

**WASHINGTON DATELINE**

BY TRUDE B. FELDMAN

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**Ford at Lubavitch Fete**

Addressing the first Jewish organization since becoming President of the United States, Gerald Ford last Sunday charmed his audience by correctly pronouncing 'Shalom' and 'Lubavitch'; by putting the wrong accent on 'Mazel Tov' and by struggling with -- or having "trouble" with -- the word 'Tzor-as' (trouble.)

The occasion was the first National Conference dinner of the American Friends of Jewish Lubavitch, and the audience included some 500 Jewish community leaders from 13 states as well as the leaders of every Jewish organization in Greater Philadelphia. They gathered at the Marriott Motor Hotel in Philadelphia to honor Senator Hugh Scott (R. Pa.) for his contributions to the Jewish community, both here and in Israel.

The highlight of the affair was the announcement of the establishment of The Senator and Mrs. Hugh Scott Library on the campus of Girls' Town at Kfar Chabat II, an educational complex near Tel Aviv. The worldwide Lubavitch movement, comprised of 500,000 members on four continents, supports Girls' Town as one of its educational projects. (When completed, it will provide high school and college level training for over 1,200 girls, with special emphasis placed on recent immigrants to Israel.)

President Ford was greeted at the Marriott Motor Hotel by its Manager, Bud Davis; Mr. Kevy K. Kaiserman, Chairman, Founders of the Friends of Lubavitch; Mr. William S. Fishman, former Chairman of the Founders; Rabbi Abraham Shemtov, Director of the Lubavitch; and by Kaiserman's grandson, Adam Robinson.

The President, who chose not to don a Yarmulka, was introduced to the ultra-orthodox group by Bernard G. Segal, former President, American Bar Association.

Ford, who has known Sen. Scott for 27 years, said he is grateful for the many instances where Scott has given him good counsel. "Hugh is one of the first I turn to when I have 'tzor-as' the President quipped. "And in the last few weeks, I have, indeed, had 'tzor-as'..."

"The library center in Israel, which you are dedicating to his name and that of his wife Marian, is a fitting honor signifying as it does the wealth of knowledge which man has gathered through the ages and the use of that knowledge in constructive and purposeful purposes.

"Nothing could characterize better Hugh's own life, nor reflect more accurately the philosophy of your movement," the President con-

tinued. "You are committed to preserving the deep and abiding faith of the Jewish tradition for young and succeeding generations. Your devotion has won the respect and admiration of thousands in this country and around the world."

Mr. Ford concluded: "My wish for you tonight was best said -- and written -- by President George Washington in 1790: 'May the children of the stock of Abraham who dwell in this land continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other inhabitants ... May the father of all mercy scatter light, not darkness, in our paths and make us all in our several vocations useful here, and in his own due time and way, everlastingly happy....' The spirit of what he said is as alive today as it was then."

As President Ford posed near a painting of Rabbi Menachem Schneerson, who is now observing his 25th anniversary as head of Lubavitch, he said of Schneerson: "I've read about him."

Sen. Scott expressed gratitude to the American Friends of Lubavitch and said he is honored with the establishment of the library in the "proud and vigorous state of Israel."

He added that he and Mrs. Scott will find "much happiness in the fact that so many young people will have the opportunity to study in a hall of learning bearing our names..."

Scott told the group that the Girls' Town project is a "tribute to your devotion over nearly two centuries, to your courage during so many periods of turmoil, and to your abiding commitment of purpose in serving others...."

"Your mission is one of bringing a new dimension of Jewish life to practitioners of your beliefs by encouraging adherence to the moral, ethical and religious teachings of the Torah as the focus of daily Jewish life," he noted. "Your mission is one which has brought you the appreciation of hundreds of thousands of Jews because of your devotion to good works -- and of millions of others who pay tribute to your efforts...."

"I would wish this library to be visited in the search for that wisdom which teaches the ways that lead to peace, so that the people of Israel will ever have that counsel among her young and old which finds the pathways of righteousness," Scott said. "And I would wish this library to be the meeting place for Americans and Israelis alike, for we share a bond that may be threatened from without, but which is ever secure and unbreakable from within. It is that special bond between us, the deep bond of friendship."

Famed opera star Jan Peerce treated guests to five selections including 'If I Were A Rich Man' from 'Fiddler On The Roof' and 'Yiboneh Bais Ha-Mikdash'. Before flying back to New York for yet another performance that night -- for Israel Bonds -- Jan Peerce told me: "I'm a Lubavitch myself and proud of it. I'm a follower of the Rebbe and the Lubavitch movement because they teach the word of God...and they believe in the greatest of all teachings... 'Be kind to your fellow man and have love in your heart...' (Peerce's wife, Alice, who accompanied him to the dinner, is very active in Israel Bonds.)

Rabbi Shemtov said that President Ford's presence "focused attention on the activities of the Lubavitch and this will contribute im-

mensely to the furtherance of them, as well as to our goals."

Kaiserman's grandson, seven-year-old Adam Robinson from New York, gave up a weekend in the country with the hope of meeting President Ford and Jan Peerce. His trip to Philadelphia proved worthwhile. "President Ford took notice of me, and bent down to say 'Shalom'.. I guess because I'm the tiniest member of the Lubavitch," Adam mused. "He's a nice President because he made the Lubavitch people happy when he came here. I could see Senator Scott smiling too...."

"My teacher always asks what we do on week-ends," Adam added. "This time I'm going to have a good story...the class won't believe me when I tell them President Ford talked to me on his way in and on his way out..." (of the Lubavitch reception).

"Haven't I seen you before?" President Ford asked Adam upon entering his limousine on the way back to the White House.

The dinner in Philadelphia also marked the 200th anniversary of the Lubavitch movement and was attended by regional directors representing Lubavitcher branches and centers in Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Massachusetts, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Florida, Georgia, Texas, Wisconsin, Washington and California.

Lubavitch, taken from the name of a Russian town where the movement originated, translates as 'Brotherly Love.' Their aim is to bring Jews the world over to "adhere to the moral, ethical and religious teachings of the Torah..."

The Chabat-Lubavitch movement was founded more than 180 years ago in Russia by Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, a scholar and leader who sought to bring a new dimension of Jewish life to the Jewish masses by the introduction of Chabat Chassidic philosophy.

The Lubavitch Rebbe has -- in recent years -- established some 75 institutions and regional offices throughout the U.S., Canada and abroad. They are operated by his 'peace corps' of thousands of young people who try to penetrate the mainstream of Jewish life. The Rebbe also inaugurated a massive world-wide 'Mitzvah' campaign to remind Jews of their "obligation to observe specific Torah precepts." The mobile 'Mitzvah tanks' used to promote this campaign encounters thousands of Jews each day.

The American Lubavitch branches also support schools, camps and publication houses.

Through its empire of regional division, and by means of the international Lubavitch Women's Organization and Youth Organization, Lubavitch world headquarters is able to monitor the pulse beat of Jewish life, world-wide. The Rebbe's public addresses are heard live in Lubavitch centers around the world via special communications hook-ups emanating from its headquarters in Brooklyn, New York.

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