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January 8, 1969

Mr. Ephraim Propp
211 Central Park West
New York, N.Y. 10024

Dear Effie:

I would like to urge you to consider, with somewhat greater urgency, the proposal I made to you several weeks ago, that you arrange for a quality kosher restaurant in our neighborhood.

Fundamentally, our community faces two problems in this respect. One is the lack of a really good kosher restaurant in all of Manhattan. Second, in the last couple of years we have lost almost all of our kosher restaurants on the West side. All we have now is the Stern Caterers at the Windemere who are open only for Saturdays, and we do not know how long they are going to continue this operation. There is a possibility that we can solve both problems with one stroke -- by establishing this first rate restaurant on the West side. Of course, this will involve a number of problems, such as trying to reconcile quality and appearance with cost.

However, I certainly do not propose to go into any minor details at the present time. I do think that the situation that prevails is little short of disgraceful. By our own inaction we are forcing many people, who would otherwise not do so, to patronize establishments whose kashruth is most questionable. Were we able to organize the right kind of establishment in our community, we would not only be providing for a large number of people for whom such a restaurant is a vital need, and not only to helping the cause of kashruth, but we would also contribute to enhancing the reputation of Orthodox Judaism throughout the city and avoiding what might otherwise be a real "chillul ha-Shem."

There is no question in my mind but that this kind of restaurant will require an on-going subsidy, but I think it is worth it, and that we have a moral obligation to do something about it.

I strongly recommend, Effie, that you undertake this project and give it all your considerable talent and energy to see it through

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to a successful conclusion. Of Course, this is not a one-man project, although it must be sparked by one individual.

I know that Larry Kobrin had been interested in something of the sort a couple of years ago. More recently, Mr. Sol Zavan independently raised the same problem with me. Some others who have indicated interest in the problem in the past are the Stern brothers and the Lindenbaums. Perhaps Charles Michael will be interested. I mention here only people from The Center. No doubt there are many, many more from other synagogues who have both the interest and the ability to help in a project of this kind.

Do give it your attention, Effie, and let me hear from you. Perhaps you can draw up a list of other people you know and in whom this will strike a responsive chord, and then you can take it from there.

Warmest good wishes.

Sincerely yours,

RABBI NORMAN LAMM

RNL/fz

cc: Mr. Sol Zavan

Mr. Lawrence Kobrin