



בס"ד

My Encounter With The Rebbe שליט"א

by Zalmon Jaffe

23rd Installment

Shvuos 5751/1991 until Shvuos 5752/1992

שנת נ"ב

Including VISIT to U.S.S.R.

“The year of wonder and miracles in all things”

Introduction

Shnas Niflos **Bakol** 5752

The Year of Wonders and Miracles in all things

Once again, I have great pleasure in submitting to you, for your enjoyment and edification, the Twenty third instalment of "My Encounter with the Rebbe, Shlita."

As usual, it takes the form of a diary with the sequence of events in the order in which they occurred.

You will read at the end of this book about the stroke which the Rebbe suffered on 27th Adar I Monday, March 2nd.

I have written about the Rebbe's illness just as it happened, with the medical bulletins which were issued every day, together with the confident assumption that the Rebbe would be restored to perfect health very rapidly.

I would add that although we have this assurance repeated all the time, that the Rebbe is getting better every day, our Dear Rebbe, Shlite, is still poorly, and I have formed the opinion that the Rebbe's complete recovery will take a little longer than was at first anticipated.

The Rebbe needs a Brocha from all the Jewish people. We should all plead with our Heavenly Father by reciting Psalms, studying Torah and giving Tzedoka on the Rebbe's behalf, so that very soon our Rebbe, Shlite, will enjoy once more the - best of health to continue his important and unique work for the Jewish people everywhere. This is our heartfelt desire and sincere longing that our prayers will very soon be answered.

Halacha

It was taught by Elija, "Whoever studies Torah Laws every day is assured of life in the World to Come."

The Rebbe has always emphasized that any meeting or convention, and even a book, shall be preceded and prefaced by a word of Torah.

I have a long tradition of commencing my books with a word of Halacha.

In this instalment I should like to stress the importance of the SHEMA, and I shall enumerate just a few laws from the Shulchan Oruch.

- 1) One should be careful to recite all the sections of the Shema with Kavanah - with concentrated attention to what he says in awe and reverence.
- 2) One who draws out (in meditation) the Dalled of Echod will merit the blessing of longevity. The Dall-ed should be drawn out for the length of time needed to reflect that the Holy One, Blessed be He, is alone in His world, and that He rules in all four corners of the universe. He should not slur over the Pronunciation of the letter Chess (Echod) but draw it out slightly for the length of time that it takes to affirm G-d's sovereignty in the seven heavens and on earth - equal to eight, the numerical value of the Chess.
- 3) One should articulate the Dall-ed clearly, so that it should not sound like a Reish. Nor should its pronunciation be protracted so long that it sounds as if the Dall-ed is vocalised with a Shema (Echo-De). Rather, when pronouncing the Dall-ed, one should prolong the meditation long enough to acknowledge His Kingdom in all four directions. After saying Echod, one should pause slightly and then begin the next verse - "Boruch Shaim"
- 4) This verse should be said in an undertone. If it was omitted, the Shema must be repeated.
- 5) One should pause briefly between this verse and the next paragraph. Similarly, one should pause in the first verse of the Shema, between Yisroel and Hashem, and another pause between Elokainu and HaShem, that is: Shema Yisroel - (pause) - HaShem Elokainu - (pause) - HaShem Echod. This will clearly convey the meaning that "Hear, O Israel, - the L-rd who is our G-d - is the One G-d."

6) It is necessary to enunciate the letter Yud of Shema Yisroel distinctly, so that it will not sound like Isroel.

7) One must hear the words of the Shema as one recites it (because it is written, "Hear O Israel). If one did not recite it audibly one has still fulfilled the precept provided that he articulated the words with his lips.

8) One should pay attention to the meaning of the words throughout the three sections of the Shema. Of primary importance, however, is the Kavanah of the first verses (Shema Yisroel....) followed by "Boruch Shaim.... Blessed be the Name, which expresses acceptance of the Heavenly Yoke. If these two verses are recited without proper concentration then they must be repeated. After these two verses have been said, he continues with the other sections, and one will have fulfilled the Mitzvah even if he only reads the words.

There are many other laws appertaining to the pronunciation and pauses in between words in the other sections, but the above will suffice for the time being.

Many of my reader's have requested that I should include the genealogical table of our family so that one would know immediately to whom I am referring.

Family Tree

Hindy Jaffe married Shmuel Lew

Name	Age	Married	Children
Yossi	28	Shternie	C.Mushka, S.Ber, Channa
Mendie	26	Rivka	C.Mushka, Channah
Chaya	25	Shimon Posner	Mousia, Freidie, Chana
Golda Rivka	24	Menachem Yunik	Yosef Yitzchok
Pincus	22		
Channah	21	Yosef Lipsker	Chaya Mushka
Zelda Rochel	19	Hershly Vogel	
Sholom Ber	18		
Toby Gittel	16		
Shaindel	14		
Benzion	13		
Bas Sheva	11		
Yisroel	9		
Yocheved	7		
Moshe	4		

Avrohom Jaffe married Susan Beenstock

Name	Age	Married	Children
Dovid	26	Rochel	Menachem- Mendel, Yakov Zvi
Leah	25	Max Cohen	Moshe, Soro, Gavriel, Levi, Shalom Ber
Levi	24		
Chana	22	Yossi Marlow	Menachem- Mendel, Levi
Golda	21	Avremel Kievman	
Shmulie	19		
Aaron	16		
Dina	8		

Bernard Perrin

My old friend, Bernard (Perrin) insisted last year upon typing the whole of "My Encounter with the Rebbe, Shlita" Number 22, using his word processor. He would not accept from me one penny piece in remuneration. His only aim and ambition was to produce a perfect book with no errors or spelling mistakes.

Mr. Stanley Fields, the managing director of the Fields Press, who printed and bound the book, paid Bernard the finest compliment and gave him the highest accolade.

He issued the following statement:

"Bernard Perrin's work is impeccable, fantastic and consistently perfect. This makes my work so much easier as the letters are all evenly typed. It also enables the photographs to come out better because less ink is needed."

My only complaint is that Bernard is a hard taskmaster. He pesters, cajoles, threatens and reproaches me continuously, to hand over some of my manuscripts without delay, "or else there will be the usual 'mad rush' to complete the book in time for Shavuos."

I realise and appreciate that this is for my own good and I am extremely grateful to him.

I hope and pray that we shall produce in the future many, many more "Encounters", together - and with the Rebbe and all of us enjoying the best of health.

I also offer best wishes to Bernard and hope that he, together with his wife, Hilda, will celebrate many family Simchas and enjoy much Nachas therefrom.

Letters of Appreciation

I was delighted to receive many wonderful letters of appreciation. One lengthy letter from a Crown Heights lady was quite fantastic - full of blessings and praise.

But the one letter which I shall always include in my book was the one from Walter (Hubert).

For over twenty years he has sent me a note immediately on receipt of each new instalment. He maintains that my books get better every year - well, Walter, so do your letters.

This is what he wrote:

Dear Zalmon,

Thank you for sending me the 22nd Edition of your annual book - by now, you should have been nominated for the "Book of the Year award" - in the following sections:

Humour - Human interest - Yiddishkeit - Torah - and I am certain that you would top each section.

Jewish orientated books written in English are still scarce and you are continuing to set a wonderful example. I look forward to all your future editions.

Thank you for your "family news". We must get together please - when Roselyn and yourself are next in Israel. My Dad is home, following 5½ weeks in hospital - still unwell.

Enclosed is my donation to the "Special Fund".

Every good wish from house to house and love to Roselyn.

Walter

However, I regret to state that Walter's father, Arthur Hubert O.B.E., did pass away during the next few months. He was a gentleman, a most generous and philanthropic person, and a stalwart of Lubavitch.

He and his wife Martha (O.H.) were actively engaged in helping the finances of Manchester

Lubavitch. They came to our rescue more than once.

Walter continues in the rewarding tradition of supporting worthy Torah institutions - in Israel and throughout the world. Roselyn and I are fortunate that we may reckon him and his charming wife, Rebecca, amongst our friends.

Another unusual letter was the one which I received from my old friend Philip Machnikoff - of Great Neck and Manhattan.

Dear Zalmon,

Many thanks for the 22nd book.

I really enjoy reading about all the events at "770" and always learn something new.

Did you know my licence plates on my car are

"PM 770"

I get real enjoyment from this attachment to 770.

Best regards to all.

Enclosed a check for the Yeshiva.

Phil

Lag B'Omer 5751 - in Manchester

We held our Lag B'Omer "Experience and Fair" – for boys at Lubavitch House – and for girls at the Broughton Jewish School, about 250 yard away

I thought that I was actually in Crown Heights. There were colourful banners stretched across the street - just like Kingston Avenue. Shmuel Yosef Davidson and some other Yeshiva boys had done a good job.

They looked very nice until the police arrived and wanted to know who gave them permission to fix these banners across a public thoroughfare and highway.

A (cheeky) Yeshiva boy, not renowned for his diplomacy or tact, became abusive and argumentative, with the obvious result that the police became annoyed and ordered them to take down the banners immediately - at once - and FORTHWITH - or else!!

Poor Shmuel Yosef was heartbroken and was almost in tears. He had spent many hours during the night fixing these banners. He had also covered the whole front of Lubavitch house with the twelve Torah verses in huge Hebrew letters. Fortunately, the Law had no jurisdiction on our private property and "Our Law", or 12 verses of them, remained on our wall intact.

For the entertainment of the boys a huge rubber "Jumping Castle" had been erected and inflated and was doing brisk business. Some Yeshiva boys tried to persuade me to "have a go" and they offered to protect me. I had reluctantly to refuse their kind offer - I would have been bouncing all over the castle. They maintained that it would be safer than at certain times in 770!

A four piece band was going great "drums", but had to be temporarily halted whilst we davened Mincha.

Inside Lubavitch House there was a large conglomeration of games - electronic gadgets and just plain, ordinary ones. Those players who won received a variety of prizes.

A special machine was on display which produced badges to one's own design. I wrote my name on a piece of paper and placed it inside a metal plate. This machine impressed or stamped another metal plate onto the first and the result was a very professional, but home made, badge complete with a pin for attaching to a jacket or frock.

When I visited the girls' section Soro Weisz insisted on making me a similar badge:

Lag B'Omer, 5751

To Zaidy Jaffe

from the girls' side

Swings and a little roundabout were provided for the children's enjoyment.

Gavriel, my great-grandson aged nearly 3, insisted upon having a ride on this contraption, and his brother Levi Yitzchok, just over one year old, joined him. Both waited excitedly and impatiently and with keen anticipation for the cars to commence their ride. However, just before they were due to start, Gavriel decided that he had already had enough and jumped down. A young girl chaperoned Levi and they were off. And so was Levi. He opened his mouth wide and emitted a huge yell. He kept his mouth wide open and his lungs at full blast whilst poor Leah (his mother) chased -around and around this roundabout - literally running around in circles - until she could reach and grab Levi and pull him off the machine.

I should imagine that both Gavriel and Levi suddenly realised that they were in the girls' section and became embarrassed!?!

Meanwhile, at 770, the Rebbe again distributed a specially minted coin to the many thousands of people who had attended the Lag B'Omer celebrations about which I wrote last year.

Erev Shavuos

We departed from Manchester on Tuesday, May 14th 1991, Rosh Chodesh Sivan. We carried with us four boxes containing my new "Encounter with the Rebbe, Shlita, No. 22". We also took along with us our young friend Soro Weisz who also very kindly brought along two of these boxes.

Dovid Kessler's father-in-law, Rabbi Josephs, also assisted by carrying a box.

The customs official wanted to know, "How many more people with boxes of books are coming today?"

Dovid (Jaffe) met us at J.K. Kennedy Airport with a car and brought along his little baby, Menachem.

We had two extremely large suitcases. Soro Weisz and her friend Soro Lent also possessed, between them, four big suitcases. We also had seven boxes of books and five pieces of hand luggage. Therefore, with five adults and one baby it was quite a squeeze. The baby was not the only one to be placed on someone's knees. Some luggage was piled upon all the passengers too.

It was a very old car and there was a gigantic hole in the floor boards into which Roselyn's feet protruded. She complained bitterly that she actually ran the "hole" way to Crown Heights.

On arrival at 770, I handed to Rabbi Label Groner my usual letter for the Rebbe together with "My Encounter with the Rebbe, Shlita" Number 22, as well as letters from relatives and friends including Susan, my daughter-in-law, and Leah (Cohen) my granddaughter. Avrohom had sent the Maamud money for the Rebbe's special fund.

Label advised me to make sure that Roselyn would be in Shool at Maariv time, 8.45 p.m., as the Rebbe might be giving out dollars. Of course, on the other hand, he could not be absolutely certain.

The Rebbe did arrive at 8.45 p.m. He saw me standing at my usual place near the Oran Hakodesh and he bestowed upon me one of his most beautiful smiles. He indicated that he was disappointed that he could not see any of my great grandchildren at my side.

There was no dollar distribution that evening. I dashed over to our apartment and informed Roselyn about the exceptional smile which I had already received from the Rebbe and that there was no need for her to rush for dollars at that moment.

Sir Sydney Hamburger, my life-long friend, had some little criticism to make about my last book. He maintained that I had mentioned over and over again that the Rebbe had bestowed upon me "a lovely smile", "a gorgeous smile" and so forth and that Roselyn had always been honored and privileged to receive her share of these marvelous gestures of welcome and friendliness.

I explained to Sir Sydney that Roselyn and I were not the only beneficiaries of these nice smiles from the Rebbe. But it was rare enough to cause the weekly news letter, "Bais Chayainu", which is published at Crown Heights, to comment upon this fact whenever the Rebbe did smile at someone.

Rabbi Boruch Slonim from Jerusalem was in charge of this "Baia Chayainu" magazine. His grandfather was the great Chabad/Lubavitcher Rabbi in Jerusalem whom everyone honoured and respected. My brother Maurice (O.H.) knew him very well and thought very highly of him.

I am extremely proud and gratified that I have the merit to make the Rebbe smile and, may I add, to even laugh occasionally.

We now had the opportunity of meeting Golda's Choson, Avremie Kieveman. He seemed to be a very nice young man, good looking, energetic, with verve and charm, and, most important, with much common sense. Roselyn and I were looking forward to welcoming to our home this new addition to our family.

Avrohom and Susan had been here for the "vort" last week and they had decided that the wedding should take place in six or seven weeks time. We did not expect to welcome Avremie so soon! Actually, it was even sooner than that because they were married just four weeks after we returned home from 770. (This day was the last before the start of the three weeks of National Mourning when no weddings may take place.)

I suppose that as long as the arrangements and details could be organised then there was no reason why there should be any delay. It would not be fair to ask Golda and Avremie to wait longer than necessary.

Our concern was with Golda. And I have to confess that she looked really lovely, radiant, happy and effervescent. I am certain that, P.G., they will be very happy together.

As Golda wrote to Toby, her other Bobby, "Avremie is a loving, caring and Chassidishe boy. Just what I want."

A slim young man approached me. He was Yossi Sternberg, a grandson of Zalmon and Chava Gurary. I have to admit that I could not recognize him. He used to have a huge, fat face and even stouter body. He had lost sixty pounds in weight (four and a half stones) in only five

months - mostly by not eating very much - and the transformation was remarkable! He has now a very thin face and an even slimmer body.

Rabbi Schneur Zalmon Labkowsky, the Rosh of the Crown Heights Yeshiva and Rav in charge of the Kinus HaTorah, reminded me that I should not forget that the Kinus HaTorah would take place on Tuesday, Isru Chag (the day after Yom Tov) and I should be prepared to address the gathering as usual.

Rabbi Ephraim Kohayne Coren handed me his "card". This stated, amongst other things, that he was "Assistant Matchmaker", a Shadchan. I could not understand his humility in referring to himself as an Assistant Shadchan. He explained to me that the A mighty is THE Matchmaker (as hinted in the Torah) so he assists HaShem.

On wendsday morning Label handed me a reply from the Rebbe. It stated:
"Received (everything) and (I) thank you very much. And you should hear good news about everything as we draw near to the Festival of Shavuos with joy and inner satisfaction and delight. I will mention you at the Tzion."

There was also a message to my granddaughter Bluma Leah Cohen that she should check all the Mezzuzas and the Tefillin, and the Rebbe would mention her at the Tzion.

Roselyn and I delivered the five bottles of vodka to Label at his office. Label was, as usual, very busy. He has three telephones and three faxes - plus mountains of papers all over the place - plus crowds of people waiting to see him and speak with him. There were no chairs for visitors so no one would overstay their welcome. Label was on the phone to one caller for over ten minutes and he was scribbling away furiously, non-stop, writing down names, names of mothers, and so forth. It must have been a wholesale order.

Golda and Avremel

For the past few weeks we had heard rumours that our granddaughter Golda (Jaffe) had been meeting a nice young man (with the Rebbe's prior permission, of course). Therefore, it came as no surprise to us when Golda telephoned on Sunday, May 5th, to inform us that she and Avremel Kievman had written into the Rebbe to say that they would like to become engaged to be married, and that the Rebbe had given his approbation and blessings to this union.

Golda added that she was "so-very-happy" and that, "Avremel was just the boy she wanted." They both sounded so thrilled and overjoyed that we were a little perplexed and wondered why it had taken them so long to discover that they were "mate" for each other.

Personally, I considered that Avremel had an ulterior motive because, a little while ago, the Rebbe had expounded during a Sicho, that a couple were entitled, and even encouraged, to see each other as often as possible to discover whether they were compatible. But as soon as the "Vort" (the exchange of words or vows) had taken place, and they were now officially engaged to be married, then the couple should meet only on very rare occasions until the actual marriage ceremony.

So, meanwhile, until they had received the approval of the Rebbe, they had spent as much time as possible in the company of each other.

Therefore, on this very Sunday, Avrohom and Susan took the first flight to New York in order to meet their prospective son-in-law and his parents.

When they reached 770, they discovered that the Rebbe was still handing out dollars and blessings and advice. So, at 5.45 p.m. Avrohom and Susan, together with Golda and Avremel, and accompanied by their new Mechutanim, Boruch and Channah Kievman, joined the queue for dollars.

The Rebbe extended to them wonderful brochas, that the Chosson and Kallah should establish a "Binyan Adei Ad" - an everlasting edifice, and that the parents and families should enjoy much Nachass from this union.

The Rebbe asked Avrohom, "Is your father here for the Simcha?" Avrohom replied, "No, but he will be, P.G., coming over next Thursday for Yom Tov." The Rebbe said, "Here is a dollar for him."

They all took their leave from the Rebbe and departed. Suddenly, they heard Label shouting, "Reb Avrohom, Reb Avrohom!" It transpired that the Rebbe wished to speak to Avrohom again.

The Rebbe said, "It would be a good idea if your mother would come as well next week. They should come together - and here is another dollar for your mother."

The official "Vort" took place that evening and Golda phoned her friend Rivka Pink, our neighbour, and described the details of that eventful evening. Within minutes, it seemed that all Manchester had already heard the news and people were phoning us offering their congratulations and Mazel Tov.

Next morning in Shool, Phaivish Pink gave us a vivid account of the previous evening's celebrations. He stated that Avremel, the Chosson, had been very excited, happy and cheerful, which Phaivish interpreted as having partaken of just one glass too many - a full glass of vodka extra, presumably.

Golda, being a dutiful and loving Kallah, rushed to Avremel's defence and explained that Avremel had been extremely nervous, so he had a little drink - and another one - and one more - until he was no longer nervous, but very - ah - cheerful.

Some Comments on my Instalment, No. 22

Leah (Cohen) and Sholom Ber (Lew), our grandchildren, complained that my book was not long enough. It was "more-ish". They wanted to read more - and more. The reason why Chanshi Liberow read it in one night was because she could not wait to find out what was on the "next page".

Our friend, Professor Immanuel Shochet of Canada, the well known author and lecturer, came to Manchester. He maintained that he dared not visit our city without calling at our home to see me.

He complained that I always kept him awake all night reading my book. He now intended to obtain his revenge and he presented me with his latest work - with the hope that this would keep me awake all night.

Roselyn is an avid reader and she took this book to bed with her. She admitted that she never slept all night. She was continuously busy referring to the dictionary to discover the plain English meaning of some of these unusual and extraordinary words which Immanuel had used in his latest book.

This reminded me of the time when I complained to the Rebbe that I could not understand many of the words which were used in the English Translation of his Sichos. I needed a dictionary. The Rebbe indicated that it was not his intention that one should use his Sichos in order to learn the English language.

Levi (Jaffe) had promised to go shopping for us at 9 a.m. He entered our apartment at 12 noon. He blamed me because he was up till 3 a.m. reading my book. Roselyn interrupted and said it was no excuse and that he did not have to finish the book in one night.

He fell asleep at 4 a.m. He had now brought details of mistakes which I had made in this last instalment. These filled two pages of notepaper and he had quoted chapter, verse and line. (A busy Levy for Levi).

For example: (1) I had written that Zelda Rochel was in Sydney, Australia, whereas she was in Melbourne.

Z.J. - Her actual address was Balaclava, Victoria, so how was I to know that it was Melbourne

and not Sydney?

(2) I had reported that the Vilna Gaon had informed to the Russian authorities about the Rebbe's activities (sending money to the poor and needy Jews in Jerusalem, teaching Chassidus, etc.) and therefore the alter Rebbe was committed for treason, whereas it was the supporters of the Vilna Gaon who had done so.

Z.J. - I had prefaced this chapter with the words that "this was my own version." And I have always been taught that a governor is always responsible for the activities of his people. In any case, I am convinced that the Vilna Gaon must have known that the Alter Rebbe had been sentenced to death for alleged treason and that his followers had been responsible.

(3) There was a nice photograph of the Koss Shel Brocha. I had stated that Levi Freidin had taken this picture - but he was also in this photograph.

Z.J. - It was magic or trick photography or, perhaps, Shimon Roomani was the camera man.

(4) I had written that the Alter Rebbe was released from prison in 1820 whereas he had already passed away about ten years before that time.

Z.J. - Yes, I admit it was a very grave mistake...

I had received very good reports about my latest Instalment, Number 22, but the opinion which I valued most, the views and comments from the Rebbe, for which I was anxiously awaiting, maybe with some slight trepidation, had not yet arrived.

I wrote to the Rebbe that I was becoming a little upset and getting worried. By return I received this exceptionally nice reply:

"Re your letter of the second of Sivan regarding the book. It is going from strength to strength, as is appropriate for a book which describes the Farbraingens and the feelings of those men and women who participate (in them).

May it be the Will (of Hashem) that you should merit, amongst the rest of the Jewish People, to the continuation of the verse (of strength to strength) 'that we shall be shown Hashem in Zion.' Azkir Al Hatzion."

We were extremely gratified when our friend Sholom (Gansberg) called in to see us during the morning. We enjoyed a small "Le'Chaim", a little snack and lots of reminiscing. It is so delightful and satisfying to relax and talk about the "old" times, and share treasured memories, especially those concerning our dear Rebbetzen (Z.Tz.L.).

Vividly, we relived our unique experiences with her. Sholom had certainly been very helpful to us as our "go-between". He was (and is) a true friend.

We found an extra shower had been installed in our bathroom. Unfortunately, it could not be turned off. The water was pouring through the ceiling from the Avtzon's flat upstairs. We had placed a few buckets in position to contain the water and stop it spreading all over our apartment

We were kept busy emptying these buckets until Lazer returned and turned off the water at its source.

Trials at the Hairdressers

Our granddaughters Golda Rivka (Yunik) and Channah (Lipsker) had just returned from the hairdressers. Both looked very glamorous. They had spent about four hours there, so they should have looked good.

However, the afternoon had been full of rather odd surprises.

Firstly, Channah had sat on the chair and the hairdresser had placed the wig upon her head. She combed it and styled it but Channah was not very happy with the result. It did not feel quite right! It was curly and too long.

The hairdresser washed it again to straighten it out and wanted to cut it shorter. Channah remonstrated that she should leave it as it was. She was very adamant and shouted, "No, no, leave it."

After four hours it became evident that this was not Channah's wig at all. The hairdresser had been washing and styling Golda Rivka's wig upon Channah's head - all afternoon - and all for \$25 a head.

More Anecdotes

I received a serious complaint from our dear friend Raizie (Minkowitz). She said, "Your book is not long enough, it could do with another twenty pages, at least." I realised very much later that there were 210 pages in this instalment plus two pages for the index = 212. This is the Gematria of Rebbe, Raish = 200 Bais = 2 Yud = 10 total 212.

Of the Spielman (twin) boys - Levi Yitzchok was always laughing and Yaakov Yaul was always frowning. Well, one got married, I don't know which one, because they are now both laughing.

Levi (Jaffe) invited me to address the Yeshiva boys of his class who studied the Rebbe's Sichos every night. This would take place at 10.30 p.m. till 11.30 p.m. I maintained that this hour was much too late for me and it would have to take place very much earlier - at about 8.30 p.m.

Levi remonstrated that they could not "Mevatel" (disparage) the Shiur. It was always at a fixed time and could not be changed.

And yet, a few days later, he and a car-load of friends travelled to Ohio to attend the wedding of their Chaver Kaltman. "So," said I, "What happens to the Shiur on those three days?"

"No problem," replied Levi, "All the boys of the class are going too, so we can have the Shiur at the wedding." He must be joking! I can just imagine what kind of a Shiur they will be holding on the dance floor.

However, I was adamant about speaking at 8.30 p.m. so they arranged that I should give my address from 8.30 p.m. until 9.30 p.m., and they would continue their Shiur afterwards.

This Farbraingen (we had drinks, cake and Mashkie) took place at 770 in the small room leading from the Bess HaMedrash upstairs. This room was full to overflowing, about 35 people altogether, so a number of people were squeezed into the smaller, adjoining room.

After my talk, one of the boys who had been sitting in that room and had been listening to my

stories, but could only hear them and was unable to see me, exclaimed, "Zalmon Jaffe has a wonderful memory. He could recall every detail of what had occurred twenty years ago."

He did not realise that I was actually reading excerpts from my book.

The boys must have been well satisfied with my talk because they invited me to address them a second time.

Levi told me that Rabbi Estulin went for dollars. The Rebbe told him to make a wish which might be granted - at this auspicious occasion. Rabbi Estulin pleaded that he wanted the Rebbe to be Gezunt (well).

The Rebbe replied, "Very good - I am already Gezunt."

A member of our family was unlucky to get a wooden splinter under his thumb nail - not difficult to obtain at 770. He went to a doctor who took out the splinter, gave him an injection, and charged him one hundred and fifty dollars! I do not know which hurt more - the splinter or the overcharging!

Aaron (Jaffe) sent a letter to the Rebbe in which he had stated (among other matters) that he wanted to give to the Rebbe "Nachas Ruach" (spiritual pleasure).

In his reply, the Rebbe had inserted the word "Rov" (much) before Nachas Ruach. This implied that Aaron would give to the Rebbe very much spiritual pleasure.

One morning, Myer Harlick asked Rabbi Sender Liberow (of Manchester) to conduct the Shacharis service.

Sender refused because "he could not keep up with the Chazan or the Rebbe. The service on that particular morning, including Tehillim, took only twenty six minutes, which was really very fast indeed.

I pointed out to Sender that we now had a good example to follow at home. He became very angry and blamed the Chazan for rushing the davenning. He also noted that the Rebbe could barely keep up with the Chazan.

On the contrary, I asserted that (1) the Rebbe always finished the Shema before anyone else.

And (2) the Rebbe always concluded the Amida before the rest.

Needless to say, after that refusal, Myer did not ask Sender to lead the morning service any more.

A little Israeli Rabbi (small size and small ambition) was overwhelmed with astonishment and surprise. He goes around the Shool asking for Tzedoka and almost everyone would hand him a dollar.

Today, Beryl Weiss had presented him with a twenty dollar note. He confessed to me that in all the years that he had been visiting 770, or the U.S.A. this was the first time he had ever seen a twenty dollar bill. He wished to borrow a pen to make out a receipt for this large, unusual and generous donation.

Similarly, every day quite a number of "poor" men are seeking alms at 770. When they are handed a dollar they automatically give back 75 cents change.

We had a fairly good example of the story about the difference between Nachas and Mechaya.

After Kos Shel Brocha at 1.30 a.m. (after midnight) some of our grandchildren and great grandchildren congregated at our apartment. They were (K.A.H. Nisht) Marlows 3: Posners 4: Yuniks 3: Jaffes (Dovid) 3: Yossi Lew 3: Levi and Shmulie (Jaffe) 2: Shterney's brother 1: Rochel's sister 1: Golda Jaffe 1.

A grand total of (Nisht) 21 (excluding Roselyn and me). Well - we certainly did imbibe much NACHAS.

After half an hour of deafening noise - chattering, screaming, crying and shouting - they departed and left us in peace and quietness. "It was a MECHAYA."

Dovid (Jaffe) desired to go on Tahalucha - the Shavuos march to Boro' Park. He did not wish to leave his baby, Menachem Mendel, behind at Crown Heights, so he placed him in a stroller (pram or perambulator) and wheeled the baby all the way to Boro' Park - a distance of five miles.

I wonder if Dovid expected Menachem Mendel to reverse the process and wheel him, Dovid, back to 770?

Yossi Gutnick was telling me that before he left Australia to fly to 770, his doctor always gave him an injection to help his resistance. Someone who was listening to this conversation asked,

"Where did you have these injections? In Australia or New York?"

"No" replied Yossi, "In the bottom of my backside."

Levi quoted one of his friends who had stated that I write what I think, others think what they write.

Tikun Shavuos, the special prayers for this Yom Tov are recited on the first night of Shavuos, after the evening meal. They take about four hours or more to complete.

Many years ago, the Rebbe used to join us downstairs at 770 and recite a Maamer from 3 a.m. until 3.45 a.m., after which most of the congregants left for home and bed.

You will recall that I have mentioned on many occasions how different it is - nay - almost impossible - to say this "Tikun Shavuos" at 770. The place is crowded, and friends who have not seen each other of ages have the opportunity to meet again and catch up with the latest local, national and international Lubavitch news.

I always say "Tikun" at home and latterly, Shmuel (Lew), my son-in-law, and some of my grandsons, have joined me there.

This year the Rebbe made a very important announcement. He stated that "One of the previous Rebbes had suggested that one should really say Tikun on both nights of Shavuos, but he (the Rebbe, Shlito) maintained that it should be said - at least - on the first night.

So everybody was saying Tikun this year at 770. No talking! No gossiping! Everyone was busy concentrating on reciting these special prayers.

I possess three of these books. I used one, Levi used the second, I lent one to Shmulie and, because it consisted mainly of loose pages, Shmulie rushed off to 770 where, owing to the sudden demand, these books were in very short supply. Shmulie shared the loose pages with very many of his friends.

At the Farbraingens I felt a little like "Rip Van Winkle" the fellow who woke up after sleeping for a hundred years.

Many of my old friends had passed away and now, most of my neighbours were young men.

Some now sat in the places of their late fathers - a Yerusha - an inheritance by Divine right!?

Instead of my friend J.J. (Hecht) his son now sat next to me, and I believe that Dovid, my grandson, occupies my place when I am not present.

However, many of the boys had completely filled the centre gangway facing the Rebbe which was supposed to be kept clear at all times for the "convenience" of the old men and in case of emergency. Some of these boys were insufferably cheeky and impertinent and held no regard nor respect for these elderly men who still managed to occupy their regular places.

It was shocking to see one or two of these insolent boys actually pushing and thrusting themselves backwards onto this bench and leaving the poor gentlemen sprawling over the bench and, each other.

At one Shabbos Farbraingen, young Hecht counted thirty three bottles of vodka which were provided by the Shiluchim for some special event. The Rebbe handed a bottle to each Sheliach together with a brocha.

At the conclusion, there were two bottles short!! My son, Avrohom, the co-chairman of the Manchester Yeshiva Gedola, had organized a special Fund Raising Dinner to celebrate the reconstruction of our premises after the disastrous fire of the past year. This banquet was to take place on the 7th of Tammuz.

I was asked to prevail upon the Rebbe to provide me with a bottle of vodka to enhance the occasion and to request a blessing that the function would be a social and financial success. (Which subsequently, it was indeed).

I walked along the tables to the top dais and faced the Rebbe who greeted me with a lovely smile. The Rebbe handed to me a big bottle of Vodka, much larger than the one which I had left with Label at his office.

The Rebbe poured out for me, into a small tumbler, a small quantity, and wished me a LeChaim and much success.

I now had to explain to the large assembly the reason why I desired this vodka and also to extend to all those present an open invitation to attend our Simcha.

I indicated that absolutely no one would deliberately and willingly suffer the heartbreak and anguish which we experienced during that terrible period. But the Rebbe had consoled us by declaring that some good would emanate from that calamity.

And that is what did occur - we literally "lifted the roof", fractionally, and these few inches enabled us to add a third storey inside the same area we had before. We therefore now possessed many more offices, a small hall and a telecommunications room.

The whole building had been refurbished and we could now boast that we had reached the

same high standard, physically and materially, as were the spiritual and academic faculties of the Yeshiva.

A fellow confided to Dovid, in Yiddish, that although he could not understand one word of my address, he could readily appreciate that I seemed to speak very well. He added that I must have plenty of money! I had to admit that I could not see the connection!

I had promised Chaya and Shimon (Posner) that we would visit their Long Island venue to Farbraingen with one of their regular classes.

Twenty men and women were present. Yoseph Guigue, the owner of the "Promised land" restaurant, was now a real fiery Lubavitcher and provided refreshments for all of us and made everyone very welcome.

Shimon made a nice introduction and I spoke all about the Rebbe - his love for fellow Jews, and so forth, for about an hour and a quarter. They loved it and lapped it up.

I added much humour and Roselyn (always my chief critic) said that it was a huge success.

We promised to join them again during the following Success, all being well.



The actual printing of "My Encounter" No. 22, cost me personally over six dollars for each copy, and I do not reckon anything for other expences, nor for my own work as the author.

But I do endeavour to make some money for our Manchester Yeshiva Gedola and I am truly grateful to my many good friends who donate so generously to the funds of the Yeshiva when I present them with my book.

Because of this, I am in the position of being able to let some Yeshiva boys have a copy for just a nominal sum, or even for nothing in exceptional cases.

An old friend of mine had been pestering me for a copy of my book. He had offered me five dollars for the Yeshiva, which I considered silly. He had been chasing me for two weeks but when he mentioned that he could not afford any more I relented and accepted the five dollars and gave him a note to the effect that Binyomin Klein (who had stocks of books for me) should hand over to him a copy.

Binyomin was on his way down with the Rebbe and he told my friend to come later on. After Maariv, however, he, my friend, had second thoughts (more like twenty second thoughts) and sent over his son to me to collect and take back his five dollars. Maybe I had overcharged him!

RABBI YOSEPH YITZCHOK GUTNICK

For many years Yossi was in the gold mining business, mostly in stocks and shares, and had been extremely successful. Every year he gave away to Tzedoka very much more than 10% of his profits.

Over three years ago, the International Stock Market crashed overnight. Thousands of people were completely ruined, and many entrepreneurs were wiped out.

All Yossi's wealth had been in "paper assets", which were now of little value, and he was in dire straits.

He did not know what to do but he did know to whom to turn - to the Rebbe, who gave him advice, guidance and encouragement. Yossi obeyed all the Rebbe's instructions implicitly.

Besides the Rebbe, Yossi possessed another asset - an area of 7,000 square kilometres in the Northern Desert of Western Australia. The Rebbe told Yossi to, "hang on to this site - to keep digging and exploring - and you will find gold. It is waiting for you under the ground - for you to get it out."

There is an association of wealthy men who meet the Rebbe every year at 770 to receive blessings and advice.

A few months ago, one of these men informed the Rebbe that there had been "some good news about Yossi Gutnick's gold mine." The Rebbe indicated that in addition to gold they would also find diamonds!

Yossi was perplexed but obtained the services of a geologist. Two months later, the famous De Beers Diamond Company approached Yossi to make a deal with them for exploration and digging.

Yossi also did his own exploring – and found "white rocks". And just four weeks ago he found not only diamonds, but gold as well!

Below is a photograph of Yossi and me at 770. He is still in the middle of Davenning.

I maintain that it could not have happened to a nicer man. He is himself a real diamond! The

Rebbe told him that he should now give double Tzedoka - and without hesitation or vacillation - he does give twice as much as last year.

Last year he gave me \$100 for the Yeshiva on account of my book, so he handed me today \$200. Last year he donated \$1,800 to the Yeshiva because of the fire. He has now promised to double this amount. I do very much regret that I did not ask for more last year.



At 770 he is always surrounded by at least a dozen Rabbonim, Shelichim and others appealing for funds, which Yossi distributes with generous profusion.

VITAL DIPLOMACY BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Yossi was in Israel at the behest of the Rebbe to try to ensure that Yitchok Shamir would be able to form a government - on his own. No deals - no conditions - and no coalition with Shimon Perez.

There were just two aims:

- 1) No return of land for (so called) Peace!
- 2) To be firm and strong and have no discussions with the P.L.O. The Aguda, whom the Rebbe had helped so much, were being very difficult.

Yossi held talks with Shamir, Sharon, the Gerer and Viznitcher Chassidim, and other groups of individuals, to ensure that Shamir would be successful in forming a government on his own, with no union with Perez. This would, of course, ensure that Perez would be unable to form a government with the Arab members of the Keneset, the Communist "Peace Now", the Aguda, and so on.

Finally - just one vote tipped the balance towards Shamir, when Rabbi Werdiger left the Aguda

and joined Shamir.

So, at long last, on the 50th day of the negotiations, on the 15th of Sivan, Yitchok Shamir formed his government.

On that selfsame day, Yossi receive a letter by FAX from the Rebbe to the effect that:

"In addition to these good tidings you will receive additional good tidings."

Only a few hours later, Yossi's wife, Shternie, telephoned to him at Jerusalem, from Australia, to advise him that she had just seen the doctor who had confirmed that she was "expecting" twins.

There was great delight and excitement on all sides. Shternie had always loved the thought of possessing twins. But it was not something that one can buy for money. It is a blessing from HaShem, so everyone was very thrilled for Shternie and Yossi.

The principal lesson which Yossi was most anxious to teach us was:

"One had to accept and carry out all the instructions of the Rebbe with alacrity and comprehensively - no matter how inconceivable or far-fetched they seemed to be."

An Unexpected Shabbos Farbraingen

Shabbos was due to conclude at 9.05 p.m. At 8.05 p.m. - very unexpectedly and without any warning - the Rebbe had, all alone, entered the Shool downstairs at 770.

Only one hundred and fifty boys were present and a very late Mincha service was still in progress. An open Sefer Torah was lying upon a small table in front of the Oran HaKodesh (the Ark).

It came as a complete surprise and a shock to everyone to see the Rebbe unaccompanied. Not even Label nor Binyomin Klein were in attendance, which was most unusual and rare. But the Rebbe had suddenly decided that he wished to hold another Farbraingen during this "Yom Tov period". The Rebbe was carrying a towel and a silver "Quart" (a water container for washing one's hands before a meal).

The Rebbe walked past the Oran HaKodesh and ascended his platform. Within seconds the Rebbe's special chair had been set upon the dais and water, challah and salt had miraculously appeared. The Rebbe, thereupon, washed his hands and made the blessing over the bread.

Every single one of the one hundred and fifty boys was most anxious to see the Rebbe. In typical Lubavitch boys fashion, they climbed upon tables, chairs, and upon each other, until they had formed a pyramid which reached right up to the ceiling. It was obvious that these boys could now very easily see the Rebbe but, as usual in these cases, their own needs had priority over anyone else's requirements or enjoyment.

I had Yahrtzeit that evening and Myer Harlick had confirmed that I could be the Chazan at the Maariv service. I arrived at 770 at 8.30 p.m. so that I should be in good time.

All I could see was this pyramid. I should have made a supreme effort, whilst it was still possible, to crawl upon all fours under the tables and push past the legs of the boys who were standing on the floor. At that moment I might have gained access to stand in front of the pyramid and face the Rebbe.

But I couldn't - and I didn't!

So I was left standing on the periphery. However, I was told that all had sung the Shabbos Zemirus (songs) and that the Rebbe had related a fine Sicho, after which all the Rebbe's special

Nigunim (tunes) were also sung.

The place was filling up rapidly. Men and boys were crawling under tables and over tables. Other tables and benches were piled three and four layers high in order to accommodate all the people who wished to climb very high so that they were enabled to overlook the rest and see the Rebbe.

Soon, the whole area was covered with a solid mass of people. And - I - was still on the outer periphery and was finally pushed right against the wall.

At that moment, an enormous ladder was brought into the Shool and placed near to me. It was a special ladder which reached to the ceiling and we, at the back, all took turns to ascend to the top and to glimpse the Rebbe for a few moments.

It was time for Maariv and, as stated above, I had permission from Myer Harlick to be the Chazan on the occasion of my Yahrtzeit.

And, in view of what I have written above, one can quite understand the difficulties I now faced in order to reach the Omud (the lectern at the side of the Orun HaKodesh). It was a most unpleasant, grim and fearful venture, and I was lucky to get within two feet of the Omud. But from thereon I could make no further progress. It was heartbreaking and pathetic to be "so near and yet so far". It was very sad that I had to listen to someone else acting as the Chazan.

It was even sadder when Myer congratulated me on my lovely Maariv! That was really adding insult to injury.

After Maariv, the Rebbe made Havdola and it was announced that there would be a distribution of Kos Shel Brocha. I have been visiting 770 for over thirty two years and I have never witnessed the Kos Shel Brocha being given out on an ordinary Shabbos. Especially when it was only a few days since we had received this at the conclusion of Yom Tov.

It was reported however, that about twelve years ago, there had been a Kos Shel Brocha distribution on an ordinary Shabbos.

However, once again we had experienced the unpredictability of our Rebbe.

Wednesday Evening

Last night the Rebbe had indicated that he was surprised that I had no great-grandsons with me. Therefore, this evening I took the precaution of taking Yosef Yitzchok (Yunik) with me to 770 for the Mincha and Maariv services when the Rebbe returned from the Ohel.

I held him in my arms when the Rebbe walked through and onto the platform. The rebbe gave him a keen look. I handed the baby back to his father, Menachem. I had also lent him a Yarmulkie although he was barely one year old.

During Mincha and Maariv, which followed straight away, Yosef Yitzchok enjoyed himself immensely. He was munching and chewing away at the Yarmulkie. At least, this kept him quiet.

The Rebbe decided to distribute dollars immediately after Maariv and I stood there waiting to approach the Rebbe. Suddenly I noticed a baby's body soaring through the air and was about to fall in my direction. I managed to catch it and was left "holding the baby."

I realised that it was Menachem Mendel, Dovid's (Jaffe) baby. As was Dovid's usual custom he had arrived just seconds before the Rebbe commenced to hand out dollars. He could not push his way to the front, mainly because he did not have sufficient time, so he had no option but to throw the baby right over the assembled people for me to catch and take him to the Rebbe for a dollar.

Obviously, Menachem Mendel was deeply shocked and disgusted at receiving such harsh and unexpected treatment and he started to cry. He looked, at first, very attractive wearing a sailor's hat and suit, although his screaming and tearful eyes did detract a little from his handsome appearance.

The Rebbe was highly amused at my embarrassment and handed me a dollar and one, with difficulty, to tearful Menachem Mendel.

The Rebbe asked me whose baby it was? I replied that it was Dovid's. So the Rebbe pushed another dollar into Menachem Mendel's hands. We then both left - the baby still screaming and yelling - until Dovid came into view and took Menachem Mendel away from me.

Meanwhile, Roselyn and Golda Rivka and Channah (Lew) and Rochel (Dovid's wife) who had

joined the ladies' line, approached the Rebbe. Roselyn received a dollar and a good, old fashioned, glorious smile.

The ladies joined us (me, Dovid and the baby) outside. We rushed up the stairs into 770 and were just in time to see the Rebbe exit from the lift into the hallway. He again noticed Roselyn and he bestowed upon her another gorgeous smile. Roselyn is certainly a very lucky woman.

I had sent a letter to the Rebbe and I had added a P.S. (postscript) stating that, "The baby who was screaming when I took him to the Rebbe for a dollar, and who was given an extra dollar, was Dovid's son - another Menachem Mendel."

At once I received a reply as follows:

"Regarding the letter of erev Shabbos concerning the grandson! He is not another Menachem Mendel but rather the Menachem Mendel (**Ha** Menachem Mendel) who will be (thus) known when he will grow up." Azkir-Al-Hatzion (I will remember this at the Ohel)

This was certainly a breathtaking, moving and unexpected prophecy from the Rebbe.

It was erev Shabbos. I had been shopping and was returning to our flat. As I passed 770, I learnt that the Rebbe intended to visit the Ohel and that he would soon be going to the Mikvah.

I dumped the shopping trolley and told Roselyn that I was going straight back to 770 because there was a very distinct possibility that I would meet the Rebbe.

Two photographers - Shimon Roomani and Mr. Vishensky the Russian - were hovering about when I dodged under the barricade to await the Rebbe. I advised them to be well prepared, with their cameras set for instantaneous action, because there was a very good chance that the Rebbe might greet me with a smile.

In photograph No. 1 the Rebbe emerging from 770, Menachem is standing by.

The Rebbe emerged from the door of 770. I wished him a good erev Shabbos and a warm "Thank You" for everything.

The Rebbe asked, "What are you doing here?" I replied that, "I have come to see the Rebbe, Shlita." The Rebbe gave me a lovely smile, and two cameras clicked at the same time.

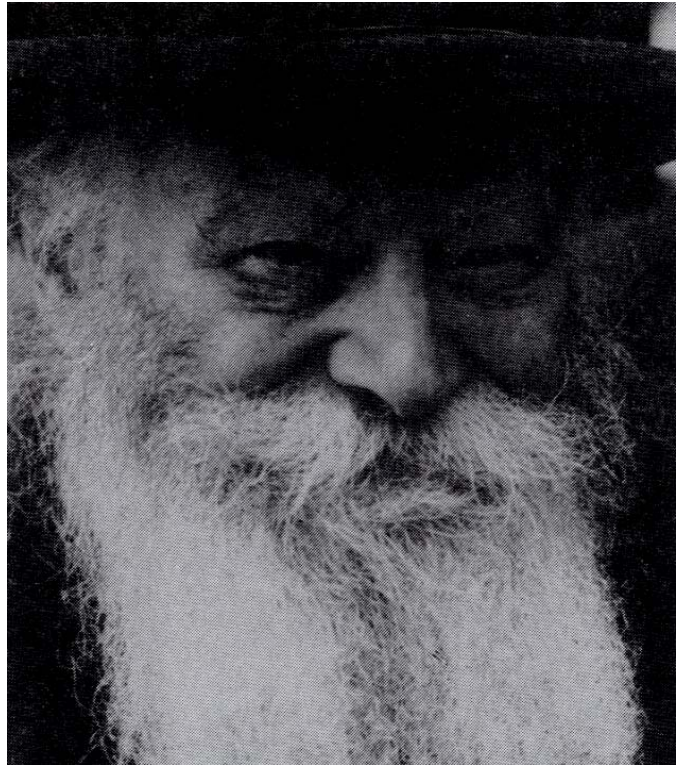
On the next page is the photograph that Mr. Vishensky was extremely lucky to take. This is how I always see the Rebbe. This picture, in colour, is also on the cover of this instalment.

This photograph was taken only ten seconds after the first one.

The Rebbe was very happy and gave me a nickel. He then enquired, "Where is Mrs. Jaffe?" I said that she was at the apartment preparing the meals. The Rebbe added, "Very well, and hand her this (nickel) from me."

Afterwards, there was the usual buzz of excitement and misinterpretation of what the Rebbe had said to me.

It was finally concluded and agreed that when the Rebbe had asked me, "What are you doing here?" The Rebbe had wanted to know - what was I doing in the reserved space behind the barrier!!?



Building Progress

No one who has read my books could be left in any doubt whatsoever that the Shool at 770 was much too small for the number of people - both men and women - who desired to pray together with the Rebbe and to be present at the Farbraingen.

Extensive plans have now been prepared and submitted to the Authorities which would effectively and completely change the whole appearance of the Shool. Both the women's and the men's sections would be transformed and poles and pillars would be conspicuous by their absence. Crowd capacity would be increased tremendously.

The first stage has now been started. The Shool, which was situated below ground-floor level, was being extended right up to the sidewalk of Eastern Parkway.

All the gardens in front of 770 were to be dug up to a depth of fifteen to twenty feet, and the washrooms and toilets would be sited in this new area.

The space of the present conveniences would be incorporated into the main Shool so that, straight away, there would be accommodation for many hundreds of extra people.

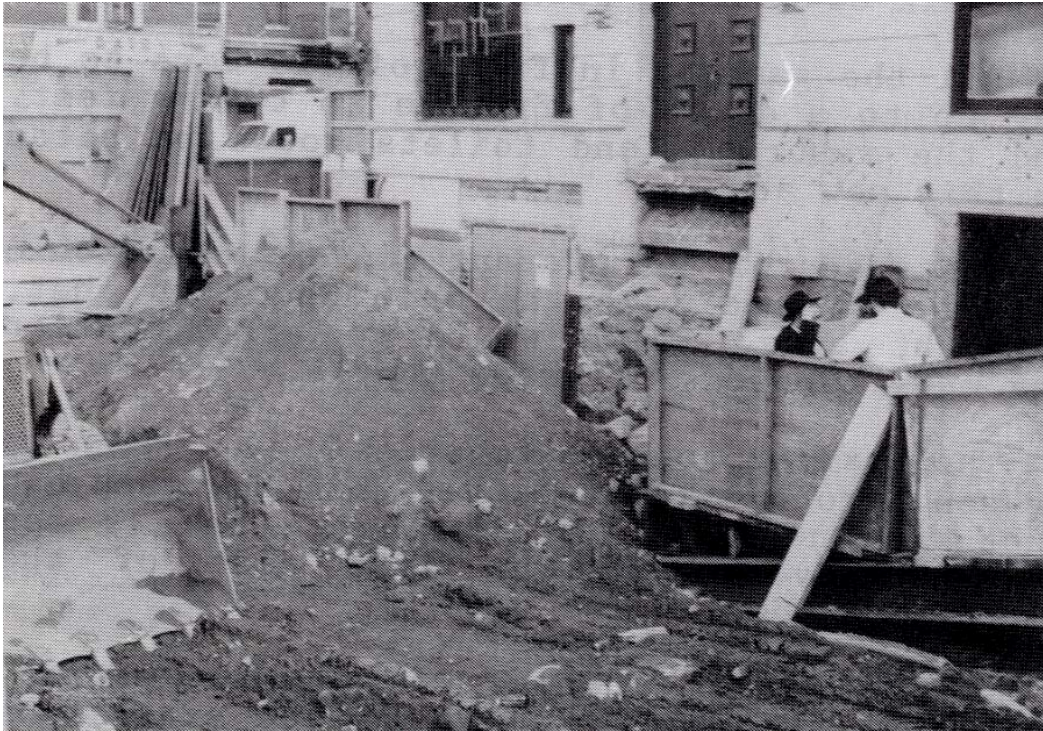
The next photograph (next page) was taken by my son Avrohom, Rabbi Jaffe, when the work had just commenced over a year ago. One may see Kingston Avenue at the left side of the picture.

Rabbi Shiur Pinson, the senior warden, wished to show me the plans of the extensions to the projected new Shool. This would include a two-tiered women's Shool. (It was about time that the ladies would get rid of the cause of all those 'tears' which have been shed in the past because of the terrible, confined and extremely congested area, where most of the women found it was impossible either to hear or to see the Rebbe).

Rabbi Pinson was seeking BIG donors with BIG money - not just a few thousand pounds!! As Samuel Goldwyn once remarked, "Exclude me out!" I am not in that super league. There was also great activity going on at the site of the library, next door to 770. Great progress had already been made.

The private apartment in which the Rebbe, Shlita, and the Rebbetzen Z.Tz.L. had resided latterly, during Shabbos and Yom Tov, was no longer required. So this area was incorporated

into the plans of the new library.



An extra storey had been added to this building to bring it up to the same height as 770. So we now had two almost identical edifices connected by an outside corridor on each floor.

Rabbi Beryl Levin was the Chief Librarian and Yitzchok Wilhelm his main assistant. Both used to live in London. They honoured Roselyn and me by personally showing us around this new :- "Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad, Ohel Yoseph Yitzchok - Lubavitch", and explained to us the details and plans of this great new venture.

The apartment of the Rashag, Z.Tz.L., which had been situated on the top floor, above 770, and which had contained a study, bedrooms and a kitchen, had been cleared of all furniture, partitions and encumbrances and was now one complete, large hall. This would become the reception room of the new library.

Prospective readers would apply to the librarian for a certain book which was listed in the catalogue. This would be brought up to him and he could peruse this book at one of the tables which were placed around the room. These books were not for taking away.

Beryl then led us across the passageway from 770 to the original library. Here we entered another large hall where many books and volumes would be on display. And yet another large hall would display books and various historical artefacts, silverware, and so forth. The two floors beneath, plus the basement, were for the stocks of seforim.

Many scores of thousands of books which had arrived recently from Europe, and so on, had

been taken out of their cartons and were being catalogued and stored.

We were all waiting with anticipation, but with impatience, for the twelve thousand seforim which were owned by Lubavitch and which were still lying at the Lenin library in Moscow. The Russian Courts had already admitted that the books belonged to Lubavitch and we were still fighting for permission to ship the goods to 770.

Rabbis Beryl Levin, Shlomo Kunin, Yitzchok Aronov and Shlomo Masutoff had spent many months in Moscow arguing with the authorities. Beryl and Shlomo Kunin came to 770 only for the few days of Yom Tov and they would be returning to Moscow immediately.

Shlomo Kunin had another valid reason for coming back to the U.S.A. His Russian visa had expired and he travelled to Washington to get this renewed.

Shlomo explained to me that in 1914, at the start of World War I, the Rebbe Rashab, Z.Tz.L., (Sholom Ber) had placed his library into storage in Moscow for safe keeping. After the war, the Communists transferred these twelve thousand books to the Lenin Library where they have lain ever since.

New obstacles were still being continuously placed in our way to halt the release of these books. Shlomo, Beryl and company had to interview, argue and plead with civil (and not so very civil) servants from every section and all departments of many ministries. There was always one man who seemed to be holding up progress.

Actually, it was by Divine Providence that Shlomo had to travel to Washington because he met there the senator who was responsible for approving the one and a half billion dollar wheat aid to Russia. He had promised to withhold the shipment until the library was released.

When Shlomo applied for his new visa he was told that the Russians had placed a block on all new applications but, in their inexplicable, inefficient and haphazard manner, they had forgotten to advise their consul in a very remote city of the U.S.A. of this ban.

In a typical, efficient Lubavitch and diplomatic manner, Shlomo obtained his visa in that outlying city.

Dollars, Blessings and More Dollars

A fellow arrived at 770 and enquired, "Where is the line, the queue for Brochas?" He was told, "You mean dollars!" "Ach" he retorted, "they call it dollars - we call it Brochas."

One Sunday morning, Soro Karmelly, an attractive and vivacious young lady from Great Neck, had been to 770 to collect a Brocha and a dollar from the Rebbe. She called in to see me and brought along her friend Roselyn Basally together with kind wishes from my good friend Mr. Mishel Hajibay. They each desired a copy of my latest book, Instalment number 22. I was delighted to oblige and they were so pleased that they handed me a generous donation to our Manchester Yeshiva. So everybody was happy. She generally brought with her groups of friends and acquaintances to meet the Rebbe and to obtain a dollar. Sometimes as many as fifty people came at one time.

She confided that although individuals spent only a couple of minutes with the Rebbe, their whole attitude towards religion was immediately and completely changed for the better.

Soro had a sister Leah who resided in London. One day, the Rebbe gave Soro a blessing that her sister would make a nice Shiduch. And, said Soro, this Brocha was accompanied by a "secret, knowing smile".

I have been the happy recipient of many kinds of smiles from the Rebbe but I cannot recall one that was a "secret, knowing" one.

Shortly afterwards, a friend arranged a lovely Shiduch for Soro's sister Leah but the boy lived in Cleveland, Ohio, and he did not feel inclined to travel all the way to London, England, just to meet a girl.

Meanwhile, Leah had arrived in New York to visit Soro and was told about the Shiduch. Leah explained that she was not interested because she had just met a nice boy on the plane when she flew from London to New York. She had arranged to meet this boy again in Crown Heights.

After some little discussion it transpired that this boy was the one from Ohio with whom they had tried to make a match. This was actually the same boy. He had been on vacation to Israel and his plane from Ben Gurion Airport had made a stop over in London. And from all those three hundred passengers on that flight it was "Bashert" (fated) that this boy and that girl

should be sat next to each other on that aeroplane.

Shmuel remarked that he realised that matches were made in heaven by Hashem but why was it necessary to fly so close to that firmament on this occasion?

On Sunday, Label advised me to come along for dollars at 2 p.m. But on that day the Rebbe did not commence the dollar distribution until 1.30 p.m. so Michael Zerkon and Yisroel Yarmush suggested that I should come much later.

However, at five minutes to two o'clock I went to 770 to reconnoitre the position and was told to come along quickly, "straight away" - "with your group", and we would be allowed to see the Rebbe immediately.

Fortunately, most of those members of the family who wished to accompany Roselyn and me were already gathered at our apartment awaiting the call.

It was just after 2 p.m. when we entered the presence of the Rebbe. The Rebbe greeted us with a hearty smile of welcome. As usual, it was "Ladies first" so Roselyn took precedence to approach the Rebbe. She was handed a dollar with the blessing of "Besuros Tovos" (we should have good news) and then given an additional dollar "for Manchester".

I was next. The Rebbe mentioned my book and indicated that he desired me to write TWICE as MUCH in my next instalment. This seemed to be a very tall order but I have learnt never to belittle what the Rebbe says. When these Diaries contained fifty pages and the Rebbe suggested that I should write one hundred, I considered this to be an impossibility. When the Rebbe declared that I should produce a minimum of two hundred pages it seemed to be just inconceivable - but I managed it! So when the Rebbe now asked me to double this number - well - I must remain silent - and speechless - and carry on writing - and hope that the Rebbe will give me plenty of action and material which I shall be delighted to record. I also received a dollar, a Brocha and an extra dollar.

Golda Rivka and Menachem (Yunik) with baby Yoseph Yitzchok followed. The Rebbe presented Golda R also with a dollar, a B.V.H. (Brocha VeHatzlocha) for blessings and success, and again - an extra dollar.

Menachem explained that the baby had been extremely unwell and was even now not fully recovered. The Rebbe handed to Menachem a total of six dollars with a B.V.H.(Brocha VeHatzlacha) for him and a Brocha for good health for Yoseph Yitzchok.

Channah (Marlow) with baby Menachem Mendie were next. The Rebbe presented them both with dollars and a B.V.H. plus "Freilicha Besuros" (joyful news).

Chaya and Shimon (Posner) with little Moussia and very little Freidie followed. Chaya received a dollar with a B.V.H., a dollar for her birthday, a dollar for "an easy pregnancy and a healthy child", and a fourth one for herself. Shimon wanted a blessing for a successful shelichus. The Rebbe replied "Omain Bekoruv - Omain Bekoruv" (so be it very soon) and gave

him a dollar.

I then introduced Golds (Jaffe), the bride, whose forthcoming wedding would soon take place in Manchester. She also received three dollars - the usual first one, one for the wedding and the third for the B.V.H.

Finally, it was Avremel's (the Choson) turn. He received four dollars, one for the Shiduch, two dollars for the Choson to give to Tzedoka on the day of his wedding, and the fourth with the B.V.H.

Our group had received a total of twenty seven dollars!! Plus - blessings galore!!

I informed the Rebbe that we would be leaving for home on the following Tuesday, the 15th of Sivan. The Rebbe replied that,

"The good news should be an ongoing activity, and especially after the 14th of Sivan when the moon was at its peak (full moon), especially in this, the third month. I will mention you at the Tzion."

I was fortunate to meet the Rebbe on the day on which we were actually leaving. I thanked the Rebbe for his kindness, friendliness and consideration.

The Rebbe said, "Fur Gezunt" (travel in good health) and handed me a nickel and another one "for your wife".

Yechidus

On the eve of the 10th of Sivan, Wednesday at 8p.m, the Rebbe had arranged to receive three separate categories at Yechidus.

- 1) The main or general group.
- 2) Barmitzvah boys (with their parents).
- 3) Brides and grooms (also with their parents).

There were about five hundred people present, men women and children, at this main Yechidus. During Simchas Torah time there were generally about five thousand who wished to see the Rebbe before they left for home. There was, at that time, also a special group for the many Yeshiva boys who were returning to their bases.

I am enclosing three photographs taken by Eli Yona of Crown Heights.

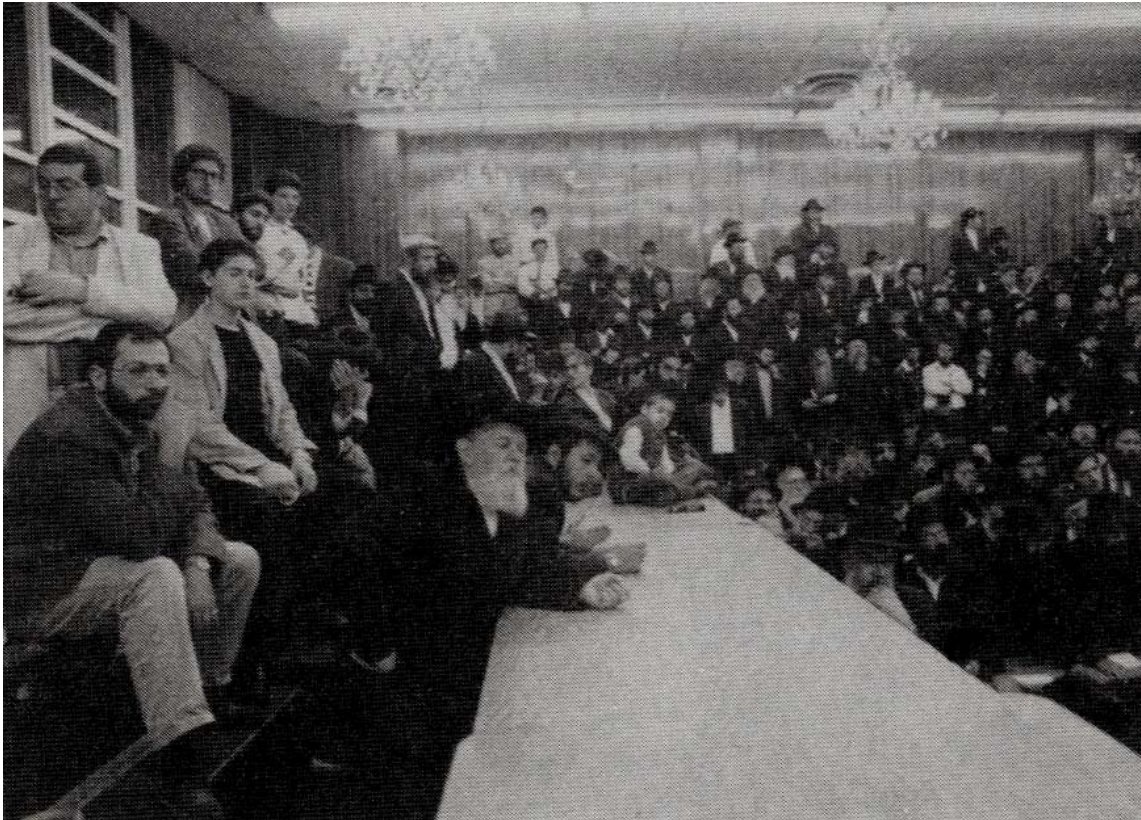
- 1) shows the Rebbe seated at a small table. He is facing the long tables in the centre which formed the Mechitza, which divided the women on the right from the men.
- 2) shows a close up of the Rebbe with the men on his left.

and in 3) we see different types of men who were anxious to be present at the Rebbe's Yechidus. They varied from jacket-less and long haired "hippies" to Chassidim wearing Shtreimels (round fur hats)

Rabbi Shiur Pinson, the Gabbai, is facing the camera and is nonchalantly leaning against the top table. One can see the boys standing behind him in Mod clothes. One can just discern the top of the Rebbe's hat below the table. Rabbi Binyomin Klein is standing at the Rebbe's left.

Shovuos 5751/1991 until Shovuos 5752/1992





The Rebbe opened his remarks by stating that we had spoken many times about the word "Shalom".

When a Jew meets another one he greets him with "Shalom Aleichem" and the other one replies, "Aleichem Shalom". So we have Shalom at the beginning the greeting and the conclusion is also Shalom - complete peace.

When Jewish people - men, women and children - meet together, then this blessing, which is praise for Hashem, is invoked because it implies, "How good are Thy Creations."

Even children should be taught and encouraged to praise Hashem in this manner.

Amongst other points which the Rebbe mentioned were - When the Torah stated that six hundred thousand men over the age of twenty, plus the women and children, rested at the foot of mount Sinai to receive Hashem's Torah, it uses the singular expression - that is - "he rested" - which implied that they all rested as one man - which implied that they all rested as one man - with one heart. Hashem also said, "I brought thee (singular) out of Egypt."

The Rebbe also stated that we recite every morning the verses that

- 1) "You should love your fellow man as yourself."
- 2) Regarding the receiving of the Torah. And
- 3) About the receiving of the Torah.

These would remind us of the three basic, underlying principles of our religion.

When we completed the Krias Shema, during the morning service, with the word "Emmess" - truth, we continued to recite fifteen words all prefaced with the letter "Vav" (meaning "and"). Great emphasis had to be laid on these "Vavs". Therefore, after the word "Emmess" (true) we say, "**And** certain, and established, **and** enduring, **and** right, **and** faithful, **and** cherished, **and** delightful, **and** beloved, **and** sweet, **and** awesome, **and** mighty, **and** correct, **and** acceptable, **and** good, **and** beautiful."

Everyone, even babies and little children, are obligated to be present in Shool to hear the Ten Commandments which are read from the Torah on the first day of Shavuos.

The Jewish soul is a part of G-d - MAMOSH (definitely).

The Rebbe then appointed each person as his sheliach (agent) to give Tzedoka. He handed to everyone a dollar and blessed each person as they filed by and left the presence of the Rebbe.

Kos Shel Brocha, Shavuos



On this photograph you will notice that I am holding Dovid's (Jaffe) baby - THE Menachem Mendel.

I have many Menachem Mendels in the family, therefore, the Rebbe's reply to me that this little boy will be THE Menachem Mendel caused quite a stir.

There were many interpretations on the Rebbe's answer, including Rashi, Tossfos, Rambam, Ramban, Dovid, Yossi and others who had examined and analysed each letter and every word. But whichever way one looked and how many meanings that one could read therein, it was still a unique and most unusual reply.

It was the unanimous opinion, however, that this message from the Rebbe did not cast any aspersions on the rest of our Menachem Mendels.

At the Dollars Distribution

We were looking forward to seeing the Rebbe at the Dollars Distribution on Sunday.

Over the course of many years we had obtained some very beautiful photographs of Roselyn and me and also with our grandchildren and great grandchildren, but all showed only the profile of the Rebbe. On none of these scores of pictures was the Rebbe facing the camera.

I had written to the Rebbe and explained that all of our family and every one of thousands of my readers wanted to see the face of the Rebbe - and not ours.

I appealed to the Rebbe that when we arrived at his side on Sunday, we would be eternally grateful if the Rebbe would turn around for a second and face the camera.

I had warned Chaim Boruch (Halberstram) that I had begged the Rebbe to do this for me and that he should be prepared to take this photograph.

On the next page is the result and it is one of the very few pictures ever taken at Dollars Distribution when the Rebbe is actually facing the camera.

I am standing in the foreground holding the two dollar bills. Esther Sternberg is just behind me. Menachem (Yunik) is holding baby Yoseph Yitzchok next to Label's beard. The Rebbe looks slightly surprised.



I had Yahrtzeit that day and I was standing by the Omud ready to lead the Mincha service but awaiting the arrival of the Rebbe.

The Rebbe had been standing in one place for seven hours handing out dollars and extending blessings, encouragement and advice to thousands of people - men, women, children and babies of different nationalities, varieties and temperaments.

I had seen many people who had waited for a couple of hours in the line and were completely and physically exhausted.

And yet, after those long seven hours, the Rebbe literally danced into the Shool as fresh as the "proverbial daisy"; full of gusto, zest and "joie de vivre".

Tycoons have office hours doctors have surgery hours but the Rebbe has no limit to the number of hours for which he is Mesiras Nefesh (self-sacrificing) for all Jewish people everywhere.

At about 1.30 p.m. the Rebbe commenced the distribution of dollars. I entered the Rebbe's presence together with Roselyn. To our surprise we noticed that Sholom Ber (Lew) was following behind. He is a very good boy but is afraid that he might miss something interesting.

The Rebbe handed me an extra dollar and said that this is for the Nachas which you will receive from this grandson. To make sure that I really did understand what the Rebbe had said - the Rebbe repeated the statement - and added, "And from the other grandchildren too."

Yisroel Yarmush, who was also standing nearby, confirmed what the Rebbe had stated about Sholom Ber.

Here are three photographs, taken by Levi Freidin.



Inquisitive Sholom Ber, afraid that he might be missing something, watches the Rebbe presenting Roselyn and me with dollars.



Roselyn (wearing her Russian hat) receiving dollars.



Sholom Ber looking a little startled.

I seem to be enjoying some Nachas already.

The Rebbe was presenting the dollars at such a rapid rate that the people seemed to be rushing from the Rebbe's presence like runners at the end of a race. The Dollars Distribution concluded at the exceptionally early time of 2.45 p.m.

At 3 o'clock we met our Manchester friends, Sholom and Ruthie Simon and family strolling towards 770 to claim their dollars. They just could not believe that it was all over for that day. They fully expected that 5 p.m. would be early enough!

Baby Yoseph Yitzchok

Yossi (Lew) had decided to celebrate his birthday this year at our apartment. It was convenient for all the family (I was not so sure of Roselyn) and it would save the bother and aggravation of waiting for the gang who never turned up at Yossi & Shterney's home in Long Island last year.

Most of the family were present and extended to Yossi birthday greetings. Yossi then recited his Maamer.

Golda Rivka and Menachem (Yunik) had to take their little baby, Yoseph Yitzchok, to the special Children's Hospital. He had been unwell for some little time.

Channah and Yoseph (Lipsker) had given them a lift in their car and they, Channah and Yossi, did not return until after midnight.

Poor Golda Rivka had to remain at the hospital with her baby for many more days and nights.

On a different occasion, an ambulance had to be called suddenly to take Yoseph Yitzchok to hospital - and he actually stopped breathing three times on the way. He was resuscitated by the ambulance crew but a doctor was urgently required to give Yoseph Yitzchok full time medical treatment. Another ambulance, which did possess a full time medical officer, was contacted by radio telephone and the baby, together with his parents, were transferred to the other ambulance.

He was normally such a jolly little baby and it was heart rending to see him so unwell. Our deepest and profound sympathy was extended, especially to Golda Rivka who, in addition to a mother's natural worries, had to spend so much of her time at the bedside of her baby at the hospital.

In true American fashion, all the doctors at the hospital had "jumped upon the bandwagon" and every portion of the baby's abdomen, brain, liver, kidneys, bone structure and other parts were examined by different doctors who could not diagnose that anything was very wrong, but did prescribe all sorts of remedies and cures which seemed to be of no avail.

I had written to the Rebbe explaining all these details and begging for a brocha.

We were leaving for home soon and I was again fortunate to encounter the Rebbe as he was leaving 770 for the Ohel.

The Rebbe had handed me a nickel and given me a brocha to hear good news and was already seated in the car, Label was closing the door.

I dashed forward and flung open the door. Label was furious, as he had every right to be. But to me it was a matter of a baby's life.

I ejaculated, "Rebbe, I am terribly sorry to bother you but Yoseph Yitzchok is still very, very poorly and desperately needs an outstanding blessing."

The Rebbe answered in Yiddish that he (the baby) will be "in gantzen gezunt" - totally and completely healthy and well.

This was very reassuring and excellent news. Subsequently, the Yuniks removed to London, England - as you will learn later on - and T.G. the baby has developed into a bright and healthy little boy.

Special Pages for Myer Itkin

My friend and landlord, Myer Itkin, has always complained that as he cannot read English, he has to rely on other people to explain to him why they burst out laughing when they read some parts of my book. I have promised Myer that I will print a couple of pages specially for him - in Yiddish. This is the English version:

Roselyn and I met the Rebbe for the first time thirty two years ago when we went into his study for Yechidus. Before we entered, Rabbi Shemtov, O.H., gave us the following advice:

- 1) Do not shake hands with the Rebbe.
- 2) Do not sit down.

As soon as we opened the door, the Rebbe sprang forward with hands outstretched and gave us a lovely Sholom Aleichem. I indicated to the Rebbe that Rabbi Shemtov had warned me that I must not shake hands with the Rebbe under any circumstances. The Rebbe declared that, "We will not tell Rabbi Shemtov" and shook my hand.

The Rebbe then invited me and Roselyn to sit down. "Oh dear!" I exclaimed, "Rabbi Shemtov had particularly stressed upon me that I must not sit down." The Rebbe intimated that I could sit down for the first three times.

The Rebbetzen had stated that, "All those people whom I have mentioned in my book are all annoyed, but those whom I did not mention are insulted."

When the Rebbe had not been well, it was decided by the Va'ad, in order to protect our Rebbe, that no one should go for Yechidus - for Lekach - for Kos Shel Brocha - and so forth. When the Rebbe heard this he was very upset and told me that he wanted everybody to come for Yechidus, everyone to come for Kos Shel Brocha, and all should come for Lekach. "And then Hashem will give me the health and strength to carry on and to be your Rebbe."

One morning I awoke and discovered that our bedroom was flooded to a depth of about six inches with water. Rabbi Dvorkin, confirmed that as the quantity was over forty Seahs it qualified as a kosher Mikvah but, as it was only six inches deep, I would have to lie on my back first and then roll over. I told the story to the Rebbe who then enquired, "But who lifted you up from the floor?" I was a bit cheeky and said that Roselyn and Mrs. Itkin pulled me up.

Well, the Rebbe was so amused at my silly answers that he almost fell over backwards in his chair with laughter.

Finally, Myer Itkin will appreciate this tale. At a Yom Tov dinner with the Rebbe at 770, I told the story of a thief in Russia who entered a house through the large chimney aperture. When he landed in the room he espied a Rabbi sitting and studying at the table. The thief was disconcerted and embarrassed but, after a significant pause, he explained to the Rabbi that he wished to ask him a "Sha'ala" (a question of Halacha). The Rabbi was astounded. A man drops into his house through the roof at 2.30 a.m. to ask him a Sha'ala? The fellow could have knocked on his front door! However, he said to the thief, "What is this Sha'ala that you wish to ask me, my child?" And the man replied, "How do I get out of here?" All laughed at this story. The next morning I met Rabbi Taivel. I asked him whether he understood the tale I told at the dinner table. He replied that he never understood one word. "So why did you laugh?" I enquired. "Well, everyone laughed, so I laughed as well," was his rejoinder.

סיין גוטע פריינט און בעה"ב, הרב מאיר שיחי' איטקין, האט אלע מאל געטיינעט אז וויבאלד ער לעיינט נישט קיין ענגליש, דארף ער פרעגען ביי אנדערע כדי צו וויסען וואס שטייט אין בוך און פארוואס מענטשען לאכען ווען זיי ליינען סיין בוך. איך האב דערפאר צוגעזאגט מאיר'ן אז אין דעם קומעדיקן אויסגאבע וועל איך דרוקען אפאר ענינים אין אידיש געווידמעט צפפעיעל צו עס.

א) סיין ווייב ראזלין און איך, האבן געטראפן דעם רבי'ן שליט"א צום ערשטן מאל אין תשי"ט. איידער מיר זיינען אריין אויף "יחידות" האט אונז הרב שם טוב ז"ל געווארענט (1) ניט געבען א האנט (אויף שלום) צום דעם רבי'ן. (2) זיך ניט אוועקזעצען. ווי מיר האבען נאר געעפענט דעם מיר, האט זיך דער רבי שליט"א גלייך אויפגעשטעלט און אויסגעשטרעקט זיין הייליקער האנט (אויף שלום)! האב איך געזאגט צו דעם רבי'ן אז הרב שם טוב האט מיר שוין געווארענט אז איך זאל בשום אופן ניט געבען שלום, האט דער רבי געזאגט "מיר וועלען ניט דערציילן הרב שם טוב" און האט געגעבען א האנט. נאך דעם האט אונז דער רבי געבעטען אז מיר זאלען זיך אוועקזעצען, האב איך ווידער געזאגט, אז הרב שם טוב האט אונז שוין גאווארענט אז מיר זאל זיך ניט אוועקזעצען! האט אונז דער רבי געזאגט, אז ביי די ערשטער דריי מאל מעג מען זיך אוועקזעצען.

ב) די רעכעצען ע"ה ז"ל האט מיר אמאל געזאגט: די אלע וועלכע ווערען דערמאנט אין דיין בוך ווערען ברוגז; און די וועלכער ווערען ניט דערמאנט ווערן באליידיקט

ג) אין תשל"ח, ווען דער רבי שליט"א איז ל"ע ניט געווען געזונט, זיינען געווען אזעלכער וועלכער האבן מחליט געווען אז מען זאל ניט אריינגייען אויף "יחידות"; מען זאל ניט נעמען "לקח", און ניט נעמען "כוס של ברכה". ווען דער רבי שליט"א האט וועגען דעם געהערט, האט ער צו מיר געזאגט, אז ער וויל אז מ'זאל קומען אויף "יחידות" און נעמען "לקח" און "כוס של ברכה"; "און אז דער אויבערשטער וועט זען אז אידן קומען צו מיר און "נוצן" מיר, וועט מיר דער אויבערשטער געבען געזונט און כח דאס צו ממשיך זיין".

(ד) אונזערע דירה אין ניו יארק איז אין דעם "בייסמענט" פון משפחת איטקין, און פון צייט צו צייט, ווערט דארט א פארפלייצונג. איין טאג בין איך אויפגעשטאנען און איך האב געפונען אז אונזער שלאף צימער איז געווען פול מיט וואסער, און נאך דעם וואס איך האב זיך דורך גערעדט מיט הרב זלמן שמעון דווארקין ז"ל, האט ער מסכים געווען, אז וויבאלד אז עס זיינען דארט געווען איבער פערציק - סאה איז דאס א כשרע'ן מקוה. דער איינציקע פראבלעם איז געווען אז די וואסער איז ניט געווען גענוג טיף, און דעריבער וואלט איך זיך געדארפט אוועק ליינען אין דער וואסער, און דערנאך זיך איבערדרייען אויף דעם אנדערן זייט כדי אז די וואסער פון דעם "מקוה" זאלען אנקומען צו מיין גאנצן קערפער! ... בשעת איך האב דערציילט די מעשה צום רבי'ן שליט"א שפעטער אויף "יחידות", האט מיר דער רבי געפרעגט: ווער האט דיר געהאלפן צו זיך אויפהויבן פון די וואסער? האב איך גלייך געענטנפערט: מיין ווייב און מרת איטקין! דער רבי האט שטארק געלאכט ווען איך האב עס דאס געזאגט.

(ה) מאיר איטקין וועט הנאה האבן פון דעם מעשה: ביי איינער פון די סעודות יום-טוב אויבן באס רבי'ן האב איך אמאל דערציילט דעם באוואוסטן מעשה פון דעם גנב וואס איז אמאל אריינגקראכן צום רב'ס שטוב דורך די קוימען, שפעט באנאכט בשעת דער רב האט געלערנט. קומענדיק אין צימער וואוהין דער רב האט געלערנט, האט בא אים דער רב געפרעגט וואס ווילסטו פונקט? האט דער געענטפערט: איך בין געקומען פרעגן א שאלה. דער רב האט געוואונדערט וואס פאלט מען אריין אין שטוב כדי צו פרעגן א שאלה, און נאך אזוי שפעט באנאכט, פונדעסטוועגען האט אים דער רב געזאגט: יע מיין קינד, מיט וואס קען מען אייך העלפען? האט אים דער גנב געזאגט: "רבי, ווי קריכט מען פון דאנעט ארויס?! אלע האבן הנאה געהאט פון די מעשה. בשעת איך האב דעם געקסטענטאג געפרעגט ביי הרב ז. טייבל צי ער האט פארשטאנען דעם מעשה האט ער מיר געזאגט אז גראדע ניט, האב איך אים געפרעגט: אויב אזוי פארוואס האסטו געלאכט, זאגט ער! וויבאלד אלע האבן געלאכט האב איך זיך אויך מיטגעלאכט!.

At long last, a section of my "Book" has been translated into a different language in addition to the original English.

This is a milestone and I am grateful to my grandson, Sholom Ber (Lew) for making this possible. He has fulfilled this assignment of converting my ideas into Yiddish, brilliantly.

Over the years I have received offers from many friends and relatives to translate "My Encounters" into Ivrit, Russian, French, Dutch and Double Dutch, but I am still waiting to see some results from those promises.

My niece, Malka Edrei, of Kfar Chabad, once confessed that, "I found it impossible to convert your 'inimitable style' into Ivrit."

So I am more than grateful to Sholom Ber for being the trail blazer. He has prepared the way, maybe others will follow.

The Chief Rabbis

Lord Jacobovitz, the Chief Rabbi, was due to retire very shortly and the Manchester Jewish Community had arranged to hold a banquet in his honour.

Roselyn and I, together with another 550 people, also attended. Lord Tonypandy, a non-Jew and the former speaker of the British Parliament, he is the only person in the House of Commons who never speaks except to ask for "Order - Order!" His position is similar to that of a chairman. Of all the speeches that were made that evening Lord Tonypandy's contribution contained more words of Torah than all the rest.

Lord Jacobovitz told us that the Six Day War was won because all the Jews were united. He made no mention of the miracles of the A'mighty. - Or maybe it was the miracle that all the Jews became united!

In my opinion, Lady Jacobovitz spoke much better. She, at least, did pray for Moshiach.

I exchanged a few words with Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the new Chief Rabbi. He confided that I had taught him the special, traditional Lubavitcher Zemiras which we always sing at the Seudos Shelishis, the third Shabbos meal after the Mincha service. And he still sings this "B'Nei Cholo" at this meal every Shabbos.

I could hardly credit it and I had no recollection of ever having taught him this melody. However, when he commenced to hum the tune and recite the words, only then was I convinced.

Roselyn and I attended a wedding in London. To our great surprise and delight the Chupah was almost on time.

The dinner was due to commence at 7.30 p.m. and when we arrived at the hall at that time we were amazed and gratified to see that the Chosson and the Kalloh were already seated at the table.

But, unfortunately, no one else was present. And - again - unfortunately, they were waiting to have their photographs taken.

So, dinner was served - nearly two hours late - as is the usual London custom. It is not too bad for the local people but we, from Manchester, have a four hour journey home.

My brother Ephraim complained that by 10.30 p.m. he just managed to eat the hors d'oeuvres and then had to leave and drive home. It is certainly not etiquette, nor good manners, to invite friends who live 200 miles away to be present at a dinner for 7.30 p.m. and which does not commence until 9.30 p.m. It is a real Chutzpah.

Our first assignment on our arrival at our hotel, the Neptune in Eilat, was to discover at what times the services were held in the Synagogue which was situated on the lower floor of the hotel.

There were no notices on the door, nor any communications on the walls, so I asked a passing waiter at what time was the service held in the Synagogue.

He looked puzzled and replied, "We do not provide a service in the Shool." "No, No", I retorted, "When is the Synagogue open for prayer?"

"Oh", he answered, "It's open all the time. Whenever you desire you may come in and pray."

What a beautiful thought - a non-stop, continuous service, all alone, with no Minyan or quorum.

More Anecdotes

I heard this story about Chief Rabbi Sacks. He was asked in an interview on Television how did he become involved with religion? He replied that he went to America to question five famous Rabbonim (and authors) about their views and activities regarding Judaism.

Four of them answered his enquiries satisfactorily but the fifth - the Lubavitcher Rebbe - did not give any answers but asked his own questions.

"What are **you** doing?" "What about **your** activities in Cambridge?" and so on. This made a terrific impression upon him, and Chief Rabbi Sacks told the world, publicly, that this was the turning point in his life.

He disclosed that he loves all the different types of Jews but not different types of Judaism.

Another Yossi Gutnick story: -

The world's largest diamond corporation - De Beers - wanted to buy Yossi's mine. Yossi retorted: "What's mine is mine."

Max (Cohen) always has an interesting story to relate. The Rebbe told him to, "Check your Tefillin". The Tefillin needed to be repaired. A few weeks later Max received another message from the Rebbe, "Check your Tefillin".

Max could not understand this recommendation. It was only a couple of weeks since he had them checked and overhauled and repaired. However, when the Rebbe advises to "check your Tefillin" then the Rebbe has to be obeyed.

It was then discovered that the Parshas, the written parchments, had been put in the wrong way by the Sofar (scribe).

One nice day last summer, Avrohom and Susan arranged to have a Chuppah in their garden. It was a really wonderful affair. But why in Avrohom's garden?

For many years Avrohom has always done his best for this young man (the Chosson). He used to attend Lubavitch groups as a youngster and even spent nine months in the Yeshiva at Kfar Chabad, Israel.

But he could not settle down. He tried everything, even drugs. But then he did settle down, with a nice Jewish girl, but he could not bear the thought of having a formal Chuppah in a Shool.

After much persuasion, he agreed to have a Chuppah in Avrohom's garden, but only ten men should be invited.

Avrohom and Susan were extremely pleased for the boy and the girl. This would legitimise their relationship and they would then be, according to the Halacha, man and wife. This was real Lubavitch work - and what a Mitzvah! So many future souls would be saved as kosher Jews.

Well, the boy and his girl decided to invite their special friends, and instead of just ten men being present, two hundred people attended the ceremony and the wonderful reception that followed. In the evening, Avrohom and Susan went even better and catered a magnificent dinner for ten men and ten women, especially so that the special Sheva Brochas could be recited following the Grace after Meals. This would ensure that the Chosson and Kalloh would have a good start to their married life. Many words of Torah were also spoken.

Some guests at the Chuppah wished to know whether the house (Avrohom's) was a hotel. Others concluded that it was a very orthodox wedding as the Chuppah was outside.

Avrohom once took Rabbi Dubov (Z.Tz.L.) to inspect his (then) new home. Rabbi Dubov enquired, "Which part is yours?"

There was a broadcast from 770 to all Lubavitch organisations world wide. It was a fast day and we, in Manchester, were listening to the Rebbe who was reciting the Haftorah. It was so loud and clear, much better than one could hear when standing actually near to the Rebbe. We also heard the Kedusha.

Rabbi Marlow maintained that as long as it was still daylight, then we may join in with the Kedusha of the Mincha service. I was wondering whether it would be correct to join in with the special prayer of "Ovenu Malkainu" with the Rebbe's Minyan, over three thousand miles away, but I was saved by the fact that there was a Chosson present at that moment at 770, so no Tachnun was said - and, of course, no "Ovenu Malkainu."

On Friday, the third day of Adar I, I enjoyed a very nice surprise. Just before Shabbos, a young, pretty lady, Miss Chavie Farro, knocked on our door. She had brought me a dollar from the Rebbe.

I do not know who was more excited - me or Chavie. T.G. I have had many dollars sent to me by the Rebbe, mainly through members of my family. But this was a new experience for me - and for Chavie. She is a very nice and attractive girl.

She related how the Rebbe had been informed at the Dollars Distribution that she was leaving for Manchester that very day. The Rebbe handed her a dollar to give to me when she arrived home.

Label and Myer (Harlick) had impressed upon her the fact that the Rebbe desired that this dollar should be taken to Zalmon Jaffe of Manchester.

I immediately forwarded a warm letter of thanks and gratitude to the Rebbe and mentioned that although I now received very few letters from the Rebbe, at least I am comforted by the knowledge that the Rebbe does bear me in mind quite often.

THE WEDDING OF GOLDA & AVREMEL

As soon as Avremie & Golda did meet one another
They were at once greatly attracted each to the
other

He immediately swept Golda right off her feet
Our poor, little girl, so naive, innocent and
so sweet.

Golda confided to Bobby Taube that Avremie was
a caring, loving and Chassidisha boy
I assure you these sentiments gave us all much
pleasure and joy.

After only two weeks of courtship they were anxious to marry
There were no obstacles, no difficulties, so there was no need to tarry.

The wedding was arranged for five weeks hence,
a certain Thursday they did pick
Which was, even for Lubavitchers, most
exceedingly quick.

Avrohom gave a sigh of relief, it was certainly
no joke
Because with so many New York telephone calls, Avrohom could very soon be broke.

Meanwhile, Avremie to Manchester for a very
short visit he came
But then he missed the plane home by accident,
on purpose, Oh what a shame!

Avremie felt somewhat guilty, Golda was pleased
with the extra hours
And Avremie proved he was loving and caring
and bought for Golda a bunch of flowers.

Once, Yossi (Marlow) in a similar situation at the airport did apprehend

And by some subterfuge he gained with Channah
An extra, lovely, long weekend.

The Rebbe's brocha message was being prepared, but Avremie went one better
And brought along himself - the Rebbe's double Mazaltov leter.

Eighteen Kievemans, eight Jaffes, some friends
and many a Lew
Were arriving from Crown Heights on the very day before the wedding was due.

The direct plane to Manchester was absolutely
full
So they travelled via London because the travel
agent had no pull.

The Chosson, however, had much more sense, He did find one seat direct to Manchester - so it
cost a few more pence!

Chaya came direct from Crown Heights with daughters Mousia 2, Frieda 1, and Chanah just
over a week
They arrived at our home on the day before, for some more extra pleasures to seek.

They all retired to bed at 7 o'clock and slept
till noon next day
What greater pleasures can one achieve than to sleep the days away.

I was pleased with Avremie's rendition of his
Maamer, he recited it concisely and without any
bother
But mainly because he made it known to my brothers, that they should honour and respect their
eldest brother.

We were lucky that the rain had stopped and
everywhere was fine and super
The only place wherein it rained was **underneath** the Chupah.

The bride looked gorgeous, beautiful and divine, And the Choson with delight reflected that
"this Jewel would soon be mine".

The Chupah was punctual and the dinner on time, There was the one speech by Avrohom and
the benching was finished by nine.

The band was really exceptionally good and
everyone felt compelled to dance
They played so well with such rythm and verve
They really did the Simcha enhance.

I was told that about 20 boys arrived specially
from 770 and Crown Height
They came for the sake of Avremie and they jumped and danced with all their might.

What did surprise and amaze me and made me so
happy as ever
Was that although the guests were from many
walks of life, they mixed so well together.

We enjoyed the acrobatic shows, burning hats
and dancing on the table
But Boruch Kieveman gave the best show of all
With the help of vodka and whisky, Black Label.

I also joined in the fun and danced around,
I had nothing to lose
Until Avrohom stamped on my toes with his big
eleven and a half shoes.

I was told that the ladies looked very
glamorous,
I wanted to take a peep But everybody did object, it really made me
weep.

Drink flowed like water, Aaron broke his ribs,
he had a nasty fall
Shmuel Yoseph Davidson broke his ankle and his
father wished to sue the hall.

It had been a real delight and Nachas to welcome our family Lew on the London bus But when
they returned home at midnight, the Nachas became a Mechaya for all of us

On behalf of everyone I compliment Susan and Avrohom for providing us with joy sublime
And all look forward to their next simcha Which will take place in G-d's due time.

Sheva Brochus

If we would have attended everyone of these
meals, we would have gained a ton in weight
Because every single one was a hefty chicken
dinner served with a side plate.

Three of Avremie's friends were at this Sheva
Brochus which I attended with my lass
Yoseph Chaim Cantor related the Rebbe's words

of Torah, and in spite of heckling, he really
was first class.

Shimon Neubort's son Snu talked non-stop till
I did come, then gave me a dirty look
Because he then remained quiet and completely
Shtum, in case I mentioned him in my book.

Levi Marmelstein went around continuously with
vodka and a bottle of whisky
He made everybody say LeChaim, and everyone
became a little tipsy.

Our Chosson bore the brunt of his attention,
he cried and cried and was very, very sad
Because Moshiach had not yet arrived it was
a shame for the poor little lad.

We wish Golda and Avremie much Nachas and joy,
let us shout it right to the rafter
They shall possess a "Binyan Aday Ad"
and live happily ever after.

TO RUSSIA WITH LOVE-AVITCH

*** Please note that this is NOT an official report - only my own version of what transpired on our visit to Russia.

The Invitation

The third European Conference of Shiluchim had been arranged to take place this year in Soviet Russia - from July 25th until 31st, '91.

It had been resolved that the Shiluchim should visit three centres which had special significance and connections with our movement.

1) The actual village of Lubavitch - the birthplace of Chabad - where some of the previous Rebbes (Z.A.L.) had resided and where our first Yeshiva had been established.

2) Alma Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, over 2,000 miles east of Moscow and on the Chinese border. Levi Yitzchok (Z.A.L.), the father of our Rebbe, Shlita, had been banished and exiled to this town after serving 4½ years in jail in Chili, 400 miles from Alma Ata for giving Jewish children Hebrew tuition. He resided in this city until he passed away in 1944 and was buried there.

and 3) Moscow.

Rabbi Nachman Sudak, the Rebbe's chief Sheliach in Europe, had invited my son Avrohom to attend, not as a Sheliach but as an observer. I urged Avrohom to take advantage of this unique opportunity to visit the roots of Lubavitch. It would be an historical occasion and would be extremely interesting. I added that I would not mind going myself.

A few days later, to my surprise and delight, Nachman asked me to join the party also as an observer. He expected well over a hundred representatives from Europe and he wanted at least twenty five men from Britain

I posed the same question to Nachman that although we were key Lubavitch workers in Manchester we were not official Shiluchim and I was hesitant to take part. Nachman promised that the trip would be most interesting and rewarding and he suggested that I should "Phone 770 to contact the Rebbe with whom you have a special relationship and the Rebbe would

doubtless give you good advice."

Meanwhile, Nachman also told us to apply at once for our Russian visas - just in case. These were difficult to obtain and there was always a long delay. It necessitated filling out special application forms and sending these, together with a copy of our passports and three photographs, to our friend Moishe Kotlarsky, in Crown Heights, who was in overall charge of all the arrangements in connection with this Russian Conference. He possessed the vital official invitation for our party so it was much simpler for Moishe to do all the documentation together from his office in Crown Heights. Levi (Jaffe) was returning to 770 the next day and we just managed to complete the documents in time for him to deliver to Moishe.

I therefore phoned Rabbi Label Groner on Sunday, June 30th, the 17th of Tammuz, and explained to him that Nachman had invited me to attend the Conference of Shiluchim in Russia and I needed the advice of the Rebbe.

Label enquired whether Roselyn was going too. I replied that the Conference was for MEN ONLY. Nachman had already informed me that many women had expressed a desire to join the party but he had remained adamant - and was very emphatic - NO women would be allowed to join.

Label informed me that because it was a Fast Day and also Distribution of Dollars, it would not be possible to receive an answer from the Rebbe until Tuesday or Wednesday (July 2nd or 3rd) at the earliest.

On the following Wednesday, Label read out to me the Rebbe's reply which was:

"Baidie Zollen Gane Gezunter Hait." (Both should go in good health). "But please note, you were not Shiluchim of the Rebbe, but being that Nachman wanted you to go, then you **should** go."

This was an exceedingly surprising answer and another example of the UNPREDICTABILITY of the Rebbe. I had asked for advice for one person and I had received a brocha for two. I had never mentioned Avrohom's name in my request.

Label was quite certain the the Rebbe had referred to Roselyn and that we should travel to Russia together.

But Nachman had told me quite bluntly that no women would be allowed so I suggested to Label that it might be very embarrassing for Roselyn to be the only woman amongst over one hundred men. He answered that Miriam was the only woman amongst her two famous and renowned brothers - Moishe and Aaron.

Label repeated that there was no ambiguity. The Rebbe meant Roselyn. I admired very much the attitude of Roselyn which was - to put it simply - "If the Rebbe tells me to do something then I have no alternative but to obey."

The immediate problem was the Russian visa. There were now only two and a half weeks before our departure, we were in Bournemouth on business, and it was 7 p.m. in the evening. Nachman faxed us a copy of the application form which was received at the hotel within seconds, and Avrohom faxed a copy of Roselyn's passport to Nachman in London. We now had to obtain three photographs which, for obvious reasons, Roselyn had to get by herself.

Every railway station had a photo kiosk and Bournemouth was no exception. Roselyn sat down on the chair, placed the £1.50 in the money slot and waited – and waited – and waited. The result was negative - no, not even that - just nothing.

We spent the next 20 minutes in a futile discussion with the Railway Station Master who had provided us with the address and telephone number of the owners of this kiosk and who, on application, would in due course refund us the £1.50.

The matter had become most urgent, however, and every minute counted. Ultimately, we did manage to obtain three photographs which bore no likeness whatever to Roselyn, my wife.

By Friday morning Nachman told me that he had now received all the documents but, as none of our friends was flying to 770 in the immediate future, he was sending them to Moishe by Air Mail.

There was now an undercurrent of gossip and rumour. "The Rebbe had meant Avrohom and not Roselyn and I had misunderstood the Rebbe's reply." There were many doubters everywhere. I became a little worried. I did not wish to become the laughing stock of Lubavitch so I contacted Label again. He at once reassured me that there was no ambiguity and he also confided that he had received a good many enquiries about the interpretation of the Rebbe's reply to me. He had confirmed to everyone that there was no doubt at all that the Rebbe had intended that Roselyn should accompany me to Russia.

On Sunday, July 20th, Moishe had conveyed the good news to me that he had already received Roselyn's visa. He would be in London himself on Tuesday to join the London contingent and would ensure that we got it in good time at the airport.

On Monday morning, the day before we were due to leave Manchester, Avrohom and I received our visas by post. We also received a splendid gift of a new baby boy from our daughter and granddaughter, Channah (Marlow) who had stayed over in Manchester since Golda's wedding to Avremie (Kieveman) a few weeks previously.

Avrohom was in a dilemma but, after much mental anguish and heart searching, he decided to cancel his Russian visit. (He attended the Sholom Zochar at his home and was honoured by being the Sandik at the Bris - which was some compensation for missing the Convention).

I had another reason to regret Avrohom's absence as he was my official video operator and camera man.

Roselyn and I had received the Rebbe's brocha to "travel in good health" so we kept to the

arrangements. But Avrohom had not contacted the Rebbe direct about this trip. However, Avrohom too did receive a nice brocha from the Rebbe. At a subsequent Farbraingen the Rebbe extended beautiful blessings to all those who went to Russia for the Conference - and - to all those who said that they were going but **dropped out at the last moment**.

There were many silly stories in circulation before Avrohom had cancelled out including:

- 1) All members of the party had to be over 50 years old (Avrohom had just reached that age) and had to be accompanied by both parents.
- 2) Avrohom would not travel without his Mammy.
- 3) Nachman wanted Roselyn specifically to help to make the sandwiches for over 100 men each day.

The British Airways flight direct to Moscow was fully booked up so we travelled by Austrian Airways via Vienna. We had to be at London Airport at 6.45 a.m. Wednesday morning. Therefore, at 5.30 p.m. on Tuesday evening, Roselyn and I accompanied by our Rosh HaYeshiva Rabbi Akiva Cohen and our friend Sholom Weiss, set out from Manchester in order to spend that night at the Airport hotel.

I drove - then fifteen minutes later Sholom Weiss drove - Yes, me crazy! - to return home immediately - he had forgotten his passport! He had left it in his other jacket. It could have been much worse, we could have been just fifteen minutes from London!

We had received from Nachman the details of our daily programme and itinerary of our movements plus general instructions regarding our visit to the U.S.S.R.

There was also a general warning about money. It was essential to change our foreign money into Roubles at an authorised bank or approved shop. The amount would be stamped onto the special form which we received - and signed at Moscow Airport. This form and cash would be checked when we left Moscow Airport on our homeward journey. We were advised to take with us towels, soap, toilet paper, tissues, chocolate, fruit and cake or biscuits. We paid our own air fare to Moscow but Nachman also asked for \$250 (£150) which all observers were obliged to pay. Full Shiluchim were charged a little less.

For this £150, Roselyn and I shared a room at the five-starred Molodegny Hotel in Moscow. This contained a private bathroom and shower, etc., a fridge, T.V. and telephone, and of course, two small beds. We also received three good meals every day. Also included in this £150 was the return coach fare to Lubavitch (7 hours each way) the return fare from Moscow to Alma Ata by private plane, a two hours trip to a Boys Camp and buses every day to ferry us to the Shool, Mikvah, sight seeing and so forth. All this for just over £16 each per day!!! Not bad, Eh!

Roselyn and I each had one suitcase but mine was filled to overflowing with all types of, first aid food including tins of salmon, gefilte fish, baked beans, sardines, packets of soup, dried

fruit, nuts, jars of coffee and tea bags. Also included were some medical items, soap and "silk stockings"(!) Moishe K and his company provided us with so much food during our visit that most of the contents of my suitcase were subsequently left behind for our Muscovite friends.

The Journey

Next morning, after a quick breakfast in our rooms of our own cereals and coffee, Roselyn and I together with Rabbi Akiva and Sholom, duly arrived at the Austrian Airlines check-in desk at 6.45 a.m.

We were greeted by Rabbi Tally Lowenthal who handed over to Roselyn her visa for Russia which Moishe Kotlarsky had personally brought from New York. A copy of this document is shown below although the photograph bears no likeness to my wife, as I stated above.

Tally was accompanied by the following (Lubavitcher) Rabbis: Aaron Cousins, Moishe Levy, Dovid Karnowsky and Shlomo Weinstein. Rachamim Goodman from Birmingham and Alex Namdar, now working in Sweden and the son-in-law of Tally, made up our party. Well almost, because Chaim Farro, who was saying Kaddish, sent a message that he needed a morning Minyan at the airport at 6 a.m. but did not arrive until 7.30 a.m.

Tally and his party had departed from Lubavitch House, London, at 5a.m. by special bus. They had brought with them thirty large cartons of paper tableware including 3,000 plates of 9 inches 3,000 plates of 7 inches 3,000 bowls, about 10,000 cups and so forth, plus plastic cutlery.

We were asked, "Are there no paper plates in Moscow?" To which we replied, "These are special kosher ones blessed by the Rabbi." Actually, these goods were really unobtainable, absolutely, in Russia.

I noticed that we had plenty of utensils but no food, whilst Rabbi Nachman Sudak's party, which was flying direct from London to Moscow, had with them about a hundred chickens and other food stuffs so **they** would not starve as some Lubavitchers do eat chicken with their fingers so they would not require our cutlery. Other groups from France, Belgium, Holland and Italy would be bringing meat (250

pounds weight from Paris), more chickens, dairy products, milk, cheese, challas, wine and so forth.

Levi Schmerling was flying from Zurich, Switzerland, and would be bringing with him something special, probably regards from his lovely wife Channah. Actually, he had already sent many thousands of pounds weight of food for the Lubavitcher summer camps in Russia.

Tally had arranged that our party should check in all together. This would mean that each passenger would be "responsible" for two or three of these thirty extra cartons avoiding extra freight charges.

Whilst we were waiting our turn, Shlomo Weinstein warned us that there were no kosher meals aboard our plane because of computer trouble. However, his father who was connected with the food division of El Al, had brought along three El Al meals presumably so that his son, at least, would not starve. He had offered twelve of these meals to the Austrian Airlines at £10 each but the offer was not accepted.

The flight was slightly delayed and Chaim Farro turned up just in time. It was anticipated that the journey to Vienna would take 2½ hours so Chaim had plenty of time to organise a Minyan. Contrary to what Shlomo Weinstein has said we did receive our kosher meals on the flight, supplied by Guttman's of Zurich, Switzerland, and supervised by the highest authorities

It was a good flight and we were served with an "ENGLISH BREAKFAST". The menu stated: Cheese, Poached salmon, Tuna mousse garnish (actually it was HOT Gefilte fish and baked Hecht), stewed fruit, crackers, jam and drinks. Therefore Shlomo put away his three meals till the next emergency.

At 10 a.m. we arrived at Vienna where we had to change planes. Chaim had not yet concluded the morning service as the Captain had made up ten minutes of the lost time. I think Chaim wanted the Captain to circle the airport for another ten minutes so that he could finish davenning.

Our flight from Vienna to Moscow took about 2¼ hours. This time we were served with a Turkey dinner and all the trappings. We had no need yet to call upon our First Aid food supplies nor on our emergency sandwiches. Shlomo Weinstein was still carrying three untouched (by hand or mouth) El Al meals.

Our Arrival at Moscow

We arrived at the main Moscow Airport at 3.30 p.m. and discovered that the London plane had also just arrived. It surprised us to find that this terminal was dark, dingy and dirty. A photograph of the airport is shown overleaf and one can just about see Rabbi Akiva Cohen, Roselyn and me sitting in the unlit terminal.



I was waiting for our suitcases to appear on the carousel when Rabbi Nachman Sudak rushed towards me and said excitedly, "Listen Zalmon, can you hear what is being broadcast on the Public Relay System?" It was a message of welcome to the Shiluchim of the Lubavitcher Rebbe who were now arriving to attend the third European Conference in Russia.

This message was broadcast in three languages - Russian, English and Ivrit. Could anyone ever have dreamt or expected to hear the traditional Hebrew words of welcome in the International airport of Moscow, capital of Communism?

The words "BEROCHIM HABOIM" (blessings and welcome to our visitors) were blaring all around the terminal, not once, but on two or three different occasions. It was no small wonder that the airport then seemed a little less dark and dingy.

Nachman also pointed out to me that there was a "duty free"- shop at the **arrival** concourse - which was most unusual.

We had collected our suitcases and now required a trolley on which to convey our baggage to the coaches which were waiting for us outside. Tally asked me to fetch half a dozen extra as we needed them for the thirty cartons of tableware.

The trolleys were all lined up against the wall and a young lady sat at a desk at the head of this line. She wanted one rouble for each trolley. I had no roubles but she would accept either a dollar or fifty pence instead. I took eight trolleys and handed her a £5 note. She gave me an English £1 coin in change, a smile and an official receipt.

We loaded up the cartons onto the trolleys and pushed them forward towards the Customs Officer who had opened up the large steel gates for our convenience. He checked the contents of three of the cartons on the first trolley and checked the reference numbers of a couple of cartons on the second trolley and waved the rest through.

Next was Immigration. We had heard many adverse reports about the tough immigration and customs officers. How they spent hours on thoroughly searching one's luggage - and even one's person. Although we had nothing to declare and our documents were in order and our money was ready for checking, we did not relish spending hours at the airport being questioned and searched.

We were then surprised and delighted when, after cursory glance at our passports and visas, the officer stamped the documents and we were now in the territory of the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics - an area of nearly nine million square miles - comprising a sixth of the earth's land surface which stretched right across Europe and Asia and which had a population of nearly 200 million in 1950.

We did not spend any time (or money) in the Duty Free shop, but made our way to the two coaches which were standing outside the terminal.



Our London colleagues, led by Rabbi Nachman Sudak, were loading their luggage and cartons onto the buses. Included in this party were Rabbis Phaivish Vogel and his son-in-law Yona Pruss, Nachman's son-in-law Yossi Alperovitch, and Nachman's son Levi, the two Yitzchok Suffrins (we referred to one of them as Ickie) and Shmuel Lew our own son-in-law. -

Rabbi Aaron Cousins has just snapped Rabbi Sudak who seems to be looking forward with

keen anticipation and pleasure to the next week in Russia.

Shmuel remarked that there were at least five Shiluchim whose Shvers (fathers-in-law) were also present, but he was the only one who had his Shvigga (Mother – in – law) with him as well (Roselyn).

Our Rosh HaYeshiva gave a helping hand with the cartons, our coaches were quickly loaded, and away we went on our 30 minutes drive to the Molodegny Hotel, just past the city centre.

Shlomo Weinstein was still clutching a couple of the El Al meals. He was keeping these for THE emergency. Nachman confirmed that they did receive their Kedassia Kosher meals on their British Airways flight. (Ours were from Guttman's of Zurich, Switzerland).

We arrived at our five star hotel, someone remarked that the only stars one could see were through the window at night. One could readily appreciate that this had once been a real, luxurious hotel but had been sadly neglected. The steps leading to the imposing entrance were broken in many places and a huge, gaping, jagged hole had been left at the side.

A "security" man sat inside the doorway all day long. I think he was supposed to check everyone who entered.

There were 1,500 beds in this hotel and, during our stay, there seemed to be thousands of young boys and girls in special groups from America and Europe staying in the hotel.

Nachman explained to me afterwards that the word Molodegny was Russian for youth. That is why it looked like a youth hotel (or hostel).

On each of the 24 floors there was also a security woman who sat behind her desk and kept the keys of all the bedrooms of that floor. She was on duty 24 hours a day and we felt very guilty when we returned occasionally in the very early hours of the morning and had to awaken her. She looked so comfortably ensconced amongst the pillows behind her desk. Roselyn maintained that they were K.G.B. and at one time were in constant communication with H.Q.

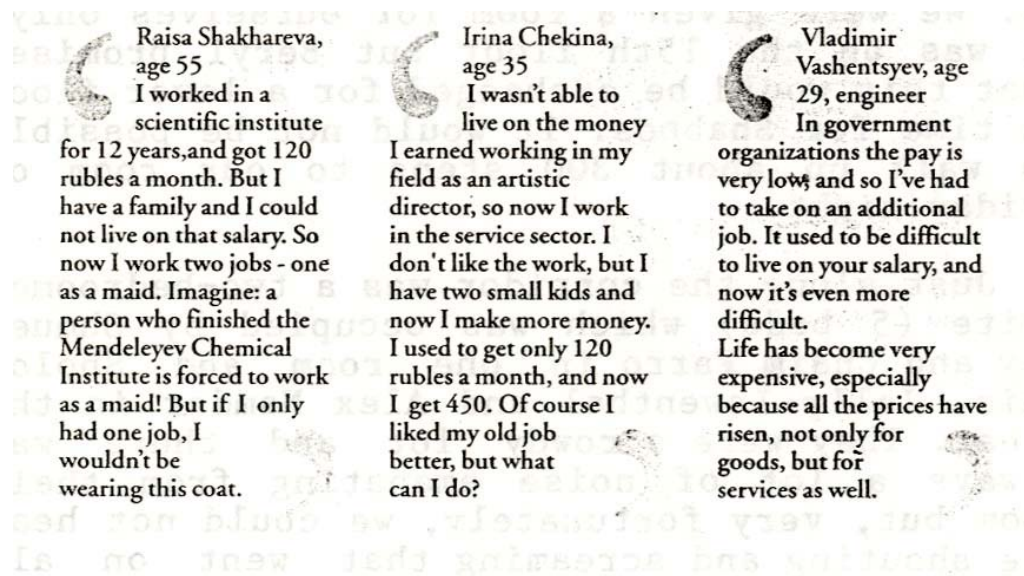
Meanwhile, however, as soon as we entered the large foyer, Big Chief Rabbi Moishe K., commanding officer and head, accompanied by his operations chief and Russian representative, Rabbi Beryl Lazar, of the Marina Rouschay Shool in Moscow and soon to be promoted to Chief Rabbi of the big shool in Moscow, approached us and handed us the "keys" to our room. Beryl is only about 28 years old and studied together with our grandson Dovid at the Ocean Parkway Yeshiva in Brooklyn. Obviously they got into many scrapes together but Beryl has settled down nicely in Moscow with his wife and family and is doing very good work there.

The Chief and Beryl had done very well for us. We were given a room for ourselves only. It was on the 15th floor but Beryl promised that this would be exchanged for a lower floor in time for Shabbos. It would not be possible to walk up about 300 steps to our room on Friday night.

Just along the corridor was a two-bedroomed suite (5 beds) which was occupied by Shmuel Lew and Chaim Farro in one room and Sholom Weis, Tally Lowenthal and Alex Namdar in the other. They were a rowdy lot and there was always a lot of noise emanating from their room but, very fortunately, we could not hear the shouting and screaming that went on all night. A bottle of vodka cost, at the most, 50 roubles - £1, so they held a Farbraingen nearly every night in their room. Once the A bottle of Pepsi Cola or mineral water cost one rouble, that is 2 pence, but some people only earn about 120 roubles a month, that is 60 pence a week. In some cases a person does two jobs and receives double this amount (double the rouble). A doctor we met earned 160 roubles a month - 80 pence per week. If he gets double it is still only £1.60 a week so, unfortunately, he cannot afford to buy a bottle of Pepsi for 2 pence.

Petrol is 3 pence a gallon but is only obtainable on the Black Market. The shops were completely empty so, if one has plenty of money, there is not much one can spend it on. The country is impoverished economically as well as in Yiddishkeit.

Here is a cutting from a magazine which will prove my point:

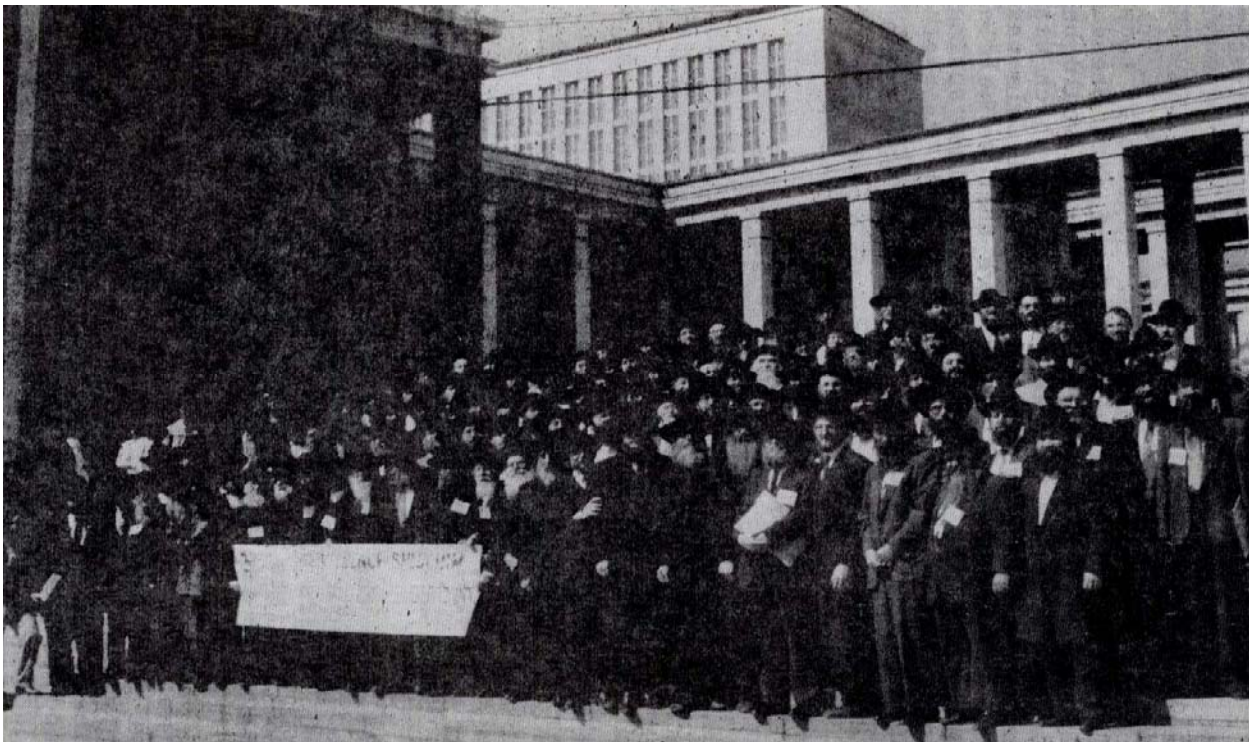


That first evening we went down to dinner at our "private" restaurant on the ground floor. We had a large hors d'oeuvre – there - was cheese, rice and potatoes. Vegetable soup followed and there was plenty of pita bread. It was originally intended that meat would be on the menu but the Paris contingent which was bringing the meat was delayed. Pepsi Cola was the principal drink. I believe that we held a stock of ten thousand bottles plus spring water. That worked out that each delegate could have a ration of nine bottles every single day.

This is the label that stared us in the face every hour of every day. (I discovered that the owners of Pepsi Cola of U.S.A. had sold to the Soviets millions of bottles of Pepsi in exchange for seven merchant/ cargo ships).

This pita bread was flat and a little hard (no yeast). Similarly, for the first few days we had plenty of fresh milk, then it was powdered dairy milk and then no milk at all. There was no butter or margarine. But Moishe K and his team did a marvellous job over the following eight days. There was never any shortage of good, plain food. Every aspect of the tour was well organised and the logistics arrangements were fantastic. I told the Rebbe that if Moishe would have been in charge of the logistics and food in Napoleon's army then Napoleon would have had no reason or necessity to retreat from Moscow in 1812.

After dinner, Big Chief Moishe made the first of his daily announcements. I looked forward to these because we then had a good idea of the programme for the following day. He spoke like a headmaster to his pupils - with firmness and authority.



Tomorrow, Thursday, we would officially open the third European Kinus in the town of Lubavitch - a 7½ hours journey from Moscow. The Bus company had expressed the desire that we should be back in Moscow at the latest by 11 p.m. that night. Therefore, we had to leave our hotel much earlier than we had originally planned. The new times were:

5 a.m. The first coach would leave for the Marina Rouschay Shool and Mikvah.

6 a.m. Shachris - morning service.

7 a.m. Breakfast, after which the coaches would leave the hotel for Lubavitch at 7.30 a.m. promptly. We would not wait for anyone. Should anybody not be in the bus at 7.30 a.m. we would leave without him.

Our Visit to the Town of Lubavitch

A complete and full 24 hours day.

I had set my alarm clock to go off at 4.30 a.m. on that Thursday morning of July 25th. We were awake long before that time and I dashed downstairs to be in the first coach which left at 4.30 a.m. for the Shool. You would not believe it when I tell you that Roselyn did not bring any towels from home. I took the largest towel from our hotel bathroom which resembled a faded tea cloth. We arrived at the Shool at 5.20 a.m. and all rushed to the Mikvah.

It was nice, clean and warm and situated in a small room. There were facilities for about six men to disrobe and two men could use the Mikvah at the same time. Suddenly over a hundred men were anxious to use this Mikvah - all at one and the same time!!

Fortunately, I was one of the first. I undressed in a little corner behind the door together with another two men. I went under the shower situated in a little cubicle and almost drenched three men who were using this cubicle as a dressing room. Afterwards we retired to the Shool for Shacharis. One could see that this had once been a beautiful Synagogue but, like everything else in Moscow, it had been sadly neglected. Nachman pointed out to me a small tablet affixed to the Omud which was in memory of a soldier who was killed in 1915 during World War I.

There were two Holy Arks, which was most unusual. A large modern one and the other a most beautiful antique and carved Oran Hakodesh which had been salvaged from another Shool which had been destroyed. It was really a wonderful work of art, one of the nicest I have ever seen. I supposed they had nowhere else to store it. However, when we came to that part of the service when we needed to layen with the Sefer Torah, it was discovered that both of the Holy Arks were locked and no one had the keys.

Well, if there was no Sefer Torah, we could not layen. Fortunately, Reb Avrohom arrived at that moment with the keys. Reb Avrohom was an old man who had kept the Shool going all these years. He had a wooden leg and yet walked to Shool every Shabbos. It took him about half an hour.

There is a story going around Moscow that the Mitzvah of Hagboh in the Moscow Big Synagogue is always given to a tourist so that when this gentleman lifts up the Torah with his two hands outstretched the wardens have a golden opportunity to feel around his waist and pockets to discover whether he has anything of value.

When we had concluded the service, Chaim Farro started the second Minyan. (But there were plenty more men who were davenning on the buses on the way to Lubavitch.) Before we left the Shool every one of us signed a general P.N. (Pidyon Nefesh) to place upon the graves of the Rebbes in Lubavitch.

After breakfast we were given the facilities to prepare sandwiches for our day's outing. We could have meat or cheese and jam. Cases of Pepsi were loaded onto each of the coaches.

These coaches were very luxurious with reclining seats, air conditioning and a public relay system. Moishe K. made an announcement to the effect that coaches number one and two were non-smoking, and coaches three and four were for smokers.

"And you, Roselyn and Zalmon, please go into bus no. 1 which is for non-smokers."

We entered the bus and almost everyone was already smoking. Unfortunately, the smoke affects our eyes and, in any case, we consider that it is bad for our health - as do most people in this enlightened age. We were met with remarks, "It's O.K." and "We won't tell anyone". So we alighted from that bus!

Moishe was annoyed and he made a strong speech that, "This coach is non-smoking. If any of you want to smoke then leave this bus immediately and travel in a smoking one."

Only one person was left in our coach who was still smoking - the driver! I asked him to refrain. He did not comprehend the actual words which I used but he did understand from my actions and intonations that I wanted him to put out his cigarette. It was the worst place in the bus because the smoke from his cigarette would be blowing from his front seat right through the whole bus.

He pleaded with me, through an interpreter, to allow him an occasional cigarette. It would be impossible for him to drive over seven hours without an occasional smoke.

Rabbi Matusoff, from Casablanca, Morocco, was the only passenger in our coach who could speak Russian, so he was our liaison with the driver.

We departed from the hotel, in convoy, at 8.30 a.m. for our 300 mile journey to Lubavitch. Our coach was fourth and last in this convoy. I had noticed from the map that we had to travel south west from Moscow and make our way towards Minsk.

It was pouring with rain when we left Moscow but the weather soon cleared up. Forests and fields lined the highways for almost the whole way. I never saw any cows or sheep and I

counted just three overhead bridges and two garages for petrol. There were no service station areas and only one toilet for the whole 300 miles, which caused some minor disruptions.

However - we had been travelling along steadily and very comfortably for about two hours. The passengers were behaving very nicely. The Shacharis Minyan had long since ended and the Shiluchim were studying the Sedra and the Rambam, and guzzling Pepsi Cola. Some were learning a Sicho or a Maamer, even discussing various topics of Torah with their neighbours whilst drinking more Pepsi, and when the first bus came to a standstill the other three followed suit.

We had actually stopped at the first and only Rest Room on this long journey to Lubavitch. It was only a small wooden shack with two doors marked Male and Female (in Russian) respectively. It was the most primitive toilet I have ever seen - anywhere. It consisted of just holes in the ground, and its only merit was that it was enclosed and private.

This place did not appeal to our passengers who all disappeared into the forest by the roadside. Every twenty minutes or so after that delay, one of the four coaches would halt to allow some of the Shiluchim to disappear into the forest and, once again, the other three buses would stop as well to let the Shiluchim join their colleagues in the glades.

We were already running over an hour late and these continual delays were getting beyond a joke. So that when, after only a few moments, the leading bus halted again, near to the junction with Minsk, we ignored it and continued along the road.

There was no sign of the first bus and it suddenly dawned upon everyone that we should have taken the road to Minsk.

The three buses turned around and we discovered our leading bus still standing near the road junction with all the passengers standing by the roadside.

The coach had a puncture - a flat tyre. The driver reported that it would take some time to change the tyre (if he did have a spare) so we condensed all the passengers into the three remaining buses and continued on our way to Lubavitch - about twenty five miles away.

Well, at last, after an eight and a half hours journey, we had arrived at our destination, the village of Lubavitch - the "town of love".

I could well imagine that this place had not changed one little bit during the past hundred years, and we could envisage how all the characters created by Sholom Aleichem in "Tevye the Milkman" had lived here in the past.

Water was still drawn from the well or from the odd pump at the roadside. The hay was still loaded onto the farm wagons with pitchforks. The roads were just cart tracks and, in some places, like quagmires. Sholom (Weiss) quoted from the "Stories of the Rebbes" that the "Streets of Lubavitch were like rivers of mud."

There were shacks and small farmsteads dotted about the countryside. There were no streets with names and numbers as we possess in our environments. I suppose that if any letters were sent to a friend in Lubavitch they would have to be collected at the small, local Post Office.

The following pictures were taken in Lubavitch by Aaron Cousins



Taxi Sir?



Shovuos 5751/1991 until Shovuos 5752/1992



The main road



Plying for hire

The only reminder that we were living in the twentieth century was the radio perched on top of a high pole and which blared out, non-stop, the news and messages from the Communist headquarters.

The whole idea was that the population would be forced to listen and would have no excuse that they never heard the broadcasts or announcements.

One of the main objectives of our trip to Russia was to visit the gravesides of the Rebbe, the Tzemech Tzedek, and the Rebbe Maharash, who were lying side by side in their Eternal Resting abodes.

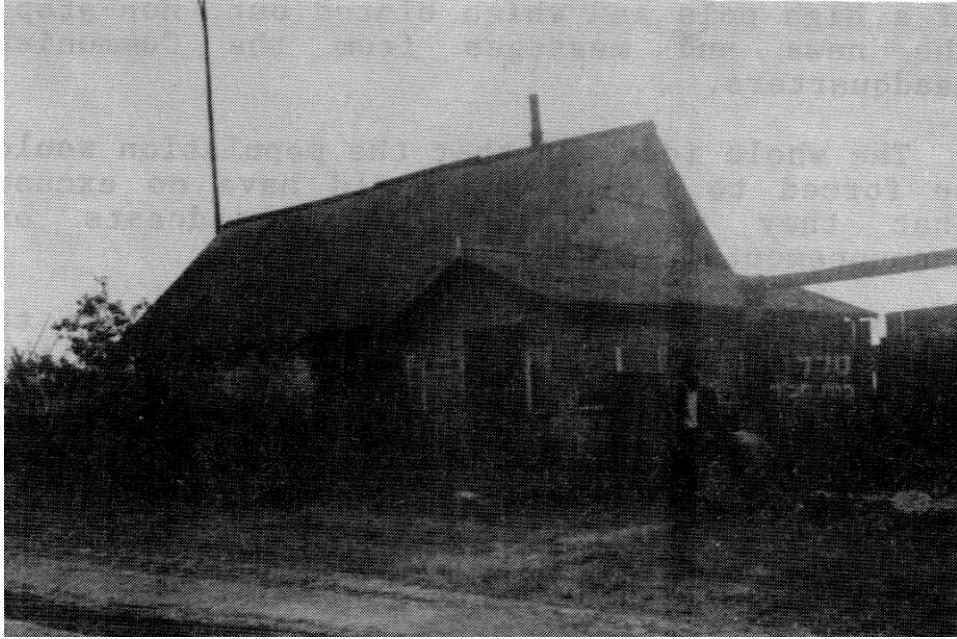
The Kinus, the Convention, would be officially opened at that Holy Place and we wended our way towards our goal.

No one knew exactly where this spot was situated. The buses took us as far as possible on these primitive roads. We now had to walk the rest of the way. We carried on walking in the general direction which we were given, through farmyards and fields, and we suddenly came upon the new Chabad House in Lubavitch.

It was an old, primitive, wooden, two roomed shack. One room seemed to be taken up entirely by an old fashioned oven which would heat the house during the cold winter months. It probably used wooden logs as fuel.

At the moment there were no sanitary facilities at all, and there was plenty of work to do in order to make the place habitable.

For me it served as a marker to point out to us the direction of the Ohel. We trudged along, Indian file, each walking in the footsteps of the one in front, through a nine inch rut with plenty of mud and water all around.



Chabad House

It was now very hot. The sun was beating down on us. It was an idyllic summer's day.

Very quiet - very peaceful. All one could hear were the bees and flies buzzing, the cows mowing, the sheep bleating, cocks crowing, geese gagging, ducks quacking, birds twittering, dogs barking, bearded goats bleating, and bearded Lubavitcher Shiluchim tramping and struggling along the narrow, nine inch furrow through the cornfields and cabbage patches towards the Ohel which, as yet, could not be seen.

Rabbi Moishe Kotlarsky presented me with the above and the next two photographs.

We then heard, in the distance, the singing of Lubavitch Nigunim (tunes). We hurried along and saw the Ohel. A nice, new brick building with a metal roof, has been erected three years ago to protect the graves and the tombstones.

This building was now surrounded by the Lubavitcher Shiluchim who were singing these Lubavitcher tunes.



The actual tombstones inside the building

Roselyn was filled with elation and excitement. She tripped, fell flat on her face and was covered with nettle stings and wet mud. Rabbi Akiva, our Rosh HaYeshiva, who was following behind, helped Roselyn to her feet - he was the perfect gentleman.



You will notice. Roselyn standing in the background. In the foreground are Ickie (Suffrin) checking the camera, Moishe K is making gesture with his hand, Shmuel Arkush is standing in front of Roselyn and Rabbi Aronov is on the right. Chaim Farro has a split personality.



The inscription on the building

We seemed to be miles away from anywhere, like an oasis in a desert. Moishe K. made a short, impassioned speech. "We were entreating HaShem that the Rebbe should be well and enjoy long life and will soon be revealed as our true Moshiach. This third Kinus of European Shiluchim is taking place in Lubavitch and the Rebbe's kingdom now spreads all over the world. I now formally open up, officially, this Convention." We then sang the favourite Nigun

of these famous Tzaddikim and continued with the special tune of each of the Rebbes (Z.A.L.) and concluded with TEN Nigunim of Our Dear Rebbe, Shlita. We sang for nearly thirty minutes. We held the Shiur Rambam and spoke other words of Torah.

The general P.N. (Pidyon Nefesh entreaties) which we had signed that morning in the Marina Rouschay Shool, was placed on the graves. The delegates were allowed to enter and private P.N.'s were laid and prayers recited.

The whole ceremony was performed with DIGNITY, DECORUM and EMOTION.

We then walked back, another thirty minutes, to our buses and drove to the square, the village centre.

We washed at the pump and ate our meal and drank our Pepsi.

It had been arranged that the Tanya should be printed in the three main centres which we were visiting. We had brought with us (probably from New York) a portable printing press which was now producing the one in Lubavitch. The next ones would be printed in Moscow and Alma Ata.



A view of the portable printing machine situated inside the luggage compartment of the coach

We were each given page Mem Alef which contained the "centrepiece" of the Tanya, Chapter 32 (Laive = Heart) and which we intended to learn when we congregated at the exact spot where stood the first Lubavitcher Yeshiva.

We all assembled at the exact spot where the first Lubavitch Yeshiva was established and built. The buildings had been destroyed by the Nazis and the site was mostly wasteland.

We were joined by about twenty Russian boys who were staying at the Lubavitch Day Camp at Minsk. A young man, Mordechai Telzner, the son of Tzvi Telzner of London, was the Chief Counsellor. Twelve of the boys recited the Twelve Torah Verses in the now traditional way in which these are recited at 770 and throughout the Lubavitcher world - with great emphasis, energy and clarity. We then learnt chapter 32 of the Tanya (which had just been printed not many yards away) on the very ground where the large Zalle (hall) of the Old Lubavitch Yeshiva had stood. Rabbi Beryl Levin then climbed upon a wall and explained in detail how the buildings and area had looked in those days, a hundred years ago.

"This is the centre, the Foundation, to which all Lubavitch Yeshivas world-wide owe their existence." ("Including the most modern and best - the one in Manchester, England," said I under my breath.)

Beryl pointed out where the Yeshiva was located at that time - the large Zalle was here the smaller one over there the Rebbe Maharash learned and studied on that side, and so on. He gave a very comprehensive report - he knew his "stuff", and he showed me a map which explained how all the buildings were planned and where they stood.

Aaron Cousins confessed to me that the story related by Rabbi Beryl Gurrevitch of France had created a lasting impression upon him.

The Yeshiva Tomchei Temimim had been founded in 1897. In 1947 Beryl had just been discharged from the army, after fighting for Russia, when he was arrested on a charge of plotting against the state (by teaching young boys). He was incarcerated in a Gulak and was sitting in this terrible jail, greatly depressed and with no hope for the future, when he recalled that on that very date, 50 years previously, the Lubavitch Yeshiva was established. This cheered him up tremendously. As long as boys were learning in Yeshivas there was hope and a bright future for our race.

It was now getting rather late so we returned to our coaches and partook of a meal and Pepsi.

An old woman of ninety years of age was reminiscing about how, when the Nazis arrived during the war, the first question they asked was, "Where are the Jews hiding?" The inhabitants refused to answer but, when they were threatened, cajoled, tempted and bribed with food, which was in short supply, then they did inform of the whereabouts of the Jewish people.

The Nazis rounded up about two hundred and fifty men, women and children and shot them all dead.

There was a similar story told regarding another town nearby where the Nazis murdered six hundred of our people.

Towards evening we noticed a procession of boys and girls, men and women, each leading with a rope one single cow. It was pathetic to realise that all their possessions and assets were concentrated in this one single animal.

It was getting dark when we departed from Lubavitch. After an hour we pulled into a petrol station. The driver made every passenger leave the bus and told them to keep well away whilst he filled the tank. He maintained that it was a dangerous exercise. He was perfectly in order because the terrible smell of the fumes from the fuel filled the whole area. I was convinced that a careless light would have caused an explosion.

We davened Maariv and took the road to Moscow. We only stopped about five times on the way home and duly arrived at our hotel. Nachman told me that on his bus they held a non-stop Farbraingen. We slipped into our beds at 4.30 a.m. precisely - exactly 24 hours since we got up. And yet, some of our friends were having exciting Farbraingen until 7.30 a.m. - and then flopped into their beds.

EREV SHABBOS AND OUR VISIT TO A BOYS CAMP

The service next morning was scheduled to commence at 9.30 a.m. but being the "morning after the night before", we were lucky to start at 9.50 a.m. Chaim Farro had his - the second Minyan - at 10.15 a.m. which was really very good.

We also celebrated a Siyum - on "Megilla". Maybe that was the reason why we had such a stupendous breakfast afterwards.

We had EVERYTHING:- tinned salmon and tuna (as usual), cheese, jam, potatoes, rice, cream and yoghurt, fruit, eggs, milk (dried at this stage) plenty of coffee (kettles of boilingwater were always placed on each table) - plus fried fish. All our food was prepared and cooked at the kitchens of the Marina Rouschay shool under the complete charge and control of Kasriel Shem Tov – the son of Yisroel and Mrs. Shemtov of Crown Heights - who fulfilled this onerous task of providing three good meals every day for one hundred and fifty people with skill, efficiency, ingenuity and fortitude. He was ably assisted by Dovid Slavin, Rabbi Y. Spalter and Yossi Levertov.

After breakfast, Beryl Lazar gave us the excellent news that we could now move from our 15th floor room down to one on the 5th storey.

Rabbi Koritz, who was taking over our old room, kindly assisted us in removing all our property and clothes downstairs, meanwhile placing his Tallis and Tefillin "out of the way" in our previous room.

Shortly afterwards, our "old" chambermaid brought down to us, now on the fifth floor, the Tallis and Tefillin bag belonging to Rabbi Koritz. She thought that she was doing us a great favour.

She also lodged a complaint, she was short of a towel (the one I had taken to the Mikvah

yesterday and which I had left, by accident, in the breakfast restaurant.)

She demanded the return of this towel as she was responsible. I could see by her sign language and her distress, that she was really upset. We could not speak Russian but money does speak all languages and we settled the matter amicably. We handed her three roubles, which was the equivalent of six pennies, and she returned upstairs with happiness and joy.

We were supposed to leave the hotel at 10.05 a.m. (Moishe liked to be precise) but it was 12.45 p.m. before we departed by bus on a guided tour. There was no guide but Rabbi Yitzchok Meshulevin gave over to us a message - a freiliche geruss - joyful regards - from the Rebbe to the Shiluchim of the Third European Convention. (The other two Conventions had been held in Nice and Milan.)

He also related parts of the exciting Sicho which the Rebbe had given on Shabbos, the 9th of Av, about the birth of Moshiach. Today (this Friday) was the 15th of Av, which is the greatest Yom Tov of all the Festivals!

Incidentally, Pesach and Succos also commenced on the 15th of the months of Nissan and Tishrei, respectively.

Rabbi Eliezer Nisilevitch was the Chazan for the fourth "Morning" service, held at the rear of the bus. Roselyn was in the Women's shool.

Rabbi Meshulevin mentioned as an aside that, "On these streets no Jews were ever allowed to walk in the past."

Shmuel Ephraim Rosenstein, aged 20, was also in our party. He was born in Moscow, studied at the London Yeshiva, and was now learning at 770. His parents live now in Jerusalem.

Shmuel Ephraim had been assisting at the Boys Camp at Kiev where there was also a camp for 300 girls. There were 200 boys and 100 girls from the U.S.A., England and other places, who were acting as leaders in camps in Russia today.

I asked Chaim Farro, a Kohen, whether he was allowed to visit Lenin's tomb. Chaim replied, "Definitely not." Tally Lowenthal retorted that, "There was even a doubt whether you, Zalmon, are allowed to go."

Neither Rabbi Akiva nor Chaim Farro, who are Kohanim, had entered into the Ohel at Lubavitch, because there was a roof on this

Later on, in Alma Ata, although there was no roof on the edifice surrounding the burial ground of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok (Z.A.L.) the father of the Rebbe, Shlita, our Kohanim also did not enter because there were many other graves through which a Kohen was not allowed to pass.

I told Chaim that I knew it was a custom in Brooklyn that when a Kohen wished to visit the Ohel of the previous Rebbe (Z.A.L.) he requested his friends to make a circle around him and in this manner he would approach the Ohel. I have seen myself, especially on Yud Shevat, the

Yartzeit of the previous Rebbe (Z.A.L.) that many Kohanim used this system. Rabbi Chaim Farro explained to me that he had once had a Yechidus (a private interview) with our Rebbe Shlita, on the 18th of Ellul 5729 (it was the day before his marriage). The Rebbe told Chaim that a Kohen could only visit the Ohel if he went by car - right up to the actual graveside. The car should enter the cemetery by the **side** entrance where there were no overhanging trees. Also, the car should go right to the fence by the path leading to the Ohel so that, at all times, there is a fence between the other graves and the Kohen. To sum up. "No fence or car, then no Kohen".

We had joined the "motorway" M5 over an hour and a half ago. We asked Shmuel Gurrevitch where we were and where we were going. He exclaimed that even Beryl Lazar did not know. Someone remarked that, "Everything in Russia was a secret."

To pass the time we decided to make a Siyum of the Rambam - Hilchos HaBechirah.

We were held up at a level crossing whilst an electric train went by. It had twenty coaches! In England the norm is eight or twelve coaches.

This evoked some discussion and one fellow remarked that one could travel by train from Moscow to Paris, a 48 hour journey, for ten roubles (20p). Shmuel Gurrevitch maintained that it must have been a soldier.

The Russians have money of very little value so everything has to be cheap. It would cost them only \$50 to fly to New York but this is almost a year's wages. The eight hours train journey to Leningrad, first class with sleeper, at £9 is very cheap, but to a Russian it is terribly expensive.

Shmuel Spiero, from Holland, was studying in our Manchester Yeshiva for three years. He went with Avrohom Taychidler of Paris to Birobidzhan. They took with them Chaim Mocher from the Marina Rouschay Shool as interpreter. They flew from Tallin to Leningrad then flew the 5,000 miles, with one stop in Siberia, in ten hours. It cost them, as Russians, \$7 (in roubles). A tourist would be charged \$200 for the same journey.

Birobidzhan was founded in 1934 as a Jewish state - a Soviet showpiece. In those days it took 1½ weeks by train from Moscow. The main road is named Sholom Aleichem Street and is signposted in Russian and in Yiddish.

As a Jewish state it is disintegrating very fast. The entire state of this name contains 220,000 people. In the city there is a population of 85,000 and of these only 8,000 are of Jewish origin. They are very "mixed" - a Jewish mother and non-Jewish father, and vice versa. There is no Kashrus, no Pesach, just nothing Jewish.

Shmuel Spiero and friends were trying to salvage something from the wreckage – seeking boys who had not been Bar Mitzvah – they discovered thirty. An old man put on Tefillin for the first time for 65 years. Thousands have left to emigrate to Israel and great numbers are leaving every month. There was never any future or hope for an artificial Jewish homeland. We pray every day for Moshiach to lead us to our Holy Jewish Land (of Israel) and that is the only

future for the Jewish people.

Just after 3 p.m. we arrived at the Boys (overnight) Camp - Vine Gradova. It used to belong to the elite of the young Communist Party so it was a superb and splendid camp. For the first time we found excellent sanitary conditions, and there was swimming facilities in the river flowing through the camp.



I give Roselyn a helping hand to surmount the high Russian steps.
- photo by Sholom Weis.

On entering the camp, a young man approached and wished us Shalom Aleichem. He was surprised when we did not recognise him. He declared that he was our neighbour! Neighbour? Neither Roselyn or I could place him although his face was familiar.

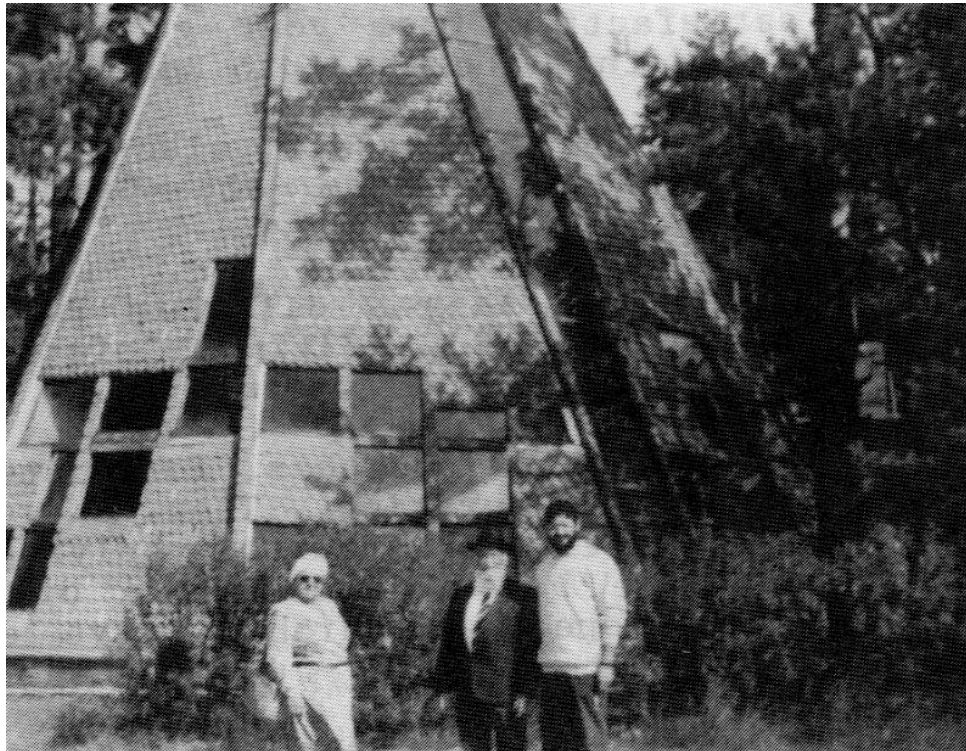
But when he added that we were neighbours in Crown Heights, then it dawned upon us that he was Yossi Melamud the son of Roselyn and Sam who reside next door to us in Eastern Parkway. But now he wore a beard and was assisting at the camp. Another friend, Tzvi Hersh Gurary, the son of Itchie Meyer from Montreal, was also a Counsellor here.

We then entered the large meeting hall where one hundred and fifty boys stood up to welcome and to greet us.

Twelve of the campers recited the Twelve Torah Verses with the same enthusiasm and verve as their counterparts in 770 and elsewhere, repeated the verses word by word.

Beryl Lazar spoke to the boys in Russian and welcomed the Shiluchim. Moishe Kotlarsky, the leader of our party, replied - in Yiddish. He mentioned that this Gan Yisroel Camp was only one of many similar camps, all over and around the world, where the campers received a real Jewish education by living and playing as true Jews - where every Mitzvah that was performed gave Nachass and delight to the Rebbe, and blessings from HaShem Who enjoyed much Spiritual satisfaction from your good deeds. Beryl translated this address into Russian.

Ezriel Chaikin, from Brussels, also spoke in Russian about Tzivas HaShem and Camp Gan Yisroel.



With Yossi Melamud outside the camp dining rooms - Photo by Sholom Weis

Yisroel Freedman sang a ditty in Russian about the Rebbe. It had a lilting, infectious and pulsating rhythm, and all joined in.

There were about ten speeches, fortunately, each one of short duration. Then a young Russian lad was given the honour of replying on behalf of all the boys. He made one of the nicest and best speeches which I have ever heard. This is what he said - and in English too:

"I have never seen so many Rabbis in my life. I had my Bris and made my Bar Mitzvah, and now have proper Jewish names. And we all thank the Rebbe for looking after us."

His new names were Moishe Pesach. Along the wall was a huge poster with all the new Jewish names of the boys who had recently had their Bris and were now 100% Jewish. There were

twenty three names on the poster at this time.

Every Sunday and Wednesday different batches of boys are taken to Moscow for their Bris where they then receive Hebrew names.

A century ago, Russia was the heart and centre of World Jewry where several millions of Jewish people lived and who were mostly frum (orthodox).

Then various anti-religious cults came into being - the Haskala, Bundist and Secular Zionists, which caused a drift from religion. The Communists finished the job by prohibiting all religious education and observance.

Yesterday, in the town of Lubavitch, we visited the graveside of our Previous Rebbes (Z.A.L.), the roots and source of our movement, where were instilled the love of Judaism and the love of one's fellow man.



A section of boys in the camp hall. - Photo by Aaron. Cousins

For over fifty years or so, the Rebbe Shlita, almost all alone, has been keeping alight the flame of Yiddishkeit which has been burning steadily in the hearts and souls of the very few Russians who are now leading the return to Judaism.

We then made our way to the dining room where we enjoyed an excellent meal of soup, fried

fish, and so forth.

It was now 5 p.m. and we had a 2½ hours drive back to our hotel in Moscow. Shabbos was due in at 8.40 p.m. so we had about an hour to spare to prepare for Shabbos.

We had reached the outskirts of Moscow and were debating whether to make a small diversion to visit a beautiful, wooden Shool wherein the Previous Rebbe (Z.A.L.) used to pray when on vacation, but owing to the lateness of the hour decided to drive non-stop to our hotel.

But the driver had other ideas and the bus did stop when we were about 20 minutes from our destination. The driver switched on the engine again, it started, we travelled 20 yards and it stopped again.

The driver jumped out and inspected the engine. It made peculiar sounds but failed to start. The fuel tank was empty. He had intended to fill up at a garage near the beautiful, wooden Shool. As we did not divert he hoped there would be sufficient fuel to see us home. Diesel engines are not as simple as petrol ones and need special priming and so forth when there is no fuel inside.

Shmuel Weinstein kept repeating the suggestion that we should leave the bus and go by Metro. He had noticed a station about a quarter of a mile away. No one was interested.

Passengers were leaping from the bus and getting taxis. I had faith in the driver and sat waiting patiently in my seat.

To put it mildly, Roselyn was becoming extremely angry. She wanted to know whether (1) I realised that it was Erev Shabbos, and (2) was I prepared to sit in this stranded bus all night?

Well! She was not! And I should move over and allow her to disembark. By that time the bus was almost empty so I followed Roselyn and jumped off too. In no time we were surrounded by taxis. I had the leaflet from the hotel with the name and address in Russian so I leapt into the first one followed by Roselyn and four other ex-bus passengers. The taxi driver charged us £1.20 for all the six of us (20p each).

It was fortunate that we were only 20 minutes from the hotel and not stuck miles away from anywhere. Sixty or seventy roubles was a fair price for the fare but some of our boys were charged \$7 (200 roubles). He happened to be a Jewish driver, so they first went to the Shool made him put on Tefillin, say Shema and made an appointment for him to call again at the hotel to put on Tefillin once again on another day. Start with Lubavitch!!

SHABBOS

The time for lighting the Shabbos candles had now arrived. Rabbi Sudak had requested that Roselyn should "bench licht" on behalf of all the Shiluchim.

Roselyn always carried with her a box of ten small candles, which generally burned for about five hours.

Therefore, in this instance, instead of using only two of these, she decided to light all of the ten. Just at that moment a Sheliach brought along a young couple, a man and a woman, and asked Roselyn to teach the young lady how to light the candles and make the blessings thereon. This was the lady's first time ever in her life.

Roselyn separated two of these candles and the lady lit and blessed them under Roselyn's guidance. We discovered afterwards that they were not husband and wife but a father (aged 45, who was a professor from Tbilisi in Georgia in charge of scientific engineering) and his daughter (aged 17). Roselyn observed that one candle would have been sufficient for a single girl. This young lady promised to light Shabbos candles every Friday night.

Many guests and visitors joined us for the Shabbos meal. One couple from Miami, U.S.A., touring Russia, had been looking forward for many weeks to our arrival and the chance to enjoy a kosher Shabbos meal in a congenial atmosphere and surroundings.

There were also a number of American girls who had been enjoying a welcome break from their camp duties, including Alec Zailingold's daughter from Minesota. Mendel Lipsker from South Africa was also joined by his daughter Goldie.

We enjoyed traditional Shabbos food. Nice Challoh, good wine and gallons of Pepsi, gefilte fish, chicken and melon - with all the side dishes.

Moishe announced that the march to the Marina Rouschay Shool would leave the hotel at 8 a.m. promptly next morning.

We had already indicated to Moishe that it would not be possible for us to undertake this long, one and a half hour walk - and return - on the same day.

Therefore, after dinner, Beryl Lazar supplied us with enough gefilte fish, Challoh and chicken, to last us for a couple of days, as well as wine for Kiddush and, of course, Pepsi. We walked up the hundred steps to our room on the fifth floor and even with many stops on the way, we arrived at our room totally exhausted, weary and out of breath. We managed to reach the beds and flopped down, out to this world. And this was only the fifth floor!!

Next day, Shabbos, we remained in our room for most of the day. I had plenty of time to daven, say Tehillim and study. We had a nice Shabbos luncheon and a lovely, long rest, which we urgently needed after the hectic three previous days.

I am not divulging any secrets but there were many notable and illustrious Rabbis who had followed our example and remained marooned in their rooms during most of the day.

Meanwhile, at 8 a.m., most of the 150 Shiluchim and guests had marched all together as a disciplined army, with their Tallaisim billowing in the wind, to the Marina Rouschay Shool.

They were escorted by two police cars as they walked and sang through the streets of Moscow.

Not so very long ago these police would have been escorting them to jail

Rabbi Ezriel Chaikin reminded me that when the Previous Rebbe (Z.A.L.) was arrested in Leningrad to be taken to jail by two officials who were both Jewish, one of them offered to carry the Rebbe's bag and indicated that his father had carried the bags for the Previous Rebbe's grandfather, the Tzemech Tzedek. The Previous Rebbe refused and remarked that the Tzemech Tzedek was going to a place where he wanted to go and unlike today when you wish to take me to a place where I do not want to go.

I was delighted to hear that (1) the professor, whose daughter had lit candles for the first time last evening, was given an Aliya, called up to the Torah, also for the first time in his life. This was very generous and clever of the Wardens. And (2) that Beryl Lazar was called up to the Aliya which contained the Ten Commandments - the Rebbe was always adamant and insistent that the Rabbi of the Shool should regularly receive this Aliya. Phaivish Vogel, who had Yartzeit, was honoured with Maftir.

After the service, luncheon was served in the Shool followed by a Farbraingen, full of high spirits (literally), until late in the day.

Before layenning, the Sifrei Torah were taken outside. Shlomo Kunin (who with Beryl Levin, Masutoff and Yitzchok Aranov were residing in Moscow in order to ensure that the Lubavitcher Seforim would be released by the Soviets) started the Simchas Torah HaKofus tune and everyone sang and danced outside. Crowds of non-Jews who were watching outside were rather bewildered. The Shiluchim then sang in Russian, "Niet, Niet " (There is only one G-d, and no other G-d beside You). The boys from Camp also sang this song in Red Square recently.

Rabbi Masutoff from Morocco spoke in the Shool. He explained that he had been arrested in that very Shool and sent to prison. And today they were celebrating in the same place.

The Warden made three "Me Shabeyrach" prayers for the Rebbe.

- (1) The normal one.
- (2) That the Rebbe should be well.
- (3) That the Rebbe should be very well.

At about 5 p.m. the Shiluchim started to return to the hotel - another 1½ hours walk. Chaim Farro stayed in the Shool, plonked himself onto a bench, davened Maariv in due course, and took a taxi back to the hotel. So he missed the "Third Shabbos meal"! So what!

Meanwhile, at 7.30 p.m., Roselyn and I had descended from our room and made our way to the restaurant where Shalosh Seudos was to be served at 8 p.m. We thought we were at 770. On every bench and armchair lay exhausted and sleeping men. One had returned at 6.30 p.m. but balked at the thought of walking up to the twenty second floor, so he - and many others - just

laid themselves down - anywhere.

There was a very nice Shabbos atmosphere during the meal and we all sang Zemirus. Moishe gave me the honour of benching (saying grace after meals). Shabbos concluded at 10.30 p.m. so we davened Maariv and made Havdolah. I was surprised that no candles were provided but, when they reached the part when the blessing on the lights was to be made, then two matches were struck together which did produce a flickering glow.

There was also no Besomim (spices) available for the blessing to be made over aromatic spices. It was too late to bring down candles from our room but Roselyn did fetch a jar of spices because this blessing could be made even after the Havdolah.

Roselyn sat at a table and everyone came along to borrow the jar in order to fulfil the mitzvah of smelling the spices and to make the brocha thereon. Roselyn did a brisk trade. She was the only person to have the foresight to bring the Besomim.

Moishe then announced that all the delegates had now to register. They would then receive their personal identity cards which had to be worn at all times and were their authorization and credentials to allow them to take part in all the proceedings.

All passports, which had been held by the hotel for processing, would be returned, and if anyone still owed any arrears, then this was the time to pay up.

Here is a copy of Roselyn's identity card - the only woman to receive one.

כינוס השלוחים האירופי השלישי
ליובאוויטש - מוסקבה - אלמא אטא
Third European Conference of Shluchim

Mrs Jaffe
Manchester England

י"ד - כ' מנחם אב
July 25-31, 1991

Each delegate was presented, by the organisers, with a gift of a brief case for holding papers and memoranda, and a folder with various pockets. Both were of Russian manufacture and made of a plastic material to look like leather. As we say in England, "It is the thought that counts."

A large exercise book and a pocket address book completed the set. The address book had an index of twenty eight Russian letters. Twelve of these looked like English letters, e.g., A,E,K,P, but they were pronounced very differently, and there were five letters which looked like Hebrew ones.

The registration of delegates had concluded by about 11.30 p.m. Moishe made another announcement to the effect that he wished to be democratic and wanted that everyone should have the opportunity to discuss the Agenda for the Conference.

After one and a half hours - at 1.30 a.m. - Roselyn and I left the conference about the Conference. I believe it ended at 2 a.m.

Sunday

Next morning we held the service at the hotel. A Jewish fellow came into our "Minyan" before we had started. He was touring Russia with a non-Jewish group.

Sholom Weiss enquired, "Will you put on Tefillin?" "Certainly" was the reply. "And will you recite the Shema?" "Yes, I can manage that." "What about the Amide?" (Shemona Esrai) "Yes, suits me too." Then he wanted to say Kaddish - good! Then "Oleinu" (the final prayer) very good! "And may I say another Kaddish." - Lovely! He certainly enjoyed a good, long session. Sholom invited him to come again when passing.

Shmuel, our son-in-law, told us about the man of 70 years old who was persuaded to put on Tefillin. He begged Shmuel to write down what these were called in order to show his children.

Shmuel is busy at the hotel with his Tefillin whenever he has a moment to spare. He generally manages to find some customers. He is not the only Sheliach with this fixation, and most of them do carry their Tallis and Tefillin everywhere - just in case! On many occasions we were stopped in the street by some men who wanted to put on Tefillin "for old times sake."

Before the first session of the Convention we were taken to the Moscow city centre in order to have official photographs taken of all the delegates.

Our buses departed from the hotel at 10 a.m. and we left the coaches near the Lenin Library where the whole group was photographed with the library in the background. The Lubavitcher Rebbe's Seforim (books) which we are fighting so hard to reclaim, after their illegal confiscation by the Communists, are stored (or exhibited) in this library.

Whilst we were already in the centre of Moscow, we took the opportunity of taking a long walk to see some of the more famous sights.

One of the main sights in Moscow that morning, however, was a large group of 150 black bearded (mostly) and black hatted Rabbis wearing black jackets. It was well understood that such a large and unusual group would demand attention and we were all warned not to give,

interviews, individually, but to refer them to our official spokesmen - Moishe Kotlarksky, Shlomo Kunin, Phaivish Vogel, Beryl Levin and Beryl Lazar

We were stopped by Moscow T.V., Swedish T.V., New York Times, London Times, and many other representatives of the world's media,

We took the opportunity to explain to them fully - to let the World know - that these books belonged to the Lubavitcher Rebbes, and we wanted them back. The editor of the "Muskovite" (Russian newspaper) sent one of his Jewish reporters, a lady, to discover what were our motives in coming to this country.

At the Kremlin, Shlomo Kunin led us in the recital of the Rebbe's, Shlita, Tehillim, verse by verse. We then sang it with great enthusiasm.

In Red Square we recited more Psalms and Sang more Nigunim. We walked - and we walked - and we walked. It was no small wonder that Roselyn's Feet became swollen - and mine!?!

We passed an enormous, palatial, white building with a large golden logo in front. The flag which was flying from the top of the flag pole was not the, usual red flag with the hammer and sickle but a pre-Revolution Russian flag. We were told that this was the Russian Parliament.

Rabbi Beryl Levin then led us to the Russian Headquarters of the Agudas Chassidus Chabad. He told us how nine months ago, the Rebbe had sent him, together, with Shlomo Kunin, Matusoff and Yitzchok Aronov, to Moscow to search for and to expedite the recovery of the Lubavitcher Rebbes' invaluable and precious collection of 12,000 books which were now lying in Lennin's Library. They were told that if the books were found they would be returned at once.

After a couple of days they discovered the whereabouts of the Seforim and Beryl Levin disclosed to the authorities that he held a copy of the Schneerson file from the Lenin Library. At the manager's office they opened this file and found a letter from the Previous Rebbe (Z.A.L.) demanding the return of these books.

On Thursday evening at 11 p.m., Rabbi Label Groner phoned from 770. He wished to know what had transpired. The Rebbe advised them to obtain an office - immediately - to print stationery and letter heads, and to open a bank account in the name of Agudas Chassidus Chabad - printed in Russian. Everything had to be done in a businesslike manner.

They visited the Mayor and requested his help to "find" them a suitable room to use as an office. There were none available anywhere. Beryl and Shlomo threatened to remain in the Mayor's room until they were actually given an office despite the fact that Shabbos was due at 4.30p.m.

The Mayor agreed that they could use his room for the time being. So they settled in and said the Shiur of the Rambam, placed a Mezzuzah on the door post, and put Tefillin on someone who had never put them on before, which is not too difficult a task today in Russia.

There was not an official "Irgun Chabad" in Russia, and it was hoped that - all would work together to retrieve the Book.

Beryl, Shlomo and company handed a letter of introduction to a Minister to give to Gorbachev. This Minister was hard headed and refused. He would not change his mind because he never, ever changed his mind.

The Rebbe had advised his Chassidim that when in serious, or 'big trouble,' then they should sing, the Alter Rebbe's song. They did so at that moment and, for some inexplicable reason, the Minister just this once, changed his mind and handed in this letter of introduction.

In Gorki Street we passed a drink machine. Ten kopikei (one tenth of a ruble 0.2 pence) was placed in a slot. There were no paper or plastic cups -just an ordinary, plain glass tumbler. There was a special water jet or spout to cleanse this glass and the drink of plain water came down from Above.

We returned to the hotel where we held two session of the Convention. Afterwards we drove to the Cosmos Hotel to participate in the Banquet

The Banquet

That Sunday evening we attended the Conference Banquet at the Cosmos Hotel in the city centre. This is one of the largest and luxurious hotels in Moscow. It was built specially for the Olympic Games when they were recently held in Russia.

Two hundred places were- set in the large banqueting hall, and many Communal leaders and notables, including thirty women, were invited. The finest paper plates and plastic cutlery were brought out specially for this high class occasion. The tables were covered with white, gleaming cloths all paper. At least the Kashrus was assured. The menu consisted of smoked salmon with, tomatos and eggs, followed by steak with potatoes and other vegetables, plates of tinned salmon and bowls of caviare were placed along the center of the tables. For dessert there was fruit. There was one bottle of Vodka for every four diners, and Pepsi "ad infinitum" and "ad nauseam".

A harmonica recorder played Lubavitcher music during the meal, very loudly. Big Chief Moishe opened up the formal proceedings with a special prayer for the Rebbe's health and the success of the Kinus.

He reminded us of the wonderful and exceptional welcome which we had received at Moscow Airport through the Public Relay System, of our visit to Lubavitch and to the Boy's Camp, and of the unique sight of 150 Rabbonim marching together to the Shool with police escorts.

Moishe concluded by stating that Gorbachev was responsible for this change in the attitude to

religion and we hope that Gorby will return to us our Holy Books.

Shlomo Kunin commenced singing the Rebbe's Psalm 90 of Tehillim and the whole assembly joined in with great enthusiasm.

Moishe continued by listing all the countries that were represented at the Conference - Austria, Belgium, England and Scotland, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, South Africa, Israel, U.S.A., and last, but not least, the, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Chief Rabbi of Russia, Rabbi Shagevitz, welcomed us in Hebrew.

Beryl Lazar told us that he was asked whilst travelling on the Metro. "Why does not the Rebbe come to Russia?" Beryl replied that, "Today the Rebbe has come to Moscow in the shape of about 120 of his Shiluchim."

Rabbi Gertchon indicated, both in Hebrew and in Russian "that there was so much work to do in this country for Yiddishkeit and with so few to do it."

Moshe introduced the next speaker in English, who would speak on behalf of all the Shiluchim, it was our son-in-law, Shmuel (Lew). He started to reminisce about the old days and the differences today. He reminded us of the time, about seven years ago, when he had visited Russia, for the first time. Roselyn and I did not need reminding because we had heard of Shmuel's terrible experiences at the Moscow Airport many times. The customs wanted Shmuel to play the tape which he was carrying with him and how the Rebbe's voice then filled the whole airport and so on and so forth.

It was a good story but we had heard it in English a few times, in Yiddish and in Ivrit too. It was probably translated into Russian tonight so it was something different.

We heard the story of a young boy of six years who was asked, "What would you expect in the time of Moshiach?" The boy answered, "To be able to open up the curtain of this room and learn Torah without fear and without interruption."

Then Moishe introduced us to a very fine Russian, Jewish lady. He called her Rebbetzen Dvora Leah. She is as a lawyer and she gave invaluable help and counsel to Shlomo Kunin and Beryl Levin and the others in the matter of the recovery of the books. She was very much Mesiras Nefesh (self sacrificing) in this cause and she received a standing ovation.

The Rosh HaKolel from Kishinev reported with great joy that a young man was getting married in 8 few weeks time to a Chassidishe girl from Moscow Chabad.

A few years ago there was not one Shomer Shabbos and today we are seeing living miracles.

Last year a Lag B'Omer Parade was held and 250 children attended. This year, there were 2,000 children and the Mayor was in attendance. He reported that he could mention twenty cities with similar stories. His "town" has helped in every way and given to then a most

beautiful building - as a Beis Chabad. They were also given back land which used to belong to Jewish people. The Rebbe declared that this was not only good for Kishinev, but for all Bessarabia too.

A few more speeches followed and we then sang and danced our way around the room. The plentiful supply of vodka helped to create high spirits, and all the Russian men were made to join in.

In due course, all returned to their places, sat down and benched (said grace after meals).

Shlomo Kunin gave me a hug and hoped that the Seforim would be returned in a couple of weeks.

Monday

It had been announced that Shacharis would commence at 7.45 a.m. There had been a discussion on whether to daven in the Shool or to bring a Safer Torah to the hotel because, being Monday, we had to layen. As far as I was aware it had been decided to daven in the hotel.

At 7.40 a.m. I emerged from the lift on the ground floor, and saw a couple of our Lubavitcher friends. They shouted. "come on zalmon, quickly, we are going to the Marina Rouschay Shool."

I dashed out of the hotel and there I saw Chaim Farro standing near a taxi. My heart dropped. "Where is the bus?" I enquired. Chaim explained that there was no bus because this was an unofficial group. The intention was to go into the Mikvah 'first' and then have the Minyan in the Shool where we would layen in the Sefer Torah.

Well, it seemed that I had made a mistake and "fallen in" (not into the Mikvah yet). We squeezed six passengers into this taxi, and Chaim had arranged the price, which was 10 roubles for all the six.

We met Sholom (Weiss), Shmuel and Tally, but the Mikvah was locked on the inside. A Ger was being converted and we had to wait. Sholom was looking after me exceptionally well and he even brought me a nice towel.

Chaim started the service. He had just recited a couple of words when Rabbi Prevezer, from Paris, interrupted him and said, "It is not Rosh Hashonah today. Get a move on!"

Outside the Shool we saw scores of girls who were boarding busses to take them to a Lubavitch Camp. Parents and brothers were present to see them off.

One father introduced us to his daughter, "the young camper" and to her younger brother, Boruch Shmuel was delighted and explained that "Boruch" is the first word we say when we bless HaShem.

We were then introduced to his wife who wished to discover from whence we came. We told her, "From England." She literally cried with emotion - she felt overwhelmed that people had come all the way from England to see them! She felt that they were not being neglected any longer.

We stopped a taxi for our return journey. There were now only five of us instead of the six who shared the taxi going to the Shool. The driver would only accept four passengers – that was the law. So, for another ten roubles, 20 pence, our other friend travelled all alone, like a lord, in another taxi.

When we arrived at the hotel, I was amazed to see two British policemen and two policewomen standing in the doorway. I readily admit that I did occasionally slightly exceed the speed limit on the Motorway when I travelled to London Airport a few days ago - but to send a group of four officers all the way to Moscow seemed a little extravagant. I learnt afterwards that they had come to Moscow on a goodwill mission - more missionaries!

Inside the hotel lobby a woman asked us whether we were the ones going to Lubavitch. We assumed that she was referring to the Shool. "Oh no," she said, she actually did mean the town of Lubavitch. She had a private car and her husband, who was Jewish, had encountered Rabbi Lipsker and four other Rabbis from Israel, and for the first time in his life her husband had put on Tefillin. He was so excited and grateful that he offered to take them all the way to Lubavitch - and back - free of charge.

The Convention

The first two sessions of the Kinus took place on Sunday morning and afternoon. The Conference continued all day Monday and the final session would take place at Alma Ata on Wednesday.

Roselyn insisted upon attending every session – and she did so!

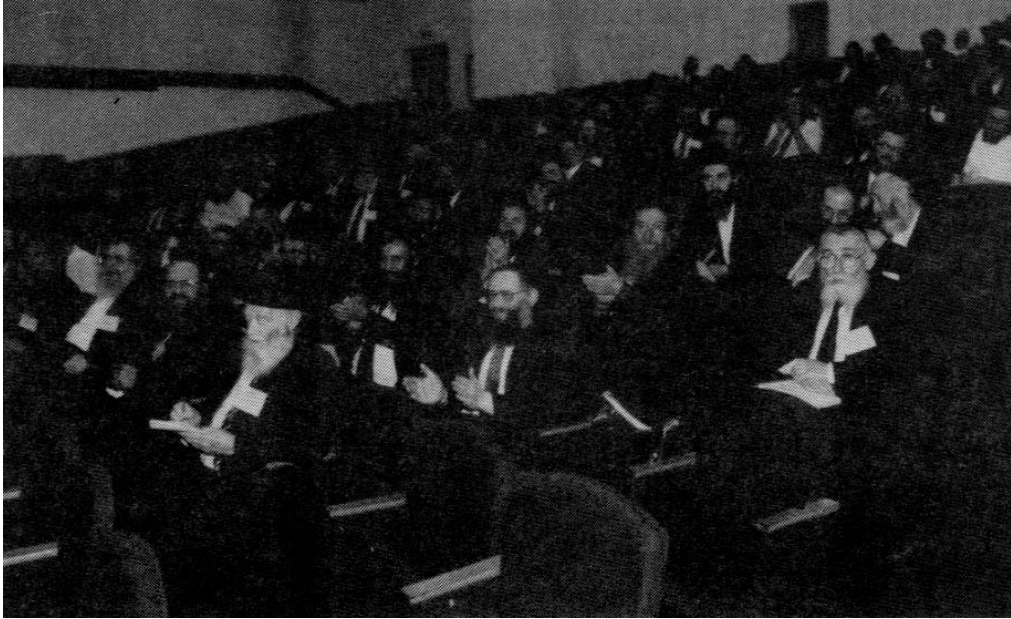
Now follows a brief summary of how I saw and understood the proceedings:

Some of the meetings were held in the large auditorium of our hotel (where we davened Kabolus Shabbos on Friday night) but most were held in a large, modern, imposing building about 1 ½ miles away, to which we were taken in our own special buses.

Most of these super edifices were owned and used by the Elite of the Communist Party, and this one was no exception. Inside was also a large, beautiful auditorium with nice, plush, comfortable seats and a big stage where, in the background, was a huge bust of Lenin sited on a high plinth or pedestal.

During our sessions we covered up Mr. Lenin with the stage curtains but, occasionally, for no gapparent reason, he would peep out.

+++



A Typical View at the Convention

Our O/C, Rabbi Moishe Kotlarsky, opened the proceedings and was always at hand to guide the speakers and to ensure that progress was made smoothly and quickly.

The agreed subjects on the agenda were: Moshiach; Communal Torah learning; Reports from the Shiluchim; Fund raising; Education; Halacha; Rabbonus; Missionaries; Publications; Universities.

Moishe announced that there was a tradition that the Chairman of the first session was normally the Chairman of the final session of the previous Convention. Most of the speeches were in Yiddish, with some in Ivrit and a few in English.

Firstly, the Rambam Shiur was given. Then, Rabbi Nachman Sudak gave us a lesson in deep humility. Chassidus teaches one to be "Bottel" to the A-mighty, that is one should be as nothing compared to Hashem. This bottel had to be kept down within oneself because, once it gets "out of hand" it becomes dangerous and would have serious consequences. Nachman received an ovation.

Rabbi Yehoshua Hadad, from Milan, was the next speaker. He maintained that he agreed 100% with his good old friend of many years, Rabbi Sudak, and he saw eye to eye with him.

Rabbi Diskin, from Munich, Germany, spoke about the Farbraingen at 770 yesterday, Shabbos, when the Rebbe mentioned how pleased he was that all the Shiluchim were at Lubavitch and were going to Alma Ata where they would daven Shacharis and Mincha and sing the Nigun, the favourite tune of his father, Levi Yittchak (Z.A.L)

Shlomo Kunin said, "The gates of the Beis HaMikdosh were sunk into the ground and it was

our task to raise these gates up again."

Levi Sudak wanted more "Persamus" - not Besomim (spices) but publicity for all our activities.

Yitzchok Suffrin mentioned that the professor from Tbilisi, Georgia, now insisted upon putting on Tefillin every weekday and requested more candles and candlesticks for his 17 year old daughter.

The half dozen or so principal speakers at each session always sat at tables on the stage facing the audience. So it was always possible to deduce how many more speakers were now left for that particular session.

Mendel Lipsker, from South Africa, observed that one had to bend down in order to lift up something or someone. The Rebbe is continually bending himself down for this purpose.

Rabbi Azimov discussed the question of the education of the children of the Shiluchim. But what was different between these children and the children of other Chassidim or just ordinary Jewish children? There was the added expense of teaching one's own family as well.

Monday morning was entirely devoted to the "Workshops" when various topics were discussed amongst smaller groups.

Alex Namdar related a story to test one's faith. A man in a circus, a tight rope walker, asked the audience, "Do you believe I can walk across this rope without my balancing stick?" "Yes", was the response. "Blindfold?" he asked. "Yes", they all shouted. "And pulling this wheelbarrow?" he enquired. "Yes", was the universal answer. "Right", he declared, "Then I want a volunteer to sit in this wheelbarrow." - Complete silence!

Rabbi Chazan no. 1 was born in Russia and now lives in Rome. Rabbi Chazan No. 2 is the son-in-law of Rabbi Gershon Mendel Garelick of Milan. He took a party of wealthy men from Italy to see the Rebbe. They made large contributions to the Machne Yisroel Development Fund which is the Rebbe's personal fund for Israel, the U.S.A., Russia and elsewhere.

He indicated that it was a good system. Everyone was happy - the Sheliach, the Rich man, and the Rebbe.

Each and every speaker was acclaimed by a deafening silence.

Rabbi Moishe reported that he had spoken to 770 twice and they were anxious to know what we were doing and what resolutions had been agreed upon.

Shmuel Arkush, from Birmingham, (he came with the French group from Paris) reported about the continuous fight against the Missionary Movements. It was a fight of Kedusha (Holiness) against the Sitra Achra (the opposite).

He declared that the churches had budgeted to spend forty billion dollars during the next ten

years on Evangelism - missionary activities. Africa had been completely devastated by them. In Asia, the Muslims had put a stop to their propaganda but Russia had now become wide open and planeloads of missionaries were arriving daily, with plenty of money, to attempt to convert the uneducated and unprotected Russian Jews - those who knew very little about Judaism.

These missionaries come in different guises e.g., "We do not want any converts - you will still be a Jew but believe in 'Yoshkie'." Or, "Be a Hebrew Christian - a Messianic Jew." They have all the answers, and unless and until our Jewish brethren have studied and learnt all the replies to their abominable and obnoxious theories, they will become easy prey.

Unfortunately, most of our people who are lured and tempted by these missionaries have a psychological problem. They are attracted by people who wear kippas on their heads and have their Tzitzis showing, so they are persuaded and convinced that they may become orthodox Jews and also believe in "Yoshkie".

It is no consolation to us, or to their families and friends, that they are considered "crackpots".

Beryl Lazar explained that up till two years ago a Sheliach used to learn with five Jews - ten were a lot. (A Sheliach is one who settled, in that town with his wife and family).

T.G. today, hundreds, nay, thousands and even tens of thousands knock on their doors pleading to be taught Yiddishkeit. Most of the principal cities in Russia have the Rebbe's Shiluchim in attendance.

Dnepropetrovsk used to be a closed city for Jewish people. Yet three years later there are now 50,000 Jews and only one Sheliach - which is very hard work for him.

All the speakers related stories about Bris (Mille). Zalmon Abelaki, the Sheliach from Kishinev, explained that years ago it was impossible to make a "Bris" but today boys come specially to him begging to have Milla.

One boy seemed so pleased and delighted that his father decided to have a Bris too. In due course, his grandfather, seeing the happiness, circumcised and his grandson acted as his Sandik!

- Speaker after speaker repeated similar tales
- "We now have a day school of 100 children."
- "We had a Summer Camp and parents offered us bribes to accept their children."
- "We have sent 20 boys to the Yeshivas in Jerusalem and in Kfar Chabad."
- "We received 40 tons of Matzo, sufficient for all Bessarabia."
- "We celebrated a wonderful Chanukah. The hall was crowded out."

- "On Purim we gave Shalach Monus, etc."

- "Lag B'Omer - thousands danced in the streets."

But we also had a complaints department:

Many made the mistake and imagined that Moscow only was Russia. Visitors came to their towns and were so impressed that they promised to send all types of religious appurtenances - and when they returned home - they forgot.

The Shiluchim urgently needed help: A Sheliach works full time - his wife teaches and prepares a Shabbos table, candles and Kiddush. They need many more teachers, Baalei Tefilla (Chazonim) especially for Rosh Hashonah, and Baalei Korah (to layen in the Sefer Torah) and Mohelim. There is a tremendous demand which is being met mainly by the Rebbe and his Shiluchim.

As Shmuel Kanninifsky said, "Every week we pray for the health of the Rebbe because, if the Rebbe is well, then all Yisroel will be well."

Ickie Suffrin surveyed his work to help the small, scattered communities in Britain, and how important was the magazine "Concorde" which he produced regularly, and which was a vital link in keeping these communities in contact with him and with each other. As Ickie said, "They stretched from Cornwall to Scotland and were spread all over the country."

Incidentally, the Sheliach from Odessa informed us that they have just opened the first Shool - to serve 65,000 Jews. There are no Tefillin, no Mezzuzas, no Sidurim, nothing - only he and his wife to do all the Lubavitch work in Odessa. Millions and millions of Jews have only a handful of Lubavitchers to look after their needs. All the Baalei Teshuvah were made by Chabad only Kashrus by Chabad Yiddishkeit and learning - only Chabad.

As stated above, the Conference would be continued - and concluded in Alma Ata to where we were flying tomorrow morning.

That evening, Moishe announced that, "Tomorrow, Tuesday, Shacharis would be at 6 a.m., breakfast at 7 a.m., and the buses would leave for the airport at 7.45 a.m. to catch our 11 a.m. flight." Moishe reckoned that it would take us 1 ½ hours to get to the Domestic Airport and we had to be there 1 ½ hours before the flight left.

We would all be issued with new, red identity cards which would also serve as boarding cards for our private Jet which would take us to Alma Ata over 2,000 miles east of Moscow.

There had been a little excitement at the hotel. A lift (elevator) broke down in between two floors at the hotel. Yitzchok and Ickie Suffrin were inside with about ten Catholic girls. The lights went out and they were in complete darkness. The girls were sobbing and crying – all suffered from claustrophobia. (Yitzchok and Ickie were just Suffrin", said Ickie)

Suddenly, one of the girls shouted out, "I am Jewish and you (to Yitzchok) are a Rabbi. So please get us out of this trouble."

All kept silent whilst Yitzchok shouted out loudly for help. Tally Lowenthal heard him and reported the matter. They were released after fourteen minutes.

Tuesday - We visit Alma Ata

That morning, everything was going according to plan (almost) when Moishe announced that President Bush had arrived in Moscow to hold a Summit meeting with Gorbachev. Bush was staying at the American Embassy and would be leaving from that address at about 8.15 a.m.

We had been advised that it would be a very good idea if we all diverted to the Embassy on our way to the Airport. There we could stand and cheer and wish him great success at the meeting.

Bush had already been notified that we would be waiting for him at that spot.

The road leading to the Embassy had been completely closed for security reasons. We were allowed to stand at the corner - the junction of this road and the main Moscow thoroughfare.

About 20 to 30 police in plain clothes, and in uniform, were patrolling this small area. Most of them held a portable telephone which they used continuously and furiously. Firearms were on show.

They seemed so busy, rushing hither and thither, and placing steel barriers here and there - mostly here.

Each Security Officer was giving orders and instructions to his subordinates, lower in rank to him. The uniformed policeman at the end of this line of command (I shall call him Boris) who had no one under him, vented his petulance and resentment upon us - one hundred and fifty Lubavitcher Shiluchim and one lady, who had congregated to wish President Bush joy and success in his mission for peace.

Boris was a real bad tempered and cantankerous, evil looking fellow. He had small, mean, penetrating eyes and a scowling visage. He would do well in the torture chambers or in the interrogation centres of the K.G.B.

We ignored Boris although he kept making his presence felt. He was continuously moving the barriers forward. At first, these were placed on the actual roadway, but every ten minutes or so he would push them, again and again, against our group until they were halfway upon the pavement (sidewalk). Roselyn stood in the front row and Boris really enjoyed himself by pushing the steel barriers upon Roselyn's shoes and toes, and scowling into her face.

We stood and waited at that corner for one and a half hours. We recited Tehillim, sang nigunim, laughed and chatted. Men and cars were still rushing about but, when about 30 motorcyclists arrived to act as escorts and outriders to the President, we realised that it would not be very long now.

And so it was! The cyclists and motorcade emerged - and here was the long, black, sleek car with the President leaning forward, waving and smiling to our large unique group of 150 Rabbis and one lady who were all cheering and applauding Mr. Bush. A large photograph of the Rebbe was held aloft – very high – and Bush gave a warm salute.

We then set off for the Airport. It was fortunate that our plane was privately chartered because we were nearly two hours late. Shlomo Kunin did not accompany us to Alma Ata because he had arranged to meet Mr. Baker, the American Secretary of State. Mr. Baker informed Shlomo that Mr. Bush would request Gorbachev to release the Seforim (books) to Lubavitch as soon as possible.

Moishe had very sensibly arranged it so that we did not need to check out from our Moscow hotel because we would be returning on the following day.

Therefore, we all carried only an overnight bag and Tallis and Tefillin.

Because of the great delay, our private Jet had been cancelled by Aeroflot and we were allotted half the seats on the scheduled flight which was due to depart at about 12 noon.

On arrival at the Airport we were all shepherded through the formalities as a special group - right up to the departure gate. We needed no passports or visas, no documents, even no boarding cards.

Our personal, red identity tags sufficed - we just walked through.

Our plane took off from Moscow at 12.30 p.m. for the 4½ hour flight to Alma Ata, 2060 miles east of the Russian capital and on the Chinese border. We had to add on three hours, because of the time difference, so we expected to arrive at the capital of Kazakhstan at about 7.45 p.m. local time.

Lunch was served on the plane in the usual, professional manner, but on paper plates and trays.

Kasriel Shemtov, with the help of his henchmen, used all his ingenuity to provide us with a satisfying and different menu, all prepared by his small band of workers. In this instance we were served with Gefilte fish and mashed eggs, beans, biscuits, mineral water and Pepsi (what else?). There were ample helpings and no one went hungry.

About an hour before we were due to land at Alma Ata, Moishe approached and asked me to say a few words at the big meeting tonight. He expected any number of people, from one to five hundred, to be present and I should speak for only a few minutes. The theme - subject - he left to me.

This was a great honour and privilege so I accepted.

It is much more difficult to speak for five minutes than for an hour. The problem was, what to leave out. Therefore, I wrote down my speech on paper so that I knew exactly what I would say and how long it would take to say it - in this instance, two minutes.

We touched down at the Airport at the estimated time and a man on a bicycle guided the plane to the terminal.

Our special buses drove us to the hotel "Kazakhstan".

Because we were late we decided to make our way across the road to the magnificent building which belonged to - who else? - the Elite of the Young Communist Party.

Nearly 500 people had gathered to greet and to welcome us in the huge, beautiful auditorium which was situated inside this outstanding edifice. Unfortunately for Roselyn and me, we had to ascend a flight of fifty six polished stone (or marble) steps which were located in front of the building. Sholom (Weiss) proved a true friend and he insisted upon carrying my very heavy overnight bag, as well as his own. He explained in full detail why it was easier to convey two bags, one in each hand, than to carry just one. It was something to do with "balance". Anyway, I was very grateful.

All the Shiluchim ascended the large stage where chairs had been set out for their convenience.

Once again, a huge bust of Lenin towered above our heads. There are busts and photographs of Mr. Lenin everywhere in the U.S.S.R. These Communists are anti-religious but, in fact, they do have their own religion. And the K.G.B. is the clerical order that ministers to this obnoxious deity.

There is very little difference between the K.G.B. and the ecclesiastics who participated in the infamous inquisitions in Spain. These clerics also took a great delight in torturing, and even burning at the stake, our poor Jewish Brethren.

As I was now an official speaker, Moishe invited me to sit in the front row. I was now one of the "Chosen People".

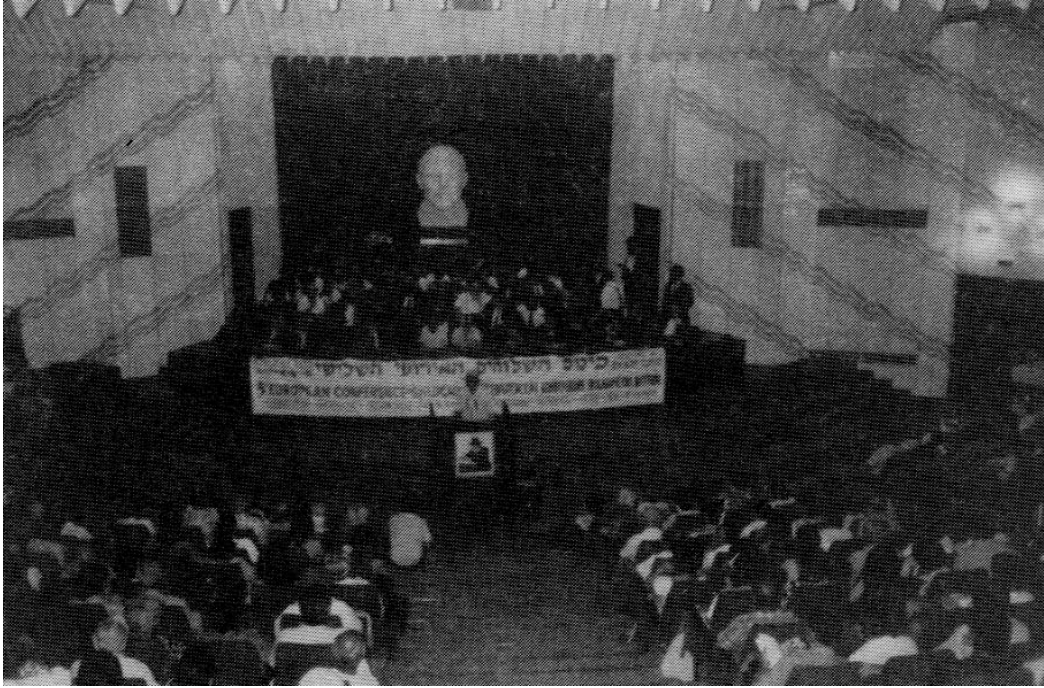
Beryl Lazar opened up the proceedings with an address in Russian. Mendel Raskin, from Morocco, was the main speaker. He mentioned also the Yartzeit of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok (Z.A.L.) the father of the Rebbe, Shlita. He spoke for twenty minutes in Yiddish and Beryl translated it into Russian. Moishe said a few words and Rabbi Nisselevitch, from Paris, sang some lively nigunim and everyone joined in.

I was handed a small scrap of paper from Moishe on which was written:

R. Zalmon

2 mins.

No more, Please!



A view of the hall at Alma Ata Photo by Aaron Cousins

I had prepared five points in my speech:

1) I thought it would be nice to thank Moishe for allowing me to say a few words but, after that note from him, I cut that out.

2) I should mention the Yartzeit but it had already been mentioned by three previous speakers - I cut that out.

3) It would be good manners to thank Nachman for his invitation to join the Shiluchim party. This was not the time nor the place - OUT.

4) Moishe had done such a fantastic job in arranging every single aspect of this wonderful visit, he really should be thanked publicly - but in "two minutes, no more Please!" OUT.

All I had left was 5) the Moshul, the parable which I had once related to the boys at a Kinus HaTorah in 770.

I would tell them that at 770 we were close to the source of a great river. This was Our Rebbe who also provided us with Mayim Chayim - living water - which was Torah.

And just like that huge waterway which wound its way thousands of miles to the sea, providing nourishment to all the inhabitants along the way, so does our Rebbe provide spiritual benefits to every single Jew who may live thousands of miles away from the Rebbe.



My turn to speak

It was now my turn to address the audience. I told them that I could not sing like Rabbi Nisselevitch, I could not dance, and I could not speak Russian - except - and I gave a shout

"KAK POYZIVAYISHTIK"

which means - or should mean - "How are you?" Well they all cheered and thought it a good joke. Beryl translated my Moshul into Russian, I added a few cliches, and that was that.

Sometimes, after a speech or even after a chat with a friend, one realises that the best part - or the good retort - had been left unsaid. It was too late now but I sensed that the audience wished to be entertained as well. I could have told them this story which has a moral too.

A poor Jewish fellow could not find a job and was starving. He was passing by a circus and saw a "Job vacancy" sign. Chaim would accept any type of work and the manager informed him that he had owned two lions and one had died last night. He had a spare pelt of a lion and he suggested that Chaim should don this skin and all he had to do was to sit in a cage during the show. Chaim had no option but to accept.

That evening the show was in progress and Chaim, dressed as a lion, was sitting in his cage when the lion tamer brought inside the Ring another cage wherein stalked another lion.

The doors of both cages were opened and the lion leapt out with a horrific and tremendous roar. Poor Chaim thought that his end had given a shout, "Shema Yisroel" – and the other lion joined in with, "HaShem Elokainu, HaShem Echod."

The moral of this story is that Jews are T.G. everywhere all have a true divine spark and everyone will help another Jew.

That is the story I should have told them. After the speeches, a video about the Rebbe and Lubavitch was shown and was enjoyed by all.

It was peculiar how many Russian Jews spoke Yiddish. Roselyn sat amongst the audience. She asked a woman whether she lights the Shabbos candles. The lady replied that her husband was a Communist and would not like that. Roselyn insisted that it would only take a moment or two on Friday night and it would brighten up the home. The woman answered and said with pride that her husband was a Cossack, too. End of argument!

We walked across the road to our 27 storey hotel. Beryl handed me the keys to our room which was actually a suite of two rooms with all facilities, even a fridge. It was on the twenty first floor but, as it was only for one night, and the lifts seemed to be in working order, we accepted this with thanks and alacrity.

Wednesday - Alma Ata (Continued)

I awoke early next morning and opened the curtains. A magnificent vista met my eyes. It was a beautiful sunny morning and I saw that Alma Ata was situated at the foot of the Alai Tan mountain range with the snow capped mountains gleaming white in the sun.

It was a large town of 250,000 people with a good transport system of buses and trolley trams. There were many large, outstanding buildings and the air was like wine. I could well imagine that many would come to this area to spend their vacation. It was also situated on the Turkestan-Siberian railway and was thus also a good centre for industry.

Moishe had announced that our first special bus would depart from the hotel for the Mikvah at 6.30 a.m. and would continue to ferry the Shiluchim to this place until 7.45 a.m. when the Mikvah would be closed.

I decided to catch the first bus and I stood by the four elevators on our 21st floor and pressed the button. For fifteen minutes I stood and pressed the button non-stop. I could hear the lift ascending and descending continuously but none stopped at our 21st floor.

I was in danger of missing the first bus so I dashed back to our room and asked Roselyn to enquire from reception why the lift did not halt at our floor.

Roselyn phoned but received no reply. I had visions of running down 21 flights of steps (better than climbing up 21 flights) but on reaching the 20th floor I tried my luck there, to my surprise and delight, the lift stopped for me and I emerged on the ground floor.

There was no danger of missing the first bus - because it had just departed.

I complained to the receptionist. Again, the language barrier impeded progress, but she handed me a complaint form. I filled this out with my comments demanding to know why the lift did not stop on the 21st floor.

I do not know whether they could not read my writing or understand my English, but I never heard anything more regarding this complaint.

However, I caught the next bus and when I related my story to my friends they just laughed and explained that the lift at which I was standing only stopped at the even numbered floors, e.g., at 20 and not at 21. The lifts for the odd numbers were situated around the corner.

The Mikvah was in reality the public swimming baths, hence the reason why we had to vacate these premises by 8.00 a.m., because after that time the public, male and female patrons, would be arriving for their mixed bathing and swimming sessions.

It was a beautiful and luxurious structure. I counted 25 private individual showers and a dozen massage slabs. These, including the decor, were in a rich light brown marble. Mr. Lenin's busts were everywhere, except inside the lovely, clean, warm, circular swimming pool. I dived from the top step and was applauded for my efforts.

From there the buses drove us to the Shool which was a considerable distance from the baths.

It had been announced that three Rabbonim who had personal connections with Rabbi Levi Yitzchok (Z.A.L.) would each lead one of the three services.

Last night, Shlomo Matusoff was the reader at the Maariv service. He had languished for quite a while in the jail of this town.

Mendel Raskin would lead the Shacharis (morning) service. His family had served Levi Yitzchok (Z.A.L.) and family, and was present when he passed away.

And for Mincha, (afternoon service) Shlomo Mendel Kalmanson would be in charge. He also helped the Rebbetzen Chana (Z.A.L.) - very much so.

In Shool, an old man, a local, sat next to me after I had put on my Tefillin. He showed me a photograph of the Rebbe, Shlita, and spoke perfect Yiddish.

"Have you got Tefillin?" I asked. He replied, "I have got nothing."

"Do you have Kashrus?" - "No."

"Are you a Levi?" - "What is that?"

"Are you a Kohen?" - "Never heard of that either."

After the service we returned to the hotel to collect our luggage and Roselyn.

The buses then drove us to the cemetery where the Tzion of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok (Z.A.L.) was situated at the far end of this cemetery, amongst other Jewish graves.

In Lubavitch, the poor Kohanim were not allowed to enter the Ohel because there was a roof upon the building. Here, in Alma Ata, they were not permitted even to approach near to this Ohel, because it meant that they had to walk in between the graves.

Very many of the local Jewish inhabitants joined us on this visit. One woman wanted a pair of Arba Kanfus for her nephew, and was seeking someone who had a spare pair of Tzitzis.

First we sang the favourite Nigunim of Levi Yitzchok (Z.A.L.) who had passed away on this day, 20th Av, (1944). These included, "Hu Elokainu" and "Ata Bechartonu".

The Rebbe's (Shlita) Tehillim was recited and sung. Rabbi Moishe Kotlarsky spoke about the importance of this day, and to pray, as Shiluchim of our holy Tzaddik, that he should be healthy and well and that Moshiach should be revealed.

Rabbi Beryl Levin said, "We should pray at this holy shrine through the father of our Rebbe for the welfare of our Rebbe, Shlita.

We recited more Tehillim and concluded with Kaddish. The general "P.N." was placed upon the grave and all those present were then allowed to enter and to place their own "P.N.'s" on that holy ground and to pray privately.

We then drove back to the hotel to conclude this third European Convention.

Moishe was in charge and he intimated that we should end this Kinus with a number of resolutions. He suggested that delegates should propose these motions, they would be open for general discussion, and then passed by a show of hands.

This is my version of what occurred.

Resolution (1) It was proposed that one should learn every day the laws and customs connected with Moshiach. After discussion, however, it was passed that this should be done once a week.

(2) To learn the Sichos of the Rebbe every week - Passed!

(3) Gemillus Chassodim (Tzedoka). Moishe had proposed that every day special Tzedoka for redemption - a percent of one's salary - should be placed in a special box. This created a great uproar, until Moishe explained that he did not mean a percentage, but a "pohr" - a couple, or a few, cents - Passed!

- (4) At every Simcha one should speak about the advent of Moshiach - Passed!
- (5) When the Rebbe hands one a dollar(s) it is essential that this should be given, or redeemed, in one's own town - Passed!
- (6) Every Sheliach should urge people to join in donating money to the Machne Yisroel (the Rebbe's personal Tzedoka fund) - Passed!
- (7) Special Tehillim for Moshiach should be recited every day. It was suggested chapter 42 and next year 43 - Passed!
- (8) Shiurim. Shmuel suggested that as this year was the Rebbe's ninetieth (till 120), we should learn every day in multiples of ninety, e.g., an extra ninety chapters. After tremendous opposition he relented and indicated that ninety a week might be acceptable - but it wasn't! Moishe declared that it was of little value to pass a resolution that nobody, no one at all, could keep. We had to be realistic and reasonable - Passed!
- (9) Tally Lowenthal proposed more activity to help the students - Passed!
- (10) Phaivish Vogel proposed, for the third year running, that a brochure for the European Mosdos should be produced and published in several languages, and done professionally with nice photographs and attractive colours. It should be ready for distribution in a week or two. Moishe suggested - by at least Rosh Chodesh Kislev - in about twelve weeks - Passed!
- (11) Shmuel proposed an exchange programme with the Mosdos of the U.S.S.R. - Passed!

As a result of this resolution, Rabbi Akiva, our Rosh HaYeshiva, and Sholom Weiss, indicated that our Manchester Yeshiva would accept immediately four boys from Odessa.

Moishe then had the last word, and officially closed this wonderful, third European Convention. Never before had there been held such a remarkable and unique Kinus. He was sure that every Sheliach would be taking away with him extraordinary lessons and memories of exceptional experiences. Moishe reminded them that they should all concentrate on what the Rebbe said at the Shabbos Farbraingen. We should be proud of our Rebbe.

We were faced with just one problem before we boarded the bus to take us to the Airport. The Rebbe had intimated that we should also davven Mincha at Alma Ata. It was now 12.30 p.m. and it was discovered that at this time of the year, and in this area, one could not commence the afternoon service until 2.30 p.m.

However, there was very little we could do about it because we had our own chartered Jet waiting for us at the Airport to take us back to Moscow. When we arrived at the Terminal we found, to our great surprise, although it should not have been a surprise at all, that our time of departure had been postponed for at least two hours. Therefore, we had ample time to davven Mincha.

We had been supplied with cheese sandwiches before we boarded our bus, but many of the Shiluchim were delving into their first aid stocks of food.

I noticed that Shlomo Weinstein must have devoured his sample El Al meals because he had opened a tin of salmon and was eating the contents direct from the can. He was not the only one!

It was a very hot, sultry day with the temperature in the nineties. The barman was doing a roaring and brisk business. He was inundated with orders and then denuded of every bottle of liquid that he had in the place.

Bottles of sparkling water, soda and lemonade, at one rouble (2 pence) were being purchased by the dozen and all the large jars of fruit juice (at 8 roubles - 16 pence) very soon disappeared.

At first, Roselyn (and others) insisted that the bottles should be nice and cold, direct from the fridge. In the end, I offered the boy five roubles, and then as much as ten roubles, for a glass of ice. He had nothing - and with tears in his eyes - he had to refuse.

Meanwhile, it was decided to hold a Farbraingen. We all sat in a huge circle in the Airport lounge, and Beryl Levin told us stories and quoted words of Torah from Rabbi Levi Yitzchok (Z.A.L.) whose Yartzeit we were commemorating this day. He was surrounded by 130 Rabbonim who were imbibing Russian Vodka at 50 roubles (£1) a bottle.

He explained that Levi Yitzchok had been sentenced to five years in the jail at Chilli, about four hundred miles from Alma Ata. He had served about four and a half years when the K.G.H., with their usual "generosity" proclaimed that all prisoners who had been sentenced to five years in jail would be required to serve an additional five years.

The Lubavitcher Chassidim worked tirelessly and strenuously, and ultimately successfully, to ensure his release before the five years had been completed.

He was then banished - exiled - to Alma Ata where he eventually passed away in 1944.

The K.G.B. only recently admitted that they had erred in sending Levi Yitzchok to jail and he has now received an official pardon and has been completely vindicated - fifty years too late!

We were three hours late when we boarded and the plane moved slowly along the tarmac towards the point of take-off - when - it stopped.

Without warning, the heavy, humid, hot day of over 90 degrees had given way to a storm with blustering winds and pouring rain. The Captain warned us that it was impossible to take off in this weather. We should have patience and wait.

Chaim Farro was asked to give a Shiur on Mishnayos which would commence with the individual letters of Levi Yitzchok. We did, at last, locate a complete Mishnayos, which enabled Chaim to learn all the relevant Mishnas.

After half an hour, the wind and the rain had abated and, typical Lubavitchers, about twenty boys had descended from the plane and commenced to sing and dance. Soon, double and treble that number had joined them and had persuaded the Captain to join in dancing round the plane. He had left the cockpit to chase the boys back into the plane.

It became a little calmer and we were warned that if our passengers did not return to the plane immediately the wind might come up again and we might be delayed for another three hours and even have to remain overnight in Alma Ata.

This threat was sufficient to ensure that all the dancing Chassidim returned at once.

We joined a small procession of five planes all waiting for their turn to take off.



We dance outside, the Captain is the one without a hat
- Photo by Aaron Cousins.

I noticed that about fifty very old, fragile, biplanes (two wings with struts) from the 1914 war, were parked in an orderly manner. Most unusual!

We left at 6.30 p.m., four hours late. Therefore, as we had to deduct three hours for the time difference, we estimated to arrive at Moscow at 7.30 p.m. local time.

The stewardess did not give any demonstrations on emergency landings, as is usual on all planes. She indicated that with 130 Lubavitcher Rabbonim on board we did not need that drill. Levi Sudak suggested that, as there were no life jackets aboard, she had probably sold them.

Kasriel Shem Tov with his colleagues - Dovid Slavin, Rabbi Y. Spalter and Yossi Levertov - served us a meal which consisted of cheese, tomatoes and cucumber salads, with the usual crackers and - Pepsi. This was followed by large portions of watermelon. As I told Moishe, it was an unusual menu but satisfying.

After we had disembarked at Moscow, it was suddenly realised that the portable printing press which had been brought into the country in order to print the Tanya in Lubavitch, Alma Ata and Moscow, had inadvertently been left in the hold of the plane. A couple of our boys were given permission to dash back to the plane and to help themselves to bring back this printing press from the hold.

We returned to our hotel to spend our last evening in Moscow.

Just before dinner, that evening, Nachman advised me to have a look at the large departmental store next to the hotel. I went inside and was flabbergasted to see such a large sales area so completely empty. There was hardly any merchandise to sell and the assistants were just hanging around doing nothing at all. (Even the bank, sited in the hotel, had no money and were closed every other day for "technical reasons".) But I did buy something from the shop. It was a very nice, dark blue velour hat. I paid 70 pence (\$1). This would cost about £50 in England. There were no bags of any type available so they offered to wrap my hat in a large sheet of very hard paper.

I refused this offer and placed the hat on my head and entered the restaurant for dinner. Roselyn has tremendous powers of observation, so it was a foregone conclusion that she would notice my new hat and tell me off for buying something without her knowledge.

I said, "Hello!" - she looked up - and made no comment. I confided to her that I had just bought something from the shop next door - still no comment. At long last, as she was returning to our table, she gave me a long, hard look, shrieked, and shouted, "Eh, you're wearing the wrong hat. That is not your hat." After all that, it was certainly a good buy (nearly a good bye).

Rabbi Raskin, from Israel, but now residing in Moscow, gave me some excellent regards about our young friend Rabbi Yehuda Pink, a neighbour of ours in Manchester and the eldest son of Phaivish (and Chana) the headmaster of the Manchester Jewish Grammar school.

Yehuda had been supervising a camp in Ufa, Siberia, 1,000 miles from Moscow. There were 200 campers, plus 300 adults, to whom he gave Shiurim in the evenings. Rabbi Raskin informed me that when Yehuda left the camp, only this week, 2,000 people came to say farewell to him.

I was also informed about Shmuel Vaisfische, the 22 year old son of the Co-Chairman of our Yeshiva, Rabbi A. Vaisfische, who had also supervised a camp for 100 boys in Kharkov for the past two months.

Thursday, the last day

Well, we had really enjoyed a very hectic eight days. But, at least, Roselyn and I had spent a restful Shabbos, unlike most of our friends who had marched one and a half hours to the Shool and then walked the same distance back again.

The Convention officially ended yesterday, and very many delegates had already departed for home. Nevertheless, although Moishe was no longer responsible for our welfare, he did arrange the transport to the Airport to enable all of us to catch our flights to London - the British Airways direct one and the Austrian Airways via Vienna. Moishe's chief henchman, Avrohom Chaim Ruchman, did an excellent job regarding the planes, buses and hotels.

Rabbi Ezriel Chaikin, of Brussels, still had plenty of good food left. Even Challah which he also offered to Roselyn every day. He had a secret formula for keeping this bread constantly fresh.

I suggested that he had obviously been to Russia before. He agreed, and intimated that he had been to Russia on five different occasions.

The most interesting and rewarding visit was two years ago when he went to Leningrad.

In one room of a small apartment there were gathered forty Jewish people on a Friday evening. It was too far to walk to Shool so they davened in this little place. After which they all managed to squeeze around the Shabbos table and to partake of the meal. They sang "Sholem Aleichem" and other Shabbos hymns whilst the candles were glowing brightly.

Many had come specially to savour the Shabbos atmosphere which they had never before experienced. It was truly an eye-opener for them and they were most impressed and enjoyed every single moment immensely.

Ezriel also pointed out to me that one should always keep a few roubles handy. For instance, when one came into the country one required a rouble (two pence) to hire a trolley at the airport. I had had to pay 50 pence for the same thing.

Mendel Lipsker, from South Africa, was telling me that he wished to present some electrical appliances to his aunt who resided in Moscow. All she needed were electric light bulbs which were unobtainable.

In the re-telling of this story it had, as usual, been changed somewhat, and his aunt's reply was that the only electrical appliances that one could obtain in Moscow were electric light bulbs.

When one sees how dark the hotels and airports are here, one may realise that there is definitely a shortage of electric light bulbs in Moscow.

It had been arranged that our bus for the Moscow International Airport would depart at 12 noon. It would return from the Airport and take the last passengers at 1.30 p.m. Roselyn and I decided to take the first bus so we went into the hotel to collect our suitcases. Two charming,

young ladies, who had been looking after 110 girls at the Lubavitch Camp, approached us and insisted upon carrying our cases to the coach. It was very thoughtful and kind of them, and although we were astonished, we were extremely gratified. The names of these pretty and sensible girls were Rochel Drizin from Brooklyn and Goldie Gurrevitch from Israel.

We always like to be early, and we had been sitting inside the bus since 11.45 a.m. From 12 noon onwards there were people, our passengers, milling around the bus, returning to the hotel, strolling about - in fact, doing everything except coming inside the coach.

At 12.30 we begged the driver to start moving, otherwise he just would not have the time to drive to the airport and return for the 1.30 p.m. departure. He did not, or did not want to, understand my English.

Eventually we moved off at 1 p.m. and all those who had missed this bus would have to hire a taxi to the Airport. In view of the prices charged by taxi drivers this was no serious threat.

We eventually arrived at the departure terminal. It was still dingy and dark but not as bad as in the arrival hall.

We obtained a trolley, but the price had increased since last week. The charge was now two roubles (four pence).

We went through Customs and Emigration without any trouble. (Rabbi Akiva dashed forward to inform us that we were in the wrong line. He thought we were in the queue for the Damascus flight.) One of our friends did have a little trouble. He had filled out the official Customs form and, in the place where one wrote the amount of currency still held, he had written 35 roubles. The officer shouted, "Cross that out and write - None." "I have no pen and I don't want to get involved with such a small amount (70 pence).

For nearly an hour Aryeh Leib Heintz, from Utrecht, was walking about the Airport lounge shouting, "Mincha, Mincha, Mincha". He always seemed to be two men short for the Minyan - then, just as we were requested to board the plane - we managed to make the quorum.

On our pleasant flight back to England we had plenty of time to reflect upon our unique and wonderful experiences during the past week or so.

We had been greatly privileged to learn at first hand of the self sacrifice and difficult work of the Lubavitcher Shiluchim in those far away cities and countries.

One could well recognise and see the Personality and Greatness of the Rebbe whose hand was guiding, supervising and encouraging all these young men and their families in their fight, initially, for their own survival, and towards their ultimate goal - the survival of the Jewish People everywhere.

Roselyn and I wish to extend to our dear, revered and beloved Rebbe, our heartfelt thanks for affording us this opportunity to participate in this historical Convention.

Our friend, Rabbi Moishe Kotlarsky, who was in overall charge, did an excellent job of work. The arrangements could not be faulted, and everything went according to plan.

It is difficult, in many instances, to arrange a programme for even ten men, but to organise a tight schedule, including meals, transport and hotels for nearly one hundred and fifty, required much moral strength, adaptability and diplomacy.

Moishe ensured that everyone worked together in harmony, with no arguments and without bickering - just with love and friendliness.

Moishe deserves special thanks from Roselyn and me for the exceptional attention which we both personally received during our stay in Russia.

A couple of weeks later the whole world was startled to hear the news that there had been a coup in the U.S.S.R. and that President Gorbachev had been arrested whilst on holiday in the Ukraine.

Beryl Lazar happened to be at 770 on that Monday morning and he enquired of the Rebbe what he should do. The Rebbe told him to return to Moscow without delay

The Rebbe was also constantly receiving requests from leaders and counsellors of Lubavitcher camps in Russia for advice on whether to close down the camps and return home (to U.S.A. and England).

The Rebbe informed them that because all these camps would normally conclude their programmes on Thursday they should carry on as usual until that day.

The Rebbe had insisted that there would be no problems and everything would be in order.

Paul Harris, the editor of the local "Jewish Telegraph" was amazed that the Rebbe should make such a positive statement and thus "stick out his neck" so unnecessarily. And yet --

Meanwhile, within a few days, the coup had completely failed - and folded up. All the hard liners and top Communists were now under arrest. The U.S.S.R. itself had disintegrated and each of the component parts, for instance, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia and so forth, had voted for, and obtained, independence.

The many thousands of statues of Mr. Lenin had been knocked down from their pedestals and lay completely smashed. And even the city of Leningrad had reverted to its old, historical name of St. Petersburg.

Unforeseen miracles were certainly being enacted daily - for all of us to see and understand.

Our Yeshiva Gedola

I have written glowing reports every year about our Yeshiva. I stated in my last book that we had purchased another house which enabled us to squeeze in fifty boys - this was our limit - a far away cry from when we established our Yeshiva ten years ago with our "own" ten boys and with Rabbi Akiva Cohen in charge - these being the conditions upon which the Rebbe permitted us to open our Talmudical College.

Today, because of the pressure put upon the Rosh HaYeshiva, Rabbi Cohen, by parents of various boys, we have compressed into our premises another five boys - making 55 altogether.

These boys come from all over the world. California, New York, France, Belgium, London and one from Singapore. We do have a few from Manchester as well, including my grandson, Aaron.

Rabbi Akiva is in the happy position that he may pick and choose which pupils to accept because there is a long waiting list.

He also dislikes to refuse boys, especially good ones.

Rabbis Yitzchok Klyne and Eliezer Eidleman continue to support and cooperate with him wholeheartedly for the benefit of the Yeshiva, the boys and our world wide, famous reputation.

Of course, it is still a big headache for my son, Rabbi Avrohom, his co-Chairman Rabbi Vaisfische, and the treasurer, Sholom Weiss.

It seems that when one's achievements become larger then the headaches become bigger.

Yisroel Derren, from New York State, came over to visit his son and he was most impressed. He mentioned that he had never seen in any Yeshiva, anywhere, where every single boy was concentrating on his learning with keenness and integrity. They came to study and that is what they did.

I often addressed the boys at their private Farbraingen and when we celebrated a special occasion, but I seldom met the boys individually, except of course Aaron, but very rarely. He cannot spare the time from his learning except when Roselyn invites him to a special meal at our house and at his convenience.

Occasionally, I do see the following. Shai Amar, a very pleasant and knowledgeable boy who has, on many occasions, addressed our Shool members at the Shaale Seudos meal on Shabbos, with great success.

Young Rabin, who continues to recite the Krias HaTorah in his impeccable manner.

Zalmon Sudak, who manages to come down to the Shool to ensure our good behaviour.

And - of course - Shmuel Yoseph Davidson, the busy - busy - busy boy.

In every organisation there is always one person who does all the odd jobs with alacrity and joy. He has his own office - the Communications room - with telephones, faxes, incoming Shidurim and the latest news from 770. Anything technical - there is Shmuel Yoseph. He likes to help everyone and to be at the centre of activities, and he insists upon knowing what is going on - everywhere - all the time. I suppose he does study, sometimes.

Bais HaBechiroh - The Temple

During the nine days of national mourning, from the first day (Rosh Chodesh) of the month of Av, until the Fast of Av, it is customary to study the Bais HaBechiroh (the laws of the Temple structure) by the Rambam (Rabbi Moishe ben Maimon - or Maimonides).

Therefore we, at Lubavitch, also study this subject. In our group were Avrohom and four other Rabbonim and they certainly made heavy going on this Rambam.

However, I recalled that when I was last at 770, Shimon Neubort presented me with a copy of his publication (second edition) on this very subject. It was an excellent production and contained nearly twenty five illustrations and diagrams which, together with the English translation and commentaries, made this Rambam comparatively easy to comprehend.

I lent this book to Avrohom and they put it to very good use. Amongst the themes discussed in Shimon's book were:

- Mitzvos connected with the Temple structure.
- A brief history of the Temple construction.
- The Altar and its ramp.
- The sacred objects - the Menorah, Table, Altar and wash stand.
- The Haichol and adjacent structures.
- The Temple Mount and the Courtyards.
- Topography of the Temple Mount, sanctity of the Chambers.
- Reverence for the Sanctuary.
- Guarding the Sanctuary.

For me, the nicest part of this book was the inscription by Shimon on the inside cover. I found the message most interesting, very clever and ingenious.

following is what Shimon wrote:

To Reb Zalmon Jaffe -

I present you with this copy of my book as a token of my great appreciation of the receipt of a copy of your book.

Unfortunately, it is only a small token, because:

a) Yours is the 22nd instalment, while mine is only the 2nd.

b) You are the author of your book, while I am only the translator, annotator and illustrator of mine.

c) I find my name mentioned in your book, but you will not find your name mentioned in mine.

What do our books have in common?

Yours is a description of your Encounter with the Rebbe.

However vivid the description may be, it is no substitute for the actual encounter.

So too this book - a description of the Bais HaMikdosh is no substitute for the real thing.

May the merit of our learning Hilchos Bais HaBechiroh bring about our seeing the construction of the real thing.

Speedily in our time

MAMOSH - (definitely)

Signed: Shimon Neubort

Max's Oriental Experiences

Max (Cohen), my grandson-in-law, has many good customers in Bangladesh which is situated in Far East Asia, past India and Pakistan, on the way to China and Japan.

A few months ago he had flown to that country and, whilst he was there, he got caught up in a civil war - a revolution, and he just barely escaped with his life. There were no more direct flights to England but his many friends assisted him to make various detours until he managed to reach the safety of his home in Manchester.

A few months later, when matters had quietened down in that area, Max arranged another flight to the Far East. He intended to call at Bangladesh first and then go on to Hong Kong, in China.

At the very last moment, and for no apparent reason, he changed his plans and decided to fly to Hong Kong first and to visit Bangladesh on his way home.

On his way out, and flying almost over Bangladesh, reports were received that this country had been severely hit by a terrific cyclone and that floods and storms had devastated the whole area. Many hundreds of thousands of people had died and five million people were homeless. Needless to say, Max did not visit Bangladesh on that trip.

Now, a month later, his customers had again contacted Max, though the telephone services had not yet been completely restored, and informed him that the towns and cities had now been mopped and tidied up and that quite a considerable amount of merchandise had been accumulated. They were anxious to sell and ship these goods to England as soon as possible in order to realise some cash.

After his two previous experiences decided that on no account would he fly to Bangladesh until, and unless, he received a brocha for success from the Rebbe.

About ten days before his projected departure Max contacted Rabbi Label Groner, at 770, and explained the position to him and asking for a blessing from the Rebbe. There was no answer from the Rebbe. Max sent six Faxes - but still no reply.

Max had booked to travel on Sunday on the 10.30 p.m. flight from London. At 8 o'clock, that morning, Max phoned to Label's private address - at home - and begged him to "Please ask the

Rebbe because the matter has now become urgent." Label intimated that as the Rebbe would be distributing dollars that day, it would be rather difficult.

Meanwhile, Max travelled down to London Airport and checked in. His luggage was loaded onto the plane together with his five days supplies of Kosher food.

From 7.30 a.m. until 9.00 p.m. Max had been trying to contact 770 but with no success. He had also spoken to Dovid (Jaffe), at Crown Heights, who promised to do his best as well.

It was getting late, and Max decided that he could not afford to take any chances - there was also a report that morning of another cyclone on its way to Bangladesh - so he refused to travel without the Rebbe's Brocha.

His suitcases and Kosher food were therefore unloaded from the plane.

It was now 10 p.m. and Max phoned to his father-in-law, my son Avrohom in Manchester, to inform him of the position - that he had checked out and he would be staying overnight in a local hotel.

Avrohom, instead of taking the message and hanging up the phone, for some unknown reason, found the time to have a chat with Max.

After five minutes of idle talk the telephone on the other line rang. Susan answered and it was Dovid calling from New York.

Dovid had been sitting with a friend and he had explained Max's dilemma to him. His friend had retorted that he did not understand what was the problem and why was Dovid sitting around, worried and morose, when all he had to do was to join the line for dollars and seek advice from the Rebbe! It seemed a sensible idea.

It was 5.00 p.m. (10.00 p.m. English time) when Dovid approached the Rebbe and explained Max's problem.

The Rebbe intimated that, "Ess tumult zich dorten" (Matters were turbulent, tempestuous and stormy there). In fact, there was a report of another cyclone approaching that area on that very day.

Label and Dovid indicated that things had quietened down a little.

The Rebbe handed a dollar to Dovid and told him to inform Max that he would have a successful journey. The Rebbe then presented an additional dollar for Max with the message that, "This is for the Sheliach in Bangladesh and Max should give him that dollar."

Dovid's mouth opened wide in surprise and he gaped at the Rebbe with wonder, amazement and disbelief. The Rebbe noticed Dovid's puzzled and startled expression and added, "There is someone who is busy with Lubavitch work there." In Dovid's opinion it seemed just absolutely

inconceivable to imagine that amongst the 114 million Muslims in that country he would be able to find even one person of the Jewish faith. And for the Rebbe to suggest, moreover, that he would find a Lubavitch worker was incredible and difficult to comprehend.

Well, it was not Dovid's concern. He was only the intermediary - and all he had to do was to convey the Rebbe's message to Max - immediately - at once!

By a wonderful coincidence Max was still chatting with Avrohom on the other line - and it was now 10.15 p.m. Max rushed back to the check-in desk. His baggage and Kosher food was reloaded onto the plane which duly left right on time - at 10.30 p.m. - with Max, very luckily, aboard. Had Dovid phoned just one minute later - or if Avrohom would have chatted with Max for one minute less - or if Avrohom would have possessed only one telephone line - then Max would have missed the flight.

For two days Max was searching for a Jewish person - never mind a Lubavitch Sheliach - to whom to present the Rebbe's dollar. It seemed to be an utter impossibility - when - on the third day - Max ascended in the hotel lift to take him to his room on the third floor.

He was emerging from the elevator when a gentleman ran along the corridor in order to enter the same lift. He looked like a Jewish fellow. Max stopped him - and yes - He was Jewish. Max immediately entered into conversation with him and discovered that out of more than a hundred million people in Bangladesh, he had, at last, found a Jew.

This gentleman, I shall call him Walter, had lived in the Sheraton Hotel in Dakar, the capital city of Bangladesh, for the past seven years. He returned to the U.S.A. every year to spend Rosh hashonah and Pesach in his home town of Charlotte, North Carolina.

But the amazing part of this story is that Max met Walter - not in the Sheraton Hotel in Dakar, but in a different hotel in the town of Chittagong which was situated two hundred miles away. That is the coincidence!

It transpired that Walter was quite friendly with Label Groner's son Yossi who was the Lubavitch Sheliach in Charlotte, U.S.A. When Yossi first arrived there, Walter was one of the first to welcome him to North Carolina.

Max realised that Walter was obviously the man who was busy with Lubavitch work over there to whom the Rebbe had referred and to whom he had to hand over the extra dollar.

To discover, at last, one Jew - and one who also happened to be a Lubavitch Sheliach - was really miraculous!

When Max returned home he phoned Yossi Groner to apprise him of what had occurred in Bangladesh. Yossi already knew the whole story. Walter's wife had phoned to Yossi Groner and given him a full report of Walter's exciting meeting with Max in primitive Bangladesh.

Yossi confirmed that Walter was the "right person". It seemed that some families from the

U.S.A. visited Dakar occasionally on short rotas of a few months or more. Walter arranged classes in Hebrew tuition for the children of these families. He was in constant touch with Yossi Groner who continuously faxed him educational material.

Three years ago Yossi had sent in a report to the Rebbe and mentioned that there was a gentleman from Charlotte who spent most of his time in Bangladesh and was busy doing Lubavitch work there.

That was three years ago. And today the Rebbe realised that Max would be fated to meet Walter and so gave him a dollar to present to him.

This story certainly gives one "food for thought".

Arrival at 770 Erev Succos

We flew from Manchester on Thursday, the day after Yom Kippur. This left Roselyn just one day to prepare for Shabbos. Yom Tov was on the Sunday evening so she had a tight schedule.

Phaivish Pink gave us a lift to the airport in his mini bus and also found room for his sons, Yehuda and Dovid.

At Kennedy Airport, New York, we discovered that Yoseph, Yechiel Vogel's son, had brought along a school bus. He assumed that some of us did behave like children. He collected the many Manchester passengers who desired to proceed to 770, which was very thoughtful and considerate of him.

Yossi (Lew) however, had promised to call for us and he was already waiting at the terminal exit. Just before we entered Yossi's car Roselyn remembered that she had left her coat behind, near the carousel.

She rushed there - and back - and then realised that she had forgotten a plastic bag containing books and odds and ends. So off she went again and discovered that the police were on the point of detonating this parcel because they had assumed it was a bomb.

On arrival at our apartment we found that the place was spotless - absolutely spick and span - which was so very different to the usual standard of cleanliness we normally found when we reached the end of our journey.

Our granddaughters, Tobie Gittel and Shaindel (Lew) had done a magnificent and exceptional job and deserved our praise and thanks - and some cash remuneration.

Shmulie (Jaffe) gave us a great welcome - and said, "Goodbye". He had become homesick and was flying on the next plane to Manchester to spend a few days at home. We had a few sandwiches left over, which we had brought from Manchester, and Shmulie did us a favour and took them back home!

I proceeded to Label's office to deliver my usual pack of letters and so forth for the Rebbe, including one from Susan, my daughter-in-law, asking for birthday brochus. Label's office was undergoing a complete Yom Tov cleaning and overhaul. At this time of the year this office becomes transformed into the Rebbe's Succah and this entailed removing a whole year's

accumulation of letters and papers and a large conglomeration of odds and ends.

I had promised to submit my report on our Russian visit to our friend Moishe (Kotlarsky) so that he could check this for any basic mistakes. On consideration, however, I decided that it was only proper and fitting, and according to protocol, that the Rebbe should be the first to peruse this document.

I explained this to the Rebbe - that I desired to allow Moishe, in due course, to have access to this account, even for a couple of hours, before I returned home in two weeks time.

I did remind the Rebbe about this, yet this report was never returned to me. Therefore I accept sole responsibility for this account of our visit to Russia (Roselyn did check this too).

There had been a steady downpour of rain all day but I was told that yesterday the temperature had reached 95 degrees F. Today, the Rebbe had been at the Ohel and after Maariv he distributed dollars.

The Rebbe handed me two single dollar bills and made his usual enquiry about my leg. I performed my usual dance routine to confirm that it was in good shape, T.G.

Roselyn had joined the women's line and she also received two dollar bills plus a very lovely smile.

On the following day, Friday 12th Tishrei, the Rebbe intended to visit the Ohel again.

I went shopping and, when I passed 770, the Rebbe's car was still outside. I dumped my purchases at the flat and rushed back to 770 just in time to greet the Rebbe as he emerged from inside.

I wished the Rebbe a good Erev Shabbos and he handed me a nickel. My palm was still outstretched and, a second later, he placed into it another nickel "For Mrs. Jaffe."

Label turned to me and commented, "How very convenient and handy it is for you to be residing within a few yards of 770." It was certainly a great advantage.

We had hardly settled into our apartment when we enjoyed an unexpected treat. We had ten visitors for lunch - grandchildren and great grandchildren who had "dropped in whilst passing." Fortunately, and from past experience, Roselyn had a huge pan of soup on boil all day and she had stocked up the fridge with dozens of eggs and mountains of chips (French fries) plus gallons of milk and barrels of ice cream, so we did possess the basic ingredients for a satisfactory snack luncheon if any of the family called in to see how we were.

Shabbos was due to commence at 6.40 p.m.

(The usual first siren warning was relayed fifteen minutes before that time and the final warning at a minute before Shabbos.) I davened Mincha upstairs in the Beis Hemedrash with

the Rebbe's Minyan.

I noticed that, at long last, we always accompanied the Rebbe's entrance into the Shool with a rousing and dynamic tune - and again when he leaves the Shool. The Rebbe swings his arms to encourage and inspire us - to join in and to sing louder and more vigorously.

8 a.m. next morning, Shabbos, we received a very welcome visitor. I had been walking together with Chaim (Farro) from the Mikvah when he left me to visit his daughter's home for coffee and cake. He had knocked and rapped on the door but he could not gain access because they were obviously slumbering and never heard him banging on their door.

Therefore he tried our door and Roselyn greeted him with open arms and we all enjoyed coffee and cake together.

As Label Groner had indicated, there was certainly a great advantage in residing next door (but one) to 770. Chaim indicated that when one wished to purchase property there were three vital conditions which had to be fulfilled. They were, in order of importance, (1) the site (2) the site and (3) the site. Therefore our apartment was ideal and perfect.

There were never sufficient Chumoshim at 770 to satisfy the demand so a very useful innovation was instituted. Thousands of booklets containing Shabbos morning's Sedra, with Rashi and other commentaries, and also the Haftorah, were distributed every Shabbos morning in the Shool in order that everyone present could follow the reading of the Torah.

As it was not Yom Tov I did not sing the HoAderess VehoEmuna.

Before the Shabbos Farbraingen Levi had sat in and reserved my place, which saved me a lot of bother. Everyone seemed to be concentrating around this area. The Rav of Lubavitch, Rabbi Marlow, always arrived at 1.29 p.m. - one minute before the Rebbe was due to enter. His "seat" was next to mine and we were all sitting packed tightly and very close together, with no place even for a pin, when he entered. But with years of experience, Rabbi Marlow did a "wriggle and a shake", "a quiver and a shiver" and a solid six foot - two Rabbi had now slithered down into what had been a solid human mass. We see these modern miracles at every Farbraingen and we can now readily understand why the solid mass of the Ark of the Covenant seemingly took up no space at all in the Holy of Holies (see Rashi).

Unfortunately, a few friends had passed away, for example, J.J. (Hecht) who has two or three heirs claiming as part of the inheritance the other seat next to me. J. J.'s eldest son said that the first born was claiming a double portion!!

The Farbraingen was very lively, the Rebbe even conducting with both arms outstretched. In one Sicho the Rebbe strongly urged that all should visit some of the Succahs of outlying communities and to celebrate Simchas Bais Hashoavu with the local Jewish population to make them Freilich (Happy). The Rebbe added that one should take one's wife with as well and she should dance with the women.

This was the year when we would see sustained wonders and complete miracles.
The Rebbe always made it his business to encourage me to sing - anytime - anywhere.

This photograph was taken when the Rebbe entered the Shool one morning. Rabbis Label
Groner and Binyomin Klein are following the Rebbe.



Erev Succos

Sunday was erev Succos. It was a busy day not only for Roselyn but for me as well.

I had been to the Mikvah and was in the bread shop at 7 a.m. (I have spent more than an hour at a time waiting to be served in some bakeries during the day so now I always go shopping very early. I also find the service so slow that, if I have to wait for only one other person to be served, then it means at least another twenty minutes delay).

Shool was at 10 a.m., and at 12 noon the Rebbe would be presenting the Arba Minim (Esrog, Lulav, Hadassim and Arovus) to special people and to those who were representing large organisations because of their position or by virtue of their having won the lottery. As it was Sunday, there would also be a dollar distribution, although I supposed that it would be a short session.

I also had to "supervise" the completion of the Succah - although the work was in the good hands of Sholom ber and Aaron, but especially of Lazer Avtzon who was once again the architect, builder, contractor, electrician, plumber and general overseer of this "Itkin, Avtzon, Jaffe" temporary abode for the next eight days. I also had to await the arrival of Avrohom Meisels of Jerusalem who would bind together the Arba Minim which the Rebbe would present to me. Avrohom Meisels would then claim to be an unofficial partner.

My first official appointment on that day was at 11.30 a.m. when there were 25 men congregated outside the main door of 770. Yisroel Goldshmit called up each person by name to enter into the Rebbe's waiting room in order to collect the Arba Minim from the Rebbe.

In due course, I heard the announcemnet that Zalmon Jaffe from Manchester was invited to come along. Rabbi Akiva Cohen's name was called next on behalf of the Manchester Yeshiva Gedola - and we both went into 770 together.

The usual routine was followed. I first of all collected the carton and plastic packing in which to place the Esrog. Then, from the table situated in the waiting room, I took one Esrog, one lulav, two Arovus and a huge fistful of Hadassim. (When I counted these afterwards, I discovered that I had picked up eighteen of these - 18 = CHAI = life). Every one of the above mentioned items had been checked personally by the Rebbe on the previous evening.

I then walked past the Rebbe who was standing at the door of his study. I thanked him warmly

for this priceless and invaluable gift. The Rebbe added a beautiful, lengthy brocha that I should draw upon myself all the blessings from every corner, location and direction. I could not, at that time, comprehend the whole blessing but, as the Rebbe was beaming and smiling all the time, then it must have been very special.

Here is a photograph of the Rebbe extending blessings to me. Rabbi Akiva Cohen is in the background, Label in the foreground.



The First Day of Succos

As I am now a fully fledged member of the "Elder Statesmen's Club" I do not really require a numbered ticket to reserve my place in the line to bench with the Rebbe's lulav. I am given the courtesy of being amongst the first ten men to use the Rebbe's Arba Minim on each morning of Succos.

But, as I was awake at 6.45 a.m. that morning, I considered that I might as well go along to 770, next door, and obtain an official ticket. This would save any arguments with some of my "envious" friends.

I met Yossi Kazan who handed me a ticket numbered 623. I was astonished to learn that by 7.00 a.m. over six hundred people had already collected tokens. Yossi indicated that some boys had been waiting since 5.30 a.m.

Anyway, Yossi had pity upon me and, just as last year, he handed me a ticket marked "FREE". This would allow me to join the line, officially, at any moment that would be convenient to me.

I had been informed that Yossi held twelve of these "FREE" tickets which he interposed amongst the pack of numbered tickets. Therefore a boy might be lucky and gain one of these privileged passes.

Yossi laughed outright and retorted, "Do you think that I am running a lottery? I need these tickets for special people - like you, Zalmon." (Z.J. - who, nevertheless, does not require them).

Yossi Kazan explained that he was the originator of this splendid idea of distributing numbered tickets.

Until 1977, before he suffered a heart attack, the Rebbe used to give out Lekach ONLY on Erev Yom Kippur.

From about 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning, people were already assembling in the women's Shool and were forming a line which went along past the Rebbe's study and subsequently emerged at the front door of 770.

At 7.30 a.m. the Rebbe fulfilled the Mitzvah of Kapporus (with a white rooster) and then attended the Shacharis service. After which the Rebbe distributed Lekach whilst standing at the

door of his study.

So, all morning, for about eight hours, some people had been waiting (and also quarrelling) about who had joined the queue first.

It was then that Yossi Kazan was struck with the brilliant idea of giving out numbered tickets. He bought a set of cloakroom tickets, wherein the numbers were in triplicate. One had to be pinned onto the coat, the second onto the hat, and the third was kept by the owner as a receipt. But for Yossi only one of these numbers was required. Therefore, Yossi distributed each number in triplicate.

But unfortunately, there were still some petty arguments because, as there were three of each number held by three different people, then three people claimed the privilege of going first.

Anyway, the system worked very well and everyone could proceed to daven in Shool and take things easy before taking Lekach from the Rebbe in an orderly manner.

On this morning, the first day of Succos, I left our apartment at about 8.45 a.m. and made my way to 770.

I noticed that Rabbi Myer Avtzon, our neighbour, was seated in our (shared) Succah and was drinking coffee and eating cake. So I assumed that he had already benched with the Rebbe's esrog.

My assumption was correct and he turned to me and, in a very excited manner and high-pitched voice, he commenced to relate to me the virtues of the Previous Rebbe (Z.L.) who used to hand the Arba Minim himself, personally, to his Chassidim and Talmidim.

I could not understand every word which he uttered but he was certainly excited and thrilled about something unusual. I discovered the reason for this very much later.

I then entered the large, Communal Succah at 770. For those who have never been to 770, I would like to point out that the small Succah in which we made the blessings over the Rebbe's Arba Minim was really part and parcel of this Communal one. An area of about six foot by six foot, square, had been partitioned off at the far end.

The Chassidim formed a line starting from Union Street and beyond. They made their way past the Kolel and through the rear garden of 770 and into this small Succah.

They would take the Lulov, tied together with the Arovus and Haddassim, from Myer Harlick. He stood behind a little table on which lay the esrog and an open Siddur (for the benefit of those who wished to be certain that they made the correct Brocha).

They made the blessing - two - on this first day, shook the lulov and emerged from this small Succah into the large Communal one where, with the co-operation of Yehuda (Blessosfsky) and his aides, they would enjoy a cup of coffee and plenty of cake.

We the members of the Elite, Elder Statsmen's club, entered the little Succah through the exit door.

I was now entering the Communal Succah and noticed that barriers had been placed across the opening and my friend, Yisroel Yarmush, was "manning the barricades".

I approached him, wished him a cheerful "Good Yom Tov" and proudly showed him my FREE ticket which guaranteed me access at any time.

He examined this token very intensely. He admitted that he had never seen one of these before and, letting me through the barrier, he advised me to show this to Binyamin Klein who was also standing nearby. Binyamin had also never seen this type of ticket before.

Binyamin then indicated that I should approach Label (Groner) who was standing close to the Exit door of the little Succah.

I was becoming a trifle bemused - all the TOP BRASS seemed to be present this morning!

However, I went up to Label and enquired in a loud, cheerful, voice, "Hello Label! Are you here as well?" I wished him also, "Good Yomtov" and showed him my FREE ticket.

Label allowed me to enter and I squeezed into the line just a few feet from Meyer Harlick.

It was now my turn. Myer handed me the lulav and, looking up, I discovered that someone was standing in the background. He looked like the Rebbe. It was unbelievable! I stared very hard and realised that - "My word! It was the Rebbe." My eyes showed complete amazement and almost total disbelief at what I was seeing. But yes, it was really the Rebbe, who was giving me a happy smile. I wished the Rebbe "Good Yom Tov" and the Rebbe reciprocated my greetings.

I made the two Brochas - and the Rebbe answered ""Boruch Hu U'Voruch Shemo" and "Omaine" at the appropriate moments. I thanked the Rebbe for the use of his Arba Minim and, to the accompaniment of the Rebbe's smile, I departed from the Succah.

Now I could readily understand what all the excitement was about.

The Rebbe stood there and just watched and listened whilst everyone made the Brochas and, of course, he answered Omaine and so forth.

Many big, strong and notable men got into a flap that morning.

Yossi (Lew) admitted that he was shaking like a leaf and did not need to shake the lulav separately.

The Rebbe reminded Chaim (Farro) that he had also to make the second Brocha (of

"Shechiyonu") today. Chaim was not the only one to err that morning.

Dozens of boys made the blessing of "Al Netillas Yodoyim" (for washing one's hands) instead of "Al Netillas Lulav."

One boy, to ensure that he made the correct Brocha, picked up the open Siddur and made the blessing for Hallel. (It's on the same page).

Then there was the outrageous rumour flying around that Zalmon Jaffe had said to the Rebbe - "Hello, are you here as well? (Of course, I did say this to Label Groner).

Meanwhile, I had returned to our apartment for tea and cake. It was now 9.45 a.m. so I went back to 770 as I did not wish to be late for Shacharis which was due at 10.00 a.m.

10.00 a.m. came - and went. At 10.15 a.m. Yossi (Lew) informed me that he understood that Shacharis - the morning service - would commence a little late today because there was still a huge line of over two thousand men and boys waiting to "bench Esrog".

At 11.00 a.m. Yossi gave me the second of his hourly bulletins - that Label had asked the Rebbe, "When would we daven Shacharis?" The Rebbe replied, "Haint" (today). Furthermore, the Rebbe had indicated that he would remain in the Succah until every single person who wished to bench with the Rebbe's "Arba Minim" had done so. The Rebbe was anxious to answer Omaine, and so forth, to everyone's brochas. Yossi advised me to be patient as he felt there would be an exceptionally long delay that morning.

At 12 noon Label Mochkin made Kiddush. Yossi continued his hourly bulletins at 12 o'clock, one and two o'clock. His last report stated that there was still an extremely long line waiting to reach the Rebbe.

Meanwhile, Label Mochkin had become slightly inebriated. Suddenly he became very fond of me and took a great delight in kissing me and giving me bear hugs. He breathed so heavily into my face that I was also in danger of becoming slightly inebriated.

At 3.00 p.m. we received the report that over four thousand people had passed by the Rebbe who had been standing inside the Succah since 8.15 a.m. that morning - nearly seven hours - and that the Rebbe was now on his way to the Shool to daven Shacharis.

One man expressed the opinion of many - that our Rebbe was a remarkable man - for a person of nearly ninety years (till 120) to stand upright in one place for so long was an outstanding physical feat.

Also, on many Sundays the Rebbe distributes dollars for over seven hours and remains on his feet all the time. He listens to everybody's problems - and gives advice and extends blessings to all.

So I retorted that it would be a great test even for a man of thirty years old!

We were not referring to the Rebbe's gigantic spiritual stature which places him into the category of the Moishe Rabeinu of our generation. (It is stated that there is a Moishe Rabeinu in each and every generation. Gemara Yoma 38b - The A'mighty saw that the Righteous were few, so He planted them in every generation).

At 3.05 p.m. the Rebbe arrived and we commenced to daven Shacharis. Of course, most people had already recited the Shema before 9.30 a.m. !?!

We davened quite speedily and, by 3.30 p.m. we had reached the part of the service where the Hallel is recited. And today, Succos, we also shook the Esrog and Lulav at that moment.

Myer Harlick brought up to the Rebbe the Arba Minim which had been used that morning by over four thousand people and the Rebbe commenced to tidy up the Lulav and the Hadassim and Arovus.

Every morning during Succos the Rebbe always spent a few moments on this preening. Once, the Rebbe had asked Label to bring a complete new set of the Lulav, Hadassim and Arovus. He was obviously satisfied that the set he had been given was beyond repair. There were always a few sets in reserve prepared and ready to be brought to the Rebbe if they were required.

On this first day of Succos, however, the Rebbe busied himself in perfecting the Lulav set and it was half an hour - thirty long minutes - before the Rebbe was satisfied with the condition and state of the Arba Minim.

It was now exactly 4.00 p.m. Everyone already realised that at this very moment President Bush was due to address the United Nations on the subject of "Israel, Racism and the Middle East peace process." It was greatly feared that he would condemn Israel and be outspoken against Shamir.

In the event, Bush spoke quite nicely. Did all this have something to do with the Rebbe's Mesiras Nefesh (self-sacrifice) during this very long morning and very lengthy wait until 4.00 p.m.? We mortals will never know!

The service concluded at 5.30 p.m. and it was suggested that the Rebbe might now continue with the Mincha prayers.

"But what about our hats?" was the cry. I indicated that there were a couple of occasions during the year when we did daven Mincha wearing our Tallaisim over our heads - and without our hats. And so it was proved today.

We now have a catch question. "On which three occasions during the year do we daven Mincha whilst still wearing our Tallis over our heads?" The answer is- 1) On Yom Kippur 2) On Tisha B'Av and 3) On the first day this of Succos (only on this "Year of Wonders").

I have stated above that our Rebbe is the Moishe Rabbeinu of our generation. Therefore, if a

Novi - a prophet - decides that it is quite in order to recite the morning service at 3 p.m. in the afternoon on this special occasion, then there is no question but that this is a correct decision. Hashem gave us His Torah but also taught us that these laws are not for the angels in heaven but for the Jewish people here on earth.

Hashem indicated that our Rabbinical Courts should arrange His festivals to take place at the correct times or seasons (Leviticus 23:4). Therefore, the Sanhedrin, or Bottei-Din, had to decide when to insert the extra month into the calendar and so form a leap year. Otherwise, we might eventually have to celebrate Pesach in the autumn (the fall) instead of in the springtime.

Throughout our history we find that the Sanhedrin (or Bottei-Din) have enacted laws which seemed to be contrary to those given to us in the Torah. For instance, it was decided that the Jewish people who resided outside Eretz Yisroel should keep an extra day of Yom Tov - two days instead of one. And if one of the days of Rosh Hashonah, or of Succos, should fall on a Shabbos, then the Shofar was not blown on Rosh Hashonah nor the Arba Minim shaken on Succos.

When King Solomon built the first Temple, this holy Edifice was dedicated during the time of Yom Kippur. So instead of fasting on that day it was decided to hold a feast, but only in that year.

During that period, the main emphasis was on learning and upon sacrifices on the Altar - either of cattle, birds or flour.

After the destruction of the First Temple, about four hundred years later, prayers were substituted - "lip service" - in lieu of sacrifices.

In fact, every day we recite this prayer: -"You have commanded us to offer the daily sacrifices at the appointed time Now through our sins the Bais Hamikdosh has been destroyed, the daily sacrifices are discontinued Therefore, may it be Your Will that the prayer of our lips be regarded and accepted by You as if we had offered the daily sacrifice at its appointed time".

The Mishna and the Gemorra do emphasize that the Shema should be recited at the correct time, especially in the morning.

Nevertheless, in Brochas 9b, we learn that if one missed the time one was allowed to say it later although this was frowned upon and discouraged.

In the same Gemorra, 27b, it says, "Avidon reported that on one Shabbos day the clouds were so thick that it became dark. The Congregation (not a single individual) davened the Maariv prayer which is recited at the conclusion of Shabbos. Subsequently the clouds dispersed and the sun shone through again. They asked Rabbah who confirmed that they did not have to daven Maariv again. (They could even make Havdolah).

Similarly, one was allowed to daven Maariv on Friday, erev Shabbos, early, as long as it was after the Plag of Mincha.

T.G., we possess a Rebbe who is imbued with prophetic vision and wisdom plus Divine inspiration, so we can always rely on his Pesak Din (decisions and judgements) implicitly.

Actually, many boys have been davenning Shacharis during late afternoon for many years, but they did realise that it was wrong. They have now discovered that the Rebbe has legalised this situation - but only for that one occasion. We have warned them!!

Chol HaMoed

The weather at Crown Heights is very unpredictable, and every year I make some mention of gales, tornadoes and tempests, especially during the Succos period.

This year was no exception.

One morning, Eastern Parkway had become a raging torrent - a flash flood, all within half an hour. I had just emerged from Yankel's Mikvah and it seemed almost impossible to cross the road. I stepped forward gingerly onto the roadway, one foot at a time, exploring the surface, when - I suddenly found myself almost up to my waist in very cold water.

After about five years, the construction on Eastern Parkway was still in progress. (They hope that the work will be completed in about another five years! hopefully).

Meanwhile, huge craters, camouflaged and unseen, were hidden from view. It was just my mazel to fall into one of these on my way back from the Mikvah. I had to change completely my shoes, socks and trousers.

As I have stated, we experienced some very bad weather throughout Succos. In spite of this, Aaron and Levi danced in the street, all night and every night, from before midnight until six or seven o'clock the next morning.

Sholom Ber went early and danced from about 8 p.m. till after midnight and so ensured that he was fit for the morning service. One night Aaron was dressed like a deep sea diver. All he required was a pair of heavy boots with solid lead soles, heels and bases.

And yet, Aaron also managed to join me at the morning service every day except the last when nature exacted its toll and caught up with him. He slept non-stop for twenty four hours.

Yisroel Goldsmit, Shmiddy, continued to work exceedingly hard, together with Michael Zerkin, Yisroel Yarmush and others, to protect the Rebbe and to try to keep some semblance of order at 770.

Shmiddy always carried aloft his sweet little daughter, Yehudis aged 2½ years, wherever he went. She was a great help to him in moving the tables and heavy benches. Their motto or war cry was, "LET'S GO-O- COME ON LET'S GO-O-O-O", accompanied by a push or a shtup.

At 7.00 p.m. one evening, there was a loud banging upon my door. An old woman wanted to bench with my Esrog and Lulov. She confided that she had used my set last year too.

I suggested that it was rather late to "bench Esrog" so she promised to come along at 7.00 a.m. next morning. After some little discussion and argument it was arranged that she would call at our Succah at 8.00 a.m. I do find them!! (Or they find me!)

After Maariv and the Sicho, the Rebbe distributed dollars. As I approached the Rebbe, he was extending to me a lovely smile, and I had eyes only for the Rebbe.

When a cheeky young lad snatched my dollar the Rebbe laughed and handed me another one.

Roselyn and Channah (Marlow) joined the women's line. On the next page is a photograph of Roselyn smiling happily after having received a dollar from the Rebbe.



A Children's Rally

On Thursday, the fourth day of Succos (and the second of Chol HaMoed), a Children's Rally was held at 770.



Here is a photograph showing some of the children watching and listening to the musicians who are standing on the stage on the left of the picture, under the Women's Shool, (Kingston Avenue entrance) but which has now been taken over by the boys.

If one looks closely, one can see a line of cord about half way down the Shool, upon which will hang a Mechitza, to divide the girls from the boys during the Mincha service only.

The Rebbe had not yet arrived.

In the past, our dear friend Rabbi J.J. (Hecht) was in complete charge of the arrangements for the Children's Rallies.

The entertainers – musicians, conjurors, fire eaters and so forth – had spent about 45 minutes in amusing the children whilst they were arriving from all parts of New York and settling into their places in 770.

Then J.J. would come into his own - by talking to the children and getting them into the right mood to receive the Rebbe. And afterwards, to translate the Rebbe's talk (given in Yiddish) into English. To see him scribbling away onto a large writing pad whilst the Rebbe was still speaking, and to see the pages turning over every few seconds, was a real eye opener. The result — when he read out his finished work - was magnificent and a masterpiece. And furthermore, what was more important, he made the Rebbe laugh with his witticisms and original jokes.

At this rally, two of J.J.'s sons had taken over their father's (O.H.) mantle. Shimon gave the talk to the children and the eldest, Sholom Ber, translated the Rebbe's Sichos.

As stated above, the Women's Shool (Kingston Avenue) was packed tight - with Yeshiva boys - not children and not women. Rabbi Yudel Krinsky explained to me that the new, rebuilt Women's Shool would be three times as large as at present. It would be three stories high and there would be NO PILLARS.

The Rebbe entered to a rousing tune, sung vigorously by the many thousands of children. The Rebbe seemed so happy - the children are his life.

The twelve verses were recited. In this instance the soloists came from London; Crown Heights; Argentina; Brazil; Milan; Sydney, Australia; Toronto; Zfas, Israel; Zurich, Switzerland; Capetown, South Africa; Paris, France and the twelfth from Jerusalem.

The Rebbe led the round of applause, not only for those who had recited the verses, but for those who represented children from all over the world.

The Rebbe indicated that it states in Sukkah, 42a, that, "Torah, Tziva Lonu Moishe.." "the Torah which Moses commanded us (to learn) is the heritage of (all) the Congregation of Jacob" - all the Jewish people. The children should know that G-d gave all the Torah to each Jewish person - men, women and little children - even a one day old baby.

As soon as a child can speak, his father should teach him, amongst other things, to say the "Moda Anni" immediately as he awakens in the morning. "I offer thanks to You, living and Eternal King, for You have mercifully restored my soul within me. Your faithfulness is great."

This is a good start for the day. Everyone says this - Bobbies and Zaidies, mothers and fathers, and all the family - every single day.

When one drinks water, even plain water, one makes a blessing - a reminder that everything in

the world was created by G-d's words. "The world was created by G-d by means of Ten Statements (sayings)". Therefore, we should carry out His Mitzvahs, commandments - which include Brochus, Succos, Esrog, the Arba Minim, Hoshaana Rabba, and so on. And then, very quickly, very soon, we shall greet the Redemption with Simcha and joy in the little Succah which encompasses all the Jewish people.

We need food for our bodies and we need food for our souls. Mitzvahs are the food for our souls. Every day we have the opportunity to fulfil Mitzvahs. You should enjoy a happy Yomtov. When children are happy and enjoying themselves they do not sleep, so the more you celebrate the less chance you will have of falling asleep. Succos is the third Yomtov, and the word Simcha is mentioned three times in regards to this holiday.

During Yomtov, one has more time to learn, to think, to study. When Moshiach arrives, there will be a special Succah for all Jewish people and an everlasting Simcha.

Succos lasts for seven days. Then we have an extra day - a different Yomtov of Shemini Atzeres - when we recite the blessing of Shehechiyonu again. Nevertheless, it still has connection with Succos.

It states - "Rejoice in your Festivals" - all of us, children and parents. Tomorrow night is Shabbos - within Succos. Then Sunday will be HoShaana Rabba - followed by Shemini Atzeres and then Simchas Torah - each one is a guest in his Succah - a guest - not in the home but in the Succah. And G-d is the Host.

Most of the days of this Yomtov have gone. We still have our Succah guests of Avrohom, Yitzchok, Yaakov, Moische, Aaron, Yoseph, King David and Shlomo. It seems that we are also guests. We leave our homes and live in a Succah. Moische brings all the other guests and we study Torah and dance together. All Jews will dance around HaShem. Today we dance by ourselves. When Moshiach comes, then all the Tzadikim (the Righteous Persons) and us, and together with HaShem, will become ONE Community - all together, with good thoughts and good words.

The Rebbe concluded by handing each child three coins for charity and mentioned that some Jewish people do not have sufficient money to provide for a nice Yomtov, and they should be helped.

Everyone sang a rousing Nigun and the Rebbe departed, still encouraging everyone to sing louder, by swinging his arms very rapidly.

Almost every day Television crews from France and other countries, even from Japan, had been busy filming the events at 770. After the Children's Rally, the Rebbe handed over three coins each to members of the non-Jewish Press.

Simchas Bais HaShoavu

The first two days of Succos this year were on Monday and Tuesday so that left us with only two evenings, Wednesday and Thursday, to visit the outlying areas in order to make other communities happy in their Succahs.

Six months ago we had promised Shimon (Posner) that we would travel to his headquarters, in Long Island, on the Thursday.

This seemed ideal because we could then visit our friends in Great Neck on the day before - Wednesday.

Unfortunately, we never heard from Yossi and Channah (Geisinkski), the Shiluchim at Great Neck, until Wednesday afternoon. They told us that they had arranged a special Succos party for the following day, Thursday, and everyone was expecting us to be present.

Obviously, we could not be in two places at the same time and, reluctantly, we had to decline. It was a great pity that Yossi had left it so late to invite us, and that there was no liaison between him and Shimon. It was now too late to visit any other place.

We used to go to Asbury Park where Rabbi Carlebach had arranged some very nice functions which were attended by large crowds in the Shool Succah, but then it deteriorated into a social gathering at a private Succah. Two of our close friends still carried on this long tradition of visiting Asbury Park, but they got lost and arrived two hours late.

The few people who had been present had already departed when the poor, lost souls did arrive.

Shimon had advertised his Succos party as
"Sukkah Jamboree"
"Live Music, Refreshment and Fun"

Shimon said that, "You, Zaidie, are the FUN!"

The evening was a huge success. Full use was made of the small Succah adjoining the Promised Land restaurant. Our friend, the proprietor, did us proud.

A special, portable stage had been erected in the Public Square, and a three piece band was in attendance. They banged away, and whacked so loudly through the microphone, that it sounded like a thirty piece band.

Shmuel related a word of Torah, with some humour, and I also spoke. We danced and we sang till after 11 p.m.

Altogether, over four hundred people were present - not all at one time - including twenty one Jaffe's and Lew's.

After Maariv on Succos, the Rebbe usually related to us a Sicho whilst standing on the platform at the far end of the Shool. As it was Yom Tov the microphone could not be used, so we had the situation which I have described to you in the past - that is -

- 1) those who stood nearby, close to the Rebbe, could both see and hear.
- 2) those in the middle section could see but not hear.
- 3) those at the back could neither see nor hear: this latter group consisted mainly of children who chattered, rushed about and played games, whilst Yisroel Shemtov tried desperately hard to keep them quiet and in order.

This year, Myer Harlick had suggested that the Rebbe should give over the Sicho whilst standing at the centre of the top table where the Rebbe normally sits at a Farbraingen.

This proved to be an excellent innovation, and a very much larger proportion of those present could now both see and hear the Rebbe.

The Rebbe commenced the Sicho by wishing us, "Good Yom Tov", three times, which we all reciprocated by shouting out loud, "Good Yom Tov" - also three times.

The Rebbe indicated that we were all sons of the A'Mighty, and generally a son has to serve his Father, but today we were all guests of HaShem, so then, our Heavenly Father serves us.

This was the year of Miracles - "Bakol" - which we would all see and acclaim. G-d blessed Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov, "Bakol, Mekol, Kol", - "In all things, by all things and with all things."

The name Yitzchok meant two opposites -

- 1) Laughter = happiness.
- 2) Gevurah = strength.

Mendel Groner, Label's son, who is doing an extremely important job in Israel very successfully, told me, "Zalmon, You were the only one at whom the Rebbe smiled at the Arba

Minim presentations." This was a very encouraging and heartening statement.

During the whole of Succos, at every morning service, a large table was placed in front of the Oran HaKodesh. This was used as a temporary Bimah and saved the Rebbe the long walk to the elevated structure situated in the centre of the Shool with the subsequent awkward climb up the steep steps.

The Rebbe, followed by ten distinguished and selected men, also circulated around this table for the daily one Hakofus with the Lulav, Esrog, Hadassim and Arovus. (Seven times on HoShanna Rabba).

Everyone else made their circuits around the aforementioned main, high Bimah in the middle of the Shool.

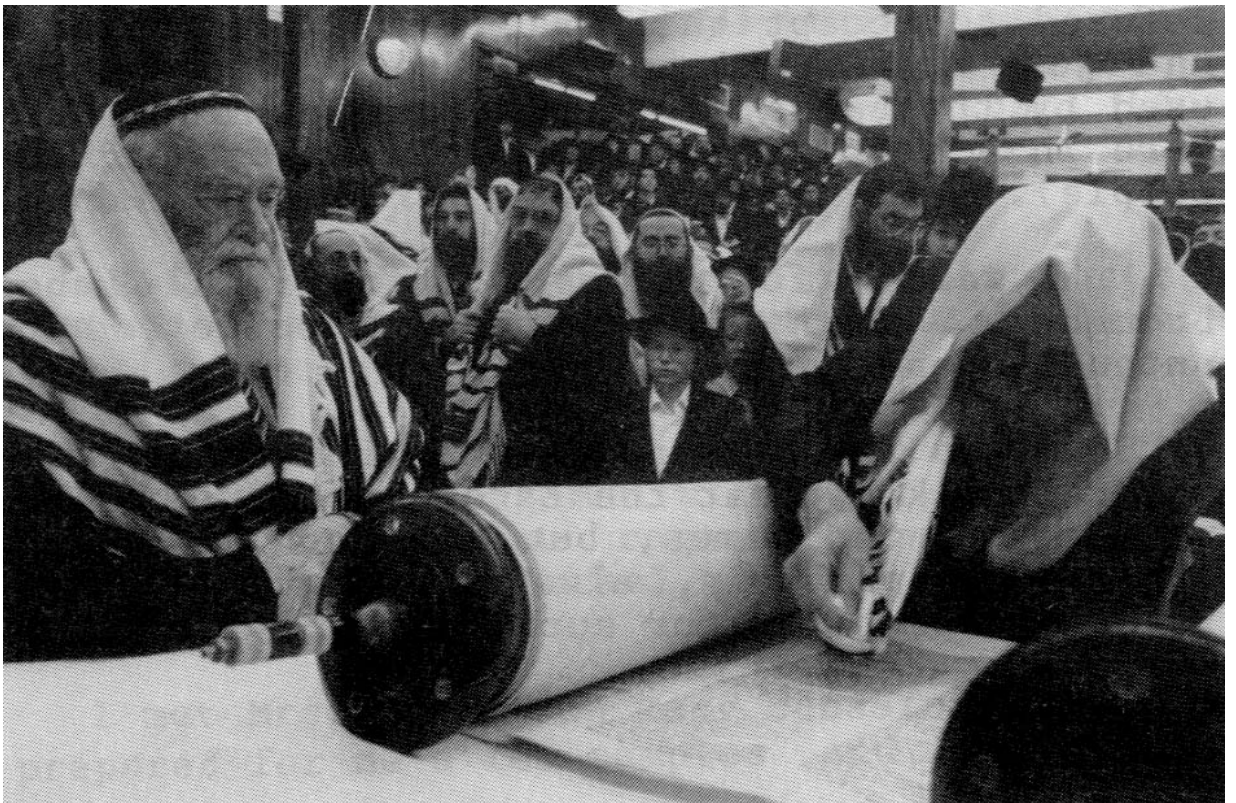
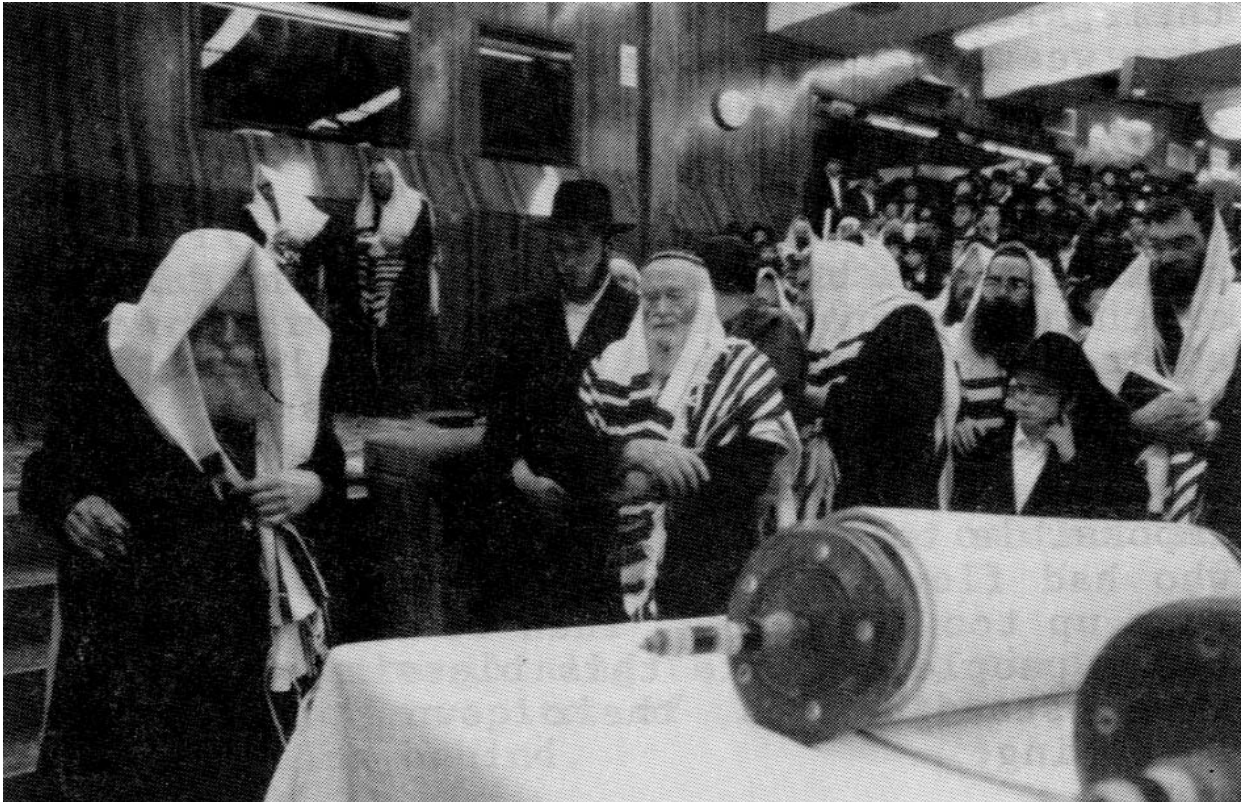
The Rebbe always stood, looked and waited until every single person, who possessed (or borrowed) a set of Arba Minim, had completed the circuit, before he turned around to continue the service.

On many occasions, the Rebbe had to wait for as long as twenty minutes before every person had made their one circuit of the Bimah.

Obviously, on HoShanna Rabba it was not possible or policy to wait for everyone to make their seven circuits. The Krias HaTorah, reading the law, was also performed on this table.

Here are two photographs - on one we see the Rebbe descending from his platform towards the table and in the other we see the Rebbe kissing the Sefer Torah prior to making the blessing. I am standing nearby on both pictures.

(taken by ELY of Crown Heights)



You will notice that in the second photograph I was actually standing at the table because I was

honoured with the third Aliya. (on Chol hamoed there are four men called up). On the day before, three Bar Mitzvah boys had the boys from Australia.

On the day before, three Bar Mitzvah boys had their Aliyas, all looked the same, three little boys wearing large, black hats. The first was a Kohen, the second a Levi and the third was a Yisroel, young Oliver from Australia.

Rabbi Nachman Sudak pronounced a Psak Din regarding the blessing of Gomel - the blessing of thanksgiving on deliverance from danger, or after recovery from a serious illness, or a journey over the sea, by air or ship, and so forth. This is recited on the Bimah when the Torah is read. Nachman indicated that it was impossible to accomodate on the Bimah all those who had flown to 770 for Succos, and it would take up too much time. Then it was in order for these people to make this blessing whilst they were standing at their own place during Layenning.

On the second day of Succos, the Rebbe refused to accept the Minim which Myer Harlick had just brought into the Shool. After being used by thousands of people that morning, they were in a sorry state (the Arba Minim, not the people).

We waited for a few minutes until Label brought to the Rebbe a fresh, complete set, untouched and perfect.

This was the first time that I had ever seen this. I do know that the Esrog has been changed as many as ten times, but not the whole set. There were probably, always a few spare sets ready and prepared for such an emergency.

That morning the weather was extremely bad. Eastern Parkway resembled the roads which we saw in the village of Lubavitch, in Russia.

It was decided that, as all the people who were waiting in the line to Bench Esrog with the Rebbe's Arba Minim in the Succah, would become absolutely drenched, this line was therefore directed into and through the Shool.

All the time, during Shacharis, this huge line was making its way from outside the Shool entrance right through the Shool, around and around, and upstairs to the Succah.

It was peculiar to see this line, bobbing up and down, and creeping along in the middle of the worshippers who were trying to concentrate on their morning prayers.

Many men were joining this queue, throughout its length, in spite of loud protests from those standing behind.

Every day, most of the officiating Chazonim (a different one each day) made some silly mistake. In the paragraph of "Yaale VeYovo", instead of reciting "Chag HaSukkos" (for Succos) this Chazan said the words, "Rosh Chodesh" - for the new month.

He then raced ahead, did not wait for the Rebbe, and then had to wait ten minutes for the Rebbe to catch up.

I met that morning the Sheliach from Acco, Israel, a nice young man with, KAH, nisht nine children. He gave me regards from my nephew Zaive Jaffe, from Israel, who is one of his great supporters.

I met Mrs. Scharf on many occasions. She had prepared for me a few samples and suggestions for the cover of my next publication. They were very nicely done but I wanted to include a photograph of the Rebbe on the outer cover. I extend to her my warm thanks for her thoughtfulness and consideration.

Said Rabbi Gutnick to me after I received a gorgeous smile. "Why does the Rebbe love you so much, Zalmon?"

During Maariv, on Saturday night, I stood at my usual place - at the foot of the stairway leading to the Rebbe's platform. Just before the service concluded, I rushed up these stairs, dashed by the Rebbe, and made my way to the block behind where the Rebbe would be sitting and giving over the Sicho. Sholom Ber, my guide and protector, was in close attendance.

The gangway was completely empty, as were the tables alongside. I arrived at that block and all the seats were taken, but Mr. Popak took pity on me and offered me his place at the end of the first row.

And now here was the Rebbe coming along the empty gangway - and behind him, almost physically touching the Rebbe's person, was a large tidal wave, a huge mass of people, inexorably and relentlessly moving forward - even walking - and pushing onto the tables.

A young man behind me was bowing and shaking non-stop, he was trembling. Suddenly I felt a warm glow, and a hot liquid was seeping through my trousers. I was sitting in a warm puddle. I jumped up with a start and discovered that this boy, who must have been celebrating Simchas Yom Tov in a most bounteous, but unaccustomed, manner, and being in a generous mood, he had heaved everything he had at me.

Mr. Popak had already been repaid for his Mitzvah. Next day, this young man apologised so profusely and abjectly that I promised not to divulge his name.

As usual, the Rebbe's Sicho was relayed live all over the world - even outside 770 - where the reception was loud and clear - but NOT inside 770.

On Sunday, HoShaana Rabba, most of our family went for Lekach and dollars together. There were Nisht seventeen of us (Tov = 17 = good). Roselyn and I Chaya with three babies Channah (M) with two babies Channah (L) Tobie Gittel Shaindel Sheva plus Max and two of his little Kohenim - Moishe and Gavriel.

Esther Sternberg and Yisroel Yarmush were extremely helpful in ensuring that we were all in

one party. The piece of Lekach (cake) was wrapped up in a brand new dollar bill.

The Rebbe handed to Roselyn one piece plus a double portion, plus a beautiful smile, plus wonderful blessings. I received exactly the same rations of everything as Roselyn.

On Erev Yom Tov, Levi went to a Shool in Port Washington, near Great Neck.

Next morning, Roselyn and I were enjoying coffee and cake when Levi arrived looking weary and dishevelled, and hungry. We expressed surprise. We thought he was in Port Washington.

Levi confessed that he had been to this place to make people happy on Yom Tov. There were only fifteen people present, but he had achieved what he had set out to do. He was very pleased, and the people he had entertained were delighted.

So, O.K., he had a nice twenty five miles overnight walk, which took him eight hours. But it was well worth it. He had been Mesiras Nefesh (self sacrificing) in a good cause.

Max (Cohen), my grandson-in-law, had arrived with not one little Cohen, but two. Moishe aged 5 and Gavriel aged 3, came to spend Simchas Torah with the Rebbe at 770.

On HoShaana Rabba, Moishe and Gavriel had received full V.I.P. treatment. They both stood together near to the table around which the Rebbe - and just ten of us - made the seven circuits. On each of the seven occasions when the Rebbe passed the spot at which they stood, the Rebbe "greeted" them by giving them a very long discerning and penetrating stare.

On Yom Tov, for the Birchas Kohanim, the Priestly Blessings, a new format had been created. An extra platform had been erected facing the Oran HaKodesh. The Rebbe's lectern was placed far back and crowds of some of the Kohanim stood facing the Rebbe ready to take part in this ritual.

Max, who is just over 5½ feet tall, and Moishe and Gavriel, who are about 2½ feet - not so tall, wished to stand on this platform in front of the Rebbe. And that is, by long tradition, the exact spot where Yehuda Blessofsky stands in order to bless the Rebbe.

Yehuda is the Kohen Godel - the Big, or Chief, Kohen and, K.A.H., a giant of a man, albeit a very happy and cheerful giant. Yehuda would not allow anyone to stand between himself and the Rebbe.

So he picked up Max with one hand - and Moishe and Gavriel with his other hand - and very un-gently dropped them about five feet onto the floor of 770, near to where I was standing.

I told Max not to worry because, as soon as all the Kohanim and the congregants had covered their heads with their Tallaisim, then I would give Max a leg up onto the platform and hand up his little Kohanim so that he would then be standing right in front of the Rebbe.

And so it came to pass!

At the end of the Duchening, when everyone had uncovered themselves, Yehuda realised that he had been hoodwinked. And he was really terribly annoyed, until he learnt that they were members of my family.

However, being a good friend of mine, and realising that Max and the boys had travelled 3,500 miles from Manchester in order to spend a couple of days with the Rebbe, he apologised for his "high handed" behaviour - and all was forgiven.

Because 770 was so overcrowded, one boy was smart and sat on a small wooden platform which he had suspended from the roof. During the Kohen Duchening he also covered himself completely with a Tallis. It looked like a Tallis hanging in the air.

I became friendly with a nice young man. He always greeted me with a smile and good Yom Tov wishes. He informed me that his name was Hershie Vogel, the eldest son of our old friend Phaivish of London. When Avrohom arrived at 770, over thirty two years ago, Phaivish, who was not yet married, was his first "Rebbe" there and helped him with his studies. Hershel was always cheerful and happy. Phaivish, however, has all the financial problems and worries of London Lubavitch, and those are nothing to smile or laugh about.

When Max arrived at 770 to attend his first morning service on Succos, I noticed with surprise that, although he was holding a Lulov, he did not seem to possess an Esrog.

I enquired whether this was the new Halacha, that it was sufficient to own three of the four Minim (kinds). Max emphasised that it was the Halacha of the United States Customs & Excise department that no fruit whatsoever was allowed into the country, especially citrus fruit, unless by prior arrangements and notice.

So Max's poor (but expensive) Esrog, Mehadrin Min Mehadrin - perfection itself - was thrown into the official incinerator.

Uncle Yossi Goldstein's word of Torah this year was about the importance of the month of Sivan, when the Torah was given to the Jewish people. "Sivon" means "See One" (One G-d, one Torah, one Jewish people).

A (Jewish) policeman approached us in Long Island. He wanted to know from where we obtained our "Schach" to cover our Succah. He admitted that he did have a Succah but without covering for the roof!!!

Every morning whilst we were awaiting the arrival of the Rebbe's Arba Minim, Shmuel (Lew) gave a public Shiur near the Succah in a loud voice so that most of the people in the line would be able to hear.

He learned three chapters of the Rambam and related stories about our Rebbe.

Shmuel had a good time - he loved it!

Every year, K.A.H., our list of Mechutanim and friends who resided at Crown Heights continued to grow, and it was becoming more difficult than ever to refuse all the lovely invitations for Yom Tov meals which we received.

Furthermore, we now have a large contingent of grandchildren and great grandchildren, K.A.H., who are always, T.G., "popping in" for a snack.

During Yom Tov we held an impromptu meal at our apartment - and twenty guests arrived - also impromptu, but everyone was satisfied with the menu and culinary arrangements.

They all realised that Roselyn's bark was much worse than her bite, and all loved to drop in and enjoy one of her little bites.

On their way home from 770, Dovid and Yoseph called in to wish Roselyn a good Yom Tov. Dovid inhaled a deep whiff of the cooking and stated that he could not leave without tasting Bobby's fresh food.

Yoseph pointed to a piece of meat on my plate and said, "eh, what's that - a shnitzel? Oh, I must have a taste." He cut off a corner and remarked, "Ah, it's good." Another corner was taken from Yossi's - "Ah, it's very good." A corner from Sholom Beres piece followed - and "That was excellent."

Yoseph had been busy cutting corners but he had no option but to leave us because Channah was waiting for him.

However, as my readers are well aware, we do have a very long tradition of visiting the home of Rivka and Moishe Kotlarsky twice a year - on Shavuos and during our Succos holiday. On this occasion, however, the venue and the date were changed. Instead of partaking of our meal on Simchas Torah inside their house, we experimented and joined them for a Yom Tov meal in their Succah. It was very homely and cosy. The food, drink and company were up to the usual high standard. All their children were particularly nice - in every way, and a lovely atmosphere pervaded. I was presented with the opportunity of paying some nice (deserved) compliments and tributes to Moishe for his excellent organisational prowess shown during our visit to Russia with the one hundred and fifty Shiluchim, a few weeks previously.

Here is a photograph of another occasion when Roselyn received dollars from the Rebbe.



A very exciting and memorable Yom Tov was drawing to a close. Exceptionally high prices had been paid for the merit of the Rebbe to recite a verse of the Ata Horaiso on one's behalf. Rabbi Yossi Gutnick had offered the sum of one hundred thousand dollars for the Rebbe's first verse.

Hakofus

During the month of Tishrei, the Rebbe's twenty foot platform, which was situated at the far end of the Shool, to the right of the Oran HaKodesh, at the Eastern (Mizrach) wall, became a permanent fixture.

During Simchas Torah, however, this was moved about a dozen feet nearer to the Ark. By so doing, a new area or - a well - was created, between the platform and the wall on the right. This was reserved for special guests or elderly gentlemen.

One had to be extremely well, and especially fit, to be able to withstand the pressures and contractions of one hundred and fifty people standing in a space barely large enough to hold fifty men in some little discomfort.

Anyone who felt that he had a claim to any special privileges or consideration was just dropped, literally, into this well and left to flounder by himself. To me it had become a danger and a hazard, and I have now refused to be persuaded, cajoled or forced to join the other victims in this area.

On this night, three Civic dignitaries from New York had arrived to join in the festivities. As

was the custom, Yudel (Krinsky) led them into this well - out of harms way!

Within minutes, I noticed three red hot, puffing and perspiring faces emerging and climbing out of this inferno. They just could not take it. Yudel came to their rescue and found them some place elsewhere.

Furthermore, and in order that everyone in the Shool would have an uninterrupted view of the Rebbe, an additional, small, six foot square platform had been erected upon this original twenty foot edifice.

A flight of steps, from the left, led to this second, upper platform, and another stairway descended from the right sidedown to the well.

At the bottom of these steps sat Zalmon Gurary and Zalmon Jaffe together with Shea Pinson the Gabbai. Every time that we wished to move to a higher step we were screamed at and booed because we blocked many boys from their view of the Rebbe.

Dovid (Jaffe), my bodyguard, together with Yossi Sternberg, who was protecting Jimmy Gurary, stood or sat just below us and leaned nonchalantly, but very forcibly, against the mass of men who were being constantly pushed and driven against this stairway.

Last year, when the freezing cold air met the hot, boiling bodies of the boys, it caused a vapour, or mist, to be formed. From our high vantage point we could not see any boys because, "a cloud of mist did cover the earth."

This year, on the first night of Shemini Atzeres (Simchas Torah) we saw hanging from the ceiling a fifteen foot, yellow "caterpillar" - about 18 inches in diameter. By the following night it had grown in length to about twenty five feet.

Dovid informed me that this was a special, extra air conditioning machine which was responsible for dispelling all the additional vapour and keeping the atmosphere clean and clear. It was a portable, 100,000 BTU Air conditioner hired especially for this occasion.

The clock at 770 was put forward for Simchas Torah - not an hour or so but 30 feet further along the wall. Every year, all the clocks at 770 have been accidentally knocked down from the wall near the women's Shool.

The procedure at the Hakofus was as follows: The Rebbe was handed a special, small Sefer Torah. This supreme honour was given this year to our friend Rabbi Yossi Gutnick from Australia. The Rebbe then followed the Chazan down the steps from his platform and made his way along a two foot wide corridor. Situated at the end of this trail, and in the centre of the Shool, was the Bimah upon which the Rebbe used to dance during the Hakofus.

This year, in order that everyone should have an unimpeded view of the Rebbe whilst he danced and sang, a small, second platform, about six foot square, had been erected upon the lower Bimah.

The warden, Ze'ev Katz, called up a number of honoured and honourable men to accompany the Rebbe. All these distinguished people would be invited to join the Rebbe again for the 7th, and last, Hakofah.

In the past, I used to follow the Rebbe in the procession but, after having walked only a few yards, the boys would lean over and block up this narrow trail. No one was allowed to follow the Rebbe and block their view.

The Rebbe would proceed to the centre platform and the distinguished men would be left (sitting or lying) on the floor, only a few yards from the starting point.

I have spent more than one Hakofah lying on the floor clutching a Sefer Torah to my chest and in company with Rabbi Cohen from Jerusalem (Rabbi Akiva's father), where we had to lie impassively until the Rebbe had concluded the dancing and returned to the original platform.

Then, one year, my friend Rabbi Moishe Kotlarsky explained to me his new M.K. system. This entailed that I should grab a Sefer Torah, dash to the platform, even before the Rebbe had started to move. I would then be the first upon this new superstructure in the centre of the Shool. Three comfortable, posh seats had already been prepared for our convenience. These happened to be upturned crates, and there I sat together with Zalmon Gurary waiting for the Rebbe to join us. Most of the boys had kissed the Sefer Torah which I was carrying and all wished me "Hallevay iber a yahr" - "P.G. you should have this Mitzvah again next year."

The Rebbe's progress was slow because nearly everyone, on both sides of the trail, wished to kiss the Sefer Torah which the Rebbe was holding as well as to ask the Rebbe for a special Brocha. Rabbi Dovid Hickson told me that the Rebbe had once related, during a Sicho, that this was an "Ais Rotzain" - a propitious time - when it was good to ask the Rebbe for a blessing.

The Rebbe duly arrived onto the top Bimah and the Chazan sat on the third seat.

The Rebbe commenced the Nigun and started to dance - alone, with the Sefer Torah. The whole place erupted with the sound of so called singing, shrieking and screaming! And everyone was swaying and bobbing up and down in time to the rhythm.

It was impossible to hear one's own voice. On one occasion the Rebbe had asked everyone to whistle the tune. The boys placed their fingers into their mouths and nearly blew out their teeth. Each and everyone wanted to prove that he was the better "whistler" and the noise became so deafening it seemed to pierce our ear drums. It was sheer agony! After two or three minutes the Rebbe ended the Nigun and the Hakofus was concluded.

During each of the "middle" Hakofus, a Chazan would lead about a dozen men or so down the trail and to the centre.

The Rebbe started the Nigun and, after three minutes of dancing, the Hakofus was concluded

and all returned back to their places. Sometimes it became impossible for everyone to push his way through so he would hand over his Sefer Torah, whilst still in this corridor, to one of those who had been called up for the next round.

By the time that the last Hakofah was announced, there were quite a number of unattached men hovering about in this narrow corridor.

Zalmon Gurary and I were already escorted in our special reserved seats on the top Bimah and we had a good view of what happened next.

We saw the Rebbe moving along the trail, slowly but relentlessly. The exit was "closed" and I noticed that Nachman (Sudak) and Moishe (Kotlarsky) were trapped. They could not retreat backwards and had to come forwards.

Step by step the Rebbe walked inexorably forward along the narrowing corridor.

Moishe and Nachman were dodging and shuffling backwards. The Rebbe was almost at their heels when Moishe, in desperation and despair, mounted a wonderful acrobatic movement and twisted and swung underneath the bar of the lower parapet. He just disappeared into the whirlpool, or vortex, below. As Moishe said, using a golfing metaphor, "This was one under Par (bar) ".

Meanwhile, Nachman was not so lucky. He had been pressed forward and had now joined Zalmon and me on the top Bimah - and the Rebbe was very close behind. I was really curious and interested to discover how Nachman would escape.

But one should never say that Nachman was not tough. He gave a lunge, a spring forward, and like an Olympic steeplechase runner, he took a flying leap and vaulted **over** the parapet.

He did a perfect and graceful dive and landed spread eagled on top of the dense mass of solid boys who were swaying and lurching several feet below him.

The last I saw of him he was flat on his back being shoved and shunted along until a place could be found where he could stand on his own two feet.

The Rebbe then commenced the Nigun for the last Hakofah. After three minutes of hectic singing the Nigun was ended and the Hakofah concluded.

To everyone's surprise, the Rebbe started a different tune, and again, after three minutes, the Rebbe ended the singing. But the Rebbe was not finished even yet! He made no move to descend from the Bimah but, surprise! surprise! the Rebbe commenced Nigun number three which happened to be "Niet - Niet". Never in Lubavitcher history had three different tunes been sung at one Hakofah. The boys went wild and ecstatic and showed their appreciation by almost, literally, lifting the roof.

Simchas Torah, the last day of Yom Tov, was on the Tuesday and on that night the Rebbe

distributed Kos Shel Brocha after he had made Havdola.

Here is a photograph where one can see that I am holding my two little Kohenim (great grandsons) whilst the Rebbe is pouring generous portions of wine into Gavriel's becher. Moishe is looking on.



I had been invited to address the Kinus HaTorah on the morrow but, in view of the fact that we were leaving for home at 4.00 p.m., it was impossible to do so.

However, we did find the time and the opportunity to say farewell to the Rebbe when he emerged from 770 to be driven to the Ohel.

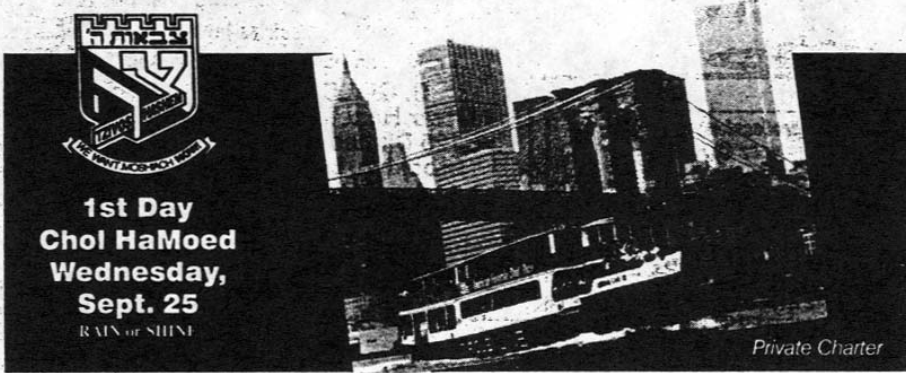
We stood in a line with some others and we each received a nickel and a Brocha for a good journey and a safe return to our homes. Myer Harlick suggested that, "You should come more often, Zalmon, you have plenty of good reasons, the Convention of the thousand Shluchim, Rosh Chodesh Kislev, Chanuka and so on." I replied, "I don't need any reasons, I only need a good excuse.

Twenty five members of our family bade us farewell when we left our apartment. It does not seem so very long ago that we had only one child - Avrohom - to see us off. A year or so afterwards he was joined by our daughter Hindy and Shmuel Lew.

כה

TZIVOS HASHEM'S

SUCCOS CRUISE



**1st Day
Chol HaMoed
Wednesday,
Sept. 25**
RAV OF SHINE

Private Charter

**FREE ADMISSION
TO
VICTORY
AMUSEMENT PARK**

Present your
Tzivov Hashem Succos Cruise
ticket for Free Admission to
Simcha Productions' Succos Fair
adjacent to the Circle Line

**Enjoy Succos
with a Circle Line Cruise
around New York**

- Refreshments Available ● Storyteller
- Live Music By Yossi Soibelman Orchestra
- Succah On Board ● Bippo The Clown
- Free Cruise Pushka for every child

A Succah for "Sail"

I expect he is useful and very competent, otherwise Rabbi Akiva would not permit it. Shmuel Yoseph is still in charge of the weekly publication "Le Chaim", in memory of Rebbetzen Chaya Mushka (Z.Tz.L.) He discontinued the "Thoughts of the Week" and amalgamated this into one large publication which contains words of Torah, stories, "Living with the Times", "Customs" and important information.

Here is a short article from one of these publications:

LIGHTS

The big ship was sailing calmly on the ocean. Suddenly, in the dark of the night, the ship commander saw lights coming straight at him. A collision was imminent.

Alarmed, he quickly radioed an order: "Change course, shift direction 30 degrees south!"

But the response came right back: "Ship master, you shift 30 degrees north!"

The Ship Commander was incensed by the impudence: "Do you know to whom you are talking? This is Captain MacArthur, Master of the Seas. You shift 30 degrees south

immediately!!"

The response came right back "I don't care who you are, you better shift 30 degrees north!"

The Captain shot right back furiously:

"How dare you! This is Captain MacArthur and this is a two-hundred-ton destroyer. Get out of the way for your own safety immediately!"

And the response came right back: "I don't care who you are or what you are driving, THIS IS A LIGHTHOUSE!"

Life is full of variables, but things remain constant and stationary. Often, we are in the dark and cannot distinguish between one and the other. We become so fixed on ourselves, and on the fleeting and the temporary, that we go full steam ahead and expect everything else to move out of our way.

We may not realise it, but we are on a collision course with Torah, standards, morals and tradition we expect them to change rather than change ourselves.

Torah and Jewish tradition are a beacon of light, to give us guidance and direction. Some things in life, like fashion and fads, are always changing, but Torah and mitzvos are constant, giving us stability and permanence for our own good and safety.

by Rabbi Israel Rubin - director of Chabad of the Capital District, Albany, N.Y.

The Rebbe has indicated to me in the past that it would be a "good thing" if I included a Sicho of the Rebbe in my "Encounter".

The following was published by "Sichos in English" (Elan Grossman, Editor), Lubavitch House, Manchester.

**The Exodus: An Experience of the
Present as Well as the Past**

*Adapted from Sichos Yomim Rishonim Shel Pesach, 5732 and
Likutei Sichos, Vol. V, Yud Tes Kislev Purim 5727*

Reliving, not only Remembering Between "forefathers ate in the land of Egypt"

Rather than a mere commemoration of past history, a Jewish holiday is an event to be personally experienced and relived, with a contemporary message for each Jew in every time and place. This concept is particularly true in regard to Pesach as our Sages declared, "In every generation, a person is obligated to regard himself as if he personally left Egypt." In this context, the Pesach Seder and its narratives and customs serve as an opportunity for every individual to experience an exodus from his personal "house of bondage."

We express this concept at the beginning of the Seder by preceding the recitation of the story of the exodus with the declaration, Hei Lachma Anya – "This is the bread of affliction." In his Shulchan Aruch, the Alter Rebbe notes, 'Those who are precise take care to say K'ha Lachma or Ha K'lachma (This is like the bread of affliction)' since [the matzah we are eating] is not the actual bread our forefathers ate." In his text of the Haggadah, however, the Alter Rebbe chooses the expression, Hei Lachma Anya, "This is the bread...", to emphasize that the Seder is intended to move each of us to the point where we feel ourselves as actually leaving slavery and view the matzah before us as "the bread of affliction that our forefathers ate in the land of Egypt."

"In every generation, a person is obligated to see himself as if he left the land of Egypt"

Redemption can be a real, living experience for us, despite the fact that we have neither seen Egypt, nor experienced actual slavery. For, as Chassidus explains, Egypt is not just a geographical location but a state of mind. The Hebrew, Mitzrayim, "Egypt," is related to the word Maytzorim, meaning boundaries and limitations. Our personal exodus from Egypt involves self-transcendence, going beyond our natural limitations.

We each possess a soul, a spark of G-d, which is infinite and unbounded as is G-d Himself. In a personal sense, Egypt refers to those influences and forces which confine and limit this spiritual potential.

To emphasize that the exodus from Egypt is an ongoing experience, the Alter Rebbe omitted the passage, Chasal Siddur Pesach, 'The Seder of Pesach has been concluded,' from his text of the Haggadah.' And to communicate the constant relevance of the exodus, we recall the redemption from Egypt in our daily prayers,' both morning and evening.

**The Education of Jewish Children:
Then and Now**

Adapted From Likutei Sichos, Vol I, Parshas Shmos, Vol VI, Parshas Shmos

"And when your child will ask you"

The Torah associates the commemoration of the exodus from Egypt with Jewish children. This is highlighted by the manner in which it communicates the commandment to retell and relive the story of the Exodus, "And you shall tell your son on that day...." Similarly, the Talmud elaborates on how our Sages incorporated many customs into the Seder to arouse and to maintain the interest of young children.

Metaphorically, there is a connection between children and Pesach, for Pesach represents the birth of our people, the days of our nation's youth. Similarly, children played a significant role in the history of the Egyptian exile. One of the most fundamental elements of the Egyptian oppression was Pharaoh's decree "every son that is born, you shall cast into the river."

Determining Our Priorities

By interpreting this decree in an allegorical sense, its significance can be extended and made relevant to our present circumstances. That decree called for the physical death of the Jewish children, but it can also refer to the spiritual death of Jewish youth. The Nile, the source of Egypt's wealth and prosperity, was worshipped by the Egyptians as a god. Throwing a child into "the Nile" meant immersing him in the ways of Egypt. There he is left to drown spiritually, to be totally submerged in that culture and life-style from infancy on.

How often do we see this approach followed in our own time? How many parents are there to whom "the Nile" appears to be the source of prosperity, the only means by which their child can achieve a "good life"? Career goals are set from the cradle. From the moment a child is born, his parents are preoccupied with his material well-being. Should not the same concern be shown for his spiritual future?

There is a twofold dimension to this mistake in establishing one's priorities. Firstly, the proper emphasis is not given to the child's spiritual potential. Furthermore, this approach cannot even guarantee material success. A Jew cannot prosper unless G-d wills it. Our people's fortune is determined by a different process than that which controls the fate of other nations. G-d controls the future of other peoples through the medium of the natural order. On the other hand, the success of our people is not a natural phenomenon and is dependent directly on our relationship with G-d.

Looking Upward for Our Sustenance

This contrast can be illustrated by a comparison between the land of Egypt and Eretz Yisrael. Both are primarily agricultural countries. There is, however, a fundamental difference between them. Egypt is sustained by the Nile river. Each year at a particular time, the Nile rises and waters the land. On the surface, no G-dly influence is seen and the natural order appears to control the water supply. Eretz Ytsrael, by contrast, has no major river and must depend on rain.

The Midrash explains that this was intended so that "the eyes of all would look upward" for rain. In this manner we become conscious of "He who holds the key to rain". Even when we have ploughed, sown, and completed all the work necessary to bring a successful crop, our work depends on G-d's blessings. Thus, a Jew comes to realize that he cannot possess a "natural, reliable" means of sustenance. In a material, as well as a spiritual sense, Torah is our source of life.

"They recognized Him first"

Just as the oppression of the Jewish people centered on the fate of their children, so too, children are associated with the concept of redemption. Our Sages relate, "Because of the merit of the righteous, women of that generation, our forefathers were redeemed from Egypt." Despite Pharaoh's decree, the Jewish women responded with self-sacrifice, bearing their children whom they hid from the Egyptians and educated as Jews despite the dangers involved.

This upbringing endowed these children with unique sensitivity. After experiencing G-d's

miraculous providence during the time He protected them in exile, at the splitting of the Red Sea, it was these same children who “recognized Him first”. Moshe, Aharon, Yehoshua, all the elders, and the entire Jewish people were present – yet these children recognized G-d before them all.

In this context as well, there are parallels at present. In the very near future, we will merit the fulfillment of the prophecy wonders with the coming of Mashiach. In anticipation of that event, we must raise our children to serve as "the vanguard of the Redemption", imbuing them with the yearning for and knowledge of the Redemption.

And in the very near future, "they will recognize Him first", we will proceed "with our youth and with our elders..., with our sons and with our daughters" to greet Mashiach. May this take place in the immediate future.

We Celebrate a Unique Occasion

Menachem Yunick married Golda Rivka (Lew), a granddaughter, and he received the call to be Spiritual Head of the Croydon Synagogue in south London. Many years ago, this was a flourishing and thriving congregation with as many as eight hundred members.

Sadly, over the years, members had moved away from that area and the Shool was left in a backwater.

There are plans to erect a new edifice in the district where most of the Jewish people now reside. Meanwhile, there are still quite a number of Jewish families living in the vicinity of this (old) Shool.

It has been a great challenge for Menachem, and for Golda Rivka too, and they have made a great impact on the local population.

We received an invitation to attend the Synagogue on the 8th of Adar I to be present when Menachem would be inducted as Rav of the Shool by the Av Bess Din of the Federation of Synagogues.

Max happened to be in London - Max always seems to intrude himself into my stories - and had arranged to meet a new client. They became friendly and Max discovered that this gentleman was Jewish and also dwelt in Croydon. Max intimated that he had received an invitation to visit the Croydon Shool to attend the induction of their new Rabbi. Max's client declared that he was the person who had sent out the invitations.

Roselyn and I attended the Induction. Max and Dovid were also present as were Menachem's parents, Rabbi and Mrs. Beryl Yunik from New York, who came over for a couple of days, and of course, Hindy and Shmuel and all the Lews who were then in England.

I have known Menachem for many years. When he was a young lad he was very friendly with our Rebbetzen - Chaya Mushka (Z.Tz.L.) and was often in her home. He did not seem to me to be a likely candidate as a Minister in an English Synagogue.

But when he stood up in the pulpit in front of the Oran HaKodesh, with over three hundred people present, including local dignitaries like the Mayor, Chief of Police, and so forth, I became filled with admiration and amazement.

His address of acceptance was a masterpiece of oratory. He was dignified and self assured - he was never stuck for a word. With confident posture he delivered his speech which flowed with well chosen and meaningful words, phrases and sentences. I could hardly believe that this self-composed and courtly rabbi was our Menachem from 770.

He has created a wonderful impression and everyone in Croydon thinks the world of him - and of Golda Rivka and of baby Yoseph Yitzchok. They are loved and esteemed and I can foresee a bright future for them, P.G. They have a lovely modern home and they are very happy.

They are also performing real Lubavitch work in addition to Shool work and the Chayder for children. For example, on Purim, they held a Seuda for about sixty people, and on Pesach, twenty were invited for their Seder. For many it was their first Pesach experience.

During Chanukah, Menachem affixed to his car a Menorah - on the next page is a photograph and here is an article from the local newspaper.

Menachem has certainly shown the way as a "trail-blazer" - that there is plenty of scope in the Ministry in England for good Lubavitcher Rabbonim.

Mendie (Lew), who is presently in Minnesota, U.S.A., has followed Menachem's example and has received a call from a Synagogue not far from Manchester.

Dovid (Jaffe) is in the process of opening a Lubavitch Chabad House



A good move: Rabbi Menachem with wife Goldie and son Yosef (Photo:912634)

Rabbi helps lift community spirit

FIVE YEARS in the spiritual wilderness for Croydon's Jewish community finally came to an end six months ago.

And in the short time since Rabbi Menachem Mendel, 25, took up his new post he has been convinced that leaving New York for Croydon was the right move.

"The first thing I did was to go out and speak to people, to reach out to

them and meet them in their own homes," said Rabbi Menachem in the Elmwood Road, Broad Green, synagogue.

Keen to quickly re-establish a sense of community among the town's Jewish population, he started Hebrew classes for children, set up adult study and discussion groups and has become a well-known face on his regular hospital visits.

"Coming to Croydon was a step in the right direction. The people here are very friendly and that has helped me feel at home," said Rabbi Menachem.

"They want to learn and we at the synagogue want to help them."

Married to north Londoner Goldie, the couple met when she was taking a teacher's degree in New York. They were wed in London and have a 17-month-old son, Yosef.

in south Manchester.

I am very pleased that some of our grandchildren' are returning to England - I wonder who will be next?



Rabbi Menachim and his much-talked about Menorah car.

Rabbi's car enlightens the curious

HEADS have been turning with amazement as a four foot high wooden candlestick — or Menorah as it's known — has toured Croydon aloft a Ford Orion.

The car belongs to Croydon's Rabbi Menachem Mendel, 25, and the Menorah commemorates the eight-day Jewish Festival of Lights, or Chanukah, which ended on Monday.

It marks a 2,100-year-old Jewish military victory, ending in the re-dedication of the sanctuary in Jerusalem and the re-lighting of the Menorah with a day's supply of olive oil which miraculously burned for eight days.

Rabbi Mendel said of the Menorah: "Lots of people stopped me to talk about it, and it made many people smile."

It also, he said, boosted the borough's 500-strong Jewish community who were spurred with pride for their religious festivals.

He added: "The Menorah is a symbol of religious freedom for all."

Rabbi Yossi Chazan

Rabbi Chazan had been working in Manchester for a number of years for Rabbi Farro's organisation. He had not been happy for some time. I think he felt inhibited and constrained.

However, by mutual consent, they parted company. Avrohom arranged that Yossi should give a weekly lecture, at Lubavitch, every Shabbos after Mincha for about an hour.

This had a tremendous impact on his career. He proved exceptionally successful. He is a brilliant speaker and, during the course of one lecture, he could quote - chapter and verse and page - from every section of the Mishnayos, every Mesechta of the Gemorra, the Tossefos, Rambam, Ramban, the Zohar and from dozens of books of which I have never even heard. He also understood the problems of so called "Modern Society".

The result of all this was that our place was always overcrowded - 200 men and women was our limit, physically, and Yossi's reputation rapidly spread throughout the community.

In the course of time, Yossi Chazan was engaged as the Rabbi and Minister of the Holy Law Synagogue - the largest Shool in Manchester with well over a thousand members.

In due course, he was inducted into office by the Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks. The occasion was a "Kiddush Lubavitch". The Shool was packed out - there was not one vacant seat - and every Rabbi and all the Presidents of the other Shools and organisations were present.

The headlines in the local Jewish Press screamed - "My Debt to Lubavitch, by new Rav Yossi". The article, accompanied by three photographs, continued - "The Rabbi of Manchester's largest Synagogue acknowledged the debt he owed to the Lubavitcher Rebbe and thanked the Rebbe for his guidance and inspiration."

Yossi speaks regularly and often at our Lubavitch functions.

At the Siyum of the Sefer Torah in memory of our Rebbetzen, Chaya Mushka (Z.Tz.L.), which had been commissioned to replace the one that had been destroyed in our tragic fire, Yossi reminded us of the fact that the first Luchos (Tablets) which HaShem gave us were destroyed, but the second ones prevailed - and will endure for ever - and so will this Sefer Torah.

Chanukah

The Rebbe had indicated that it was essential that we should give to each and every one of our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren "Chanukah Gelt", preferably on the night of the fifth "light".

Thirty years ago we had two "customers", Avrohom and Hindy. Today, Thank G-d, we had to provide for fifty one altogether, and, if it pleases HaShem, we shall have many more "clients" next year K.A.H.

This year, arrangements were made to receive by satellite the programme that was being relayed from 770 and from countries around the world. Herewith is a copy of the circular which advertised the Manchester Link-up. You will notice a picture of a giant dish on their leaflet. A similar contraption was placed in our Lubavitch car park to track the satellite on its course.

LUBAVITCH MANCHESTER CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO יג

A UNIQUE EVENT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

INTER-CONTINENTAL SATELLITE
CHANUKAH LINK UP

LONDON * JERUSALEM * NEW YORK * MOSCOW * PARIS
* MADRID * SYDNEY * ROME * JOHANNESBURG *

FEATURING A LIVE ADDRESS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE SHLITA.

SUNDAY, 1st DECEMBER, 1991
from 8.00 p.m.

LUBAVITCH HOUSE
62 SINGLETON ROAD, SALFORD,
MANCHESTER M7 0LU

In Lubavitch House, provision was made for the ladies and girls to view the video downstairs in the "Zalmon Jaffe" Hall where three T.V. sets were spread in front of the audience.

Upstairs were also placed three T.V. sets, and this area was reserved for the men and boys. Both halls were crowded out.

Jerry Levene and Shmuel Kaplan gave a very professional commentary and explained in detail some of the events which were shown on the video. This very much enhanced the proceedings and increased our enjoyment. It was a well produced and directed video.

It was pouring with rain at Crown Heights. From 770 we "travelled" to Moscow where Beryl Lazar was in charge. Ten thousand Jewish people were assembled in the Palace of Congress at the Kremlin. It cost less than one thousand dollars to hire this huge ex-Communist auditorium. We also heard some of the children from Chernobyl giving thanks to the Rebbe for his intervention and saving their lives.

From Moscow we visited Paris where 25,000 people were gathered, also in the pouring rain, to watch Shmuel Azimov lighting the 25 foot high Menorah near the Eiffel Tower.

From there we called in at Jerusalem where Chief Rabbi Mordecai Eliyohu, the Israeli, Sefardi Chief Rabbi, was waiting for us at the Western Wall. It was not just pouring with rain in Jerusalem, there was a cloudburst and a deluge, maybe it was a hurricane and a tempest. All we could see (and hear) was the Chief Rabbi standing precariously at the Western Wall whilst someone held a very large umbrella over his head which constantly seemed to be on the verge of blowing away (the umbrella, not the Chief Rabbi's head).

We then travelled to the other side of the world - to Melbourne, Australia, where our friend Yossi Gutnick was in charge of the proceedings. There was a message of congratulations and support from the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, who reminded us that we were celebrating a very important event which took place 2,150 years ago.

Next on the list was Hong Kong where Mordechai Atzon had invited about one hundred people to the posh Mandarin Hotel. We saw a beautifully carved metal Menorah made in the old Chinese tradition, in the shape of lions. A very solid piece of exquisite metal.

The cameras were constantly switching the location from country to country so that we were enabled to see the lighting of the candles and hear the recitation of the twelve verses, everywhere simultaneously.

Young Mendie Kotlarsky recited the last verse at 770. The Rebbe was conducting the singing of the song - "Hanayrus Hallolu" after the kindling of the lights.

The Rebbe said, amongst other things:

When a Jewish child is given a drink of water, he, or she, will make a blessing and thank G-d for this water and for all creation and created things. He, or she, will drink the water in order to

be healthy and to live a full life.

An appropriate Brocha should be made for different things. Every child will realise that HaShem created these things and will tell his teacher and parents.

G-d said, "Let there be light" - and there was light. It was the same with all of the Ten Sayings.

A Brocha is a connection between the Creator and the created. G-d gives energy - and peace in the world.

You should light Friday night candles - as well as Chanukah lights.

Learn Torah which teaches which Brocha to make. G-d created water - and bread, everything - all of which should be used properly.

It is dark at night, but when the candles are lit on Chanukah, and on Shabbos, the world becomes brighter and better. Every day of Chanuka we increase the light. Man also grows every year, spiritually as well. Every Jewish home should have this Mitzvah and light up the outside - even the street.

By satellite we can see the Menorahs being lit at the same time all over the world, even by a little child, because it requires no special talent to light a candle.

G-d showed us miracles in the days of Chanukah. A certain, wicked nation wished to prevent us studying and learning the Torah. Historically, nations have always been against the Jews lighting candles and studying Torah.

So every year we re-dedicate ourselves for the preparation of the Third Bais HaMikdosh, let it be soon, in our time.

In Manchester, we always light our giant Menorah in public, in the centre of the city, right opposite to the Town Hall, which at that time of the year was adorned with decorations in honour of the national holidays.

The following were all friends of my son, Avrohom, who was in charge. These were keen supporters of Lubavitch, Manchester, and took an active part in the proceedings:

Rabbi Portnoy, the Rabbi of Hale, delivered words of Torah.

Albert Dowek, the chairman of the Friends of Lubavitch was hoisted up about twenty feet by a "cherry picker" to light the candles.

Barry Parker, a noted industrialist, who gave spiritual support to Albert.

Chaim Newman sang the Brochus. Doughnuts were also in plentiful supply.

Rabbi Portnoy related the story of the occasion when Avner (Haffner) who had served as the Israeli Ambassador to the "Court of St. James" (Great Britain) went to visit the Rebbe. Avner alluded to a candle which was lying on a table nearby. The Rebbe indicated that it was only a lump of wax and a piece of wick - inanimate. Only if and when a fire is put to it, will it become a candle, a source of heat, light and other possibilities.

On January 10th, the Jewish Telegraph reported upon a meeting of the local Jewish Representative Council. It stated:

GIANT MENORAH LIGHTS FUSE OF CONTROVERSY

Lubavitch's giant menorah at Albert Square once again created controversy at Sunday's Rep Council meeting.

President Joe Nathan told the meeting: "I am yet to be convinced that this is an effective public relations exercise or that it brings in uncommitted Jews. Lubavitch should review it."

A much stronger attack on the menorah came from delegate Rev Chaim Heilpern who regretted that Mr. Nathan had been "seduced by Lubavitch to be present at the lighting of the pseudo-menorah."

It is no mitzvah", he added, "and all the more abhorrent because of the backdrop of Father Xmas." He hoped that Mr. Nathan would not go there again.

But delegate Saul Wachtel thought it was wrong of Mr. Nathan to criticize Lubavitch. "What are we ashamed of?" he asked. "Those who are ashamed, shame on them. It is a direct attempt to tell non-Jews about our festivals."

On the following Friday, January 17th, the Editor had published my letter in defence of the Menorah. It also presented me with an excellent opportunity to publicise the recent Lubavitch World Wide Satellite Link-up.

This was my reply:

CHANUCAH AND XMAS

During the festival of Chanukah, Lubavitch held a worldwide hook-up by satellite.

We were shown the menorah being lit at the Lubavitch headquarters in Crown Heights, Brooklyn. From there we "travelled" to the Champs Elysee, Paris, where 25,000 people watched the menorah lighting.

We "visited" the White House, Washington; the Western Wall; Hong Kong; Melbourne, Australia; London and finally Moscow, where over 10,000 Jews had assembled in the Palace of Congress in the Kremlin.

This was confirmed in an article in the Jerusalem Post (December 4) which also quoted that "hundreds of younger members of the audience, including many who had attended the Chabad/Lubavitch summer camps around the Soviet Union, rushed to the stage and danced together with the Chabad leaders".

So, Joe Nathan, you were in good company!

As for Rev Chaim Heilpern, he should be well aware that the din states quite specifically and categorically that the menorah must be lit near the window, even outside, so that the public domain should be flooded with light.

Incidentally, Chaim would really be amazed to learn that although most of the Jewish people in Manchester already knew about Xmas, comparatively few realised that we were celebrating Chanukah.

Zalmon Jaffe

On the 15th of MarCheshvan, our granddaughter Leah (Cohen) presented us with another great grandson (Kain Yirbu). She has now K.A.H. (Nisht) four boys and one girl, and Avrohom and Susan have (Nisht) eight grandsons and one granddaughter.

Hindy and Shmuel have almost the opposite - (Nisht) seven granddaughters and two grandsons. This includes Yossi and Shternie's new baby girl, Channah. On May 3rd, Mendie Lew's wife, Rivka, presented Hindy and Shmuel with granddaughter Channah, number eight. I had promised to attend the Bris if Yossi's baby was a boy. So, although I saved time and money, I lost a great Mitzvah.

Leah's baby son was yellow and did not have his Bris until he was nearly five weeks "old". What do they do about the Bris of Jewish Chinese babies who are permanently yellow?

Avrohom and I had already been honoured with the notable Mitzvah of being Sandik to one of Leah's baby boys, so we were not permitted to act in that capacity again (only once, in one family, is the law).

Leah offered the Mitzvah to her other Zaidie - Sidney.

Sidney waited for three weeks then had to leave for Israel. Leah then informed Shmuel (her uncle) that he was now first reserve to hold the baby.

Shmuel was lucky because if the Bris would have been postponed for a further few days it would have given Sidney the chance to be present. And there would have been two candidates for this one position.

I had promised to provide all my (Nisht) eleven grandsons with a set of Rashi's Tefillin and these had to be written by the Rebbe's scribe, Henig of Jerusalem.

There was now just one pair outstanding - for Moishe (Lew) aged 3½ years. As I was flying to

Israel in a couple of weeks, I had arranged with Rabbi Henig that the set would be ready for collection when I visited Jerusalem.

He gave me his address, a huge block of flats with no numbers thereon. He advised me to take a taxi, advise him of what time, approximately, that I would arrive, then stand in the huge courtyard and shout "HENIG", and he would come out to me.

I stood there, no one was about, it was so very still and quiet. I expanded my chest and gave a BELLOW - a loud roar of HENIG, and when the echo had died away, there appeared - like a genie - Henig, by my side - like magic.

Incidentally, I have promised to buy Tefillin for those of my great grandsons whose Bar Mitzvah I will be privileged and spared by HaShem to attend.

30th Camp Gan Yisroel Reunion

The 30th Camp Gan Yisroel Reunion was held in Manchester at the end of December.

Over 150 boys attended and they came from London, Leeds, Glasgow as well as from the Salford and Manchester area.

Obviously, all these boys had to have somewhere to sleep. Leah accepted a number of them. To ensure that all would fit into her house she followed the usual Lubavitch custom of placing mattresses on the floor in every conceivable space.

This meant that Moishe (aged 5) had also to sleep on a mattress - on the floor. He refused, made a terrible fuss and would not give up his bed. Leah had a brainwave. She placed a play-tent over his mattress and played the game of "camping out". Moishe was delighted.

It was good to see Chezky, the son of my nephew Rabbi Zallie Unsdorfer, present. He is a great fan of mine and he phones me regularly before every Yom Tov to enquire about the health of (Auntie) Roselyn and me, and to wish us both a happy Yom Tov. It is very thoughtful and considerate of him and it gives us much pleasure.

I was in charge of the quiz and I had arranged some difficult - some easy - and some tricky, questions.

I commenced with my late father's (O.H.) favourite one. If two birds are on a tree and a farmer shot one, then how many birds were left on the tree? Most of the two teams answered "one" - it is obvious and logical. But common sense comes along and points out that if one bird is shot, then the other will fly away, so no birds would be left on the tree.

This little exercise explains the difference between those people who study from books - and are inflexible - two birds - one killed - leaves one. The other type uses common sense and realises that the farmer's gun will make a loud report and so the other bird will fly away.

I asked whether Shavuot always falls on the 6th day of Sivan. All answered, "Yes". I explained that each Jewish person has to count for himself the fifty days from Pesach to Shavuot. But when one had to cross the International Date Line, then one loses or gains a day, depending on which direction one is travelling. Therefore, in those circumstances, Shavuot could be on the 5th or the 7th of Sivan.

On Saturday night we held a Grand Banquet (anyway, that is what it was called) and Siyum.

Mottie, the eldest son of Rabbi Yitzchok Klyne (our Mashpia) won the first prize. He knew, by heart, five hundred chapters (Perakim) of Mishnayus. The second prize winner had learnt seven Mesechtas of Gemmora, and the third about 250 Perakim of Mishnayus.

Moishe Shmukler of California had invited me to be in charge of the Siyum. Yehoshua Smackler was head leader. The chief organisers were Mordecai Uhrmacher and Shmuel Yoseph Davidson.

Words of Torah were given by Danny Bergson of Manchester, Zalmon Lewis from London and Mendel Angialphy of Leeds.

The Ladies' Catering Committee (who provided the banquet) consisted of Ruth Simons, Susan Jaffe, Leah Cohen (nee Jaffe), Hedella Glickman, Jean Uhrmacher, Minnie Gold, Channah Radnor and Mister Shalom Simon (the caterer).

My son, Rabbi Avrohom, presented the prizes and the Certificates of Merit.

Dayan Krausz, Av of the Manchester Bess Din, addressed the boys. Amongst the points made were: "One of the main guidelines of Lubavitch was to bring children closer to Judaism. We learn in the Torah that Chanoch studied at home all day long. HaShem told him that if he wanted to be a Tzaddik, and to spend all his time in learning, and doing nothing else, then he should come up to Me (HaShem). That is why it states that Chanoch did not die but the A'mighty took him."

Yaakov, after many trials and tribulations, desired to sit and relax at home. HaShem told him to get out and to spread Yiddishkeit.

Reuben put Yoseph into a pit to save him from being killed by his brothers. When Reuben returned to the pit in order to rescue Yoseph he gave a scream, "The child is not there."

Yoseph had been sold whilst Reuben was away doing Tshuva (repentance, for having sinned against his father, Yaakov). So, whilst one is busy at home praying and learning - "The youth is lost."

Here is a photograph of a section of the top table.

From left to right:



Rabbi Yitzchok Klyne
Rabbi Sender Liberov
Rabbi Avrohom Jaffe
Zalmon Jaffe.

In front of us on the table are some of the prizes awarded.

A Very Worrying Time

On Tuesday morning, 28th Adar Rishon, March 3rd 1992, we all experienced some moments of severe shock and anguish when we heard the distressing news that the Rebbe had suffered a mild stroke.

Fortunately, this was tempered by the reassuring message, which we received at the same time, to the effect that the Rebbe would P.G. make a very quick and complete recovery. This certainly relieved our anxiety and apprehension very much.

Shortly afterwards, we received confirmation by Fax and I am appending herewith copies of the first two messages sent from 770.

FROM: Shluchim Office Fax: (718) 221.0985

To: Chabad Lubavitch

28 Adar I, 3732

The following statement was made by Dr. Ira Weiss of Chicago at 4:00 P.M. Tuesday March 3.

This is Dr. Ira Weiss, updating a report on the Lubavitcher Rebbe Shlita as of 4:00 P.M. Tuesday March the 3rd.

The Rebbe sustained a mild stroke while visiting the gravesite of his predecessor and father-in-law yesterday in the late afternoon. The Rebbe is presently resting in the attendance of his executive secretariat and his physicians at Lubavitch World Headquarters.

My colleagues and I have recommended complete rest for the Rebbe from his exhausting daily schedule. He is receiving the necessary medical care. His vital signs are stable Boruch Hashem.

I will periodically maintain an update of the Rebbe's medical progress.

Thank you.

[This message was directed to the press and the general public.]

An update on the progress of The Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson
8:30 P.M. Tuesday March 3, 1992
by Rabbi Yehuda Krinsky

The Rebbe Shlita continues to rest comfortably at his office at 770 Lubavitch World Headquarters. As reported earlier today by Dr. Ira Weiss, all his physicians have recommended complete rest for, the Rebbe. His vital signs continue to be stable. The Rebbe is not too keen on this enforced hiatus from his exhausting schedule.

The Rebbe was visited this afternoon by additional physicians and further diagnostic tests were made. The results of the tests and the new consultations confirm an excellent prognosis for a full recovery.

An increase by everyone in Torah, Teffilah and Tzedokah, will surely contribute to the hastening of the Rebbe's full and speedy recovery.

The Rebbe had refused to be taken to hospital and insisted upon going home. When he was asked whether he wished to go to 1304 President Street the Rebbe replied, "No, my home is 770, Eastern Parkway."

The Rebbe's personal doctor, Dr. Larry Resnick, was immediately on the scene and Dr. Ira Weiss arrived from Chicago within a few short hours.

I contacted Label's (Rabbi Groner) office and was told by Bengie Struks that Label was with the Rebbe together with the doctors who had ordered the Rebbe to take a complete rest from his exhausting work-load.

It is a peculiar fact that although everyone agrees that the Rebbe always worked too hard they still expected the Rebbe to attend to their own problems and queries straight away.

My granddaughter, Leah (Cohen) had been at 770, together with her daughter Soro and baby Sholom Ber, to spend a week at Crown Heights. For many weeks the Rebbe had been giving Sichos and dollars almost every evening. My niece, Malka (Edrei) from Kfar Chabad, informed me that in the period of twenty days which she had spent at 770 she had obtained dollars (and heard Sichos) on all except three days. She received in all \$36.

On the Sunday before that worrying Monday, Leah and her children went for dollars and it was 7 p.m. before she reached the Rebbe's side - and there were still many people waiting in the line.

This meant that the Rebbe was on his feet for over six hours, non-stop, greeting people and giving them dollars and blessings.

On the following day, Monday, the Rebbe visited the Ohel as usual and intended to remain there for about seven hours. He partook of no food - and drank just a cup of tea or coffee. Moreover, for the past thirty years since I have known the Rebbe, he has never had a holiday,

not even one day off work. It was no small wonder that he has now suffered some temporary reaction.

Thousands of people from all over the world were anxious to hear the latest reports from 770 and it was inevitable that the telephone became overloaded and overwhelmed by the sudden onrush of calls.

In order to cope with this heavy demand and emergency, two special, additional lines were installed which relayed a recorded message about the Rebbe's progress. These bulletins were updated every few hours during the first few days. The telephone numbers to call were: the area code plus 770-1 or 770-2.

On Wednesday we learnt that further hospital equipment had been installed inside the Rebbe's room and another couple of doctors were in attendance in addition to the Rebbe's own, personal consultants - Ira Weiss and Larry Resnick. They reported that the Rebbe had made significant improvement and was responding well to medication and treatment.

On Thursday we were told that the Rebbe was now sitting in his chair and there were excellent prospects for a complete and speedy recovery, P.G. The Rebbe was eating regular meals.

A call had gone out to all the local Kohanim of Crown Heights to attend the morning services at 770 and to take part in the "Communal" priestly blessings (Duchenning) afterwards. The Kohanim duchenned every morning at 770, especially for the sake of the Rebbe.

Tehillim (Psalms) were recited continuously all over the world. Our Yeshiva boys also held non-stop minyanim, from 8 a.m. onwards. I joined them on occasion.

On Friday the Rebbe had intimated that he would be blessed with a very quick and complete recovery accompanied by much Simcha, singing and dancing.

770 went wild with non-stop singing and dancing which continued until the time of Shabbos.

The boys of our Yeshiva followed suit but they needed extra spirits from a bottle which they asked me to supply.

Meanwhile, the Bulletin from 770 had recorded that the Rebbe gave a lovely smile, and when one of the doctors begged for a brocha for a certain matter, then the Rebbe listened to the story and gave him a blessing.

On Saturday night, very late, 12.45 after midnight, we learnt that the Rebbe had spent a comfortable and restful day and that the doctors were all very delighted with the Rebbe's progress and prospects.

On Sunday I spoke to Label direct - on the telephone. He was delighted that I had phoned and would give over my best wishes to the Rebbe. I indicated to Label that, as in all such cases, there were many rumours circulating concerning the condition of the Rebbe - some very

optimistic and others leaning to the extreme opposite.

Label reiterated that medical bulletins which were issued were straightforward and factual. And furthermore, Label himself could easily see that the Rebbe was much more alert and was attending to all urgent matters, such as queries about Shiduchim, with advice and blessings.

On Sunday night, in conjunction with all Lubavitcher Organizations world wide, we also held a "Torah Avoda and Gemillas Chassodim" session with words of Torah, Service and Tzedoka. A lottery was held to send a representative to 770 on our behalf to convey our good wishes and apprehensions to the Rebbe. Rabbi Dovid Schurder won the "Goral" and he was requested to visit the Ohel and pray - at that holy ground - on our behalf for the Rebbe's speedy recovery.

Tehillim was being recited, as hitherto, everywhere, even in non-Lubavitch Shools, continuously. The children in most of the Jewish schools also recited Tehillim for the sake of the Rebbe.

Dr. Larry Resnick presented the medical bulletin on Sunday evening at 8.40 p.m. He indicated that, yes - the Rebbe had suffered a mild stroke but was getting better - each day a little better than the day before.

The Rebbe was fully aware of everything that was going on and we were all looking forward to a speedy recovery. He was gaining strength and his speech was better.

"And finally", said Dr. Resnick, "the Rebbe was making a much quicker recovery than the average person with this kind of stroke."

It had been announced that a new Sefer Torah was being written for the sake of the Rebbe. All friends were invited to purchase one or more letters. The writing commenced on Sunday at 7 p.m. and 300,000 people were expected to participate. It was expected to be completed by Yud Aleph Nissan (the Rebbe's ninetieth birthday).

We were informed that seven thousand people were present at the Kottel - the Western Wall in Jerusalem - to daven and say Tehillim for the Rebbe.

We also heard that there had been a substantial improvement in the Rebbe's condition during the past 24 hours.

The bulletin issued on Monday at 3 p.m. stated: "A distinguished neurologist had been called in to examine the Rebbe. He reported that he was amazed at the Rebbe's progress. It was still less than seven days since the Rebbe became unwell and, in most of these cases, progress is very much slower. There was no doubt in his mind that the Rebbe would attain a complete recovery much sooner than expected. He was so impressed and overwhelmed by what he had seen that he insisted that his teacher and mentor from Paris should fly over to New York to examine the Rebbe. Meanwhile, Label reported the Rebbe going through the correspondence and replying to enquiries.

Tuesday's bulletin stated that this day was the third of the week, which the Torah described as

twice as good (Ki Tov is mentioned twice). So we have seen double improvement in the condition of the Rebbe - very rapid progress has been made. The Rebbe was in an excellent mood and was already answering more enquiries.

Our representative, Dovid Schurder, who won the lottery as mentioned above, arrived at J.F. Kennedy at about 4.30 p.m. Sholom Weiss's son, Dov Ber, met him at the airport with a hired car and they drove straight to the cemetery and to the site of the Ohel. Surprisingly, no one else was present and Dovid settled down to fulfil his Shelichus (mission) - to pray at this holy spot, on behalf of all Manchester Lubavitchers, for the health of their Rebbe.

It was about 6 p.m. when he had completed his assignment and it was decided that Dov Ber should drive him to 770. They got as far as the cemetery gates but could get no farther because the gates were locked. There was no way out. Fortunately, there was a mobile phone in this car so they phoned to Yudel Krinsky's son who advised them to wait around because there was a constant patrol of the area by guards. Within fifteen minutes a patrolman did arrive and opened up the gates for them to leave.

As a joke I asked some friends why they lock the gates? Those inside cannot leave and the people outside do not wish to go in! Yisroel Brown intimated that there were many people dying to get into the cemetery.

After visiting 770, Dovid Schurder caught the next plane home after spending just a few hours in the U.S.A.

The latest bulletin, on Wednesday, confirmed that the Rebbe was rapidly improving. Label requested that Tehillim should be recited continuously - everywhere, as hitherto, until the Rebbe was completely cured. Tehillim was being said in 770 non-stop - with a new Minyan commencing every 1 ½ hours.

Meanwhile, the neurologist mentioned above, and by repute the greatest in the world, had flown in from Paris to examine the Rebbe. He confirmed what all the doctors had asserted. He was amazed at the Rebbe's wonderful progress in such a short time, and confided that, if he would not have seen this with his own eyes, he would not have believed it to have been possible, and we could expect a complete recovery, P.G., very soon.

On the following Sunday, Dr. Ira Weiss issued the medical bulletin. He explained that he had spent the past two days at his home in Chicago. On his return to 770 he could see a significant improvement in the Rebbe's condition. He looked better and stronger, which boded well for the future. He concluded by informing us that these medical bulletins would be issued, from now on, only once a week.

We now heard that on Shabbos the Rebbe stood up and davened all the services in his own room whilst the door was left ajar so that he could listen to the Krias HaTorah which was being recited in the hallway just outside his room.

I spoke to Label again on Monday and conveyed to him a report of the magnificent occasion,

yesterday, when Menachem Yunik, my grandson-in-law, was inducted as the Rabbi of the Croydon Shool in London. I also had a petition to ask the Rebbe. My sister, Rose Goldfield in Jerusalem, was to undergo an operation and she begged me to ask the Rebbe for a blessing for a complete and speedy recovery.

I indicated to Label that I did not wish to worry or bother the Rebbe at this time, but Label confirmed that as the Rebbe was already attending to all these queries and problems he would do his utmost to bring this matter to the attention of the Rebbe.

Label then emphasised that Tehillim should be recited as hitherto, continuously, until that special day arrived when the Rebbe would leave his room and celebrate a Farbraingen together with us.

Harry Johnson

Twenty two years ago, Harry Johnson, then a young man, was a humble employee of ours at Lubavitch House, Manchester. He was not Jewish.

In the course of time, he founded his own construction and building company, and has now achieved the status of a local magnate.

After our fire, he rebuilt and refurbished our premises and has completed many building projects for local Jewish Organisations.

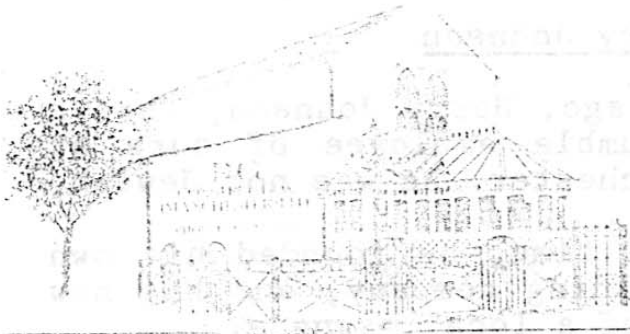
He has been very helpful and has always kept close to us and to Lubavitch.

At Golda and Avremel's wedding, he danced all night, non-stop - with the "boys" of course - and he later confided to me that, "It was great! - the greatest night I have ever spent in my life."

When the Rebbe became unwell, not only Jews - men, women and children everywhere prayed for the quick recovery of the Rebbe, but many non-Jewish people prayed too, including "Harry the Builder".

He forwarded the following letter to Avrohom.

(see foolowing page)



R&G
CONSTRUCTION
(MANCHESTER) LTD.

PHOENIX BUILDINGS
HEYWOOD ROAD, PRESTWICH
MANCHESTER M25 5FN
TEL: 061-773 7867/1558
FAX: 061-773 8617

HJ/JV.LUBA.LET Pg3

10th March, 1992

Rabbi Jaffe
Lubavitch House
62 Singleton Road
Salford
Manchester 7

Dear Avrohom,

This is just a note to say that I wish The Rebbe a speedy and full recovery from his recent illness, being only an honorary member of Lubavitch (albeit twenty-two years service) I don't know how protocol dictates me expressing my concern other than to state that I will pray for his full and complete recovery, please pass on my good wishes.

Regards,

HARRY JOHNSTON
CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING DIRECTOR



Specialising in Newbuild, Design and Build and Refurbishment Contracts
DIRECTORS: H. JOHNSTON, B. WARD.

VAT No. 149 7963 09
Registered in England No. 1098652

Avrohom's Mini Encounter & Other Stories

Only a couple of weeks before the Rebbe became unwell, Avrohom and Susan together with Dina, had the good fortune to meet the Rebbe at a Dollars Distribution and Brochus.

The Rebbe handed to Avrohom also three dollar bills "For your father". Avrohom departed but the Rebbe called him back and presented him with another three dollars "For your mother" plus another one for her and a further one "For your father."

When Avrohom handed over to me the four dollar bills from the Rebbe I was absolutely thrilled and delighted, but Roselyn was "right over the moon" with elation and delight.

When Miss Chavie Farro brought me the dollar from the Rebbe the week before, then Roselyn did share my Simcha, but to receive two rations in one week for herself alone was unique, and she was overjoyed.

Avrohom informed me that the Rebbe had visited the Ohel every day during the week that Avrohom was at 770.

Dovid and Rochel had given birth to K.A.H. another baby boy - Yaakov Tzvi - and Avrohom had flown to Montreal for the day, in order to attend the Bris. He was rewarded by acting as Sandik. His flight was via New York so he had the opportunity of being present with the Rebbe for a late Mincha service, followed by Maariv.

We also were presented with another great granddaughter by Channah (nee Lew) and Yoseph Lipsker. This was their first child - and a Chaya Mushka.

On the seventh day of Adar I celebrated my birthday (actually two this year for both months of Adar, although the main day is in Adar II). I received a very large "home made" card from Hindy and Shmuel. It had to be very large because besides all their children, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, it was signed by Chaya Soro (nee Caroline) by Leah (from Milan) and also by Jean, the Gentle Gentile, daily woman who has been with Hindy for many years.

I heard that a member of the Israeli Embassy went to see the Rebbe at a Dollars Distribution. The Rebbe wished him "Long life", which was different from the usual Brocha,

"VeHatzlocha".

A short while afterwards, terrorists blew up the Israeli Embassy in Argentina. Many were killed and scores injured. The official who received the unusual Brocha from the Rebbe was actually in the Embassy building when it was bombed but he was untouched.

My Nephew's Wedding

We were delighted to attend the marriage of our nephew, Vickie, the son of Yetta and Ephraim.

Rosalie Cooper, the bride, had visited the Rebbe at a Dollars Distribution about six months previously, and the Rebbe had blessed her that she would be married within twelve months.

At the dinner, two interesting ideas were put forward. Ephraim explained that when his son married, then his mother would be referred to as the 'old' Mrs. Jaffe. Ephraim is a doctor of medicine. When Vickie qualified, then Ephraim became the 'old' Dr. Jaffe. In due course, Vickie achieved the high position of Surgeon, obtained his Fellowship, so he reverted to plain Mr. Jaffe (Mr. is higher than doctor - sounds silly!), and Ephraim became a young doctor once again.

The Chairman at the dinner suggested that one of the reasons why Vickie was so pleased with the Shidduch was because Rosalie was a Chief Buyer at Marks and Spencers, the world famous stores. They have a policy that if one is not satisfied with the goods then one may return them and, either exchange them for something, else or receive a refund of the money. He suggested that this policy applied to Rosalie too.

Pesach Exhibition

Once again, Rabbi Yehuda Pink and his brother Dovid arranged another "Pesach Experience".

This included videos and exhibitions and even a Matzo Bakery where the visitors could bake their own piece of Shmura matzo to take home.

Hundreds of adults and over two thousand children from local schools attended.

Barry Parker's wife, Helen, was the official opener and, during the three weeks period that the exhibition and show were open, many local dignitaries including the member of Parliament, and Head teachers were present.

The publicity was tremendous and the "Pesach Experience" received mention in most of the national newspapers as well as all the Jewish

The "Manchester Evening News" published this story and photograph on April 9th. It is a very fine picture of my granddaughter Dina.



■ YIGAL Njassoff, 17, and seven-year-old Dina Jaffe with the special matzoh bread

Jewish cooking lesson

CHILDREN are sampling a taste of Jewish folklore.

Thousands of pupils from north west schools have attended a Pesach Experience exhibition at Salford's Lubavitch Youth Club.

Rabbi Yehuda Pink explained that the exhibition explained to children the original purpose of various Jewish holi-

days. He said: "We have chosen this time so children will be prepared for the Festival of the Passover on April 17.

"We have created a matzoh bakery and children will be able to bake their own matzoh bread.

"It is a bread made in a great hurry, simply flour and water. It symbolises the flight of the Israelites from Egypt."

More Nachas

A few days before the wedding of Zelda Rochel (Lew) to Hershie (Vogel), Roselyn had occasion to speak to Hindy who indicated that it was so noisy at Firsby Road that she could not hear her own voice. And another seven members of the family were due to arrive later on that day. This would make up the "party" to Nisht thirty one souls, all assembled in one house (actually two adjoining houses).

Next morning, Roselyn phoned Hindy again and Jean, Hindy's daily woman, (non-Jewish) answered the phone. Roselyn asked her how she was and Jean replied, "Very well, Boruch HaShem." Roselyn enquired how she was coping? Jean replied that she had steeled herself to be oblivious to everything and to everyone, and she keeps repeating to herself, "Jean, keep calm, Jean, keep calm."

She added that she looked forward to seeing me at the wedding "if she could manage to peep over the curtain."

Before Pesach, Pincus (Lew) phoned us and invited himself to spend a few days with us. He explained that since he had been in England, he had hardly slept a wink. K.A.H. there were nine babies at Firsby Road, and when one cried, then they all joined in the chorus. Incidentally, a week or so later, Rivka, Mendie's wife, gave birth to a baby girl - another Channah Lew.

Pincus came to our home in Manchester and he slept in bed until about 11.00 a.m. next morning, then continued to sleep non-stop until bedtime. He then retired and awoke the following day at 12 noon, had breakfast and lunch together, at 1.00 p.m. and took the 3.00 p.m. train back to London - well rested!

About a week or two later, we received another similar invitation from Yossi (Lew). This was a more exciting and thrilling invitation because it involved a party of five - Yossi and Shternie, and Chaya Mushka, aged nearly three, Sholom Ber - fifteen months, and Channah - five months. It also involved a longer period of six days.

Roselyn demurred, but Yossi insisted that he had to get away from Firsby Road without fail and without delay. So Roselyn agreed and prepared herself and the house for the invasion. These included:

- 1) To prepare three extra beds plus two cots.
- 2) Eliminate all movable objects - e.g. - vases, trinkets, ornaments, etc., from floor level and up to a height of five feet.
- 3) Oil and grease the Hoover which will be required for at least six sweeps daily.
- 4) Purchase extra stocks of food, milk, soda, etc., because our population would be increased by 350% - from 2 to 7 persons.

- 5) Prepare loads of pastries and cakes.
- 6) Prepare loads of fish and meat dishes and eggs.
- 7) Lock all cupboards and drawers.

Roselyn, in addition to being the cook and cleaner, would have the tasks of nanny, laundry woman, companion, medical officer and entertainer thrust upon her.

The syndicate duly arrived on Wednesday afternoon in a rented car, and what a gorgeous and wonderful Nachas did we enjoy!

Mushka was an angel - but she was human. A real lady who, all alone, attended to her own needs. A good and happy child.

Channah was no problem except when she decided to inform us at 3.00 a.m. that she was wide awake.

Sholom Ber was in a special category. He is K.A.H. a very big boy for his age, more like a young lad of 5 years than a baby of 15 months. He possesses big polkas and large hands. He really could not talk but he made himself well understood, and knew what he wanted - food - food - and more food. He always had a spoon in his palm but ate with his hands - even soup. He really needed a shovel.

All day long he walked around the house, moving anything that could be shifted and repeating DADA DADA DA DA DADA ad infinitum and ad nauseum. Occasionally, whilst sitting on Yossi's knees, he changed the refrain to MA MA MA MA MA MA and so forth. It drove Roselyn really "up the wall."

A slight misfortune occurred one night, after midnight, when Yossi, by accident, pressed the "panic" button of the burglar alarm. This set all the bells ringing and awoke all the neighbours who spent the following half hour banging and thumping on our door to discover whether we were being burgled. We had to explain that it was only Yossi.

It was a "Machaya" when the "relative" small group departed on the sixth day. "Six days shall one labour and toil, but the seventh day shall be a day of rest."

The three babies were lying comfortably and happily, stretched out on the rear seat of the car. It was lovely - to see them go! But we shall certainly miss them all.

Roselyn asked me why the palm of my hand was dirty. I had been patting the car which was carrying our guests back to London.

Zelda Rochel and Hershy

It had been suggested that Zelda Rochel (Lew) and Hershy Vogel would make an ideal match - a wonderful Shidduch.

Eight weeks ago they had obtained the Rebbe's approval and blessing that they should meet, and the Rebbe was in favour of the Shidduch.

It seemed that Zelda Rochel and Hershy were also in favour, and they desired that the marriage should take place at once.

Zelda Rochel was not yet nineteen, and she was an exceptionally pretty and charming young maiden. I wanted to know what was the rush? I was told that if the wedding did not take place quite soon then they would have to wait an extra seven weeks - until after Shavuos.

So what! A catastrophe! - or as they say in Yiddish - "A grosser Unglik."

But Zelda and Hershy were determined to be wed soon. Why should they wait? But the problem was to find a suitable hall for the week before Pesach. It seemed to be an impossible task, but - we are told that "if one seeks, one will find."

So they sought - and they found, and booked the Walthamstow Town Hall for Monday, 3rd Nissan, April 6th. It was a very nice, large hall but quite a distance away.

All the members of the Shmuel and Hindy Lew clan were arriving from America and elsewhere in their droves, K.A.H. They drove poor Hindy crazy, for they all desired to remain at Firsby Road, even after the wedding and after Pesach.

It was a happy, noisy and teeming household. One had to be in good voice to make oneself heard.

Roselyn and I motored down to London on the day before the wedding so that we should be fresh and refreshed to enjoy the wedding ceremony and festivities on the Monday.

On arrival in London we discovered that a new Sefer Torah had been presented by the Gorman family to Lubavitch and the Siyum was even now taking place at Max Katsch House, just opposite to our hotel, the Kadimah.

I participated in the ceremony and we all marched in procession to Lubavitch House, about a quarter of a mile away, under police escort and with musical accompaniment.

On the way, a young man approached me and introduced himself to me as Mendie Vogel, a brother of the Chosson. He was 19 years of age.

A short while afterwards, another boy came up to me. I asked him his name. He declared that he was the Chosson of Zelda Rochel. I then recalled that I had met him at 770 during Succos time and I had been impressed by his unusual friendliness. I do not know why he was so amiable because he had not yet met Zelda Rochel at that time.

At the Hakofus at Lubavitch House, Benzion Hackner called upon me to recite one of the seventeen verses of "Ata Horaisa". I felt highly honoured, especially as the verse was "Malchuscho" - the identical verse I had been privileged to recite in front of the Rebbe for so many years. Benzion did not realise this fact but added that it was by Divine Providence.

I had the pleasure of meeting my friends Edward Cohen and his sons Mottie and especially Elishan who is an extremely likable boy - and a close friend of Benzion, my grandson.

On the morning of the wedding, we kept well away from Firsby Road, but we were ordered to be present at that address at 2.00 p.m. in order to show our faces - to the camera.

It was a busy session - with the bride - without the bride - with the children and without the children. So many permutations! And after the Chupah, we would be joined by the Chosson and all the Vogel family. It would be pandemonium!

After the Kabolus Ponim (reception) where Hershy had delivered, very competently, the Maamer, Hershy, accompanied by members of the immediate families, moved forward to "badeck" the Kalloh (cover her face with the veil). It is always an emotional moment for me when I am given the privilege of blessing my granddaughter, the bride.

By a miracle, the Chupah started just a few minutes late. It seemed that it was all my fault, too. I was with my brother Ephraim and Rabbi Nachman Sudak. I mentioned that there was a swimming pool in Lubavitch House. Ephraim's ambition was to inspect this pool, and as this was one of Nachman's pet hobbies, we all rushed down to see this wonderful device. Nachman was busy explaining the technical details. Ephraim was even toying with the idea of "just a few lengths". I was just an interested spectator, but we had come to attend a Chuppah and not to have a swim. And that is the reason why we were a little late for the ceremony.

But we were in time to see Zelda Rochel actually walking down the stairs, and Mendie (Lew) intoning the introductory verses, in a splendid and magnificent manner, through the microphone. It was most impressive.

Nachman was "Masadir Kedushin" and Avrohom recited a couple of Sheva (7) Blessings.

There had been a slight delay because the glass tumbler which was to be used for the Sheva Brochus - and subsequently broken underfoot by the Chosson at the end of the ceremony, was found by Nachman to be slightly chipped. We waited over ten minutes, fidgeting under the Chupah, until another, but perfect, glass was provided.

To my great surprise and delight, I was given the honour of saying one of these Brochus. I placed the full goblet of wine on the palm of my hand, but before I could utter a sound, there was heard a little girl's excited, squeaky voice exclaiming: "Kum gicher, gicher, Mammy, Zaide gait machan Kiddush" ("Come quickly, quickly, Mammy, Zaidie is going to make Kidush". It was Chaya Mushka (Lew) calling Shternie, her mother.

We adjourned to the hall to join in with the festivities and revelry.

We never saw the bridesmaids at the Chupah. There was far too much over-crowding and congestion. But at the hall we did notice about half a dozen or more little children all bedecked in the same coloured, flowered dresses. They looked simply gorgeous.

In my own opinion, the whole wedding was simply "out of this world". The wonderful atmosphere, the terrific band, the punctuality, the single speech, by Avrohom, the sumptuous food and the plentiful supply of drinks.

But, mainly because I was surrounded by approximately fifty children, grandchildren and great grandchildren (eight of Avrohom and Susan's family were still at Crown Heights) – plus nephews, nieces and so forth. My brother Ephraim sat next to me at the top table.

I received reports from Yetta, my sister-in-law, and some others, that my granddaughters and those by marriage were so friendly and charming that it was a delight and a privilege to be present at the wedding.

The bride looked divine and I was told that she danced superbly and non-stop. I just gave a little peep over the Mechitza to confirm this.

Obviously, we remained in the hall until the very last moment - every second was precious, especially when Roselyn and I had the last dance with Hindy and Zelda Rochel, the bride. And, K.A.H., with all our lovely granddaughters and great granddaughters. I thank the A'mighty for bestowing upon us such magnificent Nachas and blessings.

We had been invited to another wedding on the following day - in Manchester. So we could not remain in London to enjoy the various Sheva Brochus dinners that had been arranged.

Avrohom had to rush back home because he was officiating at this marriage between Ruth, the eldest daughter of Gigi and Sholom Weisz and Pesach Rosenbaum from Australia.

(Question: When did Pesach fall on Shavuot? - Answer: It was the Chosson who had fallen down) Ruth and Pesach had met, of course, at Crown Heights - the "Matchmaking Centre of the World." They would be settling down in Australia.

Roselyn and I arrived back in Manchester just in time to attend the Chupah.

There was a cloudburst and torrential rain. I have never been so drenched at a Chupah - or anywhere else for that matter.

It was also a very Freiliche wedding. Most of our fifty five Yeshiva boys were present and were a great asset at the wedding.

I always compose a poem when we celebrate a family Simcha. Unfortunately, I left it rather late on this occasion but I did manage to write fifteen verses. My apologies to Zelda Rochel.

A Poem on Zelda Rochel's & Hershy's Marriage

Months ago at 770, I met a nice looking boy
with a smiling face ,
His name was Hershy Vogel, he oozed much charm
and grace

I next heard that Hershy wished to wed Zelda
Rochel, but she was not nineteen yet,
I advised her to wait a little longer, because
Hershy she had only just met

The marriage should take place at once, they
said - this order was proclaimed,
Otherwise they would have to wait another seven
weeks, and so it was ordained

The wedding was arranged for Monday April 6th,
which was Nissan, the very third day,
Thank G-d all the family came from far and
wide, especially from the U.S.A.

A boy approached me at Lubavitch and asked me -
Don't you know me?
I looked perplexed, I wasn't quite sure, "But I
am the chosson", said he

And sure enough at the Kabolus Ponim there he sat,
my very new grandson
He said his Maamer, and on behalf of all our family,
I gave him a very big welcome

The bride looked beautiful and divine, as she
sat on the Bridal chair all alone,
Awaiting her groom to veil up her face, until
he could claim her for his own

The Chupah ceremony was delayed sometime, the
the wine could not be sipped
Because the glass that was supplied, was found
to be very much chipped

I was given the honour to make one Brocha,
under the Chupah it was a pleasant surprise,
It was not often I received this award,
it was something I would always prize

I placed the goblet onto my palm, there was
silence and an expectant hush
When suddenly we heard Chaya Mushka Lew give a scream –
"Come quickly Mammy, Zaidie gait Machen Kiddush"

We adjourned to the hall, we ate and we drank,
and Hershy hopped and twisted non-stop,
There was a wonderful "Ruach and Chayus",
and gorgeous Zelda danced till she might flop

Roselyn and I with Hindy, Zelda Rochel and our
children did have the last dance
With granddaughters and great granddaughters -
and how we did prance

We thank the A'mighty for all the Nachas and
celebration
We pray for Moshiach, good health to the Rebbe,
and joy for the whole Jewish nation

P.S.

(Nisht) Thirty one souls, including nine babies
were at the home of Shmuel and Hindy Lew
There was no room, no peace, no quiet, only crying, chattering and twittering like so many
birds at the zoo

Pincus came to our house in Manchester, he had
not slept for days
He spent forty eight hours in bed, before he
went his ways

Yossi, Shternie, with Mushka, Sholom Ber and
Channah, to our house did arrive
They turned our home upside down I don't know
how we survived.

Yud Aleph Nissan

It had always been my ambition to spend the Rebbe's ninetieth birthday at 770.

Label welcomed the news that I, and Bernard (Perrin), as well as many thousands more, intended to join the Rebbe on that outstanding date.

One source had indicated that in his opinion the Rebbe would not be well enough to receive the many guests and visitors who were expected to arrive during that period, and I would be wasting my time and money by travelling to 770. Perhaps he was right?!

Label rebuked me and remarked on my lack of faith. Could I, or anyone else, really foresee how our Rebbe's health would be on the eleventh day of Nissan? After all, he is a Rebbe and a Tzaddik.

And, in any event, the Rebbe would be notified of our presence at 770, and this might have a beneficial effect on the health of the Rebbe.

Therefore, on Sunday 9th of Nissan, April 12th, Hilda Perrin drove Bernard and me to Manchester Airport to board the 12 noon British Airways plane to New York.

Rebecca Bergson, aged 4 ½, Hilda's granddaughter and a great friend of mine, came along to help us deal with the heavy luggage.

Our grandsons, Dovid and Aaron (Jaffe) were also booked on the same flight.

Bernard and I checked in and we were notified that NO Kosher food had been ordered for us. I was extremely angry and complained bitterly. I asked for the supervisor.

He arrived within moments and I berated and lambasted him - and concluded by telling him, in no uncertain manner, that if there was no Kosher meals on board for me then I would refuse to travel.

"Thank you very much" he retorted, and began ripping off the labels which had already been affixed to our suitcases. (I believe that the plane was over-booked and there were many stand-by passengers). He added that if I wished to lodge a complaint I should contact my travel agents who had shown much irresponsibility in this matter.

I hastily interjected and stuttered, "Oh, it's O.K. - now. My two grandsons have informed me that the Kosher food which they had ordered was on board and they had decided to transfer these meals to Bernard and to me."

Actually, Dovid and Aaron belong to that special group of travellers who always insist on receiving Kosher food and which is under the best and most trusted supervision - and then eat instead their own sandwiches which they bring along with them. I gladly let them have my own "first aid" sandwiches to complement their own.

On arrival at Crown Heights we immediately went to see Label who welcomed us very effusively and observed that he would notify the Rebbe, as soon as possible, of our arrival. -

We went downstairs into the Shool for afternoon prayers. It resembled a huge railway station with scores of different Minyanim groups scattered all over the place reciting prayers.

Since his recent illness, the Rebbe has been confined to his room, and so there is at this moment no official Rebbe's Minyan in the Shool. Everyone is his own boss, and every few yards a Minyan has been set up. I am fairly certain that some men overlapped and were counted and included in two separate, different groups. The women's Shool was conspicuous by the absence of female worshippers who had always insisted upon praying together with the Rebbe.

On the following day, Dovid drove me and Aaron to the Ohel (of the previous Rebbe, Z.Tz.L.) to recite special prayers at this holy place for the good health of our Rebbe, Shlita, and for a full and speedy recovery. We also visited the resting place of our dear Rebbetzen (Z.Tz.L.) and recited, also at that holy ground, prayers, so that the Soul of our Rebbetzen (Z.Tz.L.) should intercede with the A'mighty for the Rebbe's, Shlita, recovery.

It was very sad for me to note that the vacant plots around the Ohel had gradually become occupied. Most of my old friends who attended the meals at the Rebbe's, Shlita, table on Yom Tov, in the past, now lay here in peace, including Rabbis Shmuel Gurary, Lieberman, Simpson and Kahanofski.

In the evening there was a Farbraingen at 770. The place was full but not overcrowded as at the recent Farbraingen with the Rebbe. Normally, the Rebbe was in full control - he was the Chairman - the principal speaker - and the only speaker. Wine and a little cake were the refreshments.

On the Monday evening we were served with herring, cakes, pickles, vodka and soda - and plenty of everything. Moishe (Kotlarsky) was the chairman and he had a list of about ten speakers. I was invited to sit at the top table, being an "older gentleman" (Oh dear me!)

Moishe made an emotional appeal to the A'mighty to send a full, complete and quick recovery to our Rebbe.

He added, that Chassidim from all over the world had assembled at 770 to celebrate a birthday

party in a Chassidishe manner. Firstly, we should all sing the Nigunim (the favourite tunes) of the Rebbe, Shlita.

Binyomin Klein, mentioned that it was six weeks since the Rebbe had collapsed. We had nothing with which to reproach ourselves. We had engaged the services of the twelve foremost, international doctors. The finest in their own field of medicine. No expense - nothing has been spared in order that the Rebbe should have the best attention. Binyomin concluded by requesting that everyone should be "Bottel" - to consider himself as nothing - and we should all enjoy complete unity amongst ourselves.

Rabbi Simpson stated that he sees the Rebbe every day. It is very sad and depressing not to see the Rebbe here at this Farbraingen. Still, there was no question, and no doubt in his mind, that it was a temporary matter and - definitely - very soon - the Rebbe will be completely well.

Rabbis Marlow, Nachman Sudak, Yossi Gutnick, Yudel Krinsky and Lipsker from Miami, among others, all spoke.

Points that were made were:

We had not heard a Sicho for six weeks.

Already five Sundays had passed and 25,000 people have received no Brochus and no dollars. It is heartbreaking but definitely - and most certainly - this is only a short term issue, and soon P.G., the Rebbe will be restored to health.

It had been heard that people were expressing doubt and saying that we were not doing enough. This was not correct. There was 100% cooperation between the world renowned doctors and the Rebbe's staff at 770.

Rabbi Label Groner was one of the last speakers. He had already addressed a Women's meeting earlier that night. It had concluded before 10 p.m. so that the women could return home and relieve their husbands from the duties of baby-sitting to give them a chance to attend this Farbraingen which commenced at 9.45 p.m.

Rabbi Groner spoke really well. He was an inspiration, and he spoke with passion and emotion. I never realised that Label was such a wonderful orator. He told the story of the man who had collapsed, had lain in his bed and could not move a muscle for four days. On the fifth day he just managed to lift a little finger. His daughter was delighted and shouted, "Mammy, Mammy, I have witnessed a miracle."

Similarly, a man had to walk hundreds of miles. He made a good start and, after ten miles, he had done very well - but he had a very long way to go yet. "It takes time and much patience."

Label continued that it was no use to pester the Rebbe that he should "reveal himself as Moshiach" no one is allowed to reveal himself, only the A'mighty may do this.

Therefore we must address our prayers to HaShem. The first Moshiach, Moische Rabbainu, was approached directly by HaShem - at the burning bush and was told that he was the Moshiach who would bring out the Jewish people from the Egyptian exile into the Land of Yisroel.

HaShem will make known who is the Moshiach in His own good time. But no man of flesh and blood can gainsay the A'mighty Who will make the decision Himself when He is ready.

All that we mortals may do is to appeal to the A'mighty, by prayers, Tehillim, study of Torah and giving of Tzedoka, to bring the Moshiach quickly and in our time.

On the following day, early Tuesday morning, special buses were busy taking people to and from the Ohel and back to 770.

Later on, a Children's rally took place outside 770. The twelve Torah verses were recited and fifteen hundred balloons (corresponding to the number of Perakim in Mishnayus) were released and disappeared into the far distance, except for a cluster of about thirty balloons which became entangled in the trees and telephone wires just above us.

Finally, there was the most impressive procession of ninety Mitzvah Tanks, each sponsored by a town or a city. They drove along Eastern Parkway in convoy and took about fifteen minutes to pass by. The ninety tanks, including the spaces in between each one, took up a length of over half a mile, which is a very long line. The traffic was completely stopped by the police along the entire route to facilitate their smooth operation.

Before we departed, Label called me into his office and handed me a whole packet of Matzo from the Rebbe - for Manchester - and a similar packet all for me which, as usual, I divided amongst all the members of my family.

Bernard and I left 770 at 4.00 p.m. after spending exactly two days with the Rebbe. Max also accompanied us. He had been for one day only. We did receive our Kosher meals on the plane home.

On the eighth day of Pesach we displayed to the world that we, of Lubavitch Manchester, were cooperating and co-existing in complete harmony and unity, as requested, nay demanded, by the Rebbe's personnel at 770. We held a joint Moshiach's Seuda at the Yeshiva.

The place was packed out and everybody of (Lubavitch) importance was present. Avrohom was in charge and Chaim Farro and Sender Liberow were amongst the speakers. Mordecai Uhrmacher gave over the Maamer.

When Yom Tov terminated, all those whose wives were waiting for their husbands to assist them to replace the Pesach utensils, crockery and cutlery, with the normal, mundane chometz type, davened Maariv and rushed home for the sake of Sholom Bayis (peace at home).

Quite a large crowd had remained in order to continue the Farbraingen which went on until 1.00 a.m.

A Kinus HaTorah took place on the following day. This had been organised by Levi (Jaffe) who arranged this Kinus every year. It was very successful and about 120 people were present. The chairman, as usual, was Rabbi Yonason Golomb who was now the Rav of the Sheffield Hebrew Congregation. Tehillim, for the sake of the Rebbe's health, was led by Rabbi Sender Liberow.

I was the first to address the audience and, to put them into the right mood, I told them stories which demonstrated the sense of humour, humility and unpredictability of the Rebbe.

The six speakers who followed were - Rabbi M. M. Schneebalg, Rabbi Akiva Cohen, Rabbi Chaim Rappaport, Rabbi Yossi Chazan, Yehoshua Frankel and Levi Vaisfische, who all spoke extremely well.

We were staying in London for a few days on business, and we met Yossi (Alperovitch). He informed us that he had held a very successful public meeting with Professor Velvel Green, late of N.A.S.A., as the main attraction.

It was a sell-out, with nearly two hundred people who paid a nominal amount for the privilege of being able to attend.

The Bournemouth Rabbi, who gave a talk last year about why a rabbi does not need to wear a beard, and cited many "great" Rabbonim who were beardless, did not attend. His honorary officers also kept away in sympathy and in support of their Rabbi.

Our friend, Bluma Feld, who was once the proprietress of the largest Jewish Kosher hotel in Bournemouth, confided to us that she was nearly converted to Lubavitch by Velvel Green. She was suitably impressed to hear that this professor admitted that not many years previously he was not even a practising Jew.

Yitzchok Sufirin, who was also staying at the hotel with his wife Ziporah, added that the Bournemouth Reform Rabbi was also present at that meeting. He was also so much impressed that he attended Yossi's Monday morning early Minyan at the Bess Chabad.

He explained later to his members, publicly, how he had put on Tefillin for the first time for twenty years. - But he was not going to make a habit of this Tefillin Business!

Before I end this instalment, I wish to extend to my friend Bernard (Perrin) my heartfelt gratitude and warm appreciation for in an honorary capacity - as Bernard often reiterates, "It is a labour of love".

It has enhanced this publication and made its perusal more enjoyable.

I would also like to express my reluctant admiration for his stubborn demands and persistence that I should keep him constantly supplied with manuscripts so as to enable the printers and binders to receive these in good time for producing this instalment, number 23, in time for

Shavuos.

Bernard has been dedicated and loyal, but firm and relentless.

Thank you Bernard and may you and Hilda have the merit to enjoy much Nachas - (and plenty of Mechaya) from each other and from all your family.

Short Poem Composed by Shaindel (Lew) on the occasion of my birthday

Just think about the nicest day
That you have ever spent
And all the things that made it
Such a wonderful event
Think of all the pleasures
And the joys that came your way
And then you'll know exactly
What your being wished today.

Happy Birthday!

I commenced this book with a prayer that the A'mighty should grant to the Rebbe a complete and quick recovery from his illness and restore the Rebbe to the best of good health.

I conclude this instalment, number 23, with a similar prayer and petition. Although we continue to receive excellent reports that the Rebbe is improving every single day, yet I invoke HaShem to heed my prayers and those of the hundreds of thousands of Jews – and every non-Jews, all over the world, who are continuously pleading with the A'mighty to restore our dear Rebbe, very quickly, to perfect and good health – till 120.

We long for and we want our Rebbe in good health NOW.

I always end with the following:
MOSHIACH is coming NOW
MAMOSH (definitely)
MAMOSH (undoubtedly)
MAMOSH (positively)

But – the letters of M A M O S H are the acronym of MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON

I herby extend thanks and gratitude to the A'mighty for continuing to sustain me in good health to enable me to produce another instalment of “My Encounter with the Rebbe. Shlita”

This is page 289+ 3 pages for the index and list of illustrations = 292.

The Gematria of 292 = R E F U A with means “cure”, may this be prophetic that the Rebbe will soon be completely cured.