

## Dr Cwi Kantor



Photo № 47

Chairman of the Central Administration of the Częstochower Landsmannschaft in the American Zone in Germany. Summary of the speech delivered on 20<sup>th</sup> October 1946 in Landsberg:

*A dynamic motive force drove me here to Landsberg today, to take part in the memorial service of Częstochowa's [Surviving] Remnant. I am a son of the city, which we are eulogising here. I have come here to unite my feelings with the common eulogy and the common "Kaddish", as one who, in that city, has lost all those nearest to me.*

*It is a silent eulogy, which is reflected in the image of these candles, which are burning here on the lectern. This number, also, always stands before my eyes - six million murdered by way of all kinds of unnatural deaths.*

*The tragic fate of our people, in the long history of exile, has been to continuously say "Kaddish" and to commemorate souls. Today's "Yizkor" is different from all others until now - this is a "Yizkor" for heroes and martyrs.*

*With pride and reverence, I mention today the heroes who did not go of their own account to the slaughter and did not stretch out their necks, but sanctified themselves with their heroic deeds, by putting up a resistance to the Nazi murderers, with which they also sanctified the honour of those who were unable to put up that resistance.*

*In today's eulogy, I cannot pass up mentioning at least one of the heroes, who prepared the revolt in the Częstochowa ghetto, built the tunnel from the "Small Ghetto" and was in charge of the partisan work - this was my brother, Jechezkel Kantor. I was not in Częstochowa during those years, [but] I have heard about the deeds that he, the young, fanatical idealist*

*performed. May his name be one of the bright comets of the Jewish underground movement's fighting history.*

*The fate of our people was varied in the different epochs of history, [but] we never experienced things such as these, and even the greatest fantasist would not have imagined them. Suffice it to mention the history of the Spanish Inquisition, the times of the Crusades and the pogroms - the Kishinev pogrom, about which the great writer Bialik wrote "In the City of Slaughter". We had never been able to imagine that our great-grandfathers had lived through those great calamities. We only knew the Jewish martyrdom from history. Each time we mentioned it, we froze up, as it were, and did not believe it. Today, we are that generation which has experienced, with our own bodies and souls, the greatest tragedy in our history. We have lost our fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters - it is not from history that we have lost them, but from our lives.*

*We, ourselves, have been in Majdanek and Oświęcim, Treblinka and Buchenwald, Dachau and Stutthof [Sztutowo]. We have lived through that ourselves. We left the city that is bound with our tragedy. Today, we have met - the Częstochowa [Surviving] Remnant - and each one has his own tragedy in his heart. I press the hand of each individual of those who have decided to unite into one large family in this common eulogy. Today, we have been united by our common suffering and by the pure souls of our annihilated ones. Let us take a common oath today:*

*"May a terrible cheirem<sup>1</sup> be cast upon all those who tortured our folk, our brothers and sisters. Not only the Germans, but also the Poles who helped exterminate those nearest to us. The Poles, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians were also the murderers of our dearest ones."*

*All of them are drenched with our blood. May a cheirem be cast upon their nations, upon their families, upon their cultures and upon their languages - not a cheirem like in the times of Ammon and Moab, to the seventh [sic tenth<sup>2</sup>] generation, but a cheirem for all generations, a cheirem for all eternity."*

*The second oath is:*

*"If the bitter destiny has thus punished us, then we must learn from it. We must bring up a new generation, a new youth - a proud youth - which will trample, underfoot, all the Diaspora phenomena - a generation which will be capable of sacrificing itself for the revival of our people and our state."*

*This was the sacred testament of those annihilated. May we fulfil it in memory of their souls."*

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<sup>1</sup> [TN: A "cheirem" or "cherem" (Heb.) is an anathema, viz. an official curse, ban or excommunication.]

<sup>2</sup> [TN: "An Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the Lord for ever:" (Deuteronomy 23:3)]