

Passover with the Prime Minister

It's not as old as Passover itself, but it is becoming a strong tradition in Canada that each year, emissaries from Chabad Lubavitch across the country gather with the Prime Minister in Ottawa to exchange seasonal greetings and well wishes.

This year the executive committee of the Canadian Federation of Chabad Lubavitch met, of course, with a new leader, the Right Honourable Stephen Harper. The Prime Minister presented the delegation of Rabbis with an official letter acknowledging the immense contribution made by the Canadian Jewish community to Canadian society and conveyed his wishes that the blessing associated with Passover continue to touch their lives throughout the year.

The Prime Minister was then presented with a leather-bound prayer book emphasizing the universal message of prayer in demonstrating the relationship between G-d and all of humanity.

There was a very strong Calgary connection to this year's event, not only because Stephen Harper is the Member of Parliament for this city, but because before he became Prime Minister, Mr. Harper visited the household of Rabbi Menachem



Matusof. To mark this personal bond, Rabbi Matusof presented the Prime Minister with a photograph of the visit, showing Mr. Harper holding on his lap two of the Matusof boys, Yudi and Avremy.

The meeting in Ottawa was of particular significance as it marked the 104 birthday of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, whose legacy lives on in the 3,500 Chabad Lubavitch centres world-wide, including over 80 in Canada.

(Above) From l. to r. Rabbis Chaim Mendelsohn, Menachem Matusof, Yitzchak Wineberg, Zalman Grossbaum, The Prime Minister, Rabbis Berel Mockin, Avraham Altein, Mordechai Berger, and Mendel Feldman.

Rabbi Menachem Matusof presents Prime Minister Stephen Harper with a "family" memento - a photo of Mr. Harper taken during the MP's visit to the Matusof household in Calgary.

