



Josef felt he could no longer sit at home. He needed to continue being of service to the remaining Jews in Poland and to those who were in the German camps. The book *The History of the Jews in Warta*<sup>1</sup> needed to be promoted and he would do everything to help create the great relief fund for the Surviving Remnant.

Josef's loneliness is swallowed up by this public work. As in his youth in Warta, he forgets his own happiness. His suffering purifies him, as it were - the lines of a poem by the poet A. Liessin become close and personal to him: "*The joy of being able to renounce joy.*"

Yes, he is now at that level. He travels throughout the country, spending each night in a different city. He becomes an emissary, visiting the Warta *landsleit* [and] calling a nationwide conference of all the *landsleit*. The book, about his city, grows into a large and important work. He feels the joy of creation, of doing something that will remain for generations.

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At this point, Josef is about to travel as an emissary to liberated Poland. The *landsleit* here absolutely desire to send money over to those in need. But the regime, in Poland, suddenly changes. It ceases to be a democracy - the Communists dominate the country. Also, the Bund in Warsaw, which is ostensibly permitted to exist, changes its programme. Arrests are made and not only do the Jewish leaders disappear, but also do the Polish government members, who arrived from the Polish government-in-exile in London to work for a new Poland. Josef is forced to abandon his trip to Poland, which he would have made so willingly.

The day on which the book *Warter Yidn* was published was both a festive occasion and a day of mourning. The festivity of this historical work was celebrated in one of the great halls of New York. Josef felt like one of the main *mechitunim*<sup>2</sup> at this celebration. After all, he had done so much for this book to be published! Yes, he was mentioned. His name was announced and the assembly of *landsleit* applauded him with tears in their eyes, that he, Josef, had made it possible that this "*City and a mother in Israel*" [2 Samuel 20:19], the Jewish Warta, should not be forgotten!

Sitting now at the platform, he heard the applauding people and felt that his life now had some sense. In the days of sorrow and pain, he had carried out his mission and helped raise a monument to the annihilated martyrs of his hometown. His lonely life had been redeemed.

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<sup>1</sup> [TN: Obviously ref. to "Czenstochover Yidn" (New York, 1947); on the following page, the author refers to it by a different title - "Warter Yidn" (Warta Jews).]

<sup>2</sup> [TN: Fellow in-laws, viz. the parents of one's child's spouse, with whom one becomes partners over the wedding arrangements etc.]

Rywka frequently spoke of travelling back to Paris. Josef began to sense, all the more, that this was not just a yearning for the Parisian lifestyle. Something drew her to France. She now spoke with contempt of America and the strange local customs here. She would become even more animated when she mentioned the French lifestyle.

“America is heading for fascism”, she would take a stab at Josef for no reason. Josef sensed it was not only America that she hated, but that she also bore him, in her heart, a personal hidden hatred in her heart. She was repaying Josef for his indifferent, cold attitude towards her in the years past.

Josef said, “Were it not for America, who knows where you’d be? And as regards the Socialist Labour institution which you hate so much, this institution helped me bring you here. And not just you - thousands of Jews arrive here thanks to the aid of that Labour institution”.

Rywka came back derisively at Josef, “Your institution’s money belongs to the people – it’s not theirs. They, your leaders, are enemies of the people!”

“That is a repulsive and vulgar thing to say”, Josef retorted to her in an agitated voice. Rywka ran up to him and slapped him in the face. Josef was left bewildered - he had not expected this! He composed himself with all his strength, ran out of the room and said to himself, “This is the end!”

He donned his coat and went down into the street. He felt heavy at heart. He rang Rywka’s brother, Aron, and told him what had happened. He could no longer be in the same house with Rywka. She was longing for Paris, as if she had someone very close there. Her animosity was consuming him. Let her travel back, if she wanted. He would not return home anymore. The best thing would be if she moved out. He was willing to maintain her until she travelled away, and even to cover the expenses of her journey. That was the best way out for both of them.

Josef spent the night in some hotel. He thought everything over - there was no other way out. And although he was in debt due to Rywka’s illness, he secured a loan from a close friend. Rywka haggled and wanted to get as much as possible out of Josef. And within a few weeks, Rywka travelled off to France.

