

THE HOMELAND SOCIETY IN CANADA

(from the press)

The concept of homeland society, as it is understood in America, was foreign in the old home, which the Hitler assassins had cruelly destroyed. Homeland Societies are an American creation. Their main purpose was to help their brothers in the old home.

To a certain extent, they were the bridge between the immigrants in America and the countrymen on the other side of the ocean. They were the stations for new immigrants, who were received with homely warmth and at the same time taken care of by their Society.



Kutner fellows in Montreal – Canada. (Sitting from right): B. Balzamowicz, Y. Mamlok, M. Erdberg-Szatan, M. Ch. Szatan, H. Celemenski. (Standing from right): M. Szer, A. Manczyk, Y. Golberg, P. Manczyk-Goldberg, M. Krasny, L. Kufer-Krasny, L. Sznurbach and Lewitan.

The precepts and obligations incurred in rescuing all previous townsmen were, unfortunately, overruled by the resurrected Kutner-Włocławek Homeland Society in Canada. With this homeland society, its founders, the *Sh'erit HaPleta*¹ and a number of individuals, local long-time residents of the mentioned cities, intended to create a wider family circle, which should in a sense represent the lost families and relatives and mitigate the cruel loneliness. It has set itself a mission to preserve the memory of the lost lives of our own and loved ones, with whom we have been bound by irreplaceable family ties.

Throughout the years, from the beginning of the fifties, from the founding of the homeland society to the present day, the *Ner-Tamid*, which mentions the dear martyrs, is maintained with the utmost care.

The large number of photographs brought by some rescued Nazi victims, which represent the Holocaust and the suffering of the Jews, help in no small way to bring to mind the great tragedy. The streets, the houses and the different places, reminiscent of the spirited and colorful cut-out life, evoke nostalgia, which often turns into pain because of the disappointed hopes.

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At the recently held memorial service of the Kutner-Włocławek homeland society, came L. Sznurbach and M. Krzanskowski, both rescued from the Nazi hell. And although it is not the first time that they recount their dark experiences, they did, at the aforementioned mourning meeting, portray unspoken

Nazi atrocities, which broke their spirits to the deepest depths.

The six memorial candles burn to commemorate the path of hell that the six million saints have traveled. Before the eyes, appear the faces and characters of those closest to them, who were squeezed together in a large crowd, driven to burning pillars of fire. The blazing fires engulf them and huge ash mountains grow. From here the mountains bear tormented voices, voices from just-born infants to the elderly.

Regarding the Holocaust with all its dark accompaniments, which is difficult to understand with human understanding, P. Wołkowicz explains that this could only come at a time when the world is in a state of devaluation of the human species in general.

M. Herc, who recently visited Poland and wanted to visit ancestral graves at Lipno cemetery, where his father fell victim, said that not only he found no sign of living Judaism in his former hometown of Lipno, but not even a reminder of a Judaism that should be the remembrance of a Jewish death.

M. Szatan, who spoke about the hometown of Shalom Asz, struck the right note at the opening of the mourning session.

Ms. Trepman took part in the artistic part by playing ghetto themes on the piano. The poetess M. Szatan read from her works – two poems², dedicated to the victims from the cities of Kutno and Włocławek. Y. Gonszer read Melech Rawicz's moving poem "My Mother".

¹ TN: organization of survivors of the Holocaust.

² TN: see article on page 321 of the original book.