

Derhe

A Chassidic

סידישער דערהער

הָלְלוּ אֶת ה' פִּלְגִּימִים
שִׁבְחוּהוּ פִּלְהֲאָמִים:
כִּי גִבֹר עָלֵינוּ חֲסִדוֹ
וְאַמֶּת־ה' לְעוֹלָם
הָלְלוּ י-ה: (תהלים קיז)



NISSAN 5778
ISSUE 67 (144)
MARCH 2018



4 **Crowning Moment**
DVAR MALCHUS

6 **"Shnas Tismach happens once in a thousand years!"**
LEBEN MITTEN REBBE'N - PESACH 5748

13 **We Will Prevail**
KSAV YAD KODESH

14 **Seudas Moshiach**
LIVING IT, BREATHING IT, EATING IT

26 **Sharing Good News**
DARKEI HACHASSIDUS

30 **The Tzemach Tzedek**
TIMELINE

32 **The Scholar and Savior**
A CHASSIDISHER MAISE

34 **Nichoach**
PRESERVING CHABAD MUSIC FOR POSTERITY

42 **Nissim**
8 FACTS

44 **Education Day, U.S.A.**
THE REBBE'S VISION FOR EDUCATION

58 **No Need to Worry**
DER REBBE VET GEFINEN A VEG

60 **Chalukas Hamatzos**
MOMENTS

66 **Derher Letters**



About the Cover:

The Rebbe distributes Kos Shel Bracha.

A Chassidisher Derher is honored to feature unique and historic photos from Jewish Educational Media's Living Archive photo collection. The Living Archive is a project to preserve, and provide access to the video, audio, and photographic recordings of the Rebbe. These photos are copyright by JEM and are available at TheLivingArchive.org



A Chassidisher Derher Magazine is a publication geared toward bochurim, published and copyrighted by

A Chassidisher Derher
under the auspices of
Vaad Hatmimim Haolami.

All articles in this publication
are original content.

Vaad Talmidei Hatmimim

Rabbi Tzvi Altein

Publisher

Rabbi Yossi Kamman

Editor in Chief

Rabbi Mendel Jacobs

Editors

Rabbi Shalom Laine

Rabbi Eliezer Zalmanov

Rabbi Moshe Zaklikovsky

Advisory Committee

Rabbi Mendel Alperowitz

Rabbi David Olidort

Design

Rabbi Mendy Weg

Printed by

The Print House

Photo Credits

Chabad.org

Jewish Educational Media

Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad

Kfar Chabad Magazine

Special Thanks to

Rabbi Chaim Shaul Brook

Rabbi Osher Farkash

Rabbi Mendel Feller

Rabbi Yosef Gourarie

Rabbi Mendel Gourarie

Rabbi Shmuel Lubecki

Rabbi Michael Seligson

Rabbi Elkanah Shmotkin

Reproduction of any portion of this magazine is not permissible without express permission from the copyright holders, unless for the use of brief quotations in reviews and similar venues.

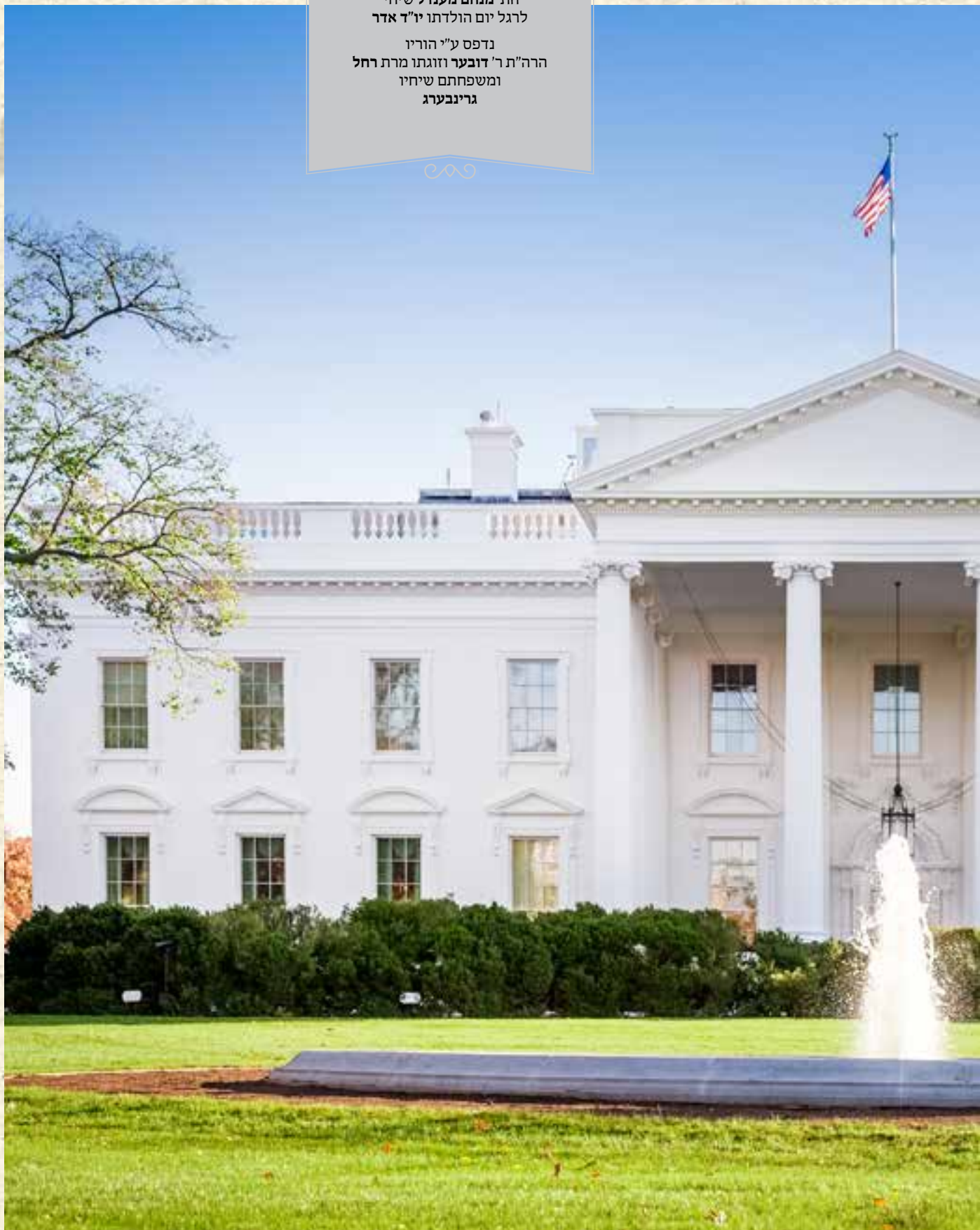
Submit your questions and comments:

(718) 305 6859, Feedback@Derher.org

To subscribe, order a copy, or access back issues visit us at www.Derher.org

נא לשמור על קדושת הגליון.

לזכות
הת' **מנחם מענדל שיחי'**
לרגל יום הולדתו יו"ד **אדר**
נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' **דובער** וזוגתו מרת **רחל**
ומשפחתם שיחיו
גרינבערג





Education Day, U.S.A.

The Rebbe's Vision for Education



This day [Yud-Alef Nissan] was proclaimed by the government of our country as a day to contemplate the purpose of creation and the mission given to all of humanity—to serve Hashem. By fulfilling Hashem's commandments—beginning with the *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach*, and in general, “לשבת יצרה”—to act with civility.

This is obviously not in my honor or in the honor of my father's house. This is an honor bestowed upon the entire [Lubavitch] movement, which has been active for more than two hundred years now, working towards one goal: To bring peace and brotherhood between the Jewish people themselves, and amongst all the nations, until we reach the point of “לעבדו שכם אחד”—when all the nations of the world will serve Hashem of one accord...

(Sichas Yud-Alef Nissan 5742)

The Rebbe often pointed out that the Rebbeim expressed an astonishing interest in the *chinuch* of children. The first Rebbe of Chassidus, the Baal Shem Tov, commented that the best years of his life were when he was an assistant teacher in a *cheder*. The Frierdiker Rebbe, the Rebbe's predecessor, put everything at risk—including his life—to establish *chadarim* in Soviet Russia.

The Rebbe's work in education is all-encompassing. On a communal level, the Rebbe led initiatives to increase enrollment in Jewish schools and camps, raised the bar of Jewish education, and established hundreds of schools across the globe. On a personal level, the Rebbe is the first and only Rebbe to regularly address children's gatherings and interact with them on a regular basis, in addition to personally designing a children's program.

But the Rebbe's activities for *chinuch* aren't limited to the Jewish world. The Rebbe articulated a comprehensive vision on education in modern day society, including the role of the government and schools in a child's rearing. Over a period that spanned several presidencies, he pushed for various pieces of legislation that would advance this vision, as administrations and possibilities changed.

The First Year

The years 5736-5738 were a whirlwind of activities related to education. The Rebbe had announced that this was “a year of *chinuch*,” highlighting and encouraging numerous educational activities. (For a full overview of this *mitvza*, see *Children Educate—40 Years from Shnas Hachinuch*, Derher Iyar 5776.)

As this time-period was coming to a close, both chambers of the United States Congress passed a joint resolution recognizing the Rebbe’s work and calling on all Americans, and the president, to set aside one day on the calendar “devoted to the importance of education to the lives of its citizens and to the general well-being of the Nation.” In honor of the conclusion of “the Year of Education” (which the Rebbe had called for), Yud-Alef Nissan was chosen to be that day (April 18, 1978; the only national holiday observed based on the Jewish calendar!)

President Jimmy Carter signed a proclamation shortly afterwards. “I ask all Americans to observe [Education Day, U.S.A.] in such manner as reflects their commitment to education and their recognition of its importance to the welfare of this Nation.”

At the *farbrengen* on Yud-Alef Nissan, the Rebbe spoke at length on the subject, declaring that the fact that the United States of America—with its tremendous influence on the entire world—had made such a public proclamation recognizing the importance of education was in itself a historical step, and was a sign of the imminent arrival of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, when all nations will serve Hashem.

The proclamation of “Education Day, USA,” is of extraordinary



EVENT IN WASHINGTON HONORING THE REBBE’S SEVENTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY, 5737.

significance in impressing upon citizens the importance of education, both in their own lives as well as, and even more so, for the young generation in the formative years—particularly in the present day and age....It augurs well for the vital cause of education in the United States. It will, we hope and pray, also have a beneficial impact on education in all countries that look up to the United States of America for leadership and inspiration in all

vital matters that transcend national boundaries, and conduce to a better human society and a better world.¹

During this and a following *farbrengen*, the Rebbe articulated his broader vision for Education Day: A national holiday (which he compared to Mother’s Day and Father’s Day) upon which people would reflect on the importance of providing and investing in the best education for their children.² More specifically, it

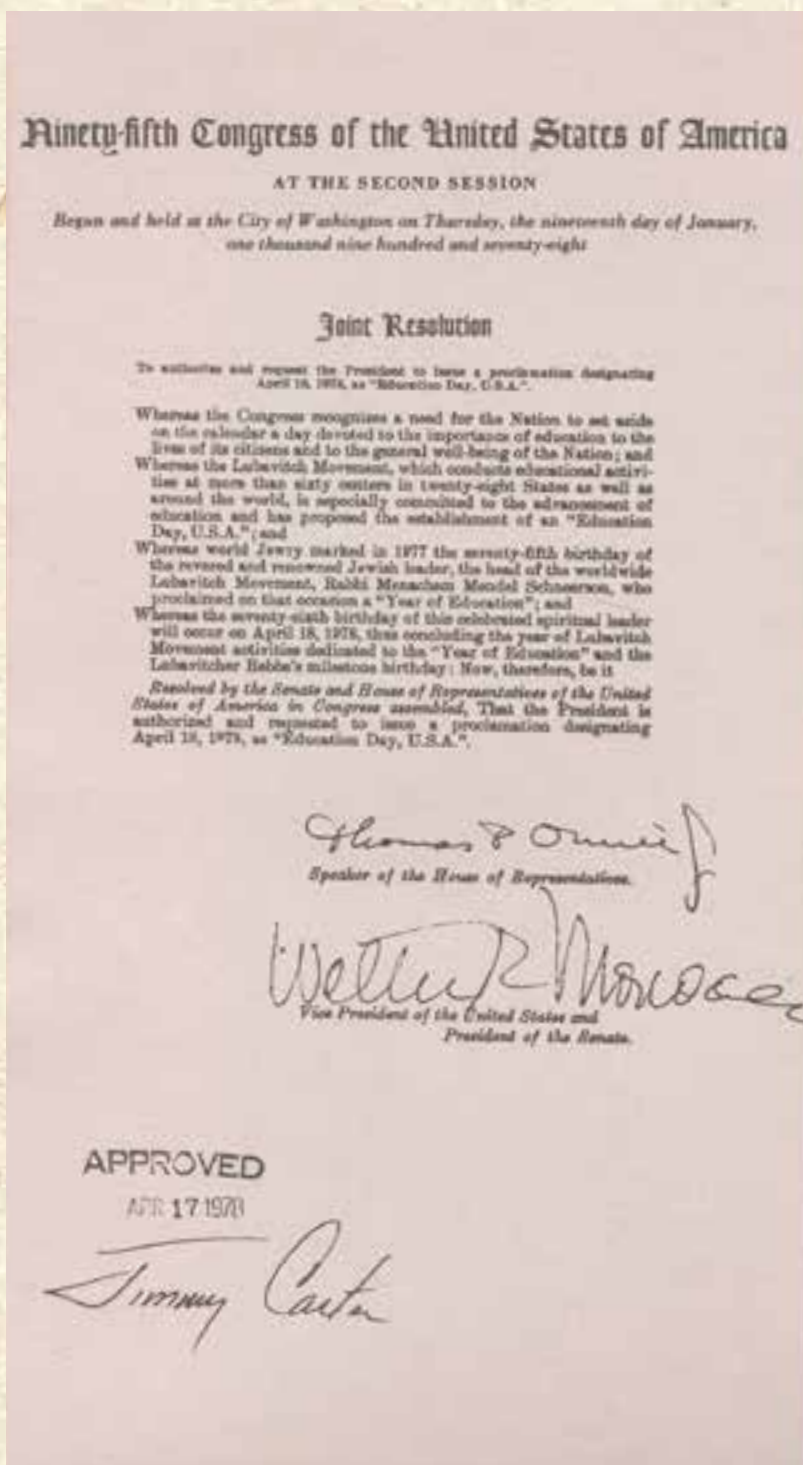
would be a time to reflect on how to better educate the child as a human being:

Education, in general, should not be limited to the acquisition of knowledge and preparation for a career, or, in common parlance, "to make a better living." And we must think in terms of a "better living" not only for the individual, but also for the society as a whole. The educational system must, therefore, pay more attention, indeed the main attention, to the building of character, with emphasis on moral and ethical values. (Need one be reminded of what happened in our lifetime in a country that ranked among the foremost in science, technology, philosophy, etc.?)

Education must put greater emphasis on the promotion of fundamental human rights and obligations of justice and morality, which are the basis of any human society, if it is to be truly human and not turn into a jungle.³ (See below for more.)

The Rebbe said that the only way to bring children's education to the forefront of people's minds is through the leadership of the government. At the Chof Av farbrengen that year, he urged that smaller government bodies throughout the country should follow the example of the federal government, and the same should be done throughout the world.

The government bodies of the country and locale should make an official emphasis on education, by declaring one day a year as Education Day, or in other ways... You should also publish literature on the subject that they will be able to take with them and read later on. Every person who hears these words...and has influence in the institutions that run the country, locale, city, or neighborhood...should



RESOLUTION OF THE FIRST EDUCATION AND SHARING DAY, 1978, SIGNED BY PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER.

...Subsequently, the president wrote a letter thanking the Rebbe. "I read with great interest the full page ad..."



arrange that the government body gather for a special meeting where they will make resolutions on education.⁴

The Rebbe noted that since the United States—a superpower—had already done so, it would be easier to encourage other countries to do the same.⁵ The Rebbe's remarks were published in a full-page ad in a national newspaper, and, subsequently, the president wrote a letter thanking the Rebbe. "I read with great interest the full page ad [...] portions of your response to the resolution passed by Congress designating April 18, 'Education Day - U.S.A.' I admire the thoughts which you expressed—and am grateful for your support and prayers."

Over the years, many cities, states, and countries followed suit, including then-Mayor Bernard

Sanders, who proclaimed "Education Day" in Burlington, Vermont. Professor Richard Sugarman, a longtime friend of his, said in an interview with Chabad.org that "Sanders appreciated the fact that the day honoring the Rebbe's birthday was designated as 'Education Day,' and was moved that a Chassidic leader like the Rebbe concerned himself 'not only with the spiritual condition of humanity, but their material condition as well.'" Sanders subsequently received a letter from the Rebbe thanking him, "I remember the day Bernard called," Professor Sugarman continues. "He says, 'I got a letter you might be interested in seeing.' I went over there and read it, and then I asked if he minded if I keep the original letter. I was surprised when he told

me, 'No, this letter is for me, I want to keep it.'"

As it happened, the Rebbe's global campaign for education would soon find a very practical outlet, on a controversial political issue that was just coming to the fore.

Federal Department of Education

Since the founding of the United States, the education of its citizens had been controlled and managed almost exclusively by state and local governments, with little involvement from the federal government. As of 1788, all federal initiatives in education were consolidated under the Secretary of the Department of HEW (Health, Education, and Welfare), with the result that education became a lower priority.

The Rebbe supported the effort in other ways as well... dispatching Rabbi Avraham Shemtov to drum up support from senators and congressmen.

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD



CHABADIC REBBE CELEBRATES WITH CONGRESSIONAL PLAUDITS

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN
OF CALIFORNIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, November 1, 1977

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, on November 15, 1977, a unique U.S. Congress tribute-honoree will be held in Los Angeles to honor the Lubavitcher Rebbe in his 75th year. I am privileged to serve as chairman of the tribute. The honorary chairmen of the event are our U.S. Senators Alan Cranston and R. I. Dole.

In his person and pastorate, the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson has reconciled paradoxes and synthesized contradictions. He has turned Torah and the modern values of citizenship into a democracy. Rabbi Schneerson is a master of the mysteries of the Lubavitcher Rebbe has inspired in his Jewish people a phenomenal growth in the Jewish community.

tionality, and creed with medical, psychological, occupational, and social work services.

The Chabad-Lubavitch vocational rehabilitation program is approved and partially supported by the City of Los Angeles under the Comprehensive Education and Training Act. This program provides job training for the hard-core unemployed.

The Chabad-Lubavitch movement also maintains senior citizens programs, a network of community centers, campus outreach programs, and an intensive Torah education operation.

Earlier this year, under the chairmanship of House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. and Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, a U.S. Congress reception was held in Washington. There 44 Senators and 134 Congressmen saluted Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson as part of the worldwide celebration of the Rebbe's 75th year.

I have had the profound personal pleasure of working closely with the Rebbe's staff in Los Angeles. I know the extent to which they derive their spiritual and academic and day-to-day direction from their leader. They have been able to overcome all odds because their staff always been not merely a undertaking, but a service of the Rebbe under the direction of His Holiness Schneerson. I trust we will see just one in existing Lubavitch and in working with such good results.



A TRIBUTE TO HARRIS SCHNEERSON

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, January 22, 1978, was a day of historic importance in the history of the American Jewish community. That date marked the 75th anniversary of Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson as leader of the worldwide Lubavitcher movement.

Rabbi Schneerson's revered predecessor, Rabbi Joseph Isaac Schneerson, of blessed memory, set an unparalleled example defending Judaism from the ravages of Soviet totalitarianism.

The present Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, has been a worthy successor to his family father-in-law. The Rebbe has fought against the silence and assimilation with the same effectiveness his predecessor brought to the battle for authentic Torah-true Judaism.

In my home State and in the congressional district, I represent people of all faiths and respect the work of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and his disciples. The tribute to the Rebbe in California is carried on by more than a score of dedicated young people working under the dynamic leadership of the Rebbe's senior emissaries, Rabbi Shmuel David Reichman and Rabbi Eliezer Chino. Further, the material and spiritual ties between the Lubavitcher movement and Los Angeles Jewry are strengthened by the annual visit of the respected educator, Rabbi Moshe Engelberg, who represents the United Lubavitcher Federation.

All Americans can take pride in the accomplishments of the Lubavitcher Rebbe over the past quarter of a century. May the Almighty continue to inspire and strengthen and bless him with good health and "long days."

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

Mr. Abraham Ribicoff, a senator who had directed the Department of HEW, explained at the time: "No one is busier than the Secretary of HEW. Crises in health and welfare demand his time. Education, which presents a different kind of problem, is relegated to a lower priority. No serious work is done in developing a coordinated federal role in education. Nor will this role ever be developed as long as the top federal education officials remain at the level of commissioner and Assistant Secretary."⁶

But the creation of a new cabinet-level department for education was mired in controversy, and hundreds of bills creating such a department had been struck down over the years. Small-government advocates argued that it would add to the bloat of the federal government, religious groups feared that it would cause private schools to lose ground and funding to public schools, and states' rights proponents feared the federal government's increasing involvement in education.

It wasn't the highest priority for President Carter, and nothing substantial was done for the first couple years of his presidency. Then, in his "State of the Union" address to Congress in the beginning of 1979, he finally put it on the agenda.

A few days later, at the Yud Shevat *farbrengen*,⁷ the Rebbe came out decisively in favor of the new department. The Rebbe quoted the president's words at considerable length, and pointed out just how revolutionary the idea truly was—that in order to elevate the status of education in the federal government, it was worth spending considerably more money and upending over two-hundred years of precedent to establish an entirely new department.

The Rebbe emphasized the *hashgacha pratis* that this had happened only a few months after Education Day.

The Rebbe supported the effort in other ways as well, writing letters of support to President Carter and Vice President Walter Mondale, and dispatching Rabbi Avraham Shemtov to drum up support from senators and congressmen. Throughout, the Rebbe emphasized that the new momentum in education must also be channeled in raising the quality of education—that in addition to filling the child with facts, education must focus on educating the child as a person.

The full story of this campaign is beyond the scope of this article, but suffice it to say that many years later, Secretary of Education Richard Riley spoke about the Rebbe's support for the department's creation and remarked, "I owe my job to him."

Following the inaugural Education Day proclamation by President Carter, every president has followed suit, with certain variations in tone and style. At the Yud-Alef Nissan *farbrengens*, which were broadcast live, the Rebbe would thank the president, and often quoted the particular proclamation and its emphases. The following are some highlights:

5742—National Day of

Reflection: That year's proclamation was for "A National Day of Reflection," in which "Americans pause to reflect upon the ancient ethical principles and moral values which are the foundation of our character as a nation," that "education must be more than factual enlightenment—it must enrich the character as well as the mind," mentioning for the first time the *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach* as a moral code for all of mankind.



LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

Focus

There seems to be a contradiction inherent in promoting Education Day: If education is truly so critical and is an endeavor that permeates every moment of a child's life, what is the value or meaning of proclaiming one day as Education Day?

In answering this question, the Rebbe went so far as to compare Education Day to our *Yomim Tovim*. In addition to pointing out that Education Day was now *dina d'malchusa dina*, it is the law of the land—and thus binding according to Torah—the Rebbe explained that the Torah itself emphasizes this very concept, and the *Yomim Tovim* are predicated on this idea. The Rebbe provided several examples:

- A person is obligated to learn Torah every day, at every possible moment—yet there's one day a year, Shavuot, when a person is inspired anew to accept the Torah and increase his study.
- Every single day of the year, a person must view himself as if Hashem took him out of Mitzrayim—but we still set aside Pesach to celebrate our redemption, and this permeates the rest of the year.
- One of the six mitzvos in which a person is obligated every moment of his life is to accept Hashem's authority, and this is the foundation of the entire Torah—and on Rosh Hashanah, we rededicate ourselves to Hashem.
- One must thank Hashem every single day, e.g. during the morning *brachos* and so on—yet there's a single day of the year, Sukkos, when we thank Hashem for the harvest and for giving us a good year.
- This same principle is also expressed in bar and bas mitzvahs, and in the *minhag* of bringing a child to *cheder* on his third birthday.

So too, there would now be one day a year dedicated to renewed inspiration and focus on education—Education Day—and this awareness would permeate the rest of the year.⁸

In the *sicha* on Yud-Alef Nissan, the Rebbe explained that for a person to be able to focus on carrying out his mission in life as a *shliach* of Hashem—whether as a Jew fulfilling his 613 mitzvos or as a non-Jew fulfilling his seven—it is necessary to reflect every morning on this mission. Reflection also has the advantage of thought over speech and action: It lifts a person to a place beyond the limitations of time and space that divide us, and in this reflection all of mankind comes together as one. The Rebbe then encouraged everyone to follow the president's directive and to reflect.⁹

The Rebbe later said that the president's announcement about *sheva mitzvos* came directly from above: When Yidden didn't utilize their influence to publicize the *sheva mitzvos*, Hashem in His great kindness shifted the cultural winds of the country, so that the president himself was leading the charge.¹⁰

The Rebbe also spoke at length about the fact that the *Aseres Hadibros* were emphasized—by the government—in connection with the *sheva mitzvos b'nei Noach*, underscoring that these are not simply principles of civilization but *commandments*, given by G-d; that people must follow the *sheva mitzvos* not because human morality requires it but because they are divine.¹¹

5745, Education Day: The Rebbe lauded the president's continued emphasis on the *sheva mitzvos* as unprecedented in the history of the world, thanking the president "in the name of all of *am Yisrael*," and encouraging him to continue in this vein and not be ashamed of those who mock. The Rebbe urged Congress to follow his lead, and Yidden to take advantage of the tremendous opportunity to spread

awareness of the *sheva mitzvos*, which now had the additional strength of *dina d'malchusa dina*.¹² Over the years, the Rebbe spoke dozens of times about the tremendous power of the president's support for the *sheva mitzvos*, making this a unique time in history, when the government not only countenances such activity but encourages it as well.

5751, Education Day: The Rebbe noted that the Joint Resolution of Congress for Education Day was number 104, the *gematriya* of צ"ד (the Rebbe was entering his ninetieth year), which, as the Rebbe explained, refers to the *avoda* of bringing the entire world to the side (*tzad*) of Yidden (*tzadi*).¹³

Education in the Modern World

Over the years, and especially at the televised *farbrengens*, the Rebbe articulated a comprehensive vision for education in America.

1. **Educate the child:** The primary responsibility of the school system is to educate the child to be a good and moral person, to make him into a *mentch*. In previous generations this role was filled by the parents, but today's families depend on the schools to educate the children, and the current system of just providing the child with a repertoire of knowledge accomplishes nothing in this area. Knowledge is a tool for a person to reach his aims, but it does not tell him what his aims should be.
Your intellect can only establish what the facts are; what is true and what is false. But it cannot tell you how to

*act; what's good and what's bad. For example: intellect will establish that two times two equals four; if someone says that it's five, your intellect tells you that he is lying. But if you have two options, one leading towards life and one to death, intellect can only establish that this path leads to life and this one leads to death—it cannot tell you which one to choose.*¹⁴

Far more important than giving tools to a child is educating the child himself.

2. **This education must be founded on belief in G-d:** A moral education based solely on intellect, untethered from belief in G-d, is empty—a person faced with a moral decision is not necessarily swayed by a vague argument that "*s'past nisht*" to be a bad person, and threat of punishment by law-enforcement is often not a deterrent either. Furthermore, the absence of *emuna* leads to distorted values that may cause tremendous harm. The only true way to educate a child to be a moral person and productive member of society is by teaching them that there is a G-d Who runs every aspect of the world and watches everything we do. On our currency is written "In G-d we trust," indicating a belief in G-d that permeates a person to the extent that he depends on Him in his day-to-day life. Only by educating children that "[the world] has a Master Who is not an abstraction, but a personal G-d; that this Supreme Being

takes a “personal interest” in the affairs of each and every individual, and to Him everyone is accountable for one’s daily conduct,”¹⁵ would they have the motivation to lead moral lives.¹⁶

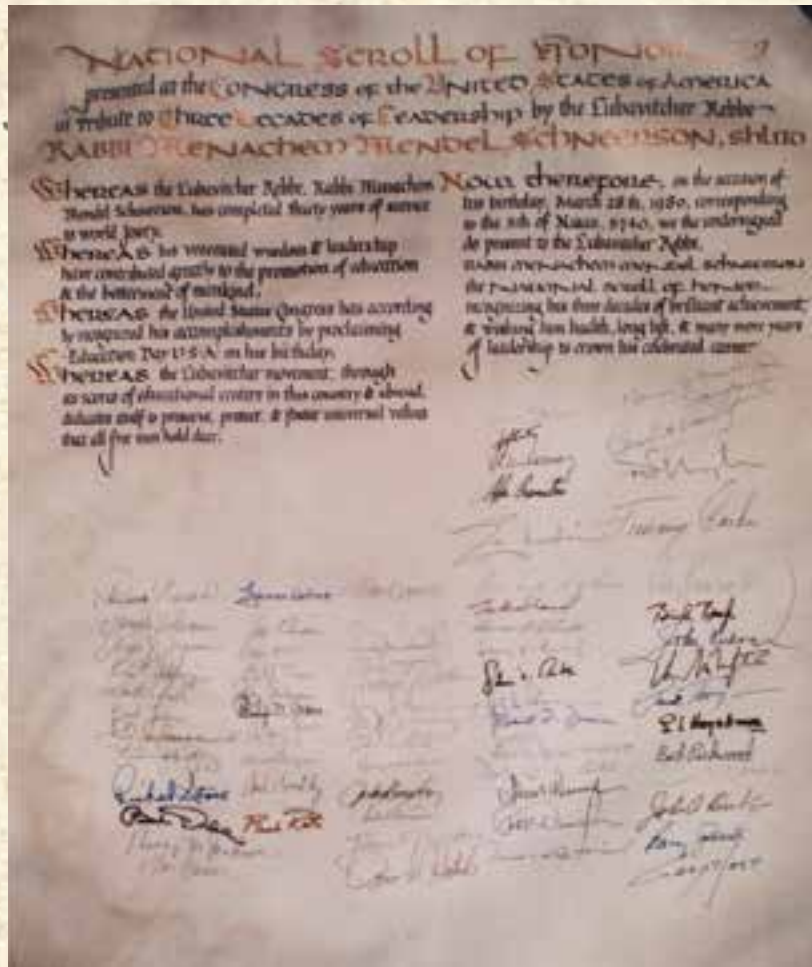
For both of these points, the Rebbe often brought the example of the Nazis. Their blunder wasn’t a logical one—they didn’t think that two times two equals five—on the contrary, they were the most advanced civilization in the world. It was distorted man-made values that caused an entire nation to systematically murder millions of people, all while championing animal-rights. Their knowledge became a destructive tool, a terrible weapon, leading to the near destruction of the world.¹⁷

There were two primary avenues the Rebbe saw for bringing an awareness of G-d into the schools: funding for parochial schools and a Moment of Silence.

G-d in the Schools

In 1962, a group of Jewish parents sued their public school in Long Island for adopting a voluntary school prayer developed by the board of regents. Although the prayer was short and non-denominational, they claimed that it infringed upon the First Amendment of the Constitution separating state and religion.

Much as with the controversy surrounding public *menorah* lightings, prominent Jewish groups came out in support of banning the prayer, claiming that it might cause the Jewish children to be discriminated against by their non-Jewish classmates and teachers, not realizing—or caring—that this would remove any semblance of G-dly



NATIONAL SCROLL OF HONOR SIGNED BY CONGRESS HONORING THE REBBE ON YUD-ALEF NISSAN 5740.



FARBRENGEN YUD-ALEF NISSAN 5737

LIBRARY OF AGUDAS CHASIDEI CHABAD

awareness from the lives of millions of Jewish and non-Jewish children.

Unfortunately, they won in the Supreme Court, and school prayer was banned throughout the United States, reversing centuries of common practice. Shortly thereafter, the Rebbe came out forcefully against this convoluted interpretation of the First Amendment—which effectively promoted the secularization of American public life, as opposed to religious freedom—urging everyone who had the power to do so to prevail upon the judges to reverse their opinion for the benefit of both Jewish and non-Jewish children. A subsequent court decision only strengthened the ban of religion

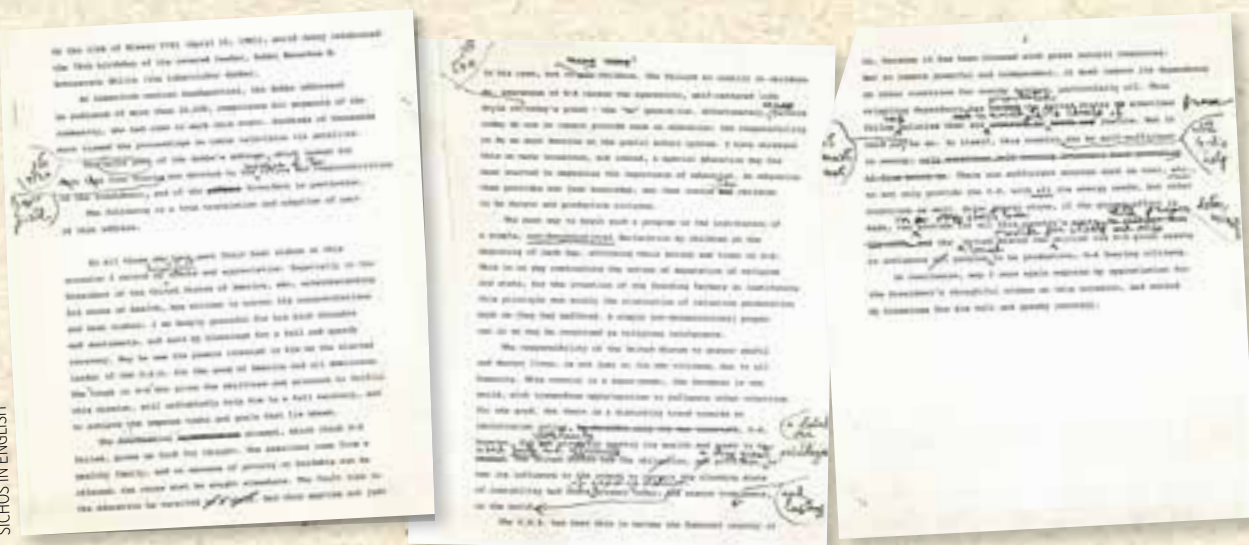
in the classroom, and the Rebbe continued speaking about the issue intermittently.

In 1980, Ronald Reagan was elected president, which signalled a new opportunity to reverse the troubling trend, as he ran on a platform of restoring school prayer. (Ironically, his platform also included a plan to eliminate the Department of Education, in which he was ultimately unsuccessful). At the Yud Shevat *farbrengen*, a few days before he was to be sworn in, the Rebbe encouraged the president to bring a practical belief in Hashem back into the schools in the form of school prayer or at least a Moment of Silence, and also to begin giving

funding for private schools, which would enable parents to give their children an education based on belief in G-d—another issue that Reagan supported.

These efforts increased in their urgency few months later, when the president was shot and almost killed. After thanking the president at the Yud-Alef Nissan *farbrengen* for sending a telegram even while he was recovering, the Rebbe pointed out that the shooting couldn't be blamed on the typical scapegoat—poverty—because the shooter had come from an affluent home. The problem clearly lay elsewhere—in the broken education system.¹⁸





THE REBBE'S HAGAHOS ON A PRESS RELEASE IN ENGLISH, WITH A PORTION OF THE YUD-ALEF NISSAN FARBRENGEN, 5741, ADDRESSING THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN AMERICA.

Over the following years, the Rebbe continued speaking about this issue at the televised *farbrengens*, pointing to it as a deceptively simple but effective solution to the rising tide of crime, and shifting the focus exclusively to a Moment of Silence, as opposed to school prayer, as this would categorically avoid any and all constitutional issues. (It should be noted that crime in the United States skyrocketed in the 1960s, and continued for decades, until the 1990s, when things calmed down. A number of reasons can be attributed to the decline, but the remedy merely dealt with the *symptoms* as opposed to the underlying cause of the issue. See the *sicha* of Simchas Torah 5746.¹⁹)

The Rebbe also expanded the scope of the Moment of Silence initiative, encouraging universities of higher learning to adopt it as well, and urging *frum* schools to put more of an emphasis on *emuna* in Hashem—that if the children daven before school, there should be some type of *tefilla* or reflection before class begins.²⁰

The Rebbe also continued speaking about government

funding for parochial schools. The Rebbe offered President Reagan tremendous personal encouragement on both of these matters, lauding his courage in declaring his open support for religion, even though it was unpopular and looked down upon, and decrying the Jewish forces

that were fighting him in the name of the Constitution (which in truth stemmed from a deep sense of shame of their Judaism).²¹ Both of these initiatives were met with ups and downs in the courts and legislatures, and the Rebbe would sometimes subtly react during *farbrengens*. (In

First Hand Reports

In one particularly fascinating letter to President Reagan, the Rebbe encourages his moral leadership by relaying reports from shlichim in the field:

I want you to know, dear Mr. President, that from the reports reaching me from our emissaries in most States of the Union and in many major centers and outposts in various parts of the world, it is particularly gratifying to note that your consistent, often courageous, leadership in areas of the traditional American and universal values is finding an increasingly receptive response. This is even more evident in the realm of education, as you rightly note in your letter.

Similarly, we have reason to believe that your forceful supportive stance to help upgrade the moral standards of human relationships on the basis of the so-called Seven Noahide Laws (with all their ramifications) as imperatives of a Supreme Being Who monitors all human conduct, has made a great impact on the consciousness of the contemporary troubled generation of mankind.

...Your lasting contribution, through word and deed, to the advancement of all inhabitants in this blessed land and of humanity at large, will surely stand you in good stead for a goodly measure of Divine blessings.



PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA HOLDS A RECEPTION WITH A GROUP OF SHLUCHIM TO SIGN THE PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION IN HONOR OF EDUCATION AND SHARING DAY, 5775.

fact, after one of Reagan's speeches on the issue, the Rebbe noted the fact that Congress applauded his words forty-two times.²²)

It is beyond the scope of this article to cover the Rebbe's full initiatives and arguments on these two issues, but the results speak for themselves: Although President Reagan's efforts to pass a constitutional amendment allowing school prayer ultimately failed, in 1985 the Supreme Court ruled that, with certain conditions, a moment of silence was permitted under the Constitution, paving the way for all states to implement it. Today, twenty-three states permit teachers to hold a moment of silence, and thirteen require it. Government vouchers

would take somewhat longer to come to fruition: It began gathering steam in the early 1990s, and there are now seventeen states with full voucher systems and a total of twenty-seven states that provide some type of reimbursement.

Global Yet Personal

During the Yud-Alef Nissan *farbrengen*, the Rebbe would always thank the president and the United States government for proclaiming Education Day, and would take the opportunity to speak directly to them about America's place on the world stage; as a superpower, any effort to raise the bar of education in the United States would have an automatic effect on all other countries.²³ And as the United States

increased its commitment to G-dly values, thus expressing "the real spirit of the American nation," the civilized world would increasingly look to it for guidance, as a moral and spiritual superpower.²⁴ Furthermore, the Rebbe advocated that the United States should leverage its billions of dollars of economic assistance to other countries to urge them to put more of a focus on education as well, with emphasis on moral values.²⁵

Some of the effects of Education Day were on a less global scale, but no less potent. Rabbi Avraham Shemtov, the Rebbe's shliach to Washington, D.C., would host annual receptions in Washington in honor of Yud-Alef Nissan, which were

attended by elected officials from across the political spectrum.

Senator Jesse Helms, a prominent and controversial conservative senator from North Carolina, attended one of these events. This was noteworthy because he was among the most virulent anti-Israel senators in Congress: He proposed a resolution calling on Israel to return the West Bank (in 1975), he was the only senator to cast a vote against prohibiting companies from boycotting Israel (in 1977), and he later called for the United States to break diplomatic ties with Israel over the Lebanon War. Then, his approach to Eretz Yisrael underwent a sudden, baffling shift, well documented by historians but ill-explained.

Attorney Alan Dershowitz later related: “I was involved in civil rights and human rights, and I considered Senator [Jesse] Helms to be the enemy of the Jewish people. At the time, he was not a friend of the Jewish people and not a friend of Israel. He stood against everything that I stood for, and against what many of my friends and colleagues stood for. In 1984, when I heard that Senator Helms was being honored by Chabad at a reception in Washington, I was surprised and disappointed. In my naiveté, I had the ‘chutzpah’ and wrote a letter to the Rebbe, respectfully asking why he chose to honor a man who was, in my view, against Israel, against integration, against social rights, and equality for all.

“The Rebbe replied with a very poignant and powerful letter. The Rebbe explained to me how one influences people. He explained that Senator Helms was not being singled out for an honor, but was simply one of many US Senators and US

“Then the Rebbe wrote a long and beautiful P.S., explaining how one influences other human beings...”

Representatives who came to the Education Day, USA reception.

“Then the Rebbe wrote a long and beautiful P.S., explaining how one influences other human beings. All people—but especially politicians, who often act out of expediency more than conviction—should be engaged in a positive way. That way, we can try to influence them. He said I should watch carefully to see whether or not we have had an influence on Jesse Helms.

“Sure enough, very shortly after he was honored, Senator Helms assumed a very influential role on the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee and became one of the strongest supporters of Israel and of other Jewish causes as well. So obviously the Rebbe had an enormous influence on persuading Jesse Helms... to become a beacon for the Jewish people.”

~

The Rebbe’s efforts in education for all citizens of this country, and in fact all citizens of the world, continue to manifest and grow and ultimately change the world. Quoting the *possuk* from *Tzefaniah*, “כי אז אהפך אל עמים שפה ברורה לקרא כלם בשם ה' לעבדו שכם אחד—For then I will transform the peoples to a pure language, that all of them call in the name of the Hashem, to worship Him of one accord,” the Rebbe often spoke of the *geula* as a time when all inhabitants

of the world will recognize and serve Hashem.

Beyond reaching every Jew in the world and bringing them back to their heritage, the Rebbe made it our mission to reach out to each and every human being and bring them into a G-dly conscience. Then we will fulfill the charge of *dor hashvi'i*, to finally and completely bring the *Shechina* down here, with the coming of Moshiach now! **T**

1. English adaption of the *farbrengen* published at the time: www.chabad.org/816460
2. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 3, p. 254.
3. English adaption of the *farbrengen* published at the time: www.chabad.org/816460
4. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 3, p. 253-254.
5. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 3, p. 253-254.
6. Abraham Ribicoff, A Separate Department of Education: Why Not the Best? *Change* (February 1978), p. 27.
7. Sichos Kodesh 5739 vol. 2, p. 12.
8. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 2, p. 122-126; English adaption of the *farbrengen* published at the time: www.chabad.org/816460
9. Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 3, p. 1196.
10. Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 2, p. 851.
11. Toras Menachem 5742 vol. 3, p. 1264.
12. Toras Menachem 5745 vol. 3, p. 1840; Toras Menachem 5746 vol. 2, p. 43.
13. Toras Menachem 5751 vol. 2, p. 441-443.
14. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 3, p. 251.
15. English letter 26 Nissan 5724
16. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 2, p. 172; Toras Menachem 5743 vol. 4, p. 1745; Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 4, p. 2168.
17. Sichos Kodesh 5738 vol. 3, p. 252; Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 4, p. 2168.
18. Sichos Kodesh 5741 vol. 3, p. 7.
19. Toras Menachem 5746 vol. 1, p. 407.
20. Toras Menachem 5743 vol. 4, p. 1750.
21. Toras Menachem 5743 vol. 3, p. 1219; 5744 vol. 2, p. 620; Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 3, p. 997.
22. Toras Menachem 5744 vol. 3, p. 997.
23. See, e.g. Sichos Kodesh 5738, p. 133.
24. Letter to President Reagan 25 Nissan 5742.
25. See, e.g. Sichos Kodesh 5738, p. 133.