

ZALMAN ON UNREICH ^{z"l}

PERSONAL STATEMENT

Zalman On Unreich (September 21, 1912 – April 21, 1978) was born in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia and immigrated to Palestine, Israel in the 1930s. He was a nameless hero by recorded history, and his whereabouts were often unknown, until now. Remarkably, Zalman was best known as an exceptional athlete, as a champion medalist in freestyle and Greco Roman wrestling, but he was so much more: a fierce protector of the Jewish community, an immigrant, founder of a youth Zionist movement and a member of Israeli intelligence organizations, a diplomat, Statesmen, rescuer of Jews and more. Zalman contributed in many ways during two historical periods: the pre-State Jewish community in Palestine and post-State of Israel in and after 1948.

SPORTS EXPERIENCE

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia (1920s) Accomplishments

- Participated in the Bratislava Maccabi Youth Club and medalist in wrestling.
- Became the Slovak welterweight champion in wrestling, 1927.
- Defeated the Austrian, Slovak and Hungarian middleweight to win the regional championship, 1928. His greatest achievement, the one he was most proud of in his early career was when he reached the final of the European Greco - Roman wrestling championships. In just two and a half minutes he defeated the reigning title holder, a Hungarian named Hegedus, who had already won the crown eleven times. Zalman was now European champion.

PALESTINE/ ISRAEL (1930s – 1970s) Accomplishments

- Participated in the Maccabi Games, won first place in the heavyweight division in the Greco-Roman wrestling, 1935.
- Joined and eventually responsible for leading and managing the Hapoel sports clubs in Tel Aviv, 1930s. Devoted much of his energy to teaching the fundamentals of wrestling and training youth in the art of self-defense and fighting skills.
- Participated and fought in a tournaments organized by the Benny Leonard Sports Club at the Gan Rina open air cinema in the center of Tel Aviv. At the time billed as an international amateur wrestling tournament between the Palestinian and Egyptian. All while, co-headlined multiple wrestling and boxing matches and getting star recognition in Israel sports newspaper publications.

PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

PALESTINE POLICE FORCE

Joined an official part of the Palestine Police Force, 1937.

THE HISTADRUT

Responsible for security for the General Council of the Histadrut Senior leader, 1938 - 1947.

HAGANAH

Member of the Haganah High Command, 1930s-1940s.

MOSSAD LEALIYAH BET

In charge of security in the Eastern European embassy, 1948-1953.

BEN GURION INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Worked for the Independent Tourism Agency, welcoming foreign dignitaries and diplomats, 1960s - 1970s.



EDUCATION, CERTIFICATIONS AND HONORARIAM

THE YESHIVA OF BRATISLAVA (PRESSBURG), SLOVAKIA

Student at the Yeshiva of Bratislava, known in the Jewish world as the Pressburg Yeshiva, was one of the most renowned centers of Jewish learning in the world.

HONORED FOR SAVING HOLY SCRIPTURES, ISRAEL

Saved holy scriptures in 1950's and received thank you letter from Israeli government.

HAPOEL AWARD CERTIFICATE, ISRAEL

Honored and recognized by the Hapoel Appreciation Committee for his life of service, 1966.

SUMMER PARALYMPICS IN TEL AVIV, ISRAEL

Recognized for giving back and honored while welcoming paraplegic athletes, when Israel was the host nation at the 1968 Summer Paralympics in Tel Aviv.



MENTORING

HAPOEL TEL AVIV SPORTS CLUB

Mentored athletes and youth. Zalman's club acted as a magnet for some of the leading athletes in the country, men and women who equaled his ambition and commitment.



INTELLECTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS

The Forward, Uprising, and the Ringer

Zalman's reflections on wrestling make interesting reading. He treated it as far more than a sport, almost as a philosophy in his personal journal.

Czech Republic, Prague Jewish Council Presentation

Zalman co-presented the issue about funding in academics for minority students and Jewish youth, making recommendations that could favorably impact student careers and workforce opportunity in Czechoslovakia.

Memorable Words by Visitors of the Histadrut House

Zalman's visitors' book, contains gratitude and personal notes by world famous individuals.