

## **Yechidus with Mayor John Lindsay, 5 Kislev 5729 (1968).**

The text in bold are the Rebbe's words

**Sit please.**

(Harvey Rothenberg:) First, I'll just give you this picture that I got from Maidanchik (Rabbi Shlomo Maidanchik),

**Thank you very much**

In Kfar Chabad, he told me to give it to you.

**Yes, thank you very much.**

**I saw you before the election, now in the middle, very hard years in between.**

(Mayor John Lindsay:) They've been, yes.

**Very hard work, very hard years.**

Hard work, yes, it's been very hard work; it's a big and very complicated city.

**Then you have a special opportunity to show an example to all the world around.**

**All this unrest that is spreading as a sea in the world around us.**

Everywhere.

**Not only in New York, and United States, but in other continents also.**

All the cities of the country, and in other countries. But that doesn't mean, you still have to fight it though, you have to make sure that we have a stable community. That's why I'm here today, to talk to the rabbis and yourself to ensure that we of the

city government plan to do everything, and we're going to take additional steps to provide security and peace for the community, the Crown Heights community, we think it's very important.

**Crown Heights and Brooklyn in general, and New York, also.**

And the whole city, but I'm very concerned about Crown Heights.

Because it very key to whole community of Brooklyn.

**It is a test case.**

Yes.

**And as I said before, not only for New York, it will be a test case for United States, for many cities and maybe all the world in general.**

That's true, it will be. That's why we have to make it work.

**You have a good staff of helpers, of assistants.**

Yes, an able team. An able team. We're going to - telling the rabbis - establish a mayor's task force in Crown Heights and starting January 1, under commissioner Ford's staff, who reports directly to me, works with staff to, Soloveitchik's nephew,

**Soloveitchik's nephew.**

Yes, and . . .



**It will be for a special purpose, for a special task . . .? Special . . .?**

For all community affairs, everything, including police. And will work with the police to, and today we're going to instruct the police commissioner at the detective division, make first priority Crown Heights area for homeowners and shopkeepers.

**It is especially important now, before the season of holidays.**

That's right, correct, so that will begin immediately and I hope it will have an immediate effect too.

**As I said to Mr. Rothenberg when he visited me; it's not only beneficial for someone who must be defended, it is also beneficial for someone who must be a fighter, because if he became used to easy benefits, easy gains, then it's very difficult for him to change his ways.**

Yes.

**I mean, even for the potential robber, or something like that it is better for him to be held in the beginning of his, so called, career,**

Very firmly too.

**then he has nothing to do with jail or punishment, he became a good citizen and in the course of time he'll thank you for not letting him to do something not desirable.**

Maybe, but I don't look for thanks anywhere.

**Nevertheless, it gives one courage.**

Well, this said, we've, I hope that and I think that we can support you in your efforts to keep the community together and to keep it stable, you've been doing a wonderful job on

that, and given great leadership to your people,

**I'm trying to expand it but it can be done only if it's in a peaceful state apart from external complications.**

Correct, but we shall have to help you on that, and give every support that we may need to do in no uncertain terms.

**I will hold you on your word, not only for this term but for the next also, as you probably know . . .**

I made no decision on that.

**You've seen success in this big city, and it will be a good thing to continue it not to let it in the middle.**

Thank you very much; maybe it's time to change hands. But anyway, thank you Rabbi.

(Other:)...on the street.

Beg your pardon?

(Other:) The children that were hurt here in the street.

Yes, we're going to close off the street to cars for a period while we make a survey of traffic patterns.

There are children who have been hurt by automobiles, so we're going to stop the automobiles while we examine them.

(Other:) On Shabbos.

Yes, on Shabbos.

**It is also especially important in this section because there are many, many schools; high schools, elementary schools, public school, all kind of schools**



(Other:) Right, and that problem that you mentioned to me about the shopkeepers and the in the area; talking about the shopkeepers that are being threatened there.

Yes, I have received direct reports of shopkeepers that warned, threatened, you know, in one or two instances they had 24 hours to get out as well. That's why I'm going to ask the, we're going to have some stake-outs of detectives in these stores, and we'll take immediate action, on the spot, and that has the deterrent effect, it has a very wide impact, it takes a lot of police time and a lot of manpower and you have to spend a awful lot of time lying in wait, but it's worth it.

**But it's beneficial if he's stopped in the beginning, even in police time also.**

But it's hit very hard, very hard, right away; take immediate action it has a terrific impact, so we're going to be doing that in the whole Crown Heights community.

We need cooperation with our plain-clothes men, the detectives from all the shopkeepers and homeowners, they will have to cooperate in every way and I'm sure they will.

**It is a very, very good task and very good deed to help the underprivileged, but I believe it can be done not by pushing someone out, but by giving him his place.**

Correct.

**And then as in everything, if something is done by threat or blackmail, there is no end to it.**

We heard the report to that the Panthers, the Black Panthers have acquired a store, or offices, and we're going to look into that.

You hear this before?

**In this section?**

This morning.

We ought, we have to look at that all the way and see what that's about.

Keep closer watch.

(Harvey Rothenberg:) President Shazar asked me to send his greetings to you.

**Thank you very much.**

**He's also worried about the situation . . .**

He's concerned.

**You have a number of Jews in Brooklyn, in New York City as President Shazar in Eretz Yisroel, in Israel.**

That's right; we have more Jews in New York than in Israel.

Many more.

Really, well what's the population?

Well, in Israel population of Jews is about two and half million, and here it's about two and half.

About the same, about the same.

But Jerusalem, we have many more than Jerusalem, ten times as many.

Jerusalem's 300,000?

About 250,000 Jews, I think.

Wow.

**I said to Mr. Rotenberg that it may be strange, but never the less rewarding that you can find always in the bible some indication on what to do and how to**



behave, that is in the book of Solomon, Proverbs, it is repeated many times, that it is always easy, more beneficial, to stop something when it's done in the beginning then to let it go, and after that you have a lot on your shoulders and your head and you agenda, and he repeated also, it is not only beneficial for the robbed, but it is also beneficial for the potential robber.

**Mr. Pressman in your last visit, I believe you told me that you have been teaching religion in church or Sunday school, or a parochial school?**

Yes.

**That means that these textbooks are also on your table.**

Oh yes, we have those.

Well it's certainly been a privilege to be with you Rabbi.

**I hope that next time we meet, it will only be about good things, not about what to prevent, but about what augment and what enlarge.**

We'll do everything we can, rabbi.

**Yes, thank you very much.**

It's very high priority.

**As I said before I will hold you on your words, not only for this thing, but after that also.**

Thank you very much.

**Thank you very much.**

**I received a letter from President Shazar and he was very thankful for your visit and for your encouragement . . .**

(Harvey Rothenberg:) I told him not even 'bli neder', when I tell you we will help take care.

**. . . what your assurance means and he will see . . .**

We're working on it.

**Thank you very much.**

Thank you very much.

