, a Gartal (a black cloth belt).

A little later, Sheva Brochos were recited for the Chosson and Kallah.

This practice was very prevalent in the past. It was a great Zechus (merit) that the Chosson and Kallah should have Sheva Brochos recited in the presence of the Rebbe. But, as in all such matters, the practice became abused. The proceedings of the Farbraingen would be stopped and delayed as many as 5 or 6 times, so this custom was discontinued.

However, in this present case, as Larry was the Rebbe's own doctor, it became the Rebbe's and everyone's pleasure.

During the Maamer, at about 1.15a.m, a man collapsed and required medical attention. Dr. Ira Weiss went to his assistance. It was no easy task to make his way to the side of the patient. There was no noise, no commotion and only hand signals were exchanged. Dr. Weiss happened to be near me, otherwise I would have known nothing of this mishap.

At the end of the Farbraingen, there was the usual mad scramble to try and get some pieces or crumbs of the Rebbe's cake which had been left on the cake-stand. I was in the direct line of the attack and my hat and Yarmula were knocked off my head.

They fell into a little pool of the Sheva Brochos wine which had been spilled upon our table and my Yarmuika became soaked with the wine.

I suppose I was lucky that we were not still drinking Benedictine liqueur, as we did many years ago at Lubavitch. My Yarmulka would have been a real sticky mess. I have had a few suits ruined by Benedictine splashes, and in that way, I am grateful to the Rebbe for insisting that only Vodka is used at 770 today. Vodka does not stain and does not smell. However, the Rebbe does not drink Vodka, and, in these days, as far as I can discern, only wine is consumed at Farbraingen. Occasionally, the Rebbe will hand over a bottle of Vodka to a recipient whom the Rebbe wishes to honour, or who is celebrating a very special event.

The Rebbe sang the Nigun, "Tzomo Locho Nafshi".

The following day, Tuesday, at the precise moment that I arrived outside 770, the Rebbe drew alongside in his car. It was uncanny. I was certain that it would be alleged that I had arranged it so. But it was just a wonderful coincidence. Naturally, I waited the few seconds whilst the Rebbe entered the gateway. I wished the Rebbe 'Sholom Aleichem' and a very good morning, and expressed my sentiments that it must be my lucky day. The Rebbe smiled and asked about my wife's health. I thanked him for his enquiries and replied that T.G., Roselyn was very well and was looking forward to coming to Brooklyn at Shovuos time.

I telephoned the Rebbetzen and she informed me that she would be delighted to receive Avrohom, Shmuel and myself at 4p.m that afternoon. Before Mincha, at 3.15p.m, I had given my shoes a lovely polish, Avrohom refused to clean his. After Mincha, my shoes were much dirtier than his.

When we arrived at the home of the Rebbetzen, we met there, Dr. Ira Weiss, his wife and family. He had just dropped in to see the Rebbetzen who had hurt her foot recently. He gave the leg a good examination and expressed his pleasure that it was back to normal. In fact, later on that week, the Rebbetzen had an X-ray taken of the foot, which showed that everything was T.G. in order.

We had a little chat with Dr. Ira and his family who then took their leave.

We settled down in our accustomed seats around the rectangular table. The Rebbetzen and myself one side, and Avrohom and Shmuel opposite. After 20 minutes or so Shmuel departed - he had to leave for the airport to catch his plane home.

Avrohom and I remained. We had afternoon tea, and Avrohom produced about a dozen or so photographs of the children and family which he had brought to show to our Rebbetzen. She liked them very much and we were thrilled and delighted when she intimated that she would love to have some of them. We urged her to accept all that she wanted, because we still had the negatives and could make as many more as we needed. (It reminds me of the time, many years ago, when my friend Aubrey Harris, of Manchester, showed the Rebbe a photograph of his children. The Rebbe said he would like to keep the picture. Aubrey was pleased that the Rebbe wanted it, but intimated that he did not have anymore. "Yes" said the Rebbe, "but you have the original")

We stayed with the Rebbetzen for about 2 hours. I hope that she enjoyed our visit as much as we did.

From 8p.m. that evening, the Rebbe was receiving people for Yechidus. The number of applications was so great, that it was decided that the following night, Wednesday, should also be a Yechidus night. There were over 300 people waiting to see the Rebbe on the Tuesday night alone.

Obviously, I also wished to see the Rebbe privately, even if only for a few minutes, but - had already had Yechidus at Simchas Torah - only a few months ago. Some of those living in New York, Brooklyn and Crown Heights had complained to me that they had not had private interview with the Rebbe for over 8 and 10 years, yet, I expected one every time I came to 770.

I put this matter to Label Groner and suggested that for the sake of peace and amity, it might be policy and forego my Yechidus on this occasion. Label pulled a wry face and told me that I should not take any notice of what other people said, and that I should take my turn. I was given the choice of that night, or the following one. Avrohom expected to come along at Shovuos time P.G. with all his family, and he decided not to press for his private appointment and leave it over until Shovuos.

Dayan Chanoch Ehrentreu, our new Av Beth-Din of Manchester, was in New York with his

son and daughter-in-law. He asked for a Yechidus and Avrohom and I pressed his claim very strongly.

Label maintained that he would not differentiate between the greatest Rabbi or an irreligious Jew. In fact, he would give preference to this Jew, who might, because of the Rebbe's influence, become a Baal Teshuva. I have heard of very many cases which have proved Labels point of view to be correct.

However, as we promised that Dayan Ehrentreu would be with the Rebbe for not more than a few minutes, Label put him on the list for a 12p.m. midnight appointment.

Being a 'Yeker' (always punctual), he arrived at five minutes to 12. At that time, there was a large contingent of French people - men and women - awaiting their turn to see the Rebbe. There were also still many families with children, and innumerable Chassanim and Kallahs. Each person or party was expected to enter into the Rebbe's sanctum, and to take their leave after a minute or two. If only 60 people stayed one or two minutes each longer, that would put an extra one or two hours on the Rebbe's time. It was no small wonder that Label stood outside the Rebbe's study and frequently opened the door to suggest to those inside that it was time for them to leave.

At 12.15a.m. Dayan Ehrentreu, to whom we had given the honour of a seat in the outer office, together with his son and daughter-in-law - asked whether there was to be much of a delay. He was informed of the position, and told that it might be 12.30 before he could see the Rebbe. At 1 a.m, he was informed that it would not be too long now. At 1.15, Dayan Ehrentreu threatened to leave the premises, and at 1.30, his party entered the Rebbe's study. Within a few minutes, Dayan Ehrentreu's son emerged with his Kallah. Eighteen minutes later Dayan Ehrentreu himself appeared. He seemed to be in a trance. We all gathered around him whilst he made his way to the exit of 770, asking him, begging for some small scrap or morsel of what the Rebbe had told him. "No comment", said he flinging his arms upwards, and opened the door to leave 770. He then turned to Avrohom and myself and apologised for not thanking us for helping him to obtain Yechidus. He added that the Rebbe knew more about Manchester than he, Dayan Ehrentreu, would ever know. (I could have told him that the Rebbe knows more about London Jewry than anyone - and even more about all the small communities in England AND Wales. Mr. Leonard Stern, the treasurer of Jews College, who went to see the Rebbe made the following understatement - "The Rebbe is extremely well-informed about matters in London").

Dayan Ehrentreu became a little more composed and returned to the office to say farewell, and to give thanks to Label and to the office staff. He remained to recount to them a few words which the Rebbe had related to him. He was most impressed with the Rebbe, just as everyone is.

There were still scores of people waiting to see the Rebbe. It was very late so I decided that I

should wait until the following night for my own private interview with the Rebbe. Yechidus concluded at 3.30a.m.

Next morning, I received a telephone call from Rabbi Yitzchok Ginsberg, the executive director of the "Jewish Youth Library", at Boro Park. When I was in Crown Heights at Simchas Torah time, he had contacted me and requested 20 copies of my latest edition of "My Encounter with the Rebbe Shlitah No. 10". I thought that this request was rather excessive, and that he had over-estimated the demand for my publication. I did let him have about half-a dozen copies.

He now explained to me that their readers and borrowers had grown rapidly. It had been decided to increase the basic number of copies, for those books which were in demand to be held by the Library, from 20 to 35. He, therefore, wanted to order 35 copies of my next edition - and to let him have further quantities of My Encounter No. 10".

35! – to one library – it sounded absurd. My wife suggested that Rabbi Ginsberg must be opening a bookshop - not a library. It did seem ludicrous. I asked Rabbi Ginsberg just who were borrowing my "book". He assured me that all the copies which he possessed were continuously out on loan, and that he had a long waiting list. It was read by the Gerer, the Belzer, the Bobover, in fact by all sects of Chassidim in addition to the Lubavitcher.

He praised my publication and said that it fulfilled a much-needed requirement. It was unique. There were certainly no books in existence which contained interesting and personal stories and anecdotes such as these about our Lubavitch Rebbe Shlitah. Rabbi Ginsberg implored and begged me to continue to write still more editions, and yes - he offered to pay!!!

Later that day, I met Yaakov Maitlis, a young man who was studying at Morristown Yeshiva. He had written to me in England, and appealed to me to send him one of my "Encounters". I replied that I would bring an extra copy to Crown Heights, and he should introduce himself to me. This he did, and I handed him a copy. He was delighted. He could not thank me enough. He - wanted - it - as a gift - for his sister!! At the outset, I was annoyed but then I realised that it was really a great compliment, because my publications cannot be bought - anywhere.

I had an interesting conversation with MYER OKINOV, who is in charge of FREE (Friends of Refugees from Eastern Europe). Our friend, Jan Peerce, the opera singer, is the President. Myer informed me that more Russians had immigrated into the U.S.A. during the past year than in all of the previous nine years together.

Thirty Brissim (circumcisions) were performed every week. Since last July there had been a long waiting list, and on Erev Rosh Hashanah, the one thousandth (1,000th) Bris had taken place. The Sandik (god-father) could not manage to hold the baby upon his knees, because this baby was Sixteen years of age; so the Sandik held on to the bed - as a token. He also presented the fund with a gift of \$5,000. The money was urgently needed, because, although the Mohel

gave his services free of charge; there were the following expenses:

The Hospital demand \$250, and at that age it becomes a major operation, so an anesthetist was also required - his fee was \$75. The surgeon who afterwards stitched up the wound was paid \$75 too.

My readers will know that every year, we have great difficulty in finding an apartment - especially for Shovuos. It is not too bad when Roselyn and myself (or Avrohom and myself), just two people wish to go to Brooklyn for only a few days to see the Rebbe, because our dear friends Raisie and Myer Mincowicz are always prepared and pleased to accommodate us and bestow upon us their most generous hospitality.

However, at Shovuos time, we are generally accompanied by some of our children and grandchildren and we certainly needed to rent an apartment for ourselves. Up till now, we have always been fortunate and managed to find accommodation - always at the VERY LAST possible moment.

The problem has been, of course, that landlords always wanted to let their premises for at least a 12 months period. We only required ours for two weeks or so. We were, therefore, compelled to wait for space which MIGHT suddenly become vacant.

During our present visit to Crown Heights (Yud Shevat), Avrohom suggested to me this brilliant idea - that we ourselves should rent an apartment for a 12 months period. It would obviously cost us much more, but:

- (1) It would always be available to us - at any time that we wished to see the Rebbe
- (2) The main reason - it would save us the constant annual worry and aggravation of whether we would ultimately obtain somewhere to sleep and eat.

Avrohom made enquiries and we were lucky indeed to discover a large basement apartment almost next door to 770. This was ideal and we agreed upon the terms with our new landlady. There were one or two drawbacks. There was no bathroom, so shower, and no cooking facilities. There was also some paintwork required; some partitions to be installed and cleaning and tidying up to do. Our landlady anticipated no difficulties and expected everything to be ready for Purim.

Rabbi Dvorkin was our shadchan - he lived in the same building. We handed him two months rental which he would pay to the lesser when the work was completed and when we would acquire possession.

Rabbi Dvorkin seemed a little amused to learn that the apartment would be habitable for Purim - in five weeks time. Well - at this time of writing, Haman and his sons have been well and

truly hanged many weeks ago, - and we have already crossed the Red Sea - all miracles - but one of the greatest miracles would be that our apartment would be ready for Shovuos!! Anyway, Avrohom - it was a good idea!

At about 1 a.m. that Wednesday night (Thursday morning), I entered the Rebbe's study for my Yechidus. Avrohom had been keeping me company during the long wait, but had now disappeared.

The Rebbe greeted me with "Sholom Aleichem Mr. Manchester" to which I replied Aleichem Sholom to my Rebbe.

I expressed regret that I had come alone, without my 'secretary'. "So you will have to do the two jobs" interjected the Rebbe. (Roselyn always brought notepaper on which she wrote the details of what we discussed).

But - I was happy to state that I had brought along my 'managing director' - Avrohom. I had to report, however, that Avrohom would not be coming in to see the Rebbe for Yechidus. He was keeping this appointment in reserve for Shovuos time, when he would P.G. be bringing his wife and children.

The Rebbe retorted, "Is he frightened of Label Groner?"

The Rebbe enquired about Roselyn. He had heard that she had met with an accident a few months ago. I explained that she had twisted her ankle, but, that T.G. it was alright now. (Roselyn probably told the Rebbetzen about this on the telephone - en passant.)

I reminded the Rebbe that HE had assured me that 770 would be less crowded at Yud Shevat than during Simchas Torah. Yet, at Simchas Torah, there were only three people claiming my seat, whereas this time there were six claimants.

"But" - remarked the Rebbe, "You did manage to sit down. Furthermore, not only did you have room to sit, but you had space to dance and to sing".

I explained to the Rebbe about the apartment which we were contemplating to lease. The Rebbe declared that it was a good idea. We discussed a few communal matters, after which, the Rebbe handed to me two, one-dollar bills. One of these was for Roselyn. We were instructed to exchange them for their value in English currency, and to give the money to Charity.

I informed the Rebbe that we would be leaving for home at 7p.m. on the following day. The Rebbe wrote down this information on a piece of paper.

The Rebbe wanted to know about my Diary. "Is it making progress?"

I replied in the affirmative. (The Rebbe told me at Simchas Torah that I should write 200 pages (!!)) but I was not making that much progress!!!)

The next question which the Rebbe asked really startled me. The Rebbe prefaced it by saying that he did not want to be a Baal Chutzpah (cheeky), but I had a Chazoka (a long tradition which must not be broken) and he added - "Where is my Mashke? You always bring me five bottles of Vodka, and I am surprised that you did not bring them on this occasion, after all, a Chazoka is a very serious matter".

I was astounded and it did upset me; because I had already given to Binyomin Kline these bottles on the day after I had arrived at 770. I explained this to the Rebbe who also expressed surprise that he had not been informed of this. (note - I shall 'murder' that Binyomin Kline!!)

The Rebbe then confided in me that he had a one-dollar bill left over, which he would like to send to Manchester.

He wanted Avrohom to do him a favour, and take it for the Rebbe to Manchester, and "Would you please ask Avrohom to come in now, but not together with you", and - jokingly - "Tell Rabbi Groner to let him in!" Whereupon I took my leave.

I was not certain whether Avrohom was still at 770, but the Rebbe must have known that he was thereabouts, because I found him in the outer office. I gave him the Rebbe's message. Avrohom was staggered. He was quite unprepared to see the Rebbe at a moment's notice. His mind and condition had to be attuned to the fact that the Rebbe wanted to see him at once. He needed a lot of advance notice, and seemed annoyed with me. (very annoyed, but why with me?). However, the Rebbe's request is our Command. Avrohom rushed back to the Mincowitz's to put on his Kapota, and a little later entered the Rebbe's study for his unexpected Yechidus.

It was now Thursday, the day we were to leave Crown Heights for home. I attended the morning service as usual. I, together with most of the visitors had still not benched Gmel. We had listened to, and taken heed of the entreaties of the Wardens, not to waste the Rebbe's time by going up to the Bimah after the Rebbe's Aliya to the Sefer Torah.

When the Rebbe had concluded the Brocha however, one fellow(?) did come forward to make his Brocha. This was the signal for a general **invasion** upon the Bimah. The floodgates were opened and the Rebbe had to wait whilst each person made his individual Brocha and received the reply from the congregation.

It was not really fair on the Rebbe, but, I will admit, that I also joined the queue later on. (As we say, in England, "chance is a fine thing").

I met an English friend, Michael Davies, from Hendon, London. Michael reminded me of the time when the Rebbe handed him a bottle of Mashke to give to me in Manchester. Michael had never been to Manchester – and did not intend to go either. His plane flew direct to London. Well - as you may have guessed - because of fog over London, his plane was diverted to Manchester, and Michael was able to carry out the Shelichus of the Rebbe.

On another occasion, the Rebbe gave him a Brocha for a safe flight - direct home. Again fog blanketed London Airport - but - his plane did land - the only one to do so for five days.

In the 'old' days, the Rebbe always discouraged people from flying in a one-engined plane. As someone remarked, it needed two engines - a Chumash and a Tanya.

Fortuitously, I was at 770 when I heard that the Rebbe would be leaving shortly to visit the Ohel (at the cemetery). I decided to try and see the Rebbe - to say farewell - and to thank him for everything. I stood outside in the freezing cold. There was a penetrating and biting wind blowing which made me shiver and my teeth chatter.

Just then, the Rebbe strode out - breezily and full of Joie de Vivre. I felt so sorry for the Rebbe going out to the Beth Olam and standing there in this terribly cold weather. I therefore expressed my hope that "The Almighty should protect you in this cold weather". To which the Rebbe replied that, "It is OK as long as the warmth comes from inside".

With these profound words and thoughts ringing in my ears, I took my leave of the Rebbe Shlitah.

Yud Shevat is also an auspicious date in our own family - it is Hilary's birthday.

"Yud Shevat Farbreng, 5740"

The Rebbe gave his blessing to all those who had troubled themselves physically and spiritually in order to participate in this occasion, particularly the children in the rally directed from the life of the previous Rebbe whose Yahrzeit Yud Shevat is. He showed the way of Messiras Nefesh in order to educate even very young children - young in years and young in knowledge - in a country where all teaching, particularly to youngsters entailed true risk to life. How much more so must we, who are blessed to be in far better circumstances, dedicate ourselves to the work of spreading Torah.

"Sicho at Yud Shevat "

When the Jews arrived at the Red Sea, there were four groups of opinions about what action should be taken. These four types were those that said:

(a) "Let us throw ourselves into the sea"

- (b) "Let us return to Egypt"
- (c) "Let us battle against the Egyptians"
- (d) "Let us cry out in prayer against them"

There are the obvious explanations regarding these four types, but there is also a deeper set of interpretations, for example:

- (a) Would refer to those who felt that they had to serve Hashem with Messiras Nefesh - to give up their lives for Torah.
- (b) This group felt that the reason for the Egyptians chasing them was because there were still "sparks of holiness", which were in Egypt and were yet to be "redeemed" and they would therefore have to return there in order to finish the job.
- (c) Since they saw Moishe negating the first two reasons, they saw no choice but to fight and rely on the way that Hashem taught us to do battle.
- (d) This group felt that all of the previous things had been negated and therefore the right thing to do was to use our spiritual power of prayer against the Egyptians.

Why should a person not even use the "weapon" of prayer? Because there is a time when man must fold up his Tallis and Tefillin and go out into the streets and "travel" as G-d told Moishe to tell the Jewish people, in order to split the sea.

What is the sea? Our sages tell us that everything that exists on dry land also exists in the sea, except that it is covered over. This refers to a time of Golus when there is G-dliness, miracles and great wonders, but they are concealed and the beneficiary himself does not even realise the miracles he is experiencing every day. We must split the sea, disconceal it and reveal the G-dliness to the world, as there is only one way in which it can happen. That is through travelling further, jumping into the Red Sea.

There are those who say:

- (a) "Let us throw ourselves into the sea." In other words, let US just rely on a miracle, However this cannot be the right way when the Shulchan Aruch gave us an explicit instruction.
- (b) There are those who say, "let us return to Egypt", in other words, we must give back to Egypt different things which the Torah says you must not do, even at the risk of losing lives G-d forbid, especially as one knows that their intention is certainly not to stop and be satisfied with that which has been given to them.
- (c) Another group said, "let us fight against them." The Torah tells us that we must not begin wars and warlike activities, but what we should do is to merely be ready with weapons (as the

Jews were when they went out of Egypt in this week's Sedra), as the Shulchan Aruch tells us to go out with weapons, be ready to fight them and then because they will realise that we are sincere in our actions and are determined to do whatever is necessary in order to protect our lives, will desist from war themselves. As Moishe told the Jewish people "G-d will battle for you", and as we have seen the children of Esau and Yishmael battling against each other in recent weeks, as our sages foretold in the Gemorah.

(d) There is a group which wish to pray and just rely on a miracle. This is something which comes from a perverted view of Torah and of prayer, because their priorities are to know the Torah but not to know the One who gave the Torah. Through an attitude which places the knowledge of Torah and Gemorah as more important than becoming one with the One who gave the Torah, one is misled in the practical application of the Torah itself. The right thing for any person to do who has misled himself and those near to him is to do as the Rabbis did in the times of the Talmud, namely to announce publicly "that which I have told you was mistaken", in other words the Shulchan Aruch clearly and unequivocally, without any dissenting voice, says that in a situation like that today, it was not to relinquish territories, and this firmness and strength itself will lead to true peace.

Before the end of the Farbreng, the Rebbe announced about the ultimate of all the campaigns, namely the campaign which Hashem Himself has to fulfil, to bring the redemption which will redeem His people and, as it was, Hashem Himself from exile. Before that the Rebbe had told Chassidim to sing a list of songs, at the end of which, the Rebbe led the singing of Tzomo Lecho Nafshi.

The Farbreng ended after 2a.m local time.

Chapter 11: American Justice Prevails

It is now two years since we were at 770 for Shovuos.

On the last Thursday night of our stay in Crown Heights, our old Manchester friends, Rabbi Label Turk and his wife Esther, invited us and a number of friends to their home for dinner. Esther's brother had just been married, and we joined in the Sheva Brochos celebrations for the Chosson and Kallah.

We had a very nice time. The festivities concluded at midnight. Lippy (Brennan) offered us a lift home in his car. We were glad to accept at that time of night, because Label lived quite a long way from our apartment in President St., around the corner to 770. A few days previously, the Police had shot dead a coloured man. There was a lot of racial friction at that time.

We drew alongside our flat and Lippy suggested that we should all go to 770. There might be some interesting things happening. Roselyn adamantly refused. It was much too late and she was tired. Avrohom agreed with her, and the three of us alighted from Lippy's car. Lippy continued on his way to 770. We went to bed.

Next morning, when I arrived at 770, I found great turmoil going on. Lippy and Johnny Hackner had been arrested and were sitting in JAIL.

It seemed, and this is only MY version, that when Lippy left us and went to 770 the night before, he found a great commotion and much excitement going on. A Lubavitch wedding had just ended, and whilst the crowds of guests were walking home down Eastern Parkway, a young coloured boy of 15 snatched the hat from off the head of Aaron Zallon, and ran away with it. Some of the more agile and active young men gave chase, caught the boy, beat him up and almost killed him. (He was unconscious, in a coma, for about a week). This was at 2a.m. Lippy was curious and anxious. He wanted to know what was going on, so he jumped into his car to find out for himself. Johnny Hackner, who didn't want to miss the fun, dashed into the car with him.

They arrived near to the scene of action, saw what was taking place and fled. Unfortunately,

on the way back, Lippy drove down a one-way street in the wrong direction. He was stopped by the police, who now had someone (tangible) upon whom to lay their hands -- a scapegoat.

They were taken back to the scene of the crime, where a coloured woman confirmed that she recognised the car, and a coloured man said that Lippy and Johnny were the attackers. At 3a.m. Lippy and Johnny were arrested and put into prison.

They were legally permitted to use the telephone, but were not allowed to do so, and it was not until 7a.m. in the morning, that, Yisroel Shemtov, who was in charge of such matters, was advised that our friends, Lippy and Johnny were in Brooklyn Jail.

On that Friday morning, I entered the outer office and discovered Sergeant Yehoushua, of the New York Police, talking to Label Groner.

The Sergeant had brought in two cartons of hot coffee and a couple of danish pastries. They sat together drinking, eating and discussing the case. Label interrupted and reminded Yehoushua to make a Brocha on the cake - then on the coffee. Sergeant Yehoushua speaks perfect and fluent Yiddish. He was, presumably, a little biased towards Lubavitch, but, he was still, basically, a policeman, - in plain clothes. Yehoushua is a nice fellow and wore a Yarmulka, when he was around 770.

His superior, Captain Katz, was also a Jew - probably a Kohen. Yehoushua was arguing with Label - "why didn't you warn us and tell us that there was a wedding taking place - we could have sent a Radio Police Car". He maintained that the Police had witnesses, who saw Lippy and Johnny run to their car - after, having, presumably beaten up the coloured youth. There was no evidence that Lippy and Johnny had actually taken part in this attack - and - they, Lippy and Johnny, emphatically and categorically denied doing so. The Police admitted that since they had shot and killed a coloured man, a few days ago, feelings amongst the local population were running high. He agreed that the Jewish people could not afford to be seen to be weak, or else the blacks would take advantage of them. They, the coloured people, had to be shown and taught that they could not attack the Jews with impunity.

But, Yehoushua added - "It surely was not necessary to kill the boy for stealing a hat - that is a very harsh lesson - and, furthermore, the usual apologetic rejoinder in these cases was that 'no-one knows who did it because they merge into the crowd', but at this moment, we have two persons who have been identified".

Meanwhile, the charge against Lippy and Johnny, at that moment was attempted murder - and this might be chanced to actual murder if the boy died. Therefore, the Police refused to let our friends out on bail. Listening to Yehoushua, one could conclude that the worst offence committed by Lippy was that he drove along a one-way street in the wrong direction. For that, should he be liable to the harshest and severest penalties?!!

The charge was too serious. The best lawyers were engaged - and the immediate problem was to obtain the release of Lippy and Johnny on bail - so that they could go home for Shabbos. At 5p.m. they were still in Jail, and Shabbos came in at eight minutes past eight. They were released a few minutes before the deadline.

The Rebbe, when asked for a Brocha, stated that P.G. our boys would be cleared, but - it would take a long time, and there would be a lot of heartache.

Although Lippy was a resident of New York, Johnny was on a short, two or three weeks, visit, for Yom Tov. Well, the first thing the police did was to confiscate Johnny's passport. He would not be allowed to leave the U.S.A., not under any circumstances whatsoever, until the case was concluded and he would be proved innocent. What a paradox - If Johnny had wanted to stay in the U.S.A. for any length of time, he would not have been allowed to do so, except under exceptional circumstances, and with a great deal of trouble. Yet, in this instance, although he wanted to travel home to England, he was forbidden.

It took about 21 months, nearly 2 years, before they were cleared of the charges.

As one week followed another, and six months followed another six months, I, personally, would just sit back and think and consider that - there, but for grace of G-d stood I. I could just as easily have been in the car with Lippy - what could I have done, all alone - in Brooklyn all this time, whilst my business and livelihood in Manchester went to rack and ruin. I think I was a lucky man.

Johnny, however, did not waste his time. In due course, he met a girl, got married, and during the last few days of the trial, he became the proud father of a bonny baby girl.

Why did it take such a long time for the case to come before the Judge and Jury?

Our lawyers tried hard to get the charges squashed. Unfortunately, it was a police prosecution - it was not the coloured youth who was the plaintiff - it was the State of New York. It had become a political issue, with no money to be spared in order to get a conviction.

Our lawyers were the best in the country. They were Jews and possessed Jewish hearts. They could have demanded exorbitant fees. Outstanding lawyers were paid \$125 an hour, and for such a trial, \$150,000 was normal. I believe they accepted a very nominal amount.

Actually, Lippy and Johnny could have obtained legal aid, but one thing was very certain, in that event, our boys - would have been found guilty and convicted within a few month of their arrest.

When I was in Brooklyn during Yud Shevat, I learnt that the trial had already commenced. Every day and all day long at every corner of 770 - inside and outside, collections were being

made for the unusual, but very important Mitzvah of Pidyon Shovaim - ransom money - to obtain the release of Lippy and Johnny from Jail. (As I stated above, if it had not been for the exertions of Mr. Sideman and Mr. Slotkin, our splendid lawyers, poor Lippy and Johnny would have been already convicted). Tens of thousands of dollars were needed, and I am happy to state that every single person made haste to join in this Mitzvah to the greatest possible extent.

The trial seemed to be dragging along, so I decided to go to the court to see for myself what was happening.

I entered the huge and imposing portals- on which wore emblazoned in large letters the words:

Supreme Court of the United States of America

I entered, and went up to the court on the 5th floor, where our case was being heard.

Proceedings were scheduled to commence at 10a.m. The trial could not continue until every person who was taking part was present - the Judge, the 12 members of the Jury, our lawyers, the prosecution lawyer, Bruce Cutler (also a Jew), the defendants and the witnesses.

An unusual feature of the trial, was that there were no prisoners sitting in the dock. Lippy and Johnny sat, incognito, in the public section of the court, together with their friends. Strangers and reporters were also present.

There was only one witness for the prosecution - a Mr. Bartholomew (I shall call him Mr. B. from now onwards),

Originally, there was another witness - a woman who thought that she could identify Lippy's car, but could not confirm that it was our boys who made the attack.

On the previous day, there had been an identity parade, at which Mr. B. had to pick out the assailants. Our lawyers had contacted the Yeshiva, and about 40 boys had come along. They sat together with Lippy and Johnny in the public section, and, needless to say, they failed to identify our boys.

When I arrived at 10a.m., I discovered that there was a rumour going around (to the effect) that there MIGHT be another identity parade that morning. So, another telephone call was made, and we waited until 30 Yeshiva Bochurim arrived. At 11.05 we entered the court, and at 11.15a.m the Jury made their appearance.

It had taken many weeks just to choose and swear in the Jury of 12 men and women "good and true". We had objected to some names, the State had objected to others. It was no small wonder that the trial was taking so long.

Well - there they sat at last - the Jury - consisting of six coloured and six white, men and women. Not one of them was a Jew.

Mr. B. a big black man in gaudy clothes and with an inane grin sat, sprawled, on a high chair near to the Judge's dias - and then we all arose as the Judge entered.

Good lawyers do their spade work before the trial. Our men had sent a private investigator, armed with a tape recorder to interview Mr. B. many months previously. All these interviews were now recorded on the tapes, which our lawyers possessed.

I was only in court that one morning, but to me, the whole proceedings were - ludicrous. Mr. B., the only witness they had, was continuously contradicting himself. In England, in my opinion, the judge would have stopped the case immediately - but - it was a political issue and the judge had to lean over backwards to show that there was no bias.

Here are a few of the questions and answers which I heard that morning

"Mr. B. Do you smoke marijuana drugs?"

Mr. Cutler (prosecuting lawyer) "I object Your Honour".

All the lawyers and the judges go into a huddle in the corner of the courtroom and confer for about 10 minutes.

The Judge returns to the restroom and pronounces "objection overruled".

Again Mr. Sideman asks:

"Mr. B. Do you smoke marijuana?"

"Yea, I had just started to light up"

"But, Mr. B., you said previously that you had not smoked for many months. When was the last time you smoked?"

"I smoked last week-end"

Mr. Cutler - "I respectfully object Your Honour"

Another conference takes place. The Judge rules that the objection is sustained.

"Mr. B. Do you remember giving your testimony to the Grand Jury?"

Mr. B. looks lost for words. The Judge tells him that if he cannot remember, that he should say so. Mr. B. looks very relieved and replies - with a huge grin:

"Ah don remember".

"Do you remember the day".

"Nah, Sir".

"The time".

"Nah, Sir" - and with a bigger grin than ever, says - "Ah remember notting".

"Mr. B. Do you remember Bruce Cutler asking you questions?"

"Oh yea".

Mr. B. stated that he saw the car and it was burgundy in colour. Mr. Sideman produced a box of coloured markers. He took out a red one and asked Mr. B. to tell the Jury what was the colour. Mr. Cutler objected - and the lawyers and Judges actually left the courtroom and conferred in the Judge's chambers for about 15 minutes.

On their return the Judge said "objection overruled".

Mr. Sideman continued and asked Mr. B. what was the colour. Mr. B. said it was a burgundy. A maroon one was produced - Mr. B. confirmed it was a burgundy. A violet one - also a burgundy. Mr. Sideman asked Mr. B.:

"What is the colour of your tie?"

"Burgundy".

"Of your pants?"

"Burgundy".

The Judge could not believe it and asked Mr. B.:

"Are you sure that they are all burgundy".

"Yea" he replied - "they all different shades of burgundy".

The Judge remarked that the tie and pants are not being offered as exhibits.

Amongst some of the answers given by Mr. B. were the following:

- (1) The attacker had red hair, no beard and no glasses.
 - (2) All Jews look the same, so it was "hard for him to recognise the attacker.
 - (3) There was a big fat man and a thin man. The fat man was as big and as fat as the investigator, but, he could not remember what the investigator looked like.
 - (4) A red car came along 3 minutes later - Yesterday, he said, it came 15 minutes later.
 - (5) The police car arrived very much later - Yesterday, he said it was seconds later.
 - (6) He admitted that he did not see the incident too well, because he, together with 25 other men and women were looking and searching for broken bottles in the garbage bins with which to fight the Jews.
 - (7) He was standing about 20 feet from the incident - Yet he told our investigator that he was 100 feet away at that time.
 - (8) The fellow with the red hair was bald, and the big fat man had no hat on.
- and (9) Mr. B. said that he would guarantee that the defendants would be convicted. He had an interest to see them convicted. Why?! - Because they are wrong.

(Mr. B. Is a "nice guy" - smokes pot, hates Jews, and fights with broken bottles).

Mr. Sideman wished to play back the tape recording taken by the investigator.

There is another conference and the Judge orders out the Jury whilst it is played back. They all troop out of the court.

"Mr. B., is this your voice?"

"Yea"

"Did you say that and this?"

"Yee, Yea"

The Jury returned.

Mr. B. is asked a question - "I object Your Honour" - another conference takes place, and so it went on - and on. I reckoned that 45 minutes were lost because of these repeated adjournments. Only one and a quarter hours were actually spent on the case during the whole morning.

Mr. B., very unperturbed, still grinning and he thought he was the Star of the Show - contradicted himself over and over again. It was so funny that all our boys were laughing uproariously. Zalmon Posner, who was also present, warned them to keep quiet. We were dealing with a Jury, who were unpredictable. They could become very biased with all this laughter, and we could lose the trial - for nothing. The Judge can only advise, but the Jury can please themselves. This was a good point, especially with 5 black members and no Jewish person on the Jury.

At 1p.m., the Judge announced that there will be a recess until the next day at 10a.m., (a woman Juror had an appointment some-where), and he added, "I hope you all have a pleasant day".

All the above is actually what I saw and heard that one morning.

Weeks later - the Judge summed up and the Jury retired for Two and a Half Days!! They returned a verdict of "**Not Guilty**".

Obviously, it was not an easy decision for them to make, under these circumstances and with just one very unreliable prosecution witness.

I believe that Lippy and Johnny were extremely lucky not to have been the victims of an American Miscarriage of Justice.

Chapter 12: Purim

"The Rebbe's Purim Letter"

Mr. Shneur Zalman Jaffe
7th Adar 5740

Greeting and Blessing:

This is to confirm receipt of your correspondence. May G-d grant the fulfillment of your heart's desires for good in the matters about which you wrote.

Since this letter is written in proximity to Purim, it is timely to recall its external teachings, especially as the Megillah expressly states, "These days are remembered and implemented". And although much has been said and written on the subject of Purim, yet every year at this time these days are renewed with new dimensions and meaning that need to be implemented in everyday life.

Let us recall here at least one of the basic teachings of Purim:

As in the days of Mordecai and Esther, our Jewish people is still "dispersed and scattered among the nations of the world". Yet, as ever, we are "one nation". And what unifies our people and makes it unique is "their laws that are different from those of any other nation" - our Torah and Mitzvoth and way of life, the very source of our eternal strength.

Purim teaches us that in a time of crisis, faced with a ruthless enemy like Haman, we must turn all the more tenaciously to our source of strength, and show that we are the "people of Mordechai, who would not kneel nor bow down" to anything that is contrary to Yiddishkeit. It is this firm and resolute stand that brought about Hamans downfall, so that "for the Jews there was light, joy, gladness and honour" -- both in the plain sense as well as in the deeper sense of "Light - this is Torah, Honour - this is Tefillin". And following in their footsteps, we may be sure that "So will it be for us".

Since Purim is also a preparation and prelude to Pesach, the implementation of the said Purim

message, particularly timely these days, will surely hasten the fulfillment of the Divine Promise, "As in the days of your coming out of the land of Egypt, I will show you wonders" -- at the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, speedily in our days.

With blessing for Hatzlocho and good tidings, and wishing you and yours a joyous and inspiring Purim.

Signed: M. Schneerson".

"Purim Kits"

In common with Lubavitcher organizations all over the world, we in Manchester arrange a full program of Purim activities. As the Rebbe said at a Sicho, there are five Mitzvahs which should be observed on this day:-

(1) We recite "Al Hanissim in the davenning and in the benching (Grace after Meals). This to commemorate the past and present miracles. The children in those far-off years in Persia played a most important role, they banded together under Mordechai, in order to learn and study - and prayed to G-d for help. This day of projected sadness became a day of actual gladness, Simcha and Joy. The bad was turned - to good.

(2) The Megillah is read, and we learn all the details how the evil was completely transformed and converted into goodness and to Jewish rejoicing.

(3) The Seudos Purim is enjoyed and celebrated by each and every family.

(4) Mishloach Monus, gifts are sent to friends.

(5) Matonus Le'evyonim, gifts are given to the poor.

There are many to-day who wish to emulate the antic of Haman, for instance, the terrorists, their friends and supporters. May all their plans and conspiracies become, turned upside down and nullified. Let them receive their just retribution - as Haman did.

One of our main activities is the preparation and distribution of Purim kits to school children and to old people. The contents of these purim parcels normally consisted of two penny pieces - for giving to the poor, two types of fruit, nuts and candy for Mishloach Monus, together with a leaflet describing the Mitzvahs as mentioned above by the Rebbe. This year we prepared, made and distributed ever 4,000 of these kits.

Many years ago, our members themselves made up these parcels, individually at their own homes. We encountered trouble when we delivered these to local old people's homes. Each inmate was most concerned because her neighbour had received an extra sweet, a different

type of cookie, a redder apple or an additional orange. After this debacle, we arranged that all kits should be of a standard quality and quantity. The contents should be exactly the same.

Once more we encountered trouble – the old men and women had lost their teeth and could not eat the nuts which were provided. This year, special parcels were made for the old people which contained pretzels instead of nuts.

The Rebbe said in a Sicho on Purim, that Mordechai refused “to kneel or bow down” to anything which threatened or challenged Torah and Yiddishkeit . This example was followed with Messiras Nefesh by other Jews. That is the reason why Hashem came to their rescue and saved the Jewish people from extinction.

The Rebbe Quotes 18 Points (For Life) For Israel

The Rebbe then went on to speak about Israel and the way that there were many unfortunate aspects in the recent past and in present policies which are not consistent with the above refusal to "kneel or to bow down". In particular; the endless concessions and lowering of self-respect, which only invites further pressures. The Rebbe then enumerated the following Eighteen points which confirmed that his views and opinions are correct:-

(1) After the revealed miracles of the Six Day War, within days emissaries went to Washington to offer to return territories which were not being requested by anyone. The Jews in the time of Achashverosh had pleasure because they were partaking from the feast of the wicked king. In this case, the king was not wicked, and nevertheless they offered to give back territories, and the only reason they were not given immediately was because the enemy refused to accept any partial gifts.

(2) A fool said a year and a half ago when there was a discussion about whether it was prudent to return the oil fields to Egypt, that Israel had stock-piled enough oil for many years (!). He knew that it would be printed and could be referred back to in the future years and it would become a form of mockery, and incalculable harm. (For those who do not discern realised that no one would make a statement which is so groundless unless there really is at least a grain of proof to it, and therefore they are not aware of the dangers which come from the returning of the oil, and gives them a false sense of security.)

(3) There is a point which began very quietly and has become increasingly heard and a pressure upon Israel; that their emissary said that there is sufficient oil, and you've already given a third of your oil back, and more and why don't you realise you're a minority and you require the good will of the whole world and, therefore give back and more. That same person advised that the Jewish people should relinquish their control over the West Bank to the President of the United States and allow it to be under the rule of a "trusteeship", and now this is being brought up as something which Israel has suggested and intense pressure is being placed upon them to fulfill this.

(4) The political leaders and rulers were not out to destroy that which was not beneficial to the Jewish people, mainly because "the hearts of kings and noblemen is in the hand of Hashem". If only the Jewish people would not have ruined the situation which today is a frightening one with regard to the security situation. There are those who have recently announced that Israel's international status has never been better. This is a ludicrous statement and in total variance with the fact. When the ones who have said that, qualify it by saying that it is not a universally held opinion.

(5) A Jew should be submissive to the will of Hashem, who said that Israel and all of its borders belong to the Jewish people even in times of exile, and even to those Jews who live outside of its borders. Also, when gentiles want to take even "straw and stubble" or "territories" from the Jewish community in the diaspora, the law is clear and one does not have to waste the mental energy to seek as to what the Torah would say about it, because the Torah is clear (the authorities of Ashcenazim and Sephardim) that one must go out with weapons, if need be on Shabbos, in order to prevent such a threat. There are those who have mentioned a ridiculous counter argument that the law only applies when the non-Jews have "besieged" a Jewish settlement, but in this case, they are sitting around at a table and there is a third nation (U.S.A.) who will give them both aid. This is a perversion of the above-mentioned law, which clearly states that the reason is "that land should not become open (vulnerable) before them". There is only one acid test as to whether we must stand firm or not: whether this will make the land open and easier to attack, and in that case even if it is in the Diaspora and certainly in the Holy Land, one must stand firm and not to allow our people to be vulnerable.

(6) This is even more serious in today's situation, when there is such a large group of Jews (Keyn Yirbu) in such a relatively small land.

(7) The embassy of Egypt, which has been hailed as a great blessing without reservation and without qualification, is a necessity perhaps, but a very great danger to the Jewish people which is being overlooked. It will become a nest of espionage activity to an unbelievable extent. We can derive this from the fact that the American's Consulate in Jerusalem is utilised for the benefits of Israelis enemies, (although this is not publicised in the press and may they be blessed for not publicising this type of aspect, despite a current tendency to publicise anything and everything without any regard for the effect it could have on the entire Jewish people.) And how much more so is this true with regard to the Egyptian embassy.

(8) When a person scalds his fingers in burning hot water, the normal thing to do is to push it aside and not to allow the mistake to be repeated. Israel has seen, after they gave back the oil fields of Abu Rhodez, they were immediately presented with greater demands. When they signed an agreement that no hostile forces would be placed in the Sinai desert, within 24 hours this was violated by the Egyptians, and the only action that Israel took, was to tell the newspapers to be silent about it.

(9) A terrible precedence was established with the people of Yamit, who were promised that they were coming to a settlement for "ever and ever". Money, body and soul were all thrown into that project, nevertheless they commanded and forced the people to leave their settlement, and since then every time Israel mention the word settlement, they are reminded - "you know that none of your settlements are permanent, you yourself have spoken about permanent settlements and very soon afterwards dismantled them, so why put all this energy into your new project".

(10) The disgrace of the Mayor of Shechem, who was first arrested and was then released as a result of pressure, in effect announcing to the world that if any foreign pressure is placed on Israel, it will succumb to it.

(11) The Yeshiva student who was murdered in Chevron and after weeks, they have still not announced who the guilty person was. This is not because the Israeli security forces themselves have not been able to find the murderer, but they have a strong motive not to want to find the person, because it might touch the "high windows" and invite undesirable Publicity, and therefore, they are not making an effort to apprehend the murderer.

(12) An Arab can buy land in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, etc., etc. Why should a Jew be deprived of buying land in any city - be it Chevron, or Aman, Egypt, Baghdad, or anywhere else. How much more so when one is dealing with Chevron which the Torah tells us was explicitly bought by the Jewish people, and there are many Jews today who have the deeds of land in that city.

(13) The real pressure is coming from Russia and its allies, and Washington is only a conduit for that pressure. The normal course of events seems to be that previously they say - let's think theoretically about something, then they begin to discuss it behind closed doors and ultimately they put a pressure by saying "you have said this yourself" etc., etc., and you are ready to make all concessions.

(14) It is not my point to cry over the past, although there were so many different events where the concessionary attitude has invited further pressure. The main point now is that at present, Teshuvah can help (and an even transform the past) and if Israel will stand firm at this point it will be in a better position in six months time. Would Israel have been firm six months ago, they would not be in as low a situation as they are now, similarly - they were infinitely worse off six months ago compared with a year ago and two years ago, etc. At come point, they are going to have to stand firm and refuse to "kneel or to bow down" and the sooner the better.

(15) Three years ago, I spoke about settling every part of the territories. It is crucial to emphasise and publicise that this is not a "settlement", a "town". We do not want to frighten anyone or chase anyone from their homes, but merely for pure security reasons, to have armed personnel at every part of the borders and in every area of the territories, armed fortresses to be

sure that Israel's securities are not jeopardised or diminished.

(16) The Rebbe at this point mentioned about how his efforts to create a new Chabad settlement in Jerusalem was being thwarted by petty revenge from people who did not like his policy with the children of Persia, and his refusing to put the tens of thousands of lives of the Jews remaining in that country into jeopardy in order to serve someone's political interest. If people would be tactful and delicate in negotiations with that country, there are signs that the situation for the Jews there will not be as bad as could be.

(17) The refusal of Israel to allow different terrorist acts to get prominence in the press does not diminish the danger of such acts, and the main point is that the terrorists themselves know of their success and therefore one is not helping the situation by creating a false sense of security and by refusing to take active steps towards alleviating that situation, as mentioned above, not for nationalistic reasons, but on the grounds of security which everyone can understand.

(18) The Rebbe concluded by saying that since we are now moving in to the day of Shushan Purim, which is the 15th day of the month when the moon is full, the moon being, similar to the Jewish people in that all its light comes from the sun, similarly all of the inspiration for the Jewish people comes from Hashem and so may we move to a situation of redemption, a completeness of the land, the people and the Torah of Israel without any bending of firmness. And just as Purim is the time to share and send food gifts to friends and to the poor, similarly in Torah we should share knowledge and inspirations with each other and certainly with those who are poor in Judaism.

At the end of the Farbreng the Rebbe invited people to donate to Kupat Rabeinu - to charity and indicated that they should sing a number of songs.

Chapter 13: Good Wishes For Pesach

All Avrohom's children had written to the Rebbe on Yud Shevat. Aaron who is only 4 years of age cannot write so he sent a "primitive coloured drawing". Each child - even Aaron, received an individual reply from the Rebbe, wishing him (and her) a happy and Kosher Pesach. Altogether Avrohom, Susan and family received nine letters on that one day. (I suppose Avrohom and Susan received separate letters too.)

I also received a most welcome letter from the Rebbe on the occasion of Pesach.

The Rebbe is certainly forwarding more replies to his correspondents than ever before. The Rebbe is also much more active in celebrating more Farbraingens, giving over more Sichos, interviewing more people at Yechidus, and broadcasting to the world also more than ever before.

Our teacher Moses, commenced his main work at the age of 80. Up till that time, he was training and being prepared for the supreme leadership. So with our Dear Rebbe, whose activities are increasing, tremendously day by day, during these final days of preparation.

Chapter 14: Lag B'Omer

As Lag B'omer this year coincided with a Sunday, the Rebbe stipulated that Lubavitch branches throughout the world should organise Parades for children and that no expense should be spared to ensure the success of these marches, parades and outings.

Rabbi Dovid Schurder volunteered to be in charge of the arrangements. Everyone promised his unstinted and lavish support. It was decided that the Parade should leave from King David School and proceed in procession to Heaton Park, about a mile away.

It was suggested that it would be an excellent idea, and a wonderful attraction if we could engage a troupe of circus clowns and animals to lead the march. We booked Hoffmans circus, who promised to head the procession with elephants, men on stilts and clowns. They also contracted to provide portable toilet facilities.

On Saturday night, twenty of our ladies were busy until 1a.m. making 1,500 packs of vauscht sandwiches - the 2,000 cans of orange juice were already at Lubavitch House.

Sunday morning, Lag B'omer dawned warm and sunny. Our fifty groups had assembled at the school grounds. The children had arrived from all parts of Manchester, North Cheshire and from as far a field as Blackpool, Leeds, and Birmingham. Whilst the children were being registered and the banners and signs distributed, Uzziyohu Brown did his best to keep the children occupied. He obtained volunteers to recite the Twelve Torah sayings. He told "jokes", he screamed, he shouted and he had a jolly good time. Shmuel had travelled overnight from London to address the boys and girls. Shmuel did very well, in spite of the fact that some of the children had been standing and waiting around for nearly an hour and they were becoming restive and restless.

Shmuel had told us that the Rebbe had given certain instructions regarding the children at the Lag B'omer Parade. One, was that each child should be given a photograph of himself (or herself) showing them participating in these activities. This photo would be an everlasting memento of the occasion.

I retorted that it was rather late in the day to convey these instructions, but in any case - and in

especially this case, they were not necessary, because at EVERY Lubavitch function or affair, we always order a photographer as Priority No 1. That is our first basic principle. However, something had gone wrong in the equipment (!) and communication centre! - and there was no photographer to take nice pictures of the lovely children. What a disaster - what a let down!!

With the help of Dovid Abenson and Susan (my daughter-in-law), we did manage to obtain the services of a photographer - a little late maybe - but as we say in England, "better late than never", to which I reply to my Lubavitch friends, "better never late".

We were then informed that our circus performers had been delayed and would arrive at 11.30a.m. - nearly two hours late. We could not keep the groups waiting any longer, besides which, many thousands of people were lining the route of the procession – so the 750 children marched off.

Roselyn and I, Aubrey Harris, Avrohom and Sholom Weiss were left with the usual self-imposed chores (nobody else seemed terribly interested) of cleaning up the rubbish and the mess. I was told afterwards that the March and the Parade were a Kiddush Hashem - with the children holding UP HIGH the banners and the signs. The two floats depicting the Jewish festivals, which were part of the procession, were outstanding and received the praise and acclamation which they deserved.

Meanwhile, whilst we were tidying up, a huge forty-foot enclosed truck or van arrived. It was part of the circus. We ordered them to try and overhaul the marchers and to participate in the procession. This they did, but they had to travel at the back end. So the Circus Van was in the rear instead of in the **Van!** (O.K. Roselyn, so you were right. You said that some of my readers would not understand this Pun – Van! - means the front). They did not bring the portable toilets either. Therefore, poor Yechiel Vogel hired a mini-bus. He did a non-stop relay service, ferrying hundreds of children to and from the toilets (about half a mile away) - all afternoon.

The groups had settled down into the special section of the park which was allocated to us for this day, and the children were waiting to be entertained. The numbers had swelled considerably "en route". Hundreds of bystanders had become intrigued by the "Circus", and about 250 adults many with prams and babies had joined our celebrations. Over 1,000 people from a Jewish population of 40,000, was not bad at all.

The large circus van, together with a couple of cars were parked on the roadway near the grassland. After 30 minutes two scruffy Llamas (Roselyn maintains they were camels) were disgorged from the van. Each one was chewing a large handful of dirty straw and grass. Another half an hour was spent in rubbing them down and cleaning them up. They were then tied to a tree.

They then started on the elephants. By this time, these had shrunk to just one little baby elephant - well - a biggish baby. It took another half an hour to get him (or her) out of the van -

and then - it immediately halted.

Meanwhile, to keep the boys, and girls interested - the circus strong man did his act. He flung heavy metal weights all over the place. He obtained eight volunteers to sit upon a plank - he lay on his back and lifted up the plank and the men with his feet. He would not accept Yechiel Vogel, who did volunteer. By now, two clowns had arrived, and spent the next half an hour fixing up a TIGHT rope wire, after which they dragged up heavy wooden objects and planks, presumably for the elephant.

A troupe of ponies appeared, ran round the "enclosure" once - and have not been seen since. It was all very interesting for the children who were now becoming hungry. So, whilst the circus guys were fixing up their "props", the boys and girls went to the Hand-washing Department. Large containers full of water, and dozens of "quarts" (jars for washing) were set out. The children, would come forward with hands outstretched and the Levi (the washroom attendants) poured water over their hands. Roselyn, amongst others, handed each one a paper towel and ensured that the Brocha was made (Al Netillas Yodoyim). They were given their sandwiches, they made Hamotzei and sat with their own groups. The 250 adults also passed along the queue with their hands outstretched - to receive the water and our sandwiches.

Years ago, at a Lag B'omer outing, we were approached by two small non-Jewish boys who informed us that they had now washed their hands - and could they have sandwiches, please! Those kiddies at least asked!!!

At long last, the circus props were fixed and we waited for the elephant to start the act. I was wondering what act the Llamas (O.K. - camels) would be doing. Suddenly, and without warning, the clowns commenced to unfix the props. They had arrived over two hours late - and, now they had to catch the "trunk line" express for home. It took them an hour or so to pack up and to load all the animals back into the vans. I never learnt what kind of act the Llamas/Camels performed!!

Fortunately, it was a glorious day, and the children benched nicely together, were told stories and had a jolly good time - mostly wondering what was next on the programme.

A few days before Lag B'omer, the "weather men" predicted rain for the day of our Parade, we had a brilliant idea, to insure our Outing (and circus) for 2,000 pounds. The Insurance Company had a better idea - they refused our application because it had to be submitted 14 days beforehand.

As I wrote above - "fortunately it was a glorious day", so we were lucky!

At 4.30p.m afternoon, our time, the Rebbe broadcast from Crown Heights. I had heard that there were 8,000 children in the Brooklyn Parade. This was changed to 13,000 - and every day the numbers were increasing. "There were 4,000 Russian children in the Parade and 6,000 Russians lining the route. Twenty-six floats and military bands also took part".

All this I was told unofficially - what I did hear was what the Rebbe said to the children in the procession - and thus to the children all over the world.

The Rebbe pointed that each child in the Parade is one individual amongst thousands of others. They may be wearing different types of clothing - Kosher - no Shatnez. They may be eating various kinds of Kosher food - come from diverse countries, have different local customs and speak different languages. The Rebbe explained that when G-d gave us the Ten Commandments, it states in the Torah - "And G-d spoke these words" and adds the superfluous word "L'amour" which means "saying". The meaning of this is that we have to keep saying and repeating them. Even if one did not speak nor understand Hebrew, one could study the Torah in one's own native tongue. One would then learn from the beginning of the Ten Commandments that "I am the Lord your G-d" - the same G-d who took your forefathers out of Egypt - I am still the same G-d who will take you out of your present Exile. From the written Torah, one must expand and study the Oral Law.

The main consideration is to speak to the children in the language which they can understand. They should realise that it is the same Torah - the same Mitzvahs, which those children heard DIRECT at the very first Shovuos - at Mattan Torah - on Mount Sinai - those little children who were the guarantors to Hashem for the whole Jewish Nation at that time, now, and in the future. The Rebbe continued - that the children would soon be leaving for their own homes. He hoped they would all speak to their parents, and have great success in awakening the Faith of their parents in G-d and in the Torah. G-d loves all the Jewish children. The children will bring Moshiach quicker, because all are connected with Ahavas Yisroel and Ahavas Hashem (Love of all Jews and Love of G-d). By this means, the exile will be ended, and will bring forth the redemption of Moshiach speedily in our days.

Lag B'omer is the time of rejoicing - for all Jews everywhere. G-d was not satisfied to remain in His Palace - He went into Exile with us. Wherever there are Jews - in U.S.A. - the Holy Land, England - and anywhere and everywhere, the Almighty is with us - and with the children in exile. We are never alone.

Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, together with his son, fled from the vengeance and retaliation of the Roman invaders. For 13 years they lived hidden in a sand pit and learned Torah continuously. G-d was with them there, too, and protected them in their exile.

G-d looks after us. We must look after Him - His Torah and His Mitzvahs. Then we will have a complete redemption. If we study hard, and give Tzedoko, we will live to see this redemption.

Lag B'omer is **in** the Omer. We count the days from Pesach to Shovuos. From Freedom to Acceptance of the Torah. If one has precious treasures, one keeps counting them, in case even

a small fraction or part gets lost. Therefore, one counts each of these days - which is so important, so dear - one must always make the best of them, especially as Lag B'omer is a joyous occasion. This Simcha can be increased because every second, every minute of the day can be used for more Mitzvahs, and so create a very large Simcha. This joy in doing the Mitzvahs by the children will automatically overflow into the hearts of the parents.

Every little boy and girl also counts. They are Jews and children possess Jewish hearts as soon as they are born. In their merit, we pray that the redemption should take place much sooner.

The Rebbe then spoke for half an hour in Russian. In London a Russian Lubavitcher gave the simultaneous translation from Russian into Yiddish. His name was Mr. Katzenelenbogen (If I could include a few more names like this, I would soon fill up the pages.)

The Children From Iran

By Divine Providence, the Rebbe has been successful in bringing out, from the "Fiery Furnace" of Iran, thousands of Jewish children who would have otherwise been condemned and doomed to remain in Iran - in despair, and without hope as far as living normal Jewish lives. Their Judaism would have been completely destroyed.

The Iranian authorities would not allow any children to leave that country, except in order to study abroad at a recognised school, especially one already established for Iranian children.

The "Divine Providence", was that Lubavitch already had a little cheder (school) in Queens, New York, under the direction of Rabbi J.J's (Hecht) son.

The first 30 children who arrived from Iran, were the foundation, the basis for bringing out nearly 1,000 boys and girls, aged from 11 to 19 years, in the first year.

Most of these children travelled via London, and remained in that city, some for many months, awaiting their visas and entry permits for the U.S.A. Where could all these young people stay? As usual - at the homes of the Lubavitchers. I know that Hilary had her share, too.

After a short stay in New York, 600 were allocated to various other centres in the U.S.A.

Many people have complained to me that the Rebbe should have sent these children to Israel. My answer was "if the house is burning, get the inmates out before they are killed - we can afterwards decide where they shall live".

We Are Nearly On Our Way

P.G. in about 10 days time, we shall be leaving Manchester in order to spend Shovuos with the Rebbe. (I still have to complete this edition).

Up to this moment (1) We have nowhere to stay in Brooklyn. When we were in Crown Heights during Yud Shevat, we did hire an apartment for a 12 month period, subject to certain alterations being carried out. These were to be completed by Purim. Our "agent", Rabbi Zalmon Shimon Dvorkin, has now informed us that this apartment is in exactly the same precise original condition as when we examined it at Yud Shevat. No work at all has been done. The kitchen has not been installed, and neither the stove nor the fridge is working. We have other friends - Lippy Brennan and Yossi Raitchik still searching for accommodation on our behalf,

and (2) Avrohom is P.G. also taking his wife and family (but not Dovid). Most of his children have not yet travelled by air, and Avrohom insisted upon flying by Jumbo Jet. If they couldn't fly with Concorde, then the second best would be acceptable. He was told that there were no Jumbo Jets flying direct from Manchester to New York. There was plenty of time before our departure date, so Avrohom booked all our seats (for eleven passengers - which included a young girl friend of Leah's) through Super Apex. We would be flying K.L.M. through Amsterdam, Holland - exactly the same way which Roselyn and I travelled with Dovid and Yenta Chaya before last Simchas Torah.

Recently our travel agents forwarded to us the tickets. The departure date, Sunday May 13th was correct, but our return flight was booked for only one week later. We wanted to stay with the Rebbe for AT LEAST Two weeks. Avrohom blamed the travel agents. The travel agents blamed Avrohom. Be that as it may, it was a terrible misunderstanding! Super Apex tickets could definitely not be changed. We could cancel them altogether and pay nearly £400 "cancellation fees". To add to our aggravation, British Airways have decided to fly Jumbo Jets direct from Manchester to New York for the summer season. Anyway, our travel agents are doing their best for us!!!!

So, P.G. we all hope to be to Crown Heights for Shovuos with the Rebbe.