

Chelm Gets Electricity

By Philip *Fishl* Kutner

Politicians make promises—sometimes they even keep them!

It all began in a hotly contested mayoral race in Chelm. At a town hall debate, Gershon the leading candidate for the conservative Gor Frum Party promised that if he were elected that there would be a brilliant light bulb in every kitchen in all of Chelm. It would not be an ordinary light bulb, but a very special one.

It has been reported that upon being challenged as to the kind of light bulb, Gershon said that it would be a CIRCLE, (Chelm Infra Red Light Emitter). It would be have an incandescent glow for reading so that the men and boys could use it for studying. Then in very cold weather, and on the Sabbath, it would automatically convert to an infra-red heater. Thus it would not be necessary to lug the cholent pot to the bakery to be kept warm overnight for the shabes.

Needless to say, that when the Chelm mayoral elections were held, the Gor Frum Party won in an unprecedented landslide receiving every vote except those of the other candidates and their immediate families.

After the installation ceremony had been held and the gala inaugural had taken place and things had settled down, it soon became apparent that Mayor Gershon had to attempt to deliver on his promise—but what to do?

Gertie, Gerhson's plump, beloved wife, suggested that the wise Chelm rabbi should be consulted. Arrangements quickly were made for the meeting and the wisdom of the ages was revealed. "Appoint the CPUC (Chelm Public Utilities Commission) and let them solve the problem" was the advice given by the rabbi.

The commissioners were selected as you would in a horse racing rap sheet—based on the sounding of the names. Beryl was selected as the Commission Chairman because B is the first letter of bulb and E is for electric.

After several commission meetings and a great deal of research and discussions, it was agreed upon that there would not be a generator built in Chelm. It would ruin the bucolic appearance of the shtetl and would be a polluter. Instead they would buy the electric power from Lublin, After a lengthy period of negotiations, a price was agreed upon.

To get the electricity from Lublin they would use a foot wide extension cord. The cord would lie on the ground except where it crossed a road, and there it would be snaked underground. Where it crossed the river, it would be laid like the Trans-Atlantic Cable.

Meanwhile the conversations all over Chelm was about the new luxury that would be in every household from Grober Gimpel, the wealthiest grain dealer, down to the humblest cobbler, Simon the Shuster. Each and every Chelm family would be treated equally.

Instead of smoky kerosene lanterns there would be the smokeless electric light bulbs that could be turned on and off with a flick of the finger. Another advantage is that the infra-red heat lamp would take the sharp chill from the long, cold winter nights.

The final problem came in how to finance the ambitious venture. The estimate was that a million dollars would need to be raised. The commission decided that the Chelm Public Utility should offer IPOs (Initial Public Offerings) on the Warsaw Stock Exchange. The initials would be CPU. It was decided to establish the original price per share at one-dollar.

Der Bay's readers are being offered a once in a lifetime opportunity for investing in a pre-offering. If 1000 readers invested \$1000 each, the entire amount would be raised. To make the offering more desirable, there is an automatic reinvestment plan so that dividends can be reinvested without commission at the lowest list price on that day. Furthermore, the dividends would be tax-free of any Chelm taxes. An additional incentive was added. If any investor wants to incorporate in Chelm, there will be no charge for incorporation.

Call the Chelm Public Utilities Commission at: 011-34-4881-633-1229, e-mail cpuc@chelmshtetl.pl or write to:
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