

TENENBERG Zalman (1894-1941) craftsman, teacher, political and union activist, city councillor and social activist. He came from a poor family. He was born on 22nd September 1894 in Częstochowa, the son of shoemaker Mošek Lejb Tenenberg and Chaszka née Halborn.

Initially, he studied in a *cheder*. Later, he graduated from the carpentry department of the Crafts School for Jews in Częstochowa. He enjoyed a reputation for being a good craftsman and worked for various furniture manufacturers.

Early on, he was active in the Bund and became famous as a great orator. In 1913, when it became legally possible to establish trade unions, Tenenberg became one of the leaders of the Łódź branch of the Union of Wood Workers. On 30th November 1913, as a representative of the Bund, he was elected to the board of the Union. After 1918, he belonged to the first Bund committee. He was one of the Bund's representatives on the Częstochowa Workers' Council. In 1920, during the war with the Bolsheviks, he was arrested, together with the entire Częstochowa Bund committee and was interned in Dąbie near Kraków.

A few years later, he left for Piotrków Trybunalski, where he began working as a teacher at the newly-established crafts school of the Society for the Promotion of Professional and Agricultural Work Among Jews. He ran the Technical Drawing Department. He was valued as a teacher, noted for his energy and ingenuity. During all that time, he was active in the Bund and in local government.

He was elected as a city councillor and was also a member of the Jewish Community Council [*gmina*] in Piotrków Trybunalski. The majority of Bund members ensured that he was elected as chairman of the Jewish Community Council. He served in that position until the outbreak of war in 1939.

At the beginning of the occupation, the Germans appointed him as president of the Council of Elders (*Judenrat*) and ordered him to organise, in Piotrków, a "Jewish residential district" (the first ghetto in occupied Poland). Tenenberg displayed exceptional courage and independence in his conflicts with the German authorities.

At the beginning of December 1939, Dreksl, the German mayor of the city, ordered him to build barracks in the city – at the expense of the Jewish population. Tenenberg refused and obtained a release from this costly project for the Jews. The whole time, he was involved in underground party activities.

In July 1941, in Piotrków Trybunalski, the Gestapo arrested Maria Szczęsna, a Polish Bund courier. As a result of that, on 5th July of that same year, Tenenberg was arrested and sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp, from where news of his death arrived soon thereafter.

His wife was the daughter of Herc, a well-known activist in Piotrków Trybunalski. She perished during the War, together with two of her children.

Czenstochow, Nowy Jork 1958, p. 144; M. Migus, *Aktiwe "Bund"-haworim* (Bund activists), in: *Pietrkow Trybunalski un umgegent. Izkor buch*, ed. J. Malc, N. Lau, Tel Aviv 1965, cols. 473, 474. – APCz, Unit No. 58, birth record No. 297/1894.

Wiesław Paszkowski