

RABBI MENACHEM M. SCHNEERSON

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מנחם מענדל שניאורסאהן  
ליוכאוויטש

770 איסטערן פארקוויי  
ברוקלין, נ.י.

By the Grace of G-d  
Erev Shabbos-Kodesh  
Mevorchim Chodesh Adar I,  
5746. Brooklyn, N.Y.

To All Participants in the  
Testimonial Benefit Dinner  
Lubavitch Educational Center  
Miami Beach, Fla.

Greeting and Blessing:

It is a time-honored Jewish custom to connect current events with our Jewish calendar. Certainly when the event is of special significance to the Jewish community and, indirectly, also to the city and state where the event is taking place.

Such an event is the present Annual Banquet, which is taking place on the 14th of Adar I, the day of Purim-Katan, "Purim-Minor." This day - were it not for the fact that the current year is a (Jewish) Leap Year, with the intercalation of an additional month of Adar - would have been celebrated as the festival of Purim (with the reading of the Megillah [Book of Esther], and other prescribed festivities). Thus, Purim-Katan is the precursor of Purim proper, with its eternal message and inspiration for all of us. To dwell, briefly, on one aspect that is particularly relevant to the occasion and is also of a universal nature:

One of the central episodes related in the Book of Esther is the confrontation between Haman, the ruthless Vizier of the Persian king, and "Mordechai the Jew," who "would not bend his knee, nor bow down to him." Seeing in Mordechai the personification of the Jewish people - "one people, scattered and dispersed among the nations, whose laws are different from those of any other people" (Esther 3:8), Haman correctly concludes that the Jewish people is indeed unique, and that despite its dispersion and being a minority, it is unified and held together by adherence to the Torah laws. Such a people will never completely assimilate and disappear in the natural order; hence he proposed a "final solution."

What Haman did not understand was that precisely because the Jewish people has preserved its identity, and culture, and way of life, it has been able to contribute the utmost to the host-country. Had Haman been living in the USA today, he would have realized that the strength and greatness of this blessed land and of this nation are derived from the strength of the components that constitute the whole, including, above all, the various nationalities that constitute the "One Nation Under G-d." E Pluribus Unum.

The Lubavitch Educational Center has an enviable record of fostering the ageless tradition of the "People of Mordechai." It deserves the support of all.

With esteem and blessing

*M. Schneerson*