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ברוקלין, נ.י.

By the Grace of G-d
Erev Shabbos Rosh Chodesh
Shevat, 5740, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mr. Avrohom Laker, Chairman
and All Participants in the Chassidic Happening
Oak Park, Michigan

Greeting and Blessing:

I am pleased to extend greetings and good wishes to you, Mr. Chairman, and all Honorees and participants in this notable event.

Since everything is by Divine Providence - especially an event that has for its purpose the advancement of Yiddishkeit and Torah education in the community, its timing is significant. For it is taking place on the day after Shabbos Parshas Yisro, highlighted by the account of Mattan Torah (the Divine Revelation and Giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai), and in the month of Shevat, highlighted by the Yahrzeit of my predecessor, my father-in-law of saintly memory (10th of Shevat). Both these events are relevant to each other and to the present occasion.

One of the reasons why G-d gave us the Torah in the desert is to emphasize that the Torah is not linked exclusively with any particular country, not even the Holy Land; that wherever a Jew lives, he has to make a "Holy Land" of his surroundings, through his every-day life and conduct sanctified by G-d's Torah and Mitzvos.

This point comes to mind as we recall one of the first public pronouncements which my father-in-law made immediately upon setting foot in this country forty years ago: America is nit andersh! Insofar as the Torah and Mitzvos are concerned, he declared, "America is not different" from any other place, nor from the "Shtetel" in the so-called "Old World." A Jew's commitment to the eternal Torah cannot change with time and place.

And since "the essential thing is action," he immediately threw himself into a determined all-out effort to make his vision a reality, without pausing to rest from the scars of the War and the Holocaust which had overtaken him, and from which Divine Providence had saved him at the last moment, precisely for this purpose, as he was deeply convinced. Indeed, the destruction of the Jewish centers in Europe made it all the more imperative and urgent that American Jewry fill the tremendous void. How well he succeeded, with G-d's help, in this task is a matter of open record, as evidenced also by the Chabad-Lubavitch institutions and activities in all parts of this country, including your City and State.

I hope and pray that - inspired by his boundless dedication and Mesiras-Nefesh and accompanied by his eternal blessing - you will continue from strength to strength in this vital endeavor, and will do so with joy and enthusiasm, in the spirit of the Chassidic Happening. All the more so since, as the Alter Rebbe, Founder of Chabad, declared, "melody and song is the language of the heart," and the most effective way of giving expression to the deepest Jewish feelings of love of G-d, love of the Torah, and love of our Jewish people, and making Torah-true Yiddishkeit a sublime everyday experience.

With esteem and with blessing
for Hutzlocho, materially as well
as spiritually

by Schneerson