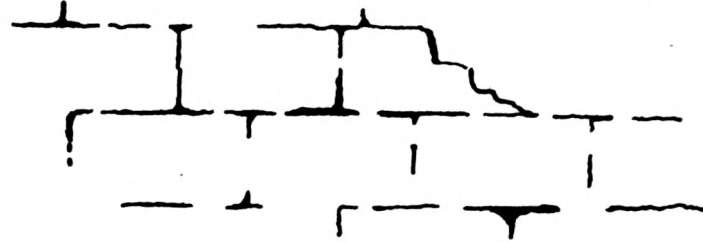


wwII

THE GHETTO



speaks

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BBC on the Anniversary of the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto

Worth noting, as a reminder, if not exactly as news, is the special transmission, by the British Broadcasting Corporation's European Division, of a program, on April 17, 1944, devoted to the first anniversary of the heroic battle of the Warsaw Ghetto.

The authentic text of this program follows:

LEAD-IN: A year ago, on April 18th, there began, in the heart of Europe, a battle unique in history.

NARRATOR: The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto.

(Music: Schelomo (Bloch), part II.

HMV DB 5816, side 2)

NARRATOR: The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto. In order to understand it, it is necessary to trace the story of the German treatment of the Jews in Poland since that country was invaded. The mass killing of several million Jews in Poland was preceded by a series of carefully prepared moves. In 1940 ghettos were created all over Poland. The Jews were compelled to move into them under penalty of death.

VOICE: All the Jews. Illiterates and University professors, proletarians and industrialists. Even those who have been brought up from birth in the Christian Faith, because they had one grandparent who had once been a Jew.

NARRATOR: In some small townlets the Jews were imprisoned in the local church. In large towns, whole streets or districts were cordoned off. It is difficult to describe the living conditions there. Often, several large families had to settle in one single room.

Over the entrance German notices said: "Warning! Contagious disease. Entry strictly forbidden."

The Ghetto in Warsaw was surround-

ed by a wall five to six metres high. The entrances were strongly guarded by German pickets. And within the walls lived four hundred thousand people.

VOICE: Lived? No, they died, at the rate of seven thousand a month. They died of starvation, of exhaustion, of disease.

NARRATOR: In the mornings the streets were full of human corpses, covered with newspaper. The rule for the Ghetto was this: If a man or a woman or a child died during the night, the family had to carry the corpse out into the street and place it on the pavement by the door. Some time later, it was picked up by the vans of the sanitary board, as they might collect refuse. Apparently, however, seven thousand deaths a month—in one Ghetto—was not considered enough. In March, 1942, Hitler visited Poland, and issued an order that by the end of the year fifty per cent of all Jews were to be exterminated. A little later, the quota was raised.

VOICE: On September 1st, 1939, the Jewish population was approximately three million, one hundred thousand. Today . . . nobody knows for certain—10 per cent of the old figure—more, or less—who can tell?

NARRATOR: It was done like this: on July 20th, 1942, special guards, drawn from the scum of Eastern Europe—Lithuanian and Ukrainian gangsters—were posted on the walls of the Ghetto. Escape was made quite impossible. And next, firing squads of German police drove through the streets, shooting or taking as hostages all well-dressed Jews. Two days later, the Germans announced that the

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Ghetto was to be evacuated at the rate of six thousand per day.

Subsequently: ten thousand per day.

VOICE:

'Evacuate' . . . the old, infirm and crippled were killed on the spot. The others herded into cattle-trucks. A hundred and twenty men, women and children into each truck. Sometimes the convoys waited a whole day in a siding before driving off. Groans, shrieks and cries for water would drive you mad. At last the sealed trucks were moved off—usually to a station called Treblinka. There, men and women were separated and driven to hermetically sealed bath-houses, in which instead of water, steam was introduced through the faucets. It is not yet known why the Germans preferred to kill the Jews from Warsaw by steam instead of gas . . .

NARRATOR:

By April, 1943, some three hundred and sixty thousand out of the original four hundred thousand were 'evacuated from the Warsaw Ghetto. And then came that Sunday, April 18th. At 6 o'clock in the evening German S.S. formations and Lithuanian and Ukrainian auxiliary units burst through the gates of the Ghetto on a fresh mission of murder and torture. But this time it was to be different.

VOICE:

The streets were empty. The houses looked like dead. And suddenly, from the windows of those silent houses came a shower of bullets and hand grenades. Roofs and attics began to spout fire and death—this time, it was the Nazi gangsters who ran for their lives. An alarm was sent out to the S.S. More police were mobilized. The walls were surrounded. Tanks were brought up.

NARRATOR:

But tanks could not do the job.

VOICE:

Field guns had to be brought up—whole batteries of field guns.

NARRATOR:

But not even field guns could do the job.

VOICE:

Squadrons of the Luftwaffe had to come and bomb the Ghetto. And more tanks and armored cars. And flame throwers.

NARRATOR:

And still the Jews fought on. They were firing from the roofs and the attics, although they knew that already German sappers were mining the houses.

How did they get the arms? That story will one day be told in full. One day, when it is safe to tell the world all that the Polish Underground Movement has done in this war.

The battle went on, for six weeks. From street to street, from house to house—with tanks and planes against rifles and pistols.

For six weeks, although not for a moment was the outcome in any doubt. And while the battle was raging and the Ghetto was burning, its defenders wrote a Manifesto to the people of Warsaw.

VOICE:

"The fight in the Ghetto is for our freedom and yours; for human, social, national pride and honor. Long live the brotherhood of arms and blood of fighting Poland! Long live freedom!"

NARRATOR:

At the end of the six weeks, the Germans counted their dead—twelve hundred killed. And in the smoking ruins of the houses . . .

VOICE:

In the houses there were no survivors. The order of Virtuti Militari—the highest military decoration Poland can award—could only be given posthumously to one of the leaders of the Battle of the Ghetto.

(Music: Schelomo, Part V - HMV DB 5818)

T H E G H E T T O S P E A K S

NARRATOR: Let us then pay homage to the dead—but not with words, which could only be meaningless, nor with praise, which they never wanted. From those who fired the first shots and threw the first hand grenades a year ago, no survivors remain. But many others are still alive: thousands of Jews in Poland and in all the countries of Europe where the S.S. and the Gestapo still hold sway. They live like hunted animals, in danger of torture and death, shielded by kind people.

Help them.

Help them to hide, to stave their hunger, to reach neutral or Allied soil. Help them before it is too late. And let your mercy and assistance be the wreath you lay down on the unmarked graves of those who died in the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto.

NEW DETAILS ABOUT THE BATTLE OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

Despite all the authentic reports which have already reached us from the Jewish Underground Labor Movement of Poland, and the published accounts of some eyewitnesses, the full story of the battle of the Warsaw Ghetto has yet to be written.

In view of the fundamental importance of this unique heroic uprising, we deem it wise to publish some details of this epic battle which have just reached us:

“On the seventh day of the battle of the Warsaw ghetto, the leaders of the Jewish Underground fighters received a message from the prisoners at Paviak (a well-known prison in Warsaw, within the boundaries of the ghetto—ed.) which reads: ‘Set us free and we shall join your ranks.’ Five hundred Jewish armed insurrectionists, attired in German uniforms, were ordered to immediately attack the prison. Following a violent battle with the German guards, who had been caught unprepared, all the prisoners were freed. “At some time during the course of the battle of

“the Warsaw ghetto, the Germans issued an ultimatum to the Jewish Underground fighters demanding their unconditional surrender and the immediate delivery of the German prisoners. “The reply of the Jewish defenders of the ghetto was that for every German taken prisoner, ten captured Jews should be set free.”

POLISH UNDERGROUND LIQUIDATES BETRAYERS OF JEWS

Drastic steps to deal with any traitors who act against Jews in Poland have been taken by the Underground movement there.

Two Poles who delivered Jews, hiding from the Gestapo, into German hands were sentenced to death by the special tribunal of the Polish resistance movement. The death sentences on these persons, Boguslaw Jan Pilnik and Wacław Noworel, were published in the “Rzeczpospolita Polska,” organ of the Plenipotentiary in Poland of the Polish Government.

The announcement reads that Pilnik “born on May 5, 1912, son of Alexander and Felicia Szekowski, living in 17, Pieracka St., Warsaw, has been sentenced to death and loss of public and civil rights because acting as a German police spy, he delivered to the German authorities Polish citizens of Jewish nationality who were hiding from the German authorities; he defrauded his victims of large sums of money on the false pretext that the money was needed for the protection of those in hiding. . . .” The sentence was carried out by shooting on August 8, 1943.

The second announcement states that “Noworel, a peasant of Lipnica Wielka, Nowy Sacz, South Poland, was sentenced to death and shot because he collaborated with the Gestapo as a police spy and caused the arrest of Polish citizens of Jewish origin as well as of Poles who were in hiding.”

GERMAN TORTURERS OF JEWS IDENTIFIED

The names of German torturers of Jews in a number of concentration camps have now been disclosed by a Jew who managed to escape to a neutral country.

According to this witness, the most notorious torturer and executioner of Jews in the Sobibor camp is

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Franz Halzheimer. Other executioners and torturers are Eugen Grimmelsen, Johann Loeffler, Theodor Ontyrd, Paul Hrachowy, Max Hilberg from Niederwitschnitz.

JOINT DECLARATION OF PPS AND BUND

At a meeting of the Polish National Council, held in London on May 10, 1944, Adam Ciolkoss, leader of the Polish Socialist Movement, presented the following statement on behalf of the Polish and Jewish Socialists of Poland:

In view of the recent events in the Polish Army, the representatives of the Polish Socialist Party (F.P.S.) and the Jewish "Bund" in London issued the following declaration:

"Certain reactionary and anti-Semitic elements continuing abroad their damaging and—by the majority of the Polish people—condemned policy of racial hatred have developed their activities in the Polish armed forces.

"The dangerous influence of these elements has not always met with sufficiently strong opposition by those authorities responsible for order in the Army, an opposition which in itself would have been conducive to the atmosphere of sincere brotherhood and citizenship. In these circumstances the approval granted by the C-in-C. and Minister of War to the first and second group of Jewish soldiers to be transferred to the British Army only acted as an provocation to other groups to do the same.

"The attitude taken up by our military authorities in respect of the first groups of Jewish soldiers on the one hand and the tolerant attitude to those who have committed offenses of an anti-Semitic nature on the other hand have combined to create a situation in which there could have been no moral basis for the punishment of those who have left the ranks of the Polish Army.

"The representatives of the P.P.S. and Bund state again that the Republic of Poland is the common fatherland of all her citizens without difference of origin, religion or nationality. In particular, no person and no thing can divide the common fate binding the Polish and Jewish masses in our country.

"The Polish Army is the army of the Polish Republic, the place for a Polish soldier—a Jew—is in the Polish Army. He has fought, fights and will fight shoulder by shoulder with the soldier—a Pole. Today, more than ever he will be inspired by the heroic determination of the Jewish masses murdered by the German occupants and by the resistance of the Jewish underground worker who, together with the Polish worker, fights for a free, independent Poland, for democracy and social justice for all."

After asking for the immediate release of the sentenced Jews, Ukrainians and White Russians and denouncing the idea of creating separate Jewish units in the Polish Army the declaration continues:—

"It is necessary to bring to account all those guilty of anti-Semitic offenses. They should receive exemplary and severe punishment. It is necessary to start educational activity in the army to counter-act nationalism, reaction and anti-Semitism, ideas against which the majority of the Polish people, particularly the Socialist workers, have always fought.

"The responsibility for the present unsatisfactory conditions in the army falls not on the Polish nation and its unquestionably democratic majority but on those military authorities who by the nature of their office must accept that responsibility. The same authorities must also bear the political consequences of the situation created.

"Those who utilize the offenses in the armed forces committed by reactionaries to discredit the whole right for freedom of the Polish masses or are supporting the wrong solution, namely, the transference of Jews to the British Army or the creation of separate Jewish units, only hinder the battle against anti-Semitism and reaction.

"We simultaneously condemn all attempts by certain external elements, hostile to Poland, to utilize these recent events for a general attack on the Polish state and her army. We are sure these attempts are also condemned by the Jews in Poland."

Signed:—The Foreign Committee of the Polish Socialist Party.

London Delegation of the Central Committee of the "Bund" in Poland.

JEWISH WORKERS UNION DELEGATION CONFERS WITH POLISH PRIME MINISTER

The American Representation of the General Jewish Workers Union of Poland appointed a 3-man delegation—which on June 13, 1944, conferred with Polish Prime Minister Stanislaw Mikolaichik, in Washington. The parley lasted almost an hour. All poignant matters were discussed. The delegation dwelt particularly upon the issue of anti-Semitism with regards to a bill which E. Szerer had introduced in the Polish National Council; upon the attitude of the Jewish Labor Movement to the Polish Government as it is presently constituted, and upon its position with regards to the Russian-Polish conflict. Finally, the delegation asked that the Polish Premier, during his talks with the U. S. Government, should initiate a new warning to Germany, with regards to the mass murders of the Jews, and, too, that the Jews under the heel of Nazi Germany be regarded as prisoners of war.

BILL MAKES ANTI-SEMITISM CRIMINAL OFFENSE

On May 26, 1944, Dr. Emanuel Scherer, representative of the Jewish Labor Movement of Poland in the Polish National Council in London, introduced before that body a bill which makes anti-Semitic propaganda and activity a criminal offense.

The bill, dispatched to a special committee of the Council, is due for speedy consideration.

Scherer's bill has been signed by all Socialist members of the Council and by Dr. Schwartzbard.

The text of the bill follows:

"P R E A M B L E

"WHEREAS to spread hatred against national, racial or religious minorities, as well as to scoff at them, is contrary to the basic principles of democracy and morality, and

"WHEREAS any kind of political activity, propaganda or agitation directed against any national, religious or racial part of Poland's population is contrary to the basic principle of equality and should therefore be regarded as a crime, and

"WHEREAS anti-semitism is undoubtedly the most obnoxious form of racial discrimination, and

"WHEREAS anti-semitic politics and propaganda is presently being employed by the reactionary forces the world over as the most dangerous weapon against democracy and liberty, and

"WHEREAS anti-semitism, no matter how disguised, poisons and undermines community morale and destroys the cooperation between citizens, regardless of race or creed, and

"WHEREAS the Jews of Poland are on equal footing with all other citizens of Poland with regards to their rights and duties, and

"WHEREAS the democratic forces of Poland have always fought relentlessly against anti-semitism and are also presently resolved to fight against any attempt made by any reactionary group to continue its anti-semitic activity or propaganda,

"THEREFORE, be it resolved that:

"The Polish National Council is of the opinion that the following decree should immediately be issued:

"D E C R E E

"Paragraph I—Any kind of anti-semitic activity or propaganda should be regarded as a crime.

"Paragraph II—Anyone who discriminates against Jews, because of their national or racial adherence, or because of their religion, is subject to the penalty of arrest or imprisonment.

"Paragraph III—Anyone who spreads hatred or contempt against the Jews, or demands reduction of their equal rights, compared to the rights of other citizens of Poland, either orally, by print or picture, is subject to the penalty of arrest or imprisonment. If this criminal act has been committed by print or by picture, the Court may halt the distribution of these items and the publishers and editors may be subject to the same penalty as the authors. In the event the same crime is repeated by a periodical, such a publication should be entirely forbidden.

"Paragraph IV—Anyone who commits the above-mentioned crimes under circumstances which are apt to disturb public peace, or to provoke an uproar, damage property or body, or result in death casualties, is subject to the penalty of imprisonment.

"Paragraph V—An official, army officer, teacher, school head, or anyone in charge of public facili-

"ties, guilty of one of the crimes mentioned in this decree, may, in addition to the penalty of arrest or imprisonment, be subject to forfeiture of his office for a period of not less than two years."

"The Polish National Council believes that, after such a decree has been issued, the Polish Government should initiate an international convention to outlaw anti-semitism as a criminal offense everywhere."

In introducing this bill, Dr. Scherer has followed in the footsteps of the late Szmul Zygelbojm, who, shortly before his death, prepared an identical motion to forbid anti-Semitism in Poland.

JEWISH LABOR MOVEMENT OF POLAND PARTICIPATES IN ILGWU CONVENTION

David Dubinsky, President of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, invited the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers Union of Poland to participate in I.L.G.W.U.'s National Convention, held on May 31 - June 9, at Boston. On May 31, Emanuel Novogrudsky was accorded a hearty welcome by President Dubinsky, Convention Chairman. In his message of greeting, President Dubinsky stressed his background in the Jewish Labor Movement of Poland and the intense sympathy he bears for the fighting Jewish masses of Poland. In his address, Emanuel Novogrudsky dwelt particularly upon the conditions of the Jewish masses in Poland previous to the outbreak of the war and upon the aims and tasks of the heroic underground fight being waged under the "Bund" banner and continuing unceasingly in the Polish land. At the close of his address, Emanuel Novogrudsky described the heroism of the immortal fighters during the Warsaw ghetto uprising, and pointed out to the 800 Convention delegates that they, along with all of laboring humanity, ought to do everything possible in the present hour, to rescue the Jews still surviving in Poland and in Nazi Europe. Emanuel Novogrudsky's address drew prolonged delegate applause.

DUTCH POPULATION AIDS PERSECUTED JEWS

*The Nazi beasts persecute the Jews of Holland with the same cruelty and vandalism which they man-

ifested against Jews elsewhere. However, the compassion of the Dutch people for the innocent victims of the Nazi criminals, is remarkable. The Nazi newspaper of Holland, "Storm," states indignantly, in its issue of November 29, 1943, that the clergy of the reformed church in the small Dutch country town of Zwolle, went so far "as to provide the Jews in the Nazi concentration camp Westerbork, with substantial food packages, mailed to them regularly."

Another Dutch-Nazi organ, called "Deutsche Zeitung in den Niederlanden," relates that a certain number of Dutch inhabitants have recently been arrested because of their attempts to prevent the Nazi police on duty from hunting hidden Jews.

NAZIS EXECUTE CZECHS FOR AIDING JEWS

The Prague Special German Court sentenced to death eight Czechs, including two women for "assisting Jews in crossing the frontier thus sabotaging government measures to solve the Jewish problem in the "Protectorate." The victims, executed on November 5, were Elsa Taussigova, 58, Marie Pospisilova, 27, Frantisek Kucera, 34, Frantisek Sedivy, 47, all from Prague. Petr Ribacek, 36, Tomas Ribacek, 41, both from Stranznice and Jan Sadle, 39, Jaroslav Klemes, 47, of Sudomerice.

The Prague Special Senate and German Court sentenced to death Vaclav Nemeec, 58, his wife Katerina Nemeec, 50, and their son Joseph, 30, of Lhotka, Bistrice, Zbiroh, for supporting and not denouncing enemies of the Reich wanted by the police. The executions were carried out on November 8.

WARSAW GHETTO AS REVEALED IN CURRENT POLISH LITERATURE

Stefania Zahorska, well-known Polish author and playwright, who presently lives in London, recently completed a new drama which portrays the appalling conditions prevailing in the gloomy streets of the ghetto of Warsaw, since 1942, when the Nazis began to transfer the Jews to the death camps.

Stefania Zahorska's drama is called "Smocza St. No. 13."

THEY DON'T NEED THEM ANY MORE

Following the liquidation of the entire Jewish community of Cracaw, the Nazis established a unique Jewish body there called "Judische Unterstutzung Stelle," composed chiefly of former members of the Jewish Community Council of Cracaw, along with some other Jews especially selected outside of Cracaw by Gov. Frank. The purpose of this new body, said the announcement, was to receive from abroad and to distribute among the Jews of Poland, food and medical supply packages. However, the Underground Jewish Labor Movement of Poland made it public that the body in question has been created by Gov. Frank, in Cracaw, in order to deceive donators and to snare supplies for Germany, and it warned that the members of this body are collaborationists who shouldn't be trusted.

Now, word has reached us from Poland that the aforementioned body has been finally dissolved by the Gestapo, and that all its members, including Dr. Michal Weichert and David Hilfstein, have been deported from Cracaw. They disappeared without a trace. Apparently, the Nazis do not need them any more.

ITALIAN JEWS DEPORTED TO POLAND

According to a report published in the Italian newspaper "Squille Italica," "a concentration camp, which the Nazis have established for 2,000 Jews near Piacenze, has recently been liquidated, and all inhabitants deported to Poland."

Undoubtedly, the new victims are destined to perish in the death camps, as have so many others.

F/SGT. RYSZARD BYCHOWSKI KILLED IN ACTION

On May 22, 1944, our dear young friend, Sgt. Richard Bychowski, was killed in action over Germany.

As a school boy, Ryszard joined the Polish Socialist Youth Organization. A few months following his graduation, in September 1939, he enlisted in the regular Polish Army. In 1941, he came to the United States with his family. He was hardly a year in this country when he volunteered for service with the Pol-

ish Air Force in Canada, where he received his wings. Sent to England, he became a navigator and participated with the Polish Lancaster Squadron in many bombing missions over Germany.

He died at the tender age of 22. He was an offspring of an old Jewish family of Warsaw, and his grandfather, a prominent doctor, served many years as an alderman in the City Council of Warsaw.

Ryszard Bychowski died as a soldier in line of duty, in our fight for freedom.

Honor his memory!

JEWISH POPULATION IN HUNGARY

With regards to the recent developments in Europe, which brought under Nazi domination the entire Jewish population of Hungary, we deem it pertinent to reveal authentic figures concerning the number of Jews in Hungary.

Before the present war, the Jewish population of Hungary totaled only 400,000. However, during the present war, the Jewish population there increased substantially, thanks to the many thousands of Jewish refugees from Poland and elsewhere, who sought shelter in Hungary against the Nazi atrocities. As early as in 1941, Hungary already harbored about 730,000 Jews. Presently, the number of Jews there, exceeds one million.

CURRENT PUBLICATIONS ON THE BATTLE OF THE WARSAW GHETTO

- 1: "Ghetto in Flames," Yiddish, 206 pp., published by the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers Union of Poland, New York.
- 2: "With Heads Unbowed," article published in magazine "War Guide Supplement," prepared by the Book and Magazine Bureau, Office of War Information, New York.
- 3: "In Memory of the Ghetto Fighters," poem, published in the "Knitgoods Workers Voice," May 5, 1944, New York.
- 4: "Tribute to Warsaw Ghetto Fighters," article published in "Justice," organ of International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, June 15, 1944, Jersey City, N. J.