

RABBI JOSEPH H. LOOKSTEIN
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NEW YORK, N. Y. 10028

THE STUDY
HANOVER 7-1000

April 29, 1971

Mr. Charles H. Bendheim
Jewish Women's Club
232 West 78th St.
New York, NY

My dear Charlie:

I have your letter of April 27th, 1971,
a copy of which you sent to all the Rabbis in the
neighborhood.

It is regrettable that in our affluent area,
a Mikvah has to undergo such hardship. Neighborhoods,
far poorer than ours, somehow found a way how to construct
a Mikvah and how to maintain it properly. I lay the blame
on all of us. I mean the Rabbis, who are so extremely busy
with a variety of matters that, in the language of the
Bible, "they tend other gardens but neglect their own vine-
yard".

Now you have a problem on your hands and you
are entitled to relief and to assistance. I am especially
mindful of the fact that you offered to make a gift of
\$5,000 in order to be relieved of carrying the burden
further all by yourself. I think this is a generous in-
tention on your part and I, for one, will be happy to see
you implement that intention with the conditions that you
set.

How shall we go about preserving the institu-
tion of Mikvah in our area? I think that we ought to make
one grand effort and assemble, in your home, the Rabbis
and a number of lay people who are interested in this
matter. I am sure that we can find a way of making these
repairs, amounting to \$16,000, by increasing the mortgage
on the Mikvah property. I think that by doing that, we

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can also include the debt that is due to the Wurzweller Foundation, a debt which was incurred on good faith and goodwill.

I am further sure that the total debt, plus the maintenance of the Mikvah proper, could then, and should then, become the responsibility of the Rabbis of the neighborhood and of their synagogues. I, for one, together with my son, will do our best to carry our share of the responsibility, and even more.

Please convene a meeting as soon as possible. Before long, the summer will set in and all of us will be departing, and the matter will again be neglected.

Thank you for bringing this to my attention and be assured of my every cooperation.

Very cordially yours,


Joseph H. Lookstein

JHL/ak