

Image not found or type unknown



Central Bohemian Conference

JÓN HJÖRLEIFUR STEFÁNSSON

Jón Hjörleifur Stefánsson, M.A.,
is a Ph.D. candidate, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam

The Central Bohemian Conference is now a defunct church unit belonging to the Czech lands.

Territory and Statistics

Period: 1931-1939, 1946.

Territory: Central Bohemia, Czechoslovakia; population 4,500,000 million; membership 750; churches 20¹

Origin of Seventh-day Adventist Work in the Territory

Adventist missionary work in Bohemia began as early as 1890.² A little more than 20 years later, the Bohemian and Moravia-Silesian Missions first appeared in the field list of the West German Union in the colporteur report for January 1912³ and in the union's first quarter report of the same year. Membership was 132 and 191, respectively.⁴ That summer, the missions were moved from the West German Union to the newly formed Central European Union. This occurred at the annual session of the West German Union, July 19-28, 1912, and took effect on January 1, 1913.⁵

Czechoslovakia declared independence on October 28, 1918, and this new political reality called for reorganization of the church units in the Czech lands and Slovakia. Therefore, the Czechoslovakian Union was organized a year later, at a meeting in Brno, November 13-19, 1919.⁶ It comprised five church units: the North Bohemian, Moravia-Silesian, and Polish-Silesian⁷ Conferences, and the Central Bohemian and Slovakian Missions.⁸ The church units covering Bohemia were divided along ethnic lines: the German believers formed the North Bohemian Conference, and the native Czechs the Central Bohemian Mission.⁹

Organizational History

The Central Bohemian Mission grew slowly, but steadily. After its first quarter in 1920 it had 124 members.¹⁰ Ten years later in 1930, its last year in the *SDA Yearbook*, the mission had 343 members.¹¹ It was organized into the Central Bohemian Conference around this time.¹² The territory of the conference remained that of the mission—Central Bohemia. The headquarters was moved to Tomkova 31, Praha-Zižkov. Membership in 1931 was 355. Initial officers were president, Karel Poledník; treasurer Ms Auguste Reckziegel; and additional committee members were Josef Popelka, Josef Simon, Jaroslav Mokry, and Karel Novák.¹³ In 1936 the conference headquarters was moved to Dvořákova 29, Praha-Zižkov.¹⁴

During World War II the Czechoslovakian Union was not listed in the *SDA Yearbook*, and the three Czechian Conferences—North Bohemian, Moravia-Silesian, and the Central Bohemian—were apparently united into the Bohemian-Moravian Conference, which was detached from the division.¹⁵ Shortly after the war, in about 1946, the union reappeared, now in the Southern European Division,¹⁶ and the three conferences were restored. The address of the Central Bohemian Conference was the union headquarters, Londynska 30, Praha-Vinohrady.¹⁷ Three Czechian conferences turned out to be too many, so a year later they were reorganized into the Bohemian and Moravia-Silesian Conferences.¹⁸

		Central Bohemian Mission 1919–31;		Central Bohemian Conference 1946	
Early mission work c. 1890–1912	Bohemian Mission 1912–19	Central Bohemian Conference 1931–38	Bohemian-Moravian Conference 1939–45	North Bohemian Conference 1946	Bohemian Conference 1947–
		North Bohemian Conference 1919–38			

List of Presidents

Karel Poledník (1931-1935); J. Doubravský (1936-1938); conference non-existent during World War II; J. Doubravský (1946).

SOURCES

“Berichte der Tschechoslowakischen Union vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1920.” *Zions-Wächter*, July 1920.

Conradi, Ludwig R. "A New Union in Central Europe." *ARH*, September 19, 1912.

Frauchiger, Emil E. "Report of the Czechoslovakian Union Conference." *General Conference Bulletin*, May 28, 1922.

"Kolporteurbericht vom Januar 1912." *Zions-Wächter*, March 4, 1912.

Rühling, Richard. "Die Abteilungskonferenz in Brünn." *Zions-Wächter*, December 17, 1919.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1883-1894, 1904-1947.

Statistical Report of Seventh-day Adventist Conferences, Missions, and Institutions. Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1930.

Staubert, Otto. "Wintersitzung des Westdeutschen Unionausschusses." *Zions-Wächter*, March 18, 1912, 130-131.

NOTES

1. Statistics from "Central Bohemian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1946), 212.?
2. For a glance at the early missionary work in Bohemia, see *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (1996), s.v. "Czech Republic."?
3. "Kolporteurbericht vom Januar 1912," *Zions-Wächter*, March 4, 1912, 116.?
4. "Berichte der Westdeutschen Union vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1912," *Zions-Wächter*, May 6, 1912, 188-189.?
5. Otto Staubert, "Wintersitzung des Westdeutschen Unionausschusses," *Zions-Wächter*, March 18, 1912, 130; Ludwig R. Conradi, "A New Union in Central Europe," *ARH*, September 19, 1912, 13.?
6. Richard Rühling, "Die Abteilungskonferenz in Brünn," *Zions-Wächter*, December 17, 1919, 236; Emil E. Frauchiger, "Report of the Czechoslovakian Union Conference," *General Conference Bulletin*, May 28, 1922, 304.?
7. In the *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* of 1920-1921, the Moravia-Silesian Conference is called the West Silesian and Moravia Conference.?
8. Richard Rühling, "Die Abteilungskonferenz in Brünn," *Zions-Wächter*, December 17, 1919, 236, 238. According to Rühling, there were two church units extant before the organization of the union: the Bohemian and the Moravia-Silesian Conferences. However, if there was a Bohemian Conference, it is not found in the reports. The Bohemian Mission is reported in all the quarterly reports of the Central European Union in 1918. In 1919, no Czechian church units are listed. The first report of the Czechoslovakian Union, the fourth quarter of 1919, lists the Bohemian Mission still. The first quarter report of 1920 then lists the five church units.?
9. Richard Rühling, "Die Abteilungskonferenz in Brünn," *Zions-Wächter*, December 17, 1919, 236.?
10. "Berichte der Tschechoslowakischen Union vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1920," *Zions-Wächter*, July 1920, 146.?
11. "Central Bohemian Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1930), 136. The statistical report for that year lists the church unit as a conference. *Statistical Report of Seventh-day Adventist Conferences, Missions, and Institutions* (Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1930), 10.?
12. I did not find material on the organization in the official periodicals or minutes.?
13. For address, territory, members, and officials, see "Central Bohemian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1931), 139.?
14. "Central Bohemian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1936), 82.?
15. "Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1939), 95-96.?
16. "Czechoslovakian Union Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1946), 211-212.?
17. "Central Bohemian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1946), 212.?
18. "Bohemian Conference" and "Moravia-Silesian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1947), 196.?