

National Conference of the *Częstochower Landsmannschaften* in America and Canada

Throughout practically the entire duration of the aid work for Częstochowa, some degree of connection existed between the New York Czenstochover Relief - and later the United Czenstochover Relief and Ladies Auxiliary - and the *Częstochower landsmannschaften* and aid organisations in other cities of America. Thus, for instance, the Czenstochover Relief Committee in New York helped the organisations in Detroit and Chicago arrange the showing of the films of the I.L. Peretz Kindergarten and Primary School in Częstochowa.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, when the horrifying news of the destruction of our brethren across the ocean arrived, it became clear that the aid work for Częstochowa would demand such great monetary sums and efforts, that it would need to be done through the combined forces of all the friends in America and in other lands. The connection between the *Częstochower landsmannschaften* became particularly relevant following the decision to publish the book *Czenstochover Yidn*. Such a great task could by no means be carried out by a *landsmannschaft* in [just] one city - even such a large one as New York.

On 13th October 1944, at a meeting of the United Czenstochover Relief, it was decided to turn to all the *Częstochower landsmannschaften* in America and Canada to the effect that they should send representatives to a national conference, in order to coordinate aid activity for Częstochowa and to carry through the publication of the book *Czenstochover Yidn*.

On 25th April 1945, the United Czenstochover Relief's Organising Committee, headed by R. Federman¹, by prior understanding with Chicago and Detroit, sent out a request to all the *Częstochower landsmannschaften* in America and Canada to send delegates to the national discourse (conference) in New York, on Saturday the 23rd and Sunday the 24th of June 1945.

The conference was held, on the appointed date, at the Beethoven Hall on East 5th St. 210, New York.

Conference delegates were:

from Chicago - S.A. Frydman and wife, Louis Gross and wife, A. Willinger, A.S. Miska and wife, Sam Szlezinger and wife, and Saul Baum; from the Chenstochover Independent Verein in Chicago – Mojsze Cieszynski; from the Chenstochover Ladies Aid Society in Chicago – Mrs Rose Hofman;
from Toronto - Chenstochover Aid Society in Toronto and the vicinity - Kenigsberg, Mr Goldberg and Cyna Orzech;
from *Częstochower* Branch 11 of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order (International Workers Order) - R. Berger and D. Tanski;
from First Zaloshiner Chevra Anshei Bnei Achim – William Nachtigal and Emanuel Wargon;
from Czenstochauer Young Men's - Karl Buchner, Maks Kamiński, Jack Jacobs and Jack Zajdman;
from Detroit – Isidor Gliksman;

¹ [TN: The author of this article.]

from Czeŝtochower Branch 261 Arbeiter-Ring, New York – M. Fajner and J. [י] Szubin, [and the members of the] United Czenstochover Relief.

Here is the [text of] the greeting from the United Czenstochover Relief and Ladies Auxiliary which was handed out to the delegates, along with the conference's agenda, the programme of the book *Czenstochover Yidn* and the proposed resolutions:

Greetings

Dear assembled delegates and guests,

With the blood of the millions of victims of all the fields throughout the globe, the Nazi beast has been vanquished and, together with us, the entire world can now breathe more freely.

The greatest victim of the destruction and genocides perpetrated by the German Nazi beasts, over the course of their rule, was the Jewish People, whom the barbaric murderers annihilated and pulled up by the roots, only leaving small remnants who were miraculously saved.

As we assemble today, at this conference, to ponder the ways and means to best assist our surviving brothers and sisters in our hometown, our first thought and feeling is with those who gave their lives in the war against the German Nazi world-murderers and, foremost, let us remember today the Jewish martyrs of our city and all the Jewish communities, who perished at the hands of the cruellest man-beasts.

Their pain and suffering and their sacred memory will invigorate us to carry out the work that we have undertaken - to aid the survivors repair their lives and to build up the Jewish community and Jewish life in our hometown.

With [our] new courage and the old faith that has sustained our people over the course of the millennia and with the unified, combined forces of those who have assembled here and those who are in other parts of the world, we hope to achieve our goal.

Welcome, fellow assembled delegates and guests!

United Czenstochover Relief Committee in New York
President: A.J. Senzer

Czenstochover Ladies Auxiliary in NY
Chairwoman: Jetta Lenczner

The conference was opened at nine o'clock in the evening in a very festive and solemn atmosphere. Apart from the delegates, a large number of guests were [also] present.

The presidium platform was decorated with the American stars and stripes flag on the one side, and the blue-and-white flag on the other. The portrait of the recently deceased President Franklin Delano Roosevelt looked down upon the assembly from the forefront. Lit candles in a Jewish *menorah* blazed in sacred memory of the martyrs in Czeŝtochowa and hundreds of other cities and *shtetls* in Poland.

The stage bore the following inscriptions: "*Bruchim Ha'Boim*² – Welcome, delegates and guests, to the first National Conference of *Częstochowers* in America!" and "Building Jewish National Life Everywhere!" and "Ten Jews are a *minyan*³, a hundred are a congregation, a thousand are a tribe and twelve tribes are a nation!"

The general impression was that a serious meeting of men of the people was taking place here for a great national cause.



National Conference of the Częstochower landsmannschaften in America and Canada

The conference was opened by Flw Jakow-Ber Silver, Chairman of the Organising Committee. In his opening address, among other things, he said:

When we decided to call together a conference of the country's Częstochower organisations, the tragedy of the Jews in the countries under the Nazi rule was already clear to us, and the horrific image of the Jewish annihilation was already looming before our eyes. We felt that it was our essential obligation to organise aid for our surviving brothers and sisters. Today, we already know that human understanding is incapable of grasping the great misfortune that found our people. Today, we already know that our own indifference and that of the whole supposedly civilised world bears the blame for the great crime that was perpetrated against our people.

The response of the Częstochower landsmannschaften to our call [and] the large number of delegates, who are gathered here today, have not disappointed us.

Dear fellow delegates and guests, on my behalf and on the behalf of our Secretary Raphael Federman and the entire Organising Committee, [please] accept our heartfelt thanks and greetings.

² [TN: Heb., lit. "Blessed be those arriving," viz. "welcome," as follows in Yiddish.]

³ [TN: The minimal prayer quorum to hold public prayer services, which consists of ten male Jews aged over thirteen.]

He then passes the chairmanship over to the President of the United Czenstochover Relief, Flw Abram Senzer, who reads out the names of the delegates taking part and the organisations which they represent. He establishes that thirty-six delegates, whose authorisations have been confirmed, are participating in the conference.

As he puts the Presidium together, the President declares that all the delegates are to be represented in the Presidium over the course of the conference. The following members are invited to the first sitting: Josef Kaufman, Harry Fajersztajn, Raphael Federman, Jetta Lenczner, Gussie Gelbard, Korpiel, Mojsze Cieszynski, Rose Hofman, Saul Baum, Frydman, Isidor Gliksman and Cyna Orzech. A. Chrobolovsky, Aba Kaufman and Chaja Waga-Rotman are appointed as secretaries. Dr Rafael Mahler, Editor of the book *Czenstochover Yidn*, is also asked to the Presidium.

After all the formalities are dealt with, the Chairman, with a bang of his gavel, gives the sign for all the assembled to stand. Miss F. Czarny plays the American anthem *The Star-Spangled Banner*, followed by the *Ha'Tikvah*⁴. The floor is then given to Flw A. Chrobolovsky, who pays respects to the memory of all those fallen in the war against fascism-Nazism and the millions of annihilated victims with the following words:

Our primary word and primary thought belongs with our children, our brothers and the children and brothers of all the peoples in the world, who fell in the war against the German Nazi murderers on the battlefields, in the Warsaw, Czestochowa and other ghettos, in the partisan divisions and in the death camps. For all these, we bow down our heads in reverential awe and profound sorrow. Honoured be all their memories!

In the midst of the savage killings and hurricanes of death and annihilation perpetrated by the Nazi murderers, it was we, the Jews, who occupied the foremost position. Communities, which had been rooted for a thousand years, were wiped from the [face of] earth. Among them is also our hometown - our old mother city of Czestochowa.

The human tongue is too weak and too poor to put into words, to bewail and to manifest the agony of all our sorrow and pain for the tens of thousands of annihilated brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers and youth and children. S. Frug's "Streams of blood and flood of tears"⁵ will not suffice, and no human heart and no human emotion can take in so much agony and pain.

Our great misfortune, our unprecedented tragedy – the sorrow and pain of the millions who perished of hunger and cold, horrifying slayings and mass murders in the gas chambers - becomes a thousand times greater by remaining a mute tragedy which we, ourselves, are unable to put into screams, to bewail and manifest its agony.

The wider world remained deaf and dumb while, for long years, cries for help resounded from the ghettos and murder camps - and now, too, they remain silent.

The Czechoslovakian [massacre of] Lidice⁶ has been mentioned thousands of times, and has been written about before and now. Our tragedy - millions of times greater - is completely

⁴ [TN: Although the conference was held in 1945, both the flag and the anthem of the future State of Israel were already in use by proto-Zionist groups since the 1880s, and were officially adopted by the Zionist Movement in its early days.]

⁵ [TN: Opening words to the poem "Have Pity," which Simon Frug published in 1906 as a lament for the recent Kishinev Pogrom.]

⁶ [TN: A village that was wiped out by the Nazis in 1942 in reprisal for the killing of a senior Nazi officer; of the village's 503 inhabitants, 340 are estimated to have been murdered.]

hushed up. As regards the Nazi plunder, murder and extermination - we were Jews. As regards to bringing claims and paying for all these crimes - we are Frenchmen, Poles, Belgians, Dutch, etc. The suffering, torments and heroic fight of the martyrs of all nations against the Nazis have by now already been presented in dozens of films - our martyrs and holy ones, our heroes in the ghettos, have to this day not been shown in any film.

Generations before us created and developed Jewish life in Częstochowa. First, they built up the streets of the Getzevizne [Jewish Quarter]: the Nadrzeczna, Garncarska, Senatorska, Potters⁷ and Meat-Market [Targowa] Streets - then the Old Market, the New Market, ul. Ogrodowa and Tylina [Strażacka]. After that, they settled in the First Aleja, the Second Aleja, ul. Spadek, ul. Wały, ul. Dojazd, etc. Desolate expanses were transformed into a broad cultural community. Institutions upon institutions were built, which became the pride of Poland - such as the Crafts School, the Horticultural Farm and the new Jewish Hospital - and an extensive communal life blossomed and sprouted in Częstochowa.

The Freedom Movement, at the start of the 20th century, led a new and young generation out to the arena of our life, which began a struggle for a new and freer life - and new institutions and cultural establishments arrived. The Yiddish language and Yiddish songs, which had hitherto been spoken and sung only in the cellars and poor hovels of the Getzevizne, resounded openly and proudly from the spacious and beautiful halls of the Literary Society, the Lira, and the [Jewish] Gymnastics-Sporting Association which the new Jewish youth had created. They formed their own Yiddish press. Like a beautiful dream coming true and a fairy tale in real life, on ul. Krótka 23, the building for the I.L. Peretz kindergartens and primary schools, created by our brothers and sisters in America, was erected.

Thousands of our Częstochowa brethren - old and young - travelled off to America, the Land of Israel and other countries and, with their efforts and toil, helped build up new Jewish communities and occupied an important place in everywhere.

The death-storm of Nazi annihilation came and eradicated, desolated and obliterated everything - and the destruction, the tragedy of death and eradication, of even our one city is so great, that the human heart stops beating and the tongue seizes up.

Who can convey the fear and anguish of a city that, night after night, week after week, awaited death in the [railway] carriages or in the gas chambers, which would put an end to their suffering? Who can convey the baseness of the murderers, who deceived the few remaining sufferers with dozens of tricks?

Dear friends, let us etch this upon our minds and hearts and never forget it. Let us pass this on to our children, that they should remember it! Let us not forget our annihilated brothers and sisters, and never forget and forgive their murderers!

Let us light up an eternal candle for them not only in Częstochowa, but also at home - in each heart and soul - so that the fire of love and sorrow for our martyrs should never cease to gleam!

⁷ [TN: According to p. C of the biographical section at the end of this book (under "Mendel Szuchter"), Potters Street was the same ul. Garncarska already mentioned; perhaps the Polish name was used for one part of the street and the Yiddish one for the other.]

Let us sanctify their memory with our work to aid the survivors to build their lives, for which we have gathered [here] today.

We dedicate our conference's primary word and primary thought to them - our martyrs and holy ones. Let us all stand, bow our heads in profound sorrow and grief, and sanctify and honour their memory.

With tears in their eyes, the assembled stand to honour the memory of the annihilated brothers and sisters. Miss F. Czarny plays Chopin's funeral march⁸.

Following this, Flw Abram-Jakow Senzer addresses the delegates on behalf of the United Czenstochover Relief and Ladies Auxiliary with the following salutation:

Honoured delegates and guests, honoured conference,

The settlement of Czeŝtochower Jews in America is probably as old as Jewish immigration to America itself. Czeŝtochower Jews, in large numbers, have been living in America for over half a century. Over the course of this time, Czeŝtochowers all over America have created their synagogues, societies and unions. They also never forgot their old home, where they left those closest to them and friends. They always shared in their suffering and joy and always helped to make their life easier, which had always been difficult enough. But this is the first time that a conference of Czeŝtochower organisations comes together, in which the delegates of thirteen organisations in various cities of America and Canada are participating. This is certainly an important event in the communal life of Czeŝtochower Jews here.

What caused such a conference to be called and to take place? A great misfortune - the greatest misfortune in the history of the Jews - has befallen our people. One-third of the Jewish people has been heinously annihilated by Hitler's villainous fascism.

All nations made sacrifices during the War, but no nation suffered such a downfall as the Jewish people. It is this great tragedy and misfortune that has brought this conference about. Honoured delegates and guests, let us bear this in mind throughout the duration of our negotiations.

It is precisely due to the fact that our tragedy is so great, that we do not wish the remaining part of our people to be ground between the wheels⁹ of the further development of human society. We must gather all our strengths, all our remaining strengths, and say to ourselves, "We wish to live!". And live we shall - concurrently with all the peoples, and like all the peoples! We must put our lives on the line for our further existence with deeds, just as our brothers and sisters did - our nearest and dearest in the ghettos of Warsaw and Czeŝtochowa. We must gather all our material and spiritual forces, each one in his own field, and continue spinning [the thread] of our people's life - not as individuals, but as a nation.

Let us bear this, too, in mind throughout the duration of our negotiations.

⁸ [TN: The Piano Sonata No. 2.]

⁹ [TN: Apparently amalgamation of the expressions "crushed under the wheels" and "ground between the millstones" – both are used in Yiddish, as in English.]

On the face of it, our conference is a small one but, at its core, it is very large one, if we take into account that the scope of our activity is just one city, one Jewish community - our hometown and the city of our fathers and mothers, Częstochowa.

We have organised the conference in a modest manner, without parades, because we wish to achieve practical and productive results.

We wish to reach an understanding amongst all Częstochower landsleit, to the effect that our organisations, which work towards one and the same goal, should follow one and the same path, in order to help build up, as quickly and productively as possible, Jewish communal life in our hometown of Częstochowa.

I wish to believe - and am convinced of it - that our conference will be imbued with a great willingness to aid our surviving brothers and sisters in their current difficult situation and in their further existence and that, with God's help, it will bring about the most successful results.

In my name and in that of all our members of the United Czenstochover Relief Committee in New York, I greet you warmly, fellow delegates and guests, with a hearty "Bruchim ha'Boim" and I wish you and ourselves fruitful work in the conference's negotiations and successful results.

Welcome!

To greet the assembly, the floor is given to the delegates Flw Saul Baum (on behalf of the Educational Society in Chicago) Flw Mojsze Cieszynski (Independent Verein in Chicago), Flw Harry Goldberg (Chenstochover Aid Society in Toronto), Flw Rose Hofman ([Ladies] Aid Society in Chicago) and Flw Isidor Glikzman (Chenstochover Hilf [sic Rajoner] Verein in Detroit). A telegraphic greeting from Flw Harry Grauman, on behalf of the Aid Society in Los Angeles, is also read. The salutation by Mojsze Cieszynski, from which we hereby present a few excerpts, expresses the sentiments of the delegates at the conference most distinctly:

I have travelled nearly a thousand miles in order to meet with you once again. Like many of you, hundreds of times have I dreamt, fantasised and sought plans of how and when to be with you face-to-face and to share together with you the sorrow of our great tragedy, and to organise together the work for our Surviving Remnant.

I am pervaded by two strong opposing feelings of joy and sorrow. I am unable to hold back the tears for the horrifying Jewish destruction in general and of Częstochowa in particular.

But here, keinehora [no evil eye], such a large number of friends are assembled, whom the murderers' "Sword of Damocles" was unable to reach and we, here, represent a Częstochower Jewish community of many thousands of Jews brought here by the stream of emigration, before the Nazi hangmen set upon the bloody work of killing off and annihilating our finest, most beloved and dearest ones, whom we left back in the old home. We cannot suppress the feeling that this was a great fortune, not only on the personal level, but for the Jewish people as a whole.

We, here on the American soil, have over the course of time grown mightily and have matured communally, nationally and in many other respects. This is shown by the current conference and by the fact that we aim to publish the book "Czenstochover Yidn".

Many years ago - back in 1923 - in Częstochowa, there were already plans to publish a "Pinkas" [book of records] entitled "On Both Sides of the Ocean". At the time, it was no more than a dream. Now, this dream is coming true.

This is an achievement that makes us proud, even though we are now living in the aftermath of the most horrific tragedy of all the Jewish generations that lived before us.

The last item on the agenda of that evening's session was Dr Rafael Mahler's lecture on the topic of *The Future of the Jews in Poland*. The main points of his content-rich discourse were [these]:

The greatest problem in [inter-War] "independent" Poland was the unresolved agrarian issue - [viz.] that half of the land was owned by a handful of noblemen. Due to the large mass of poor peasants, commerce and industry has shrunk. Instead of [providing them with] work and land, the Reaction fed the masses with antisemitism and incited them to pogroms.

The fundamental social reforms that the democratic government of liberated Poland is implementing, such as parcelling out the land amongst the peasants and the socialisation of the heavy industry - along with the Soviet-friendly policies - will create the grounds for true democracy and the country's financial development.

The current situation of the small number of Jewish survivors is much worse than that of the whole Polish population, because they have been literally left naked and barefoot. But the worst thing is the pogroms organised by the local fascists. As a consequence, a large part of the surviving Jews in Poland set about moving away - especially to the Land of Israel. For them, we must fight for the gates to the Jewish homeland to be opened. That said, there will still remain Jewish communities in Poland and the Jews will, as equal citizens, have the possibility of participating in building the new Poland. To them, we must stretch out our fraternal hand and do everything within our power to help them rebuild and set their lives in order.

The Conference's second session is held on Sunday, 24th June, at 12:30 in the morning [viz. noontime]. President Abram-Jakow Senzer opens the session and invites, to the Presidium, Flws Louis Szymkowicz, Ruben Berger, M. Kep, Icek Gurski and Harry Fajersztajn, the Vice-President of the United Czenstochover Relief, who leads the proceedings.

The proposed agenda is approved. Flw R. Federman reads, out loud, greetings received from the United Jewish Appeal, the Joint, ORT, the American Federation for Polish Jews, the Russian War Relief, the Jewish Labour Committee, the Częstochower Central Committee in the Land of Israel, the Częstochower Society¹⁰ in Buenos Aires, Dawid Akerman in London, Ivon Gans [aka Izrael-Lajb Gancwajch] in Melbourne, Australia, Godl Fajertag in Tel-Aviv and Louis Szwarc in Seattle, Washington. The greetings are received with vigorous applause.

Flw Josef Kaufman, Finance Secretary of the United Czenstochover Relief, delivers a detailed report of the great aid work in New York and illustrates his talk with a whole series of numbers. Flw Sadie Senzer gives the report of the Ladies Auxiliary in New York. Delegates Mojsze Cieszynski, Rose Hofman and

¹⁰ [TN: This organisation's official name in Yiddish translates as "Society of Częstochower Landsleit in Argentina"; we have been unable to find its name in Spanish.]

Harry Goldberg (Toronto) report on the state of affairs in their organisations. Mrs Winkler, from the Zaloshiner Ladies Auxiliary in New York, gives over a cheque for \$100.

There is an interval for refreshments. The afternoon session begins at 15:30. Vice-President Harry Fajersztajn turns over the running of the session to President Abram-Jakow Senzer.

The two most important¹¹ discourses are read - one by Flw Icek Gurski on the subject *To What Purpose and in Which Manner the Building Fund Should be Employed*, and the other by Dr Leon Lajzerowicz regarding medical assistance for the Jewish survivors in Częstochowa. The lectures are acclaimed for their seriousness and thoroughness.

A discussion is held regarding the forms and character of the countrywide organisation that the Conference is to establish. Flws Berger (New York), Kenigsberg (Toronto) and Tanski (New York) [are those who] take part in it.

A Resolution Commission is elected, made up of Harry Fajersztajn, Josef Kaufman, Louis Szymkowicz, Isidor Gliksman and Fajner. The Commission holds its meeting in a separate room and comes to an unanimous decision regarding all the points of the proposed resolutions.

The closing session begins at seven in the evening, under the chairmanship of Flw Josef Kaufman. Flw A. Chrobolovsky reads out the following resolutions, which the Conference approves unanimously:

[Continued next page]

¹¹ [TN: This would imply that other works had been sent in.]

I

The delegates assembled at the National Conference of Częstochower Organisations in America and Canada, on 23rd and 24th June 1945, in New York, having become thoroughly acquainted with the ideas voiced in the lectures and discussions, determine that:

1.) The building and the revival of the physical and spiritual state of the Jewish population in Poland is already at the present moment the most important task for all the Jewish national organisations throughout the globe.

2.) Within the framework of the *Częstochower* aid organisations, the possibility already needs to be created to provide the remaining Jewish populace in our hometown Częstochowa with emergency aid, such as:

- a.) Medical aid, food products and clothing.
- b.) Taking care of the orphans and children, and giving attention to their education and development.
- c.) Constructive aid (craftsmen's tools, machines, production workshops).
- d.) Jewish cultural institutions and religious scholastic establishments.
- e.) Aiding the refugees and exiles who are temporarily in various countries.

3.) The aid must be dispensed directly to the leading Jewish institution in Częstochowa in the first instance, or through existing Jewish national organisations which conduct an activity in Poland in general and in Częstochowa in particular, with the approval of the Executive [Board] in every case.

4.) These obligations apply to all existing *Częstochower* organisations that have collected and are collecting aid funds, wherever they should be.

II

The Conference therefore resolves:

1.) In order that the funds raised by the organisations should be utilised in the most expedient, productive and rational manner, a general agreement is made between all the organisations participating in the Conference.

2.) To establish an Executive [Board] consisting of authorised representatives of the existing organisations, to

convene as the necessities dictate, with the goal of realising the resolutions approved by the Conference.

3.) The Executive's work is [to be] directed by an elected Secretary of Executive, whose residence is in New York.

4.) Until the meeting of the Executive, the work is to be directed – in agreement with the Executive of the United Czenstochover Relief in New York – by the secretary elected by the Conference, Raphael Federman.

III

The Executive is authorised by the Conference to carry out the following duties:

1.) Coming to understandings with the *Częstochower* aid organisations of other cities in America, Canada and other countries.

2.) Systematically assisting the organisations to increase their aid funds.

3.) Determining the means and methods of all the funds raised and the utilisation thereof, in accordance with the abovementioned adopted resolutions.

IV

Bureau for the Contact with Relatives

The Conference determines that, due to the great importance that the individual connection between the saved Jewish brothers and sisters (many of whom are dispersed across the cities and camps in all the European countries and even in China) and their relatives in America will have, this bureau of the United Czenstochover Relief is to be reinstituted, and it will have the task of seeking out and connecting all the surviving brothers and sisters, all those in necessity of advice and aid, with their kinsmen in all cities of America.

V

Bulletin

In order to acquaint the *Częstochower landsleit* in New York, other American cities and other countries with the Conference's deliberations and decisions, and to mark the historic achievement of our Conference, which is the first national conference of Jewish *landsmannschaften* in America – the Conference resolves to publish a bulletin with its most important materials.

VI

A Thank-You to the Yiddish Press

The National Conference of the *Częstochower Landsmannschaften* in America and Canada, which has convened in order to determine the means by which to most successfully aid in rehabilitating and building up the Jewish life of the surviving brothers and sisters in our hometown of *Częstochowa*, thanks the Yiddish press: *Forverts*, *Morgen Freiheit*, *Tog* and *Morgen Journal* for their cooperation in the work of the United *Czenstochover Relief* and in organising the Conference.

VII

Acknowledgement of the Relief Committee

The Conference warmly thanks the United *Czenstochover Relief* for organising and successfully running the National Conference.

VIII

Resolution Regarding the Book *Czenstochover Yidn*

The Conference resolves:

1.) Every *landsmann* of *Częstochowa* is required to purchase the book, bearing in mind that the proceeds enlarge the Building Fund for a new Jewish life in the home of old.

2.) The Jewish representative body that has been formed in *Częstochowa* is to be provided with the necessary amount of copies of the book *Czenstochover Yidn*, as a voluntary gift.

3.) The organisations [shall] employ every means in order that this book should reach each *Częstochower landsmann*, wherever he should be.

4.) All the organisations commit themselves to helping that the book should be unconditionally published by no later than the end of 1945.

5.) The organisations commit themselves to conducting a campaign among those *Częstochowers* who are not yet represented in the book with their contributions, biographies, the biographies of their offspring in the army, and their deceased relatives in the memorial section – to the effect that they should fulfil this as soon as possible.

6.) When the book is published, the *Częstochower* organisations, with the assistance of the Executive formed, are to hold special festivities in every city for all the *Częstochower landsleit*, with the purpose of selling the book, which will bring in large sums from individuals for the Building Fund.

7.) All the sums raised by the organisations from selling the book [are to] remain in the treasuries of the organisations that received them – obviously after deducting the factual cost of the book and the function.

8.) Every city sets itself the task and takes upon itself the obligation to sell at least as many books as is the number of half of the *landsleit* in that city.

The resolutions of A. Chrobolovsky regarding the necessity of a connection between the *Częstochower* organisations in all parts of the world, and of Aba Kaufman regarding the *Eternal Candle*, were not discussed due to lack of time. They were added to the Conference's minutes. Flw Tanski's resolutions regarding rights for the surviving Jews in *Częstochowa* also were not discussed.

R. Federman is elected Secretary in charge of running the countrywide organisation until a national [Central] Executive is formed. He is required to direct the work in accordance with the United *Czenstochover Relief* in New York.



After the Conference, a dinner and a song evening were held for the delegates. A large number of *Częstochower landsleit* in New York took part. President Abram-Jakow Senzer chaired the evening. The singer Stella Glazer appeared, singing a whole series of Yiddish and Hebrew songs which were received very well by those present.

The assembled responded warmly to the appeal of Flw Jakow-Ber Silver, and a sum of more than \$4,000 flowed in.

The temporary Central [Committee], which was formed in adherence with the Conference's decision, was made up of Flw Abram-Jakow Senzer - Chairman and R. Federman - Secretary.

With the Central's first circular, copies of the adopted resolutions were sent to all the organisations, who were asked to approve them and to appoint authorised [representatives] to the Executive.

The second circular reports on the contact with the Jewish Committee in Częstochowa and regarding the necessity to immediately send aid to the surviving Jews in Częstochowa.

In the third circular, the temporary Central announces its decision to call the first meeting of the Central Executive in Detroit.

The plenary session of the Central Executive of the *Częstochower Landsmannschaften* in America and Canada was held on 24th and 25th November 1945 in Detroit, at the hall of the Jewish Cultural Centre. [Flw (Isidor) Gliksman greeted¹²] the delegates and guests and thanked them for the great honour that was given to the *Częstochower landsmannschaft* in Detroit by the fact that the first meeting of the Central Committee to aid the surviving brethren in Częstochowa was being held in their city.



Conference of the Central Committee of the Częstochower Landsmannschaften in America and Canada, in Detroit

The agenda was

- 1.) Minutes of the Conference;
- 2.) Report from the secretariat and the Relief in New York;
- 3.) Reports from Chicago, Detroit, Toronto and Los Angeles;
- 4.) Aid for Częstochowa;
- 5.) Aid for Częstochowers in France, Belgium and other countries;
- 6.) The campaign for the publication of the book *Czenstochover Yidn*;
- 7.) Resolutions and further directives.

Authorised [representatives] from three cities participated: New York - Abram-Jakow Senzer, R. Federman, Silver, Kep and wife, Lenczner and wife, Frajermauer and wife, and Gelber and wife;

¹² [TN: The words "Flw Gliksman greeted" are missing from this sentence, but appear further down this page in an unrelated context.]

Chicago - Mrs Fradel [or Prodel¹³] as representative, and Leser and Willinger as guests; Detroit - Flws Isidor Gliksman, Rechtman, Birnholtz and a large number of guests.

The session was opened by Flw Abram-Jakow Senzer, who invited Flw Winter as Secretary. Flw Gliksman greeted [sic]

The Chairman, Flw Senzer, greets the delegates and guests. He states that the *Częstochower* aid societies in America and Canada have been the first to unite themselves in a Central to coordinate the aid work. The national Jewish organisations, such as the Joint, the American Federation for Polish Jews, ORT and the Jewish Labour Committee acknowledge the great importance of our pioneering work.

Raphael Federman reads the minutes of the historic conference in New York, which is listened to with great interest and attention.

Reports from the cities are delivered by: Flw Senzer - from New York; Flw Federman – from the temporary Central; Flw Silver also reports on the agreements with Joint to send, to *Częstochowa*, \$2,000 worth of clothes and food, and with the OSE¹⁴ to send \$1,000 worth of medications. Flw Faks reads out the written agreements with the abovementioned organisations. They are approved by the Conference and praised as good work.

Flw Gliksman reads the telegram from the Independent Verein in Chicago. Photographs of the session are taken. In the evening, a banquet was held for the members of the Central Executive and a large number of fellows [*landsleit*] in Detroit.

The second session is held on Sunday, 25th November. Flw Rechtman opens the session and gives the chairmanship over to Flw Abram-Jakow Senzer.

A notification from the fellow [*landsleit*] in Los Angeles is read, to the effect that they regret not being able to send a delegate to the session. They send their regards to the meeting and commit themselves to carrying out all its decisions.

Flw Isidor Gliksman, on behalf of those in Detroit, consents that the Central should be based in New York. He also reports that the Aid Society in Chicago has now \$500 in its possession.

Flw Federman speaks about the number of surviving Jews in *Częstochowa*, about the Central's contact with the Jewish Regional Committee in *Częstochowa* and with the religious *Kehilla's* Aid Committee, and he calls on the representatives of the aid organisations to conduct their relief work in unison, and to urge the *Chenstochover* [Aid] Society in Toronto to join the Central.

Mrs Fradel [or Prodel] of the *Chenstochover* Ladies Aid Society in Chicago reassures the support of the society which she represents.

By Flw Gliksman's proposal, it is decided to assign \$500 as aid for the *Częstochower landsleit* in Paris.

After Flw Silver gives a report on the imminent publication of the book *Czenstochover Yidn*, and Flw Senzer speaks about how important it is that the organisations should determine the number of books that they need. The Central Executive is elected, with Flw Abram-Jakow Senzer as President, Flw R.

¹³ [TN: This surname is written several times as "Fradel" (), but in the biographical section at the end of the book it is clearly spelt "Prodel"; we have as yet been unable to find either surname in genealogical sources pertaining to Jewish Chicago.]

¹⁴ [TN: Worldwide Jewish health organisation, nowadays based in Paris, France; its Polish branch was known as the TOZ.]

Federman as Secretary and one representative from each city where there is a *Częstochower* organisation.

The salutation to the meeting from the *landsleit* in Toronto is then read, and the first session of the Central Executive of the *Częstochower* organisations and aid societies in America comes to a close.

Declaration Attached to the Minutes

We, the Częstochower landsleit, assembled on 24th June 1945 - 13th Shvat 5705 - at the Beethoven Hall in New York, swear a sacred oath:

Never to forget the destruction and annihilation of our brothers and sisters in our old hometown, the eradication of tens of thousands of lives of several generations in a single stroke, and always to remember the thousands of martyrs and holy ones whom the bloodied German murderers destroyed.

We shall never forget, forgive and cease to demand vengeance upon the German murderers for their unprecedented killings, boundless cruelties [and] annihilation of Jews of entire cities - of an entire people. Cursed evermore [be] those who created and put into effect Treblinka, Majdanek, Oświęcim and other torture camps and the ghettos, and cursed [be] the soil that gave birth to them.

We shall not forget the indifference and the silence and silencing on part of the entire so-called "civilised" world, which remained deaf to the despairing screams for help and calls for rescue that emerged for years from the ghettos and death camps, where our brothers and sisters with their families were annihilated en masse.

We, together with all the Częstochowers in all corners of the globe, shall observe the day of the greatest misfortune that befell our martyrs and holy ones in our hometown, Częstochowa, as a yearly day of mourning and remembrance.

*In Częstochowa, we shall put up, as an everlasting memorial, an **Eternal Candle** for the souls of the martyrs in the known and unknown mass graves.*

With bowed heads and profound sorrow and pain, we stand by the graves of our holy ones and swear a sacred oath - never to tire and let down our hands in despair, but to continue helping the survivors with all our strengths to set their lives in order and continue drawing out the links in the golden chain of the existence of our eternal Jewish people.