

## Gerszon Prędko

The spiritual leader of the leftist *Poalei Zion* Party in Częstochowa was Gerszon Prędko. As a commercial employee in the manufactured goods branch, he was known as a solid and honest man. He was ruled by the ideology of Borochof, to which he devoted all his life. Every Saturday, he gave talks to his party members, teaching them the basic principles of Socialist Zionism and also shedding light on the current problems of day-to-day life.

Following his weddings, he opened his own manufactured goods shop at I Aleja 10, in order to secure material support for the family. He did not abandon his political views. On the contrary, he spent whole days and nights writing lectures, which he delivered at the Saturday party meetings.

During the War, under the Nazi occupation, he felt depressed by the tragic Jewish reality. He tried to dispel apathetic thoughts by regularly conducting discussions. These discussions took place in the home of Lajbisz Tenenbaum, where they listened to clandestine radio broadcasts, and Gerszon Prędko was the main commentator. He had a group of followers and advisors, who were ideologically bound to him. In the evenings, he would be seen at Altman's confectionery surrounded by "*kibitzers*"<sup>1</sup>, who polemicized on different issues of the day.

In the tragic period of deportation, he was sent away to the Treblinka death camp. As fate would have it, he was selected to work in the sorting camp. There, too, he did not forget his ideals, and he formed a committee to make contact with the outside world. He managed to send his fellow party member, Aron Gelbard, who was also in the Treblinka sorting camp, to Częstochowa. In that manner, contact was made with the city, where he had dedicated all his life to communal-political life.

This committee was the first sprouting of communal activity and, later, turned into the resistance organisation which organised the uprising in Treblinka. Gerszon Prędko was sent from the sorting camp to the death camp, where he perished, on the altar of the [Jewish] people, as a Jew and a martyr.

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<sup>1</sup> [TN: Yiddish term for onlookers, usually offering unsolicited advice or commentary.]