

North Bohemian Conference

JÓN HJÖRLEIFUR STEFÁNSSON

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

The North Bohemian Conference is a defunct church unit belonging to the Czech Lands.

Territory and Statistics

Period: 1919-1938, 1946.

Territory: North (and west in 1946) Bohemia, Czechoslovakia.

Population 2,000,000; membership 100; churches 8.¹

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 In the 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

Organizational History

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 to 19, 1919.⁶ The union was comprised of five church units: the North Bohemian, Moravia-Silesian,⁷ and Polish-Silesian 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 The territory of the North Bohemian Conference was the northern part of Bohemia.¹⁰ The headquarters was located at Pragerstrasse 36, Teplitz-Schönau.¹¹ Membership of the conference was 315.¹² Starting officials were: president, Emil Frauchiger; secretary, Franz Böhm; treasurer, Fr. Ludwig; and executive committee members: Aberle, Seidl,

Palme, and Quaiser.¹³

Development

The headquarters was listed at Adventhaus, Glasscheiferstrasse, Gablonz from 1927 to 1928. After that it was moved to Reichenberg, at various addresses: Demantiusstrasse 10 from 1929 to 1933, Karl Herzig Strasse 16 from 1934 to 1936, and Bayerstrasse 36 from 1937 to 1938. In 1946 it was at the union headquarters address!¹⁴

On the eve of World War II, North Bohemian Conference membership had grown to 834.¹⁵

During World War II the Czechoslovakian Union was not mentioned in the *SDA Yearbook*, and the three Czechian Conferences—the North Bohemian, Moravia-Silesian, and the Central Bohemian—were apparently united into the Bohemian-Moravian Conference, which was detached from the division.¹⁶ Shortly after the war, in about 1946, the union reappeared, now in the Southern European Division,¹⁷ and the three conferences were restored. The North Bohemian Conference then covered the northern and western part of Bohemia.¹⁸ It now had only 100 members. The war explains the paltry membership. The conference was for Germans, and they were not welcome in Czechoslovakia after the war. Three Czechian conferences turned out to be too many, so a year later they were reorganized into the Bohemian and Moravia-Silesian Conferences.¹⁹

Early mission work c. 1890–1912	Bohemian Mission ²⁰ 1912–19	North Bohemian Conference 1919–38	Bohemian-Moravian Conference 1939–45	North Bohemian Conference 1946	Bohemian Conference 1946–
------------------------------------	---	--------------------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	------------------------------

List of Presidents

Emil Frauchiger (1919-1920?);²¹ H. Bischoff (1920-1923);²² M. H. Wentland (1923-1931);²³ Josef Schor (1931-1935);²⁴ M. Gehann (1935-1937);²⁵ M. R. Hartmann (1938); conference did not exist during World War II; P. Surman (1946).

SOURCES

“Berichte der Westdeutschen Union vom 1. Januar bis 31. März 1912.” *Zions-Wächter*, May 6, 1912.

Bischoff, H. H. “Von Teplitz in Böhmen nach Kassau in der Slowakei.” *Zions-Wächter*, August 15, 1923.

Böhm, Franz. “Bericht der ersten Konferenz der Nordböhmischen Vereinigung.” *Zions-Wächter*, November 1920.

Böhm, Franz. “Bericht der 4. Jahreskonferenz der Nordböhmischen Vereinigung.” *Zions-Wächter*, November 1, 1923.

Conradi, Ludwig R. “A New Union in Central Europe.” *ARH*, September 19, 1919.

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

Hartmann, M. R. "Jahresversammlung der Nordböhmischen Vereinigung." *Zions-Wächter*, October 15, 1935.

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

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

Schuberth, H. F. "Tschechoslowakei." *Zions-Wächter*, October 15, 1931, 317-318.

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

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

NOTES

1. Statistics from "Czechoslovakian Union Conference," *SDA Yearbook* (1946), 211-212.
2. For a glance at the early missionary work in Bohemia, the most easily available text in English is still "Czech Republic," *SDAE*, which does not list any sources.
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 *SDA 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 at least 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, still lists the Bohemian Mission. 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. This comprised districts (Bi)Schofteinitz, Mies, Luditz, Jechnitz, Saas, Bilin, Leitmeritz, Dauba, Niemes, Reichenberg, Gablonz, Hohenelbe, Trautenau, and Braunau. Richard Rühling, "Die Abteilungskonferenz in Brünn," *Zions-Wächter*, December 17, 1919, 236.
11. "North Bohemian Conference," *SDA Yearbook* (1922), 87.
12. Franz Böhm, "Bericht der ersten Konferenz der Nordböhmisches Vereinigung," *Zions-Wächter*, November 1920, 223.
13. Richard Rühling, "Die Abteilungskonferenz in Brünn," *Zions-Wächter*, December 17, 1919, 236.
14. See *SDA Yearbook*.
15. "North Bohemian Conference," *SDA Yearbook* (1938), 95.
16. "Czecho-Slovakian Union Conference," *SDA Yearbook* (1939), 95-96.
17. "Czechoslovakian Union Conference," *SDA Yearbook* (1946), 211-212.
18. "North Bohemian Conference," *SDA Yearbook* (1946), 212.
19. "Bohemian Conference" and "Moravia-Silesian Conference," *SDA Yearbook* (1947), 196.
20. The Bohemian Mission may have become the Bohemian Conference for a brief time in 1919 before the Czechoslovakian Union became five church units. Some sources mention such a church unit, but I have not found sufficient data.
21. Richard Rühling, "Die Abteilungskonferenz in Brünn," *Zions-Wächter*, December 17, 1919, 236.
22. H. H. Bischoff, "Von Teplitz in Böhmen nach Kassau in der Slowakei," *Zions-Wächter*, August 15, 1923, 253.
23. Franz Böhm, "Bericht der 4. Jahreskonferenz der Nordböhmisches Vereinigung," *Zions-Wächter*, November 1, 1923, 331.
24. H. F. Schuberth, "Tschechoslowakei," *Zions-Wächter*, October 15, 1931, 317.
25. M. R. Hartmann, "Jahresversammlung der Nordböhmisches Vereinigung," *Zions-Wächter*, October 15, 1935, 316. It is not entirely clear whether Gehann was elected or re-elected on this occasion.

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)