

לזכות  
כל נכדינו שיחיו  
שיגדלו לתורה לחופה ולמעשים  
טובים לנח"ר כ"ק אדמו"ר

נדפס ע"י  
הרה"ת ר' יצחק מאיר וזוגתו  
מרת לאה שיחיו  
שפאלטר

# PRACTICAL HORA'OS

A CLOSER  
LOOK AT  
SOME OF  
THE REBBE'S  
HORA'OS

## LUBAVITCH IS APOLITICAL

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*While the Rebbe corresponded with, guided and advised world leaders and elected officials, it has always been made clear that Lubavitch is not a political organization, and holds no political leanings. Here is a compilation of the Rebbe's hora'os on the topic of politics—or the lack thereof.*

## A FOUNDATION OF LUBAVITCH ACTIVISM

When it came to elections in Eretz Yisroel, the Rebbe was clear about the importance of participating in the elections and voting for candidates who are G-d fearing. At the same time, the Rebbe carefully avoided any political affiliation, as Lubavitch is not connected to any party, and reaches out to every Jew, regardless of their politics. The Rebbe expressed this to a respected *Charedi* activist on 15 Teves, 5714:

“As is known, Lubavitch is exceptionally careful to avoid any political affiliation, in Eretz Hakodesh just as in other lands. This is by longtime direction of my father-in-law, the [Friediker] Rebbe, and his father, the Rebbe [Rashab]. Of course, I also reinforced this *hora'ah*, even though this matter needs no reinforcement, as it is a foundational element of Lubavitch's approach in the realm of activism.”<sup>1</sup>

In a letter to the administration of the *Reshet*—the network of Chabad schools in Eretz Yisroel established by the Rebbe—the Rebbe wrote:

The approach of Lubavitch, which has long been known, is that it does not enter at all into anything partisan. Certainly, you should explain this in a pleasant and amicable way... But in any case, you should under no circumstances agree to take on anything that has any political affiliation.”<sup>2</sup>

## NOT JUST APOLITICAL, BUT ABOVE POLITICS

As is known, in keeping with the stance of Lubavitch, which is apolitical, and more correctly, above politics, there is no room for party-affiliated youth activities to take place in the schools belonging to the *Reshet* and the like.<sup>3</sup>

## TORAH STUDY HAS NO POLITICAL CONNECTION

*From a letter to Mr. Mordechai Rich, of Melbourne, Australia.*

“... What you must do is to guard against giving the *yeshiva* a political tint or a partisan character, for Torah-study is not connected with politics or parties. This has been one of the foundations for the success of Lubavitcher *mosdos*—they have always been ‘beyond-parties’ (nonpartisan).”<sup>4</sup>

## HOSTING A CANDIDATE

In Cheshvan 5740 (November 1979), Massachusetts Senator Ted Kennedy formally announced his intention to run against incumbent President Jimmy Carter for the Democratic nomination in the 1980 presidential election. The previous summer, in the leadup to Kennedy's campaign, Rabbi Dovid Raskin wrote to the Rebbe, inquiring whether to organize a dinner honoring Kennedy. "Is this proper?" he asked. The Rebbe's answer was succinct:

“כפשוטו - מופרך.”

“This is, of course, out of the question.”<sup>5</sup>

## LUBAVITCH TAKING A POLITICAL STANCE?

In 5741 (1980), New York's 16th Congressional District was an open seat, as incumbent Elizabeth Holtzman had stepped down to run for a Senate seat. Democrat Chuck Schumer—then a state Assemblyman—ran for, and ultimately won, the seat, his first in Congress. Three other politicians vied for the seat as well, including Susan Alter, a frum woman serving on the City Council. On 19 Tammuz, 5740, the Rebbe wrote to Alter, making clear that Lubavitch would not be taking sides in the election.

“I received your (undated) letter, and was surprised to read in it about a purported stand of Lubavitch in connection with the forthcoming elections for Congress from the Sixteenth Congressional District.

“It is well known that neither I personally, nor the Lubavitch movement, take a public stand in any election to any office, which is a policy of long standing. It therefore surprises me how you could have received any impression contrary to this established policy.”

## THEY HAVE A FIRM DIRECTIVE

An individual wrote to the Rebbe, expressing his shock at a decision Tzeirei Chabad in Yerushalayim had taken. In a letter dated 10 Nissan, 5720, the Rebbe wrote that while he was not fluent in the specifics, certainly they had a reason for their actions. The Rebbe continued and said:

“... As far as I can tell, based on your letter and the newspapers about this matter, it appears that their reasoning is because of the strong directive placed upon them—among all Chabad Chassidim—the directive of our Rabbeim to distance [ourselves] as much as possible from anything partisan, whichever party it may be, even the very best one. The reason for this directive is explained in writing and even more so verbally: for our purpose is—among all Yidden—to spread Judaism, and especially to spread *Toras HaChassidus*, also to the

outside. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to distance ourselves in the extreme from anything that may cause a limitation of the ability to spread [*Yiddishkeit* and *Chassidus*], so much so that even a doubt and the shadow of a doubt must be dealt with stringently.

I very much hope that after you consider this, and in keeping with the saying of our sages<sup>6</sup> to judge every person favorably, you will judge Tzeirei Chabad favorably as well in this matter, and not only will you not be upset at them, but you will even help them in their work of *hafotzas hamaayanos*, even more than you have helped them until now...<sup>7</sup>

## WHEN THE REBBE WAS INVITED TO A POLITICAL CONVENTION

In 5723, the Rebbe was invited to join the seventh convention of the Herut party in Eretz Yisroel. The Rebbe responded:

“While I thank you for the honor and the well-intended [invitation], on a fundamental level doing so [joining the convention] is not possible for me, for one of the foundational stances of Chabad-Lubavitch is not to be identified with any party whatsoever, and therefore also not to participate in a partisan convention ...”<sup>8</sup>

## THERE'S NO TIME FOR POLITICS

In a 5716 letter to Rabbi Yitzchak Mendel Liss, a Chabad activist in Kfar Chabad, the Rebbe wrote that there's simply no time to play politics:

“I already clearly stated that I have no time to participate in politics of any sort (and what's more, in my opinion, members of Anash don't have time for this either, for we are in the time of *ikvesa d'Meshicha* [the time immediately before Moshiach] and every moment is precious).”<sup>9</sup> **T**

1. From a letter dated 15 Teves 5714, published in *Hiskashrus* issue 250 p. 17.

2. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 8 p. 59.

3. From a letter of Rabbi Hodakov, dated 7 Iyar, 5725, to Rabbi Yisroel Leibov, who headed Tzach in Eretz Yisroel. Published in *Hiskashrus* issue 250 p. 18.

4. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 10 p. 48f.

5. *Teshura Ben Shachar-Druk* 5773 p. 19.

6. *Avos* 1, 6.

7. *Igros Kodesh* vol. 19 p. 251f.

8. *Likkutei Sichos* vol. 33 p. 238f.

9. *Hiskashrus* *ibid.*