

5730  
ENCOUNTERS TWO

It was nearly 11.00p.m when we arrived at '770' on Monday evening, May 25<sup>th</sup>. I immediately went to see Rabbi Chodakov to ascertain the earliest possible moment when I could see the Rebbe Shlita.

"Well," he said, "Yechidus is on Thursday, and I will try and fit you in, but if you really wish to see the Rebbe sooner then you can go in straight away." Rabbi Gutnick of Australia was now with the Rebbe and as soon as he leaves the Rebbe's room, I could immediately enter the Rebbe's presence. Of course, if I accepted this offer for tonight, I should not be allowed again on Thursday, so "which day do you prefer?" What a question to ask!!

Leaving Roselyn at the apartment (which the Rebbe had kindly loaned to us) together with our grandsons Yoseph Yitzchak and Menachem Mendel, I rushed to '770' and took my stand outside the Rebbe's door. It was now midnight, and as Rabbi Gutnick had been with the Rebbe since 11.00p.m, I expected to enter at any moment.

Suddenly the door opened - I was nearly caught unawares, and Rabbi Gutnick emerged. I looked at my watch - it was 2.00a.m.. I had been waiting for 2 hours!

The Rebbe looked very tired and depressed - after 3 solid hours with Rabbi Gutnick (!!) but nevertheless gave me a lovely welcome. He said I must be tired, because by English time, which was five hours later it was now 7.00a.m. And I had been up for 24 hours. I admitted that before I entered the Rebbe's Sanctum I was indeed tired, but the Rebbe had certainly now made me wide-awake.

"How are your children and grandchildren? And daughter-in-law? It is the first time I have seen her."

"Surely not" said I, "she has been here before."

"Yes," replied the Rebbe, "but she was not your daughter-in-law then."

I took this opportunity of telling the Rebbe that Susan wished to send special warm regards to our Rebbetzen, and to say how impressed she was with our wonderful lady, by her grace and charm and when she made Susan, Avrohom and the children so welcome at the time of their first visit at Purim.

The Rebbe remarked that he had deliberately refrained from telling me to come on the Purim flight. He said he took no chances, in case I then would not come for our regular Shovuos visit.

The Rebbe was not pleased - not one bit - when he heard that some Rabbonim were leaving 35,000 Manchester Jews - *hefker* - whilst they selfishly removed themselves to Israel. It is against the Din, against the Shulchan Oruch to leave a community without first seeking and obtaining a replacement. He was surprised that "such a great Posek" should ignore the Din because it suited himself." And the 'cheek' of another Rabbi, also leaving to settle in Israel - to request the Rebbe to send a replacement from America to work for less money, in a smaller community whilst he clears off to Israel.

Whatever answer can the Rebbe now give to people like the Lubavitcher Shochtim in Manchester who begged the Rebbe to allow them to leave Manchester but were restrained because the Rebbe would not allow Manchester to be left without Kosher meat - when they see their "so called" superiors leaving the town without compunction. When I remarked that one of these Rabbonim was over retirement age, the Rebbe interjected by saying that Rabbonim do not retire, at all, at any age. Moshe Rabeinu did not retire. It was a disgrace to give Rabbonim 5 year contracts! Incidentally, the Rebbe took great exception to people asking for a Brocha for something they had done or decided upon without even consulting the Rebbe.

The Rebbe then requested me to provide a Rashi 'Kashi' for the following Shabbos. I then reminded the Rebbe that this year we came especially for Shabbos 'Mevorchim,' as the Rebbe himself had requested last year, and "why should I have to work for an extra Farbrengen?" Well, the Rebbe still persisted that he would like a Rashi question.

I was happy to inform the Rebbe that the Mikvah was very nearly ready. **But**, I said, I was not too pleased. I only used the Mikvah on very special occasions, and if we had a beautiful Mikvah on our own premises, it would not be right for me to pass by without using it. I would have to arise earlier in the morning and change my routine.

I then delivered the message from Manchester Lubavitch that we wanted Rabbi Chaim Farro as soon as possible.

"Oh, but not before Yud Bais Tammuz," says the Rebbe, "it would be cruel!"

The Rebbe then went on to say that because an extra man was coming, this did not mean that the rest could now take it easier. Avrohom, is still the Rav of the shul, **and** is to carry on as hitherto. All must continue to work precisely as hard, if not harder than at present.

"Chaim Farro's job is to see that everybody works **harder**."

The Rebbe was pleased that Hilda Perrin had been helping at the Lag B'Omer Parade. He hoped she would continue her efforts for Lubavitch and that her daughters would support us too. The Rebbe was keen to hear about the good progress being made regarding printing the Tanya in Hebrew together with the English translation.

The Rebbe was disappointed that neither David Kessler, Minah Margulies nor the Golditch girls had arranged Shiduchim.

We discussed business matters for a few minutes and the Rebbe had a jolly good laugh when I explained to him that Avrohom took off a whole day from business to arrange the Lag B'Omer outing.

I showed him the cable we received for Pesach from the Rebbe, the identical one which was sent all over the world - but ours had *nifle niflous* (instead of just *Niflous*). The Rebbe laughed heartily and said it was a brochah from the Post Office.

Last year I was told to bring Yossi with us to Brooklyn on this trip. I reported that, as requested, I had carried out instructions and brought Yossi. "Oh," says the Rebbe, "you mean Yoseph Yitzchak."

It was now 3.05a.m. and I had been with the Rebbe an hour and five minutes. Before leaving I presented the Rebbe with 4 bottles of mashke to give out at a Farbrengen. "Which one," asked the Rebbe. "Anyone" says I. "It is for the Rebbe to give to whomsoever he wishes."

"Is it from Manchester?" "No" I replied, "from me." "Surely the Rebbe can find some deserving person or cause to whom to give the mashke". The Rebbe admitted that he had stopped the giving of mashke at the farbrengens because "it got out of hand." I told the Rebbe I did appreciate the cake, but it was not as good as the Mashke because it became hard and stale after a week.

The Rebbe once again showed his humbleness and humility by saying, "Mr. Jaffe, I thank you!" What a wonderful and unique Rebbe we do possess. That such a great man and Tzadik should actually thank **me** for coming to see him was so unheard of that it left me speechless. He then offered to take me home!!

I do believe that the Rebbe looked very much happier and more sprightly than when I entered over an hour ago. Rabbi Chodakov told me to wait a moment whilst he went in to see the Rebbe. He came out beaming and said, "You put the Rebbe in such a good mood!" (T.G. for that, says I to myself.)

Incidentally, the following Thursday evening was the last Official Yechidus for two weeks (until after Shvuos). The Rebbe gave over 70 interviews and Yechidus ended at 5.00 in the morning.

That Shabbos was Shabbos Mevorchim. We commenced Tehillim at 8.30a.m. and finished at 9.55a.m. - 1 hour and 25 minutes - fantastic. Farbrengen started, as usual, at 1.30p.m., prompt on the dot, and went on until 5.30p.m. Main theme - 'Who is a Jew,' conversions must be according to the Halachah - bringing in all goyim (wives and children) and making a 5<sup>th</sup> column - there will be no peace unless and until we rescind this evil law - then G-d will destroy all Israel's enemies.

After a particularly strong and effective sicha on this subject the Rebbe sat with his head sunk and bowed down, very dejected, and not looking up at anyone at all. Meanwhile Yossi and Mendel were standing up straight and together, each holding a cup of wine and waiting to say Lechaim to the Rebbe, the Rebbe taking no notice. For very many minutes (which seemed like hours) they stood in dead silence whilst everyone waited and wondered when would the Rebbe look up and if he would shake off his despondency. It was already getting most embarrassing, so I stood up and in a very loud and clear voice said Lechaim to the Rebbe. He looked and replied, "Lechaim Velivrocho." I then pointed to Yossi and Mendel still holding their glasses and standing so straight and upright. The Rebbe's face became transfigured by a lovely smile as he replied to their brochah of Lechaim.

I was told by a great many people that this was the best part of the farbrengen. It made the Rebbe so happy after his deep depression. Someone told me that the Merkos should pay for my ticket to come once a month to make the Rebbe 'freilech!' You do such a Mitzvah, Mr. Jaffe. You make the Rebbe happy! The Rebbe honored me by giving me a bottle of Mashke to divide amongst those present.

One Lubavitcher asked Roselyn, "What mishpocha have you in Brooklyn, Mrs. Jaffe?" Roselyn answered, "The Rebbe."

The following day, Sunday, was the Annual Convention of the Neshei Chabad. 500 women were present. Roselyn and Hindy sat on the top table as honored guests from England. Rabbi Gutnick from Australia was the chief speaker, but there were many other speakers too. It took place at the Venetian Manor, Brooklyn, and commenced at 11.30a.m. with brunch. Greetings, reports, discussions, dinner presentations, film show and other entertainments followed in quick succession. All the ladies and girls were supposed to be at '770' to meet the Rebbe at 7.00p.m. Why cannot our Lubavitch organizations be punctual for a change and take example from the Rebbe. The Rebbe's address to the women was due to be broadcast - live - to England, Australia, Israel and all over the USA. The whole world and our dear Rebbe had to wait for the women (mainly for the organizers) until 8.20p.m. - nearly one and a half hours. It was not really fair, in fact, I would say it was extremely rude - because there was the usual 'line of Yechidus' afterwards, and our poor Rebbe did not leave for home until 4.00 in the morning. I considered that these ladies were very selfish indeed to make the Rebbe wait one and a half hours. It could have meant that the Rebbe would have been able to leave for home at 2.30a.m. instead of 4.00a.m.; besides the people in England and Israel waiting near their telephones from midnight until 1.30a.m. for the Rebbe's message plus the extra financial obligation this entailed.

Subsequently, I met delegates (to this convention) from Chicago and other cities, as well as from Brooklyn. One told me that she had not had Yechidus for 8 years. Another was going to settle in Israel and had tried for many months to see the Rebbe. A third woman had tried for three years. They were told to "join the line" and get a brocha from the Rebbe. I am, really, a very fortunate and lucky person to be able to see our Rebbe so often.

Thursday was Erev Rosh Chodesh. The Rebbe went to the Ohel - the graveside of the previous Rebbe - to pray, say Tehillim and plead for all the Jews. He fasts the whole day. During the three weeks we

were in Brooklyn the Rebbe went three times to the Ohel. It was 8.40p.m. when he returned, looking terribly tired, hot and really worn out. What the Rebbe does for us Jews! Shmuel, my son-in-law, had yahrtzeit and davened Mincha. (A *chidush* - he was told that as the yahrtzeit was on Rosh Chodesh he did not to have to bring Mashke and cake.) Maariv was at 9.20p.m. I was asked to daven at the Omud. A Chazan is supposed to be asked three times before he accepts. I took no chances and accepted straight away. As the Rebbe was still fasting, I davened extremely quickly - no one objected at all - but after Maariv, instead of going straight home for a meal, the Rebbe had Yechidus with Chief Rabbi Dreyfus of Belgium!

By trial and error I had now found a reasonably good mikvah. The 'Rebelle' who owned the one I had used for the past few years had moved to Boro Park. I was told that the mikvah opposite '770' was now "beautiful - clean, spotless and had constant hot water." Unfortunately, my informant was the person who looks after this Mikvah. I visited another one on Kingston Avenue - very dingy. It was so steamed up I could not see whether the water was clean or not. I put on my spectacles but they obviously too became steamed up and I nearly fell right into the Mikvah. Finally, I found my way down the steps - and almost burnt off my toe, it was so hot! I took another step down - and almost froze the other foot, it was so cold! The mikvah I eventually decided to patronize was quite good and I paid my subscription for the whole three weeks in advance. When I went on Friday about 2.30p.m, I was the first one to use it. It was really lovely and clean, but - no water!

Friday, 3.00p.m was one of the highlights of our American trip - a visit to our really charming and gracious Rebbetzen. It is something to which we always look forward and we always make certain that we are not one second late. We were privileged and honored this year to be allowed to take with us Hindy, Shmuel and their family (our grandchildren). Yossi and Mendel were very shy, Golda Rivka and Pinchus were good, but Yenta Chaya was terrific. She was singing Nigunim for the Rebbetzen all the time. We had nice fruit juice, cream cake and so forth. After half an hour Hindy and Shmuel left with the children. We stayed for over two hours altogether.

The Rebbetzen talked about Susan and Avrohom who had visited her last Purim. She had watched Susan waiting for Avrohom outside '770,' "for hours." She adored their "lovely children." We informed the Rebbetzen how impressed Susan had been with the Rebbetzen's friendliness and courtesy, and how much 'at home' one was made to feel. We had a very good, enjoyable and happy afternoon, laughing and joking, and occasionally being serious too.

We told her that we were thinking of attending the opening of the new Lubavitcher yeshiva. The Rebbetzen insisted that we do go and also that we come back the following Sunday and report to her what happened. So at 3.00p.m on the next Sunday we again had the delightful pleasure of seeing our beloved Rebbetzen again. We went alone this time, so we had tea instead of fruit juice. We all agreed that it was a pity that the boys **and** men did not take an example from the Rebbe - in cleanliness, tidiness, punctuality and doing everything with a 'seder,' also the perfect gentleman. He still greeted Roselyn "good morning" or "good afternoon" and touched his hat whenever he met her in the street. We had a jolly good time for two and a quarter hours, and the Rebbetzen asked us to come again next year, P.G.

The following is an abridged version of the report I gave and at which the Rebbetzen laughed uproariously!

We received the official invitation to the Yeshiva Dedication Dinner. The following names were on the invitation: Rabbi S. Gurary - Chairman, then the Dinner Chairman, followed by 12 Honorary (or Honorable?) Chairmen, 8 co-Chairmen, 59 Vice Chairmen, 1 Toastmaster and 45 Committee men. In addition there was a Guest of Honor and a Guest Speaker. A total of 129 men. If they all came with their wives we were certain of at least 258 people at the Dinner. A good nucleus.

The building was supposed to have cost \$3,000,000 (without the land). It had three floors and every available space was being used (but not duplicated as in Manchester and London). The building had

already been in use for 9 months (and looked it) and an opening dinner had already been held a few weeks previously. Today was the dedication dinner, and in a few weeks time was to be the grand opening at which Governor Rockefeller was due to attend.

We walked around the premises - 15 dormitories with 4 beds each, that is for 60 boys, on the top floor. Everything else nice and modern. After the inspection we partook of refreshments-reception before the dinner. Marvelous, wonderful - plenty to eat and drink, fish, hot and cold meats and liver, deserts, jellies and so forth. I did not want to eat too much as it would spoil my appetite for the Dinner. **And**, if the reception was so elaborate, one could imagine what the dinner would be like!

We then sat down to Dinner at which 450 people were present. Mr. and Mrs. David Lew, my Mechutonim, were also there. My wife and Mrs. Lew did not sit with us as they were at a women's-only table very far from us. David Lew and I were given seats at a very nice table, near the top, but we sat with **other** women **and** their husbands. Rather peculiar to say the least!

Two nice, jolly gentlemen approached me and asked me how I was and wished me well. I was taken aback! This was the first time I had met such friendliness in New York in all the years I have been going. I learnt afterwards that they were politicians and wanted me to vote for them.

Then the Chief of Police arrived, a huge tough-guy - almost a six footer and broad chested. (I thought to myself that I would not like to meet him in the dark.) I suddenly realized that it was my old friend Rabbi Gutnick dressed up as an Australian Army Chaplain in a blue uniform.

Dinner was called for 6.30p.m and when the Chairman introduced himself at 6.45p.m I remarked that it was very good timekeeping for Lubavitch. Unfortunately however, we had a very long wait in prospect before we tasted food. It seemed from past experience that when dinner was served first **no one** stayed for the speeches or for the appeal. So we were to have the speeches **first**. At this function half of the people, knowing of the new arrangements, arrived two hours later, still missed the speeches and came in time for dinner. Out of 42 tables, only at 7 did the men and women sit separately. Bernard Deutch, the Dinner Chairman, dressed in a very light blue dinner suit, with vivid royal blue frilled shirt, and similar colored tie, spoke for 12 minutes. He introduced the Chairman of the Executive, Rabbi Gurary, who introduced the Guest of Honor, who introduced the Guest Speaker - anyway, we will come to that later. The Rebbe's message was read by the Rashag, who added his own commentary for 15 minutes. Mr. Gruss, the Guest of Honor, who had presented the land as a gift and also furnished the kitchens, Dining Hall, Science Lab, etc. etc., spoke for 10 minutes. Rabbi Lookstein, The Guest Speaker, addressed us for 45 minutes. A little fellow, and a wonderful orator, with slow delivery like an actor - yes, he would do well on the Stage. He is a president of Bar Ilan University in Israel. He said Lubavitch attracts the youthful intellectuals as well as all types of people. Holding the microphone which he barely 'topped,' turning from left to right and then back again, he said - slowly - and through grated teeth, "I offered -- a -- Professor aged 32 -- a - job in Bar Ilan. What -- did -- he -- reply, this -- young -- man?" ----- Very large pause----- "He must ask the Rebbe!" "I met a hippie in Israel who had been round the world -- looking -- seeking -- searching - - frustrated ----- who was going back home to study Gemora." "Why?" ----- The Rebbe had told him so. Karl Marx said "Religion is the opium - of - the masses." I say, today opium is the religion of the masses. Michelangelo was a sculptor and a painter. He made a picture of Moses holding the Ten Commandments. We - hold - the Ten Commandments (great pause and shriek) IN -- OUR -- HEARTS and we gave the Torah to the world. In the Sedra it says vayehee - when Moses finished the Mishkon and vayehee always prefaces something bad. What can be bad about finishing the Mishkon? There are various Midrashic explanations. But, says the speaker, "it is bad because we are then left with the large mortgage to pay off!" Once the Baalei Batim used to have their own bench or seat - their own 'Bank' in the shul. Today we - have - the Shul - in - the Bank!"

Rabbi Weinberg then made the appeal. Four people gave a total of \$65,000. Grand total was 40 people \$100,000. We were offered to be made a 'Torah Ambassador' for \$10,000 - no customers! A life-time Governor for \$5,000 - no clients!

So, at last, at 8.30p.m dinner was served, and what an anti climax this was! Three courses, excluding fruit hors d'oeuvres, soup, meat and sweet. No choices of anything. Take it or leave it! In fact they left out the sweet course on our table entirely.

Then we started a new theme. Presentation of plaques to the Guest of Honor, Guest Speaker, Guest ? And so forth. Eight altogether. At 10.00p.m it was decided to bench. The benching was offered to a dozen rabbonim - all refused - they had not washed (had they eaten?). They even asked **me!** I wouldn't accept. At last someone volunteered. He said, "*Rabboai mir vellen benchen*" etc., and then had a relapse. Everything was so quiet, that Rabbi Weinberg announced that whilst those people were benching, he would carry on with more speeches - ridiculous! Incidentally, he is prone to exaggeration - he introduced Rabbi Gutnick as the Chief Rabbi of Australia (Rabbi Gutnick denied this in his speech). He refers to Maurice, my brother in Israel, as Colonel Jaffe. And, of course, I am Rabbi Jaffe. I have semicha from 500 boys at '770,' but not from **one** Rav!

Next day I went, as usual, to Rabbi Dworkin's Shiur, but found no one there. They had gone to a wedding. I met Rabbi Gutnick in the office. He said, "you look a cheerful soul." I replied, "wouldn't you be too if your Rebbie had gone to a wedding and there was no shiur!"

Shabbos, I had, thank G-d, an aliya in the Shul. At 1.30p.m a farbrengen was held and lasted until 6.00p.m.

During the second Nigun the Rebbe got so excited, he jumped up waved his arms, conducting the tempo. When the Rebbe stands, all stand too. Everybody standing, singing and jumping and the tempo getting quicker and faster. It was impossible to keep up. Yet the Rebbe is egging us on, faster and quicker. After I had said Lechaim to the Rebbe about 3 or 4 times he leaned over and said, "Say Lechaim," and in Yiddish, "you are hiding yourself under the table."

Again, on "Who is a Jew" the Rebbe pointed out that the Druse, Arabs living in Israel right on the borders where it was more dangerous, who were Christians and Moslems, fought and were fighting for Israel. They did not want to become Jews! Not at all. Not on any account! When it came to the test, no Jew would give up his heritage. Acha the wicked Jewish King had murdered all the Jewish Prophets, but when approached by a gentile to buy his Sefer Torah, he refused.

The Rebbe was in a much better mood at this farbrengen, but four and a half hours. It was tough too!

Shvuos was now approaching and once again I had the zechus of being invited to partake of Yom Tov meals with the Rebbe Shlita. The seating arrangements and the food were similar to the past few years. The routine was the same too (see last year's diary). This year I had a good helpmate in my endeavors to make the Rebbe freilech. Rabbi Gutnick, who took my advice and followed my lead. A good time was had by all. I remarked that Her Majesty, the Queen was well represented - from Canada, from Great Britain and Rabbi Gutnick who was a Chaplain in Her Majesty's Forces in Australia. The Rebbe said that he even had a higher title - a Kohen. Rabbi Gutnick told me after Yom Tov that it was the most enjoyable and memorable Shavous he had ever spent.

Another interesting guest was Rabbi Lazar Nanes. He has been residing in Shikun Chabad in Jerusalem for the past 4 years after spending 20 years in Russian jails, mostly in Siberia. He was sentenced to death for teaching Yidishkeit. This sentence was then reduced to 10 years imprisonment. After serving this sentence in full (only a thief receives remission for 'good conduct') he was jailed for another 10 years. After these 20 years of hard labor, which killed most of the prisoners, he was released. He then waited 10 years for permission to travel to Israel. All this time, for 30 years he had tasted neither meat nor poultry. (Incidentally, on the Rebbe's instructions, he visited us in Manchester for one day en-route from New York to Israel.)

At the outset, at the first meal, recalling that the previous year I had earned good commission from the Rebbe for suggesting that we should continue to sing 'Hoaderness Vehamuna' at '770' (just as all Lubavitcher Branches all over the world were still doing on Yom Tov), I declared to the Rebbe that I would like to discuss some business matter. The Rebbe agreed to hear my proposition as long as I spoke in Yiddish for many of the dozen or so guests could not understand English. So the deal was settled and I was to be allowed to commence the 'Hoaderness Vehamuna', 'Hu Elokeinu', and 'kailee Atoh'. I did very well, I must admit.

In the event, I started the first tune on Shovous morning. I felt like Nachshon Ben Aminodov who was the first to jump into the Red Sea. The congregation was hesitating quite a while before they joined in. The Rebbe commented, "it would be much easier on the following day." It was. Subsequently one fellow severely reprimanded me for singing in Shul without the Rebbe giving the signal. I explained that the Rebbe had already previously given me permission, and I certainly would not do anything against 'protocol,' he apologized profusely. The trouble was, that I was then inundated with requests to sing various other Nigunim. Obviously, I had to decline. One cannot or should not overdo a good thing. I was quite satisfied with what I had achieved.

I still carry on the custom of singing a Nigun when the Rebbe is leaving the Shul, but instead of helping me by joining in and being freilech, I get blank stares and a few smiles of approval and even disapproval. Fortunately, my old friend Rabbi Shem Tov and my new friend Zvi Fisher had pity on me and we danced and sang together for the Rebbe.

Well, to revert back to meals with the Rebbe. Every meal was freilech. I sang many Nigunim and told a few good jokes. I had just concluded a very good one, when the Rebbe observed that he did not like that joke at all as I had related something detrimental to the Jewish People. **And** I must immediately express something good about Jewish People - now and at once. This I did, and the Rebbe raised his glass and wished me Lechaim.

At a subsequent farbrengen I thought of something very good to say about Jews. This time the Rebbe made **me** say Lechaim in a very loud voice.

The Rebbe takes a lot of salt with his food. Once someone asked him why he uses so much salt. The Rebbe replied because "*Es is geshmack.*"

I asked the Rebbe a question on Rashi. In the Birchas Kohanim, the words 'Emor Lohem', Rashi repeats and then again the word 'Emor'. He suggested I ask Rabbi Gutnick who is a Kohen. He gave one answer, but the Rebbe promised to discuss this question at the next farbrengen, on Shabbos.

At the last Yom Tov meal we sang the Rebbe's Tehillim posuk, which he quoted at every gathering this year - 'Kee Elokim Yoshiya Tziyon' - to the tune of Dayeinu. The Rebbe was really exceptionally pleased, and his face beaming he asked whose inspired idea this was. We explained that some of the yeshiva boys had hit on this brilliant idea. This Nigun became 'Top of the Pops.'

This last meal at Shovous had a very happy atmosphere. It seems though that the Rebbe has now discontinued the custom of joining with his special Chassidim at Seudos Yom Tov. I am very sorry to hear that, I hope I was not to blame for that cessation. Maybe the Rebbe noticed that I did not eat too much at that meal. Instead of the usual Gefilte Fish I was served a fish head! The first time in my life that I had this 'delicacy' on my plate. The fish continued to stare at me with cold but appealing eyes. I did not have the heart nor the courage to disturb it. The next course was the soup. It seems that by the time I really got started on my plate of soup, the Rebbe had finished - so that was that! Normally the Rebbe was very particular to see that everyone had finished the course, before he put down his spoon or fork. I was unlucky this time. Then the meat arrived - everyone had meat - except me! I once caused a great commotion by asking the boys to exchange my tongue (which I normally do not like) for chicken. Maybe they think I only eat chicken. So, for the fourth consecutive meal I had to eat chicken and look as if I was enjoying it!

At the first meal I was given the honor of benching, which was much appreciated - by me - and I hope by the other guests.

On the Shabbos after Shvuos, our last Shabbos this year at '770,' we again had a farbrengen, thus keeping up my reputation of there always being a farbrengen when I am present at '770.' 1.30p.m. **prompt** until 5.00p.m. It was extremely freilich! The Rebbe stated that I was not yotzai with the le'chaim of my grandsons (I had already wished the Rebbe le'chaim twice).

Then the Rebbe started with the Rashi question which I had asked. I asked one question on the posuk in Naso, chapter 6, verse 13. When he got to question number 8 on this Rashi, he asked me. "how many is that?" and I answered correctly. At 11, again "how many;" at 14 once more, I answered 14. Somebody shouted 15. The Rebbe said, "we'll have an auction, anybody say 16?" (My answer was correct.) and so, the Rebbe kept on asking more questions on the same Posuk until he had asked 20 questions! Then he started on the 20 answers - brilliant.

One of the Rebbe's questions on this Rashi was why Omer Lohem was in the plural whilst yivorechacho was in the singular. The answer was that the Kohen had to concentrate with great *kavonah* to feel that he was blessing each one individually and collectively. Afterwards I told the Rebbe that this was no Chidush, nothing new, because the Rebbe had told me many years ago that he spoke to **everyone** individually at a farbrengen. This remark also pleased the Rebbe.

I found a Tehillim where on the front page was written that the gematria of 'Beis Moshiach' is '770.' I showed it to the Rebbe who laughed heartily.

The Rebbe then spoke very strongly, once more, on the theme of "Who Is A Jew." He mentioned the reform 'rabbi' who made conversions which consisted of only a certificate. This piece of paper, which was given to the applicant straight away, without even any formal instruction, stated that this man was now a Jew. Even Bris Milah was not performed. This reform 'rabbi' did not believe in shedding blood, and he had pity on the poor fellow. So this man's children or grandchildren would, in time, G-d forbid be able to marry one of your children and grandchildren. You must think of them and of the future.

The Rebbe handed me a bottle of vodka, "a little for now a little for the plane and the rest for Manchester." Shmuel also received a bottle, "to give to students." We did very well indeed!

Yossi and Mendel were standing at the doorway of '770' when the Rebbe arrived. He said "Good Shabbos" to Mendel, who gave the Rebbe his hand to shake, whilst answering "Good Shabbos" to the Rebbe. The Rebbe also shook hands with Yossi. A large argument and debate ensued on whether the Rebbe had given his hand first or if the boys were rude and had stuck out their hands. Whether it was correct or it was wrong and so on. Well, the following day we had just returned to '770' when the Rebbe happened to be coming along. The Rebbe touched his hat, smiled at Roselyn and me and **firmly** and smartly shook hands with Mendy and Yossi who were again standing in the doorway of '770.'

One afternoon we took Yossi and Mendy with us to Utica Avenue. I went to a bank to change a Travellers Cheque - what a performance. I thought I was going to be arrested. The bank manager said he had never seen an English Travellers Cheque and I should go to Wall Street. I told him a few home truths; that even in the most primitive parts of India I could change English Bankers cheques. But here in New York, the so call center of commercial civilization, when every hour or less we could hear on the radio the temperature, humidity and degree of air pollution, we were taken for forgers and thieves. When he explained the troubles he faced in Brooklyn with gangsters, with the racial problems and slum conditions (even in better parts, the dustbins lined the streets every day of the week), I had to sympathize with him - as long as he gave me my money.

It was now getting late for Mincha. I didn't want to miss the Rebbe's Mincha at '770' but my foot was giving me trouble. So we all 'dashed' down into the subway and caught a train just in time! Unfortunately it was an Express and it went flying past Kingston Avenue, the whole station vibrating and the train screeching - to the great delight and amusement of Yossi and Mendel. (In New York, the slow trains stop at every station, but the Express's stop in between the stations.) Ultimately it stopped at Franklin Avenue, the third station, and we had to wait 20 minutes for a train back. I was late for Mincha.

On the subject of trains, Berel Futefas invited me to accompany him to see a client somewhere near Jamaica (New York). His friend promised to take us by car, but let us both down. We arrived at the station 'P' like a country village. Quiet, silent and 'dead.' Even the Station Booking Office was closed. No one was about, anywhere. The town was miles away. Mind you, it was a glorious summers day. Ah - civilisation - a telephone! AND just for us - a card advertising a taxi service stuck on the wall. We phoned the number and were told that there was no taxi at this moment but in 20 minutes we should be getting one! After half an hour we phoned again, and were assured that within 10 minutes he would be there! We should wait! - Wait? Nebech - where could we go? Within half an hour the taxi arrived. Driver explained about the card. He explained that he had come from miles away and it would cost us double that ordinary taxi fare. AND we were mad! When we returned to the station, we boarded the lovely train back to Brooklyn, all air conditioned and modern. Berel and I were travelling very nicely and relaxed, except when the conductor would be shrieking -"Blarty, blarty, blah." I remarked to Berel that one could never understand a word these people said. Pity because we should have changed for Brooklyn at the 'next stop' instead of which we arrived at Penn Station!

On one of our visits, about 10 years ago, we had taken our leave of the Rebbe and gone to Miami Beach with Avrohom and Hindy. At 6.00p.m we got a telephone call from Rabbi Shemtov, greatly excited and agitated. It was the 5<sup>th</sup> 'Lichtel' of Channuka, and what right had we to take Avrohom away from '770' when the Rebbe was going to distribute Channuka Gelt! Avrohom must come back to Brooklyn at once. So, a quick dinner for him, and we were lucky to get one seat on a plane arriving New York at about 3.00a.m and he could return almost immediately to Miami Beach. Very good! Suddenly, the telephone rang again. Rabbi Chodakov - he had just heard of our plans. The Rebbe was annoyed that we should spend good money on 'wheels,' so if Avrohom would give him, Rabbi Chodakov, the power of attorney, he would collect on Avrohom's behalf. Furthermore, if Hindy would do the same, (although she was not really entitled to Chanukah Gelt from the Rebbe) she would also receive a silver dollar. "What about me," I ask. "Just a moment" - whilst he enquires from the Rebbe. "Yes, if you give me power of attorney I will be given a silver Dollar for you. One, only for you and Roselyn, because a husband and wife are one."

The climax of our visit had now arrived. Sunday and our Yechidus with the Rebbe. There were so many people coming to see the Rebbe that the following night, Monday, was also declared as a Yechidus night. This was extremely unusual - two consecutive nights! I had never heard of such a thing.

Shmuel, Hindy and the children went in on the first night. The Rebbe gave sidurim to Yossi, Mendel and Chaya. They were with the Rebbe for 4 minutes. Moshe Stewart (4 minutes) and then Neville Cohen - excited, worried and nail biting - his first Yechidus ever - 4 minutes. Result - fantastic, marvelous, unbelievable!

Monday evening, Roselyn and I entered at 9.40p.m. Never before had we been so lucky to enter so early. 4.00a.m, 6.00a.m., yes, but before 10.00p.m.?! Actually some people were delayed, so we took their turn. We received a splendid greeting from the Rebbe who remarked with a twinkle in his eye, that we seemed to have come well prepared with pads and pens. I replied that as we had come thousands of miles for this interview and every word of the Rebbe was so important that we could not afford to miss or forget anything. "You are not needing to write 1,000 lines or even 100 lines" added the Rebbe. "No," I replied, "but why should I take any chances?" I told the Rebbe what I had spoken at the Kinus haTorah. The Rebbe was very pleased but said I must be careful to tell that bit about Moshe Rabeinu only to those people who came from the town of Lubavitch (report of my address to Kinus Hatorah follows later on).

The Rebbe requested that I keep writing to him every two weeks as hitherto. We were leaving for home the next day, at 9.30p.m from '770.' "Would we miss Maariv?" I asked. The Rebbe told us that

he would be visiting the Ohel **again**. So Mincha would be at 8.30p.m. and Maariv 10 minutes earlier than usual. And “my wife will be delighted to see me 10 minutes earlier,” added the Rebbe.

The Rebbe reminded me that he had not answered every one of the 20 Rashi questions. He would give these answers later on. The Rebbe advised us to come next year again for Shabbos Mevorchim, because “you are always wanting a Farbrengen.” I said “A chossid must have no pity on his Rebbe if it concerns Torah.” I pointed out that the Rebbe had spoken for 14 hours over the Shvuous period - “it is a very lot of Torah.” “Ah,” says the Rebbe, “you say that **after** the event, not before.” I admitted that I could not understand everything at the Farbrengen. “Yes,” said the Rebbe, “they are not words one uses every day in business.” Also I once told the Rebbe that in the English translation of his Pesach or other messages, some words were so difficult to understand that one needed a dictionary handy. The Rebbe said that the purpose of my letters is not to study English.

We then discussed our apartment which was on the top floor of the Kolel building. During Shvuos, it was like Grand Central Station. Boys from all over the USA arriving at all hours of the night, sleeping here, there and everywhere - even on the floor. In spite of ‘**private**’ notices all over our place, one boy actually tried to come into our own bedroom. He wanted to sleep in that room “as usual.” Even normally, some boys would be learning, in a lovely but loud, clear voice until 4.30a.m when the next shift would arrive and give us, at least, the feeling of safety and security. Otherwise, we might have been afraid of strange passers-by. Now and then we seemed to have a number of chazonim and choirs practicing their whole repertoire at 3.30a.m. until 5.00a.m.. The Rebbe said next year the apartment would be better. As my landlord had again refused the rent, I offered the Rebbe this money as Bikurim - an ‘unexpected windfall!’ “Who is your landlord” asked the Rebbe. “A very nice and exceptional gentleman who likes to remain anonymous,” I answered.

The Rebbe said he had received a ‘nasty’ letter from Israel - “Some of my best friends are Lubavitchers” - complaining about the money wasted by telephoning the Farbrengen to Kfar Chabad. It would be better to buy Phantom Jets! Cheek! It would probably cost them just a few shillings each in Kfar Chabad. In any case “Loh Bechayill Eloh Bidvar Hashem”!

I said that the Farbrengens were received exceedingly well in London and in Manchester, now, too. Except that the Rebbe was not there in person and also that it was at an awkward time - 2.00a.m until 9.00a.m. - otherwise it was very nice indeed. Comfortable chairs and tables, refreshments, no crush etc. “Shush” says the Rebbe, “don’t tell anyone here, they will all want to go to London for the Farbrengen!” “Still” he added, “it is a pity I keep everybody up, all over the world.”

I remarked, that a great impression had been made on Yossi and Mendel which will last them all their lives. “No, no” says the Rebbe, “they will come plenty of times.”

The Rebbe said I should write the diary again this year (as herewith), but not about Moshe Rabeinu at the Kinus haTorah.

I should also speak in Yiddish next year at the Kinus haTorah - Oh No. I cannot - let us say half and half. “OK” says the Rebbe, “but the year after that, all Yiddish.”

The Rebbe informed me that there were a few letters for me “hanging about his office.” “Never mind, now,” I said. “I do not need the answers.” “But,” interjected the Rebbe, “you won’t object to receiving a letter?”

I told the Rebbe that Chaim Farro was complaining that he had a headache, but I told him not to worry because we will give him a bigger one when he comes to Manchester.

The Rebbe stated that the Shvuos trip must continue. If the Purim flight interferes, then cancel the Purim flight. He was very pleased with my grandsons who had attended every ‘service’ in ‘770.’ We left the Rebbe after a stay of one hour 10 minutes.

Hershel Pecker went into Yechidus after we had left. He came out flushed and excited - the Rebbe had given him \$100 to buy his wife (whom he had left at home in London) a gift.

Here is an abridged version of my address to the Kinus Hatorah:

First - a thank you to Rabbi Mentlik and a couple of topical jokes. Then the Rebbe's theme over the past months has been "Who is a Jew?" The goyim, lehavdil, here in New York realized the dangers of pollution in the air, in the atmosphere, and in the water - and were taking immediate steps to safeguard the health of the Nation. In Israel, they are trying to pollute the whole spiritual existence of the Jewish People - **deliberate** pollution, by injecting Goyim into our midst. T.G. we had a leader who realises the danger to Klal Yisroel. The peculiar reaction of some Jews that the Rebbe has no right to interfere... The greatest Jew who ever lived was Moses, our teacher. He, under the guidance and instruction of the A'Mighty took the Jews out of the Golus of Egypt - slavery, cruelty and made them into a one and united nation. He taught them the Laws, the Torah and made them into the first decent and civilised nation on this earth. He led them to Israel with instructions of how to conquer and then divide the land amongst themselves. But, unfortunately, he did not enter or live in Eretz Yisroel.

(This bracketed part is for those from the town of Lubavitch only: Can anyone imagine Joshua telling the Israelites that they did not intend to be influenced by Moses because he never lived in Eretz Yisroel?! That they were going to keep the second day as the Day of Rest instead of the seventh, as directed by the A'Mighty through Moshe. Every generation had a Tzaddik. Today we have our Rebbe Shlita, who received divine inspiration and guidance on urgent problems affecting us all.)

I told the boys at '770' that they were living too near the **mountain**. You cannot visualize the impressive greatness and inspiring dominance of this great mountain unless you are many, many miles away from it. Same with the Rebbe. We in England, Australia, Israel and all over the world can see full well and realize the greatness of our Rebbe, much more so, than you boys living next to and near our great leader.

Could anyone visualise 50 or even 20 years ago that our Lubavitcher Rebbe would be celebrating a Purim Farbrengen with 3,000 Chassidim in Brooklyn, whilst thousands of Chassidim in every continent of the world would be listening to the Rebbe's words at the same identical moment. Do the boys appreciate what the Rebbe is doing for them and for all Jews with 'Mesiras Nefesh.' The Rebbe never leaves his office - works almost 24 hours a day. No holidays (vacation). Erev Yom Tov, the Rebbe is kept busy with Farbrengen (14 hours Torah this Shvuos), which needs terrific preparation. Where could anyone find today, or at any time, such a brilliant brain and scholarship in one man who can not only find 20 questions to ask on a couple of words of Rashi, but can also find and give the answers too.

The Rebbe told me to speak only good of Jews! So I can not tell you how badly you behave by going about with glum and miserable faces. When you have a chance of helping me by singing for the Rebbe's enjoyment and pleasure, you just turn the other way and grumble and mumble. All seem obsessed with his own secret sorrow. Where are all the happy faces and smiles we used to see here years ago? Most of these happy faces belonged to boys like you who are doing the Rebbe's work and doing it well in every country of the world and going from strength to strength. The Rebbe does not **need** thanks, but everybody likes a little appreciation. I will conclude as last year. Please G-d, don't make me a Tzorris Chossid. Give me the merit and the opportunity to write good news to the Rebbe every week or so. You do the same and with a happy heart and manner and so put our beloved Rebbe into a happier and more joyful frame of mind.

I was gratified to receive a tremendous amount of applause and acclamation. Rabbi Mentlik said "**zayer** good, Mr. Jaffe. I have given a big Chizuk to the Bochorim." Rabbi Chodakov said he heard "*Platzen*" after my speech and another rabbi said he didn't understand a word, but "*Alle hoben gelacht hob ich aich gelacht!*"

It was now time to leave for home. The bus arrived at '770' but the Rebbe's car was parked outside. The Rebbe had been to the Ohel and the car would be required to take him home. The bus therefore parked further up the street. I was again given the honour of davening Maariv at the Omud. Again very quickly as the Rebbe was fasting. The time was 9.35p.m and we were 'running' late. We had very little time to spare in order to catch our plane. I rushed out and as usual had great difficulty in getting the passengers onto the bus. Everyone wanted to be the last on. In addition to being late, I also hate to keep our Rebbe waiting to see us off. More so in this case, as he was fasting too.

He had expressed his wish to say farewell to us from the steps of '770.' The Rebbe normally gave us this honor, but it still could not be automatically taken for granted. At last all were in the bus which then moved towards '770' and the Rebbe, about 100 yards away. Then a terrible calamity, the driver refused to open the door so we could see and wave to the Rebbe. "Not whilst the bus is moving," said he and refused to stop, either. "Not allowed to stop on this road" said he. Although we could and did see the Rebbe's farewell, he couldn't see us because of the bluish tinted windows.

The plane left for home about midnight and took 6 hours 12 minutes to Manchester. We drank the Rebbe's vodka. Shacharis was 4.00a.m and at 700 miles an hour I would say it was a speedy davening. Also Kedusha at 40,000 feet must have been a '*Haicha Kedusha*.' T.G. we all arrived home well but tired.

Subsequently, I received a letter from the Rebbe saying how disappointed he was that I never said farewell to him before leaving '770' as I usually do.

It was almost worth being held prisoner by the bus driver in order to get such a letter from the Rebbe Shlita.

(To be continued...)