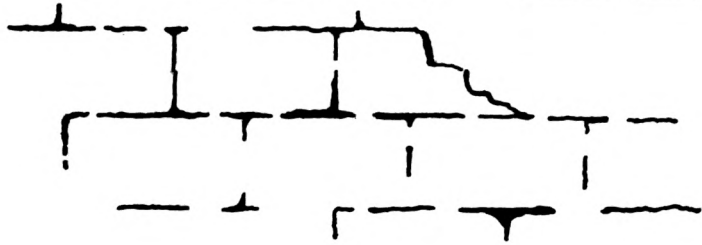


-THE GHETTO



Speaks

WWII

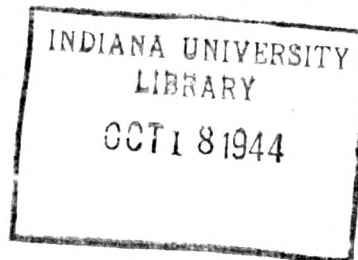
No. 29

OCTOBER 1, 1944

New York, N. Y.

Table of Contents

PRESS RELEASE



**JEWS PARTICIPATE ACTIVELY IN THE WARSAW
UPRISING**

THE JEWISH ARMED RESISTANCE ORGANIZATION

SHOULD YOU MAKE
use of this release, please
forward a clipping to us.

330

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

Jews Participate Actively in the Warsaw Uprising

The Central Committee of the Underground Jewish Labor Movement "Bund" sent a cable about the participation of the Jewish underground fighters in the Warsaw uprising and asked that aid be mobilized by the democratic world for the fighters.

During the first week of the uprising in Warsaw, on the 7th of August, 1944, the Jewish Resistance Organization, the same which conducted the Battle in the Warsaw Ghetto, issued an ardent appeal to the Jews of Warsaw to join the uprising against the hated Germans.

We have also received later reports about the participation of the Jews in the heroic uprising of Warsaw, which broke out on the 1st of August, 1944, and is going on to this day. According to these reports, those Jews of Warsaw who have remained alive, established two fighting detachments. One detachment was named "Michal Klefisz," the hero of the "Bund," who fell as one of the most important leaders of the armed uprising in the Ghetto of Warsaw. This detachment excelled itself particularly in the bloody fights with the Germans for that section in Warsaw which is known as the "old city." General Bor, the leader of the Warsaw uprising, gave this detachment special recognition and stated, that this detachment alone killed three hundred Germans and obtained a large amount of German arms and ammunition.

The other Jewish detachment is fighting under the name of "Berek Yoselewicz." The latter is a well-known historical figure of the Kosciuszko uprising in Poland in 1794. This detachment participated in the siege and occupation of the main post office building in Warsaw. General Bor informs, that the Jews of this detachment seized over a hundred Germans.

In connection with the above report, we received the following messages, which were broadcast to Warsaw from London:

WILL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO BE HELPFUL TO POLISH PEOPLE OF WARSAW IN CRUCIAL SITUATION IN WHICH THEY ARE PLACED STOP AM CALLING UPON OUR GOVERNMENT TO EXERCISE ALL EFFORTS POSSIBLE TO BRING ABOUT RELIEF

WILLIAM GREEN, PRESIDENT
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

THE HEROIC UPRISING OF WARSAW'S POPULACE IS ONE OF THE MOST OUTSTANDING EVENTS IN MANKIND'S IMMORTAL STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM AND ADDS NEW GLORY TO THE GRIEF-STRICKEN POLISH PEOPLE STOP I CONVEY THE ADMIRATION OF THE HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS' UNION FOR THE JEWISH WORKING MASSES OF POLAND AND FOR THE POLES WHO ARE VALIANTLY FIGHTING THE NAZIS AGAINST TREMENDOUS ODDS

DAVID DUBINSKY, PRESIDENT
INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT
WORKERS' UNION

YOUR GALLANT STRUGGLE IN WARSAW STREETS AGAINST NAZI HORDES IS A MOST HEROIC AND SACRED FRAGMENT OF WORLD WAR STOP THE HOUR OF NAZI DOWNFALL IS CLOSE STOP NATIONS AND PEOPLES ARE ALREADY LIBERATED STOP POLAND TOO WILL BE FREE STOP LET YOUR INDOMITABLE SPIRIT CONTINUE STOP VICTORY IS IN SIGHT

JEWISH LABOR COMMITTEE

ADOLPH HELD

JACOB PAT

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

TO THE GALLANT FIGHTERS OF THE WARSAW UPRISING AGAINST THE NAZIS, TO THE BRAVE, HEROIC FIGHTERS OF THE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT IN WARSAW: WE ADMIRE YOUR HEROISM, YOUR FEARLESS AND DETERMINED STRUGGLE AGAINST THE NAZI BEASTS, THAT WILL STOP AT NOTHING IN ORDER TO ANNIHILATE YOU ALL AND TO DESTROY THE CITY OF WARSAW. YOU ARE A SYMBOLIC EXAMPLE TO THE ENTIRE WORLD OF A COURAGEOUS STRUGGLE OF AN UNDERGROUND LABOR MOVEMENT, OF AN UPRISING OF A POPULACE THAT IS FIGHTING TO ITS LAST DROP OF BLOOD FOR ITS INDEPENDENCE, FOR FREEDOM IN ITS OWN COUNTRY AND FOR THE LIBERATION OF THE ENTIRE WORLD FROM NAZI OPPRESSION.

WE PARTICULARLY WISH TO GREET OUR JEWISH SISTERS AND BROTHERS THAT ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE UPRISING AGAINST THE NAZIS. WE SEND YOU OUR WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND ARE SURE THAT THANKS TO YOUR UPRISING AGAINST THE NAZIS, THANKS TO THE STRUGGLE WHICH IS BEING WAGED BY THE RED ARMY ON THE BATTLE-

FIELDS AROUND WARSAW, THE BANNER OF A FREE, DEMOCRATIC, INDEPENDENT POLAND WILL SOON WAVE AGAIN OVER THE CAPITAL CITY OF POLAND, WARSAW. OUR JEWISH BROTHERS AND SISTERS WILL THEN, AS FREE AND EQUAL CITIZENS OF POLAND, HELP REBUILD POLAND ON PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY, DEMOCRACY AND AMICABLE COOPERATION AMONG THE VARIOUS NATIONAL GROUPS, ON PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE.

BE STRENGTHENED IN YOUR STRUGGLE. THE HOUR OF FREEDOM IS APPROACHING. THE NAZIS WILL BE OUSTED FROM POLAND, JUST AS THEY ARE NOW BEING OUSTED FROM OTHER COUNTRIES THAT WERE RECENTLY LIBERATED AS A RESULT OF THE BRAVE BATTLES OF THE AMERICAN ARMY AND THE ARMIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE WORKMEN'S CIRCLE

R. GUSKIN, PRESIDENT

J. BASKIN, GENERAL-SECRETARY

The Jewish Armed Resistance Organization

The American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland ("Bund") has just received another authentic report from the Underground "Bund" in Poland. The report is dated May 26th, 1944. It describes Jewish life in Poland and gives an exact account of the sufferings and struggles of those who have already perished, as well as of those who are still alive. The report consists of seventy typewritten pages, and it is, therefore, impossible to publish this wealth of information at one time here. The following is but one chapter of the report. This chapter gives, for the first time, a precise description of the battles in the Ghetto of Warsaw and of the preparations for them.

We will publish other chapters of this astounding report in the future issues of this publication.

The following is a literal translation of that chapter:

(CHAPTER C)

"It is but fitting, that on the anniversary of the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto, we should supplement our previous reports with a detailed description of the activities of the Jewish Armed Resistance Organization and of our own part in the armed resistance against the Nazis.

"From the outset, the uprising was led by the Jewish Armed Resistance Organization, which comprises Jewish Zionist elements as well as representatives of our Party.

"Before relating the story of the Jewish Armed Resistance Organization, we would like to outline our own situation and the circumstances which led to the establishment of this body.

"You were informed through the report sent by Janczyn (one of the leaders of the Jewish Under-

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

ground Labor Movement killed in action—ed.), that the first rumors about the mass-extermination of Jews in gas chambers (Chelmno) reached the Jewish community of Warsaw in February, 1941. Our youth organization 'Zukunft' immediately called a meeting to discuss ways and means of defense should the mass-slaughter of Jews spread throughout the General Gouvernement (that part of Poland occupied by Germany but not as yet incorporated in the Reich—ed). The meeting unanimously decided to wage armed resistance. However, at that time, the layman did not believe the appalling truth of the unheard of atrocities of the Germans.

"The first conference of Jewish political parties to discuss the possibility of waging armed resistance did not take place until January, 1942. This conference did not succeed in creating a Joint Armed Resistance Organization. The participants did not know each other well enough at that time and most of them were afraid lest information about the creation of such an organization would reach the Germans and give them an excuse to further persecutions.

"After this conference, our own Central Committee, at that time located behind the ghetto walls, commenced organizing a self-defense organization, consisting exclusively of members of our Party. Its activities were strictly confidential. From its inception, our self-defense organization was in close contact with the Polish Socialist Organization (R.P.P.S.). Three persons were appointed to lead our self-defense organization (names cannot be divulged—ed.). Some of the officers of our self-defense detachments were: Abram Fajner, Frydryk Zalmen, Kostrynski Szmul, Lejbel Szpichlerz and Marek. The members of our self-defense organization received their military schooling from instructors of the P.S. (Polish Socialists—ed.). The most active members of the self-defense organization were former members of our 'Skif' and 'Zukunft' (youth organizations of the Jewish Labor Movement before the outbreak of the war—ed.). The names of the following persons, who are known to you, will give you an idea of the elements who joined our self-defense organization: Jurek Blones, Janek Bilak, Gabrys Fryseldorf, Jankiel Gruszka, Natan Liebeskiend, David Peltz, Welwel Rosowski, Szperling, Pola Lifszyc (intelligence), Cywia Waks (intelligence), etc.

"The most difficult task for us, who were shut behind the ghetto walls and denied of all contact with

the world, was to provide our self-defense organization with weapons. At that time, no one even dreamt of hand grenades. To buy and hoard a sufficient number of pistols was difficult enough. However, time passed quickly and soon we were confronted with a new situation. The deportation of the Jews from that part of Poland incorporated into Germany was almost completed. Only the Jews of Lodz were left there and the Ghetto of Lodz had become a closed concentration camp.

"In the Spring of 1942, the Germans had already commenced with the deportation of the Jews from the smaller towns in the General Gouvernement. Even a large Jewish community in one of the more important cities of Poland had already suffered a deportation, but the Jews of Warsaw still did not believe, that the same horrible fate was in store for them too. They stubbornly insisted that the capital of Poland would be spared.

"On the 18th of April, 1942, the first flash of armed resistance occurred in the ghetto. Our self-defense organization paid dearly for its boldness. Our comrades Szklar (printer), Naftula Leruch, Mojsze Goldberg, Taube, Libder and Szajn (all well-known members of the Jewish Labor Movement 'Bund'—ed.) died as soldiers for freedom. After these events, there wasn't a quiet night in the ghetto any longer. Nevertheless, the layman still did not believe, that a '22nd of July' would come (the 22nd of July was the fatal day on which the wholesale deportation of 500,000 Warsaw Jews towards death began—ed.). Our 'Weker' (the clandestine newspaper of the Jewish Underground Labor Movement—ed.) kept urging the Jewish population to resist. However, the Jewish police, together with the Jewish hirelings of the Gestapo as well as some of the elements close to the Kahal (Board of the Jewish Community—ed.) went out of their way to prevent an uprising of the Jews. After the 22nd of July, 1942, while the deportation of the Jews of Warsaw was being brutally carried out, a second conference of all Jewish political parties took place. Not being able to convince them, even at that time, to wage armed resistance, we issued an appeal of our own to the Jews of Warsaw, revealing the truth about the dreadful fate, that was being prepared for them by the Nazis and calling for armed resistance. Lacking sufficient weapons, we called upon the Jews to resist with their bare arms. The following is a quotation from the leaflet we issued at that time:

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

“Don't let them snatch you. Defend yourselves even if only with bare hands.’

(A page or two of the report, following this quotation, was apparently lost on its way from Poland, via London, to us. Despite all their efforts, our delegation in London was unable to find the lost pages—Ed.)

“The Jews still did not believe. Only when, on the sixth day of the deportation, Zalmen Frydryk (Zygmunt) returned after having followed a transport of Warsaw's Jews who were being sent to the death camp of Tremblinka, and we publicized his story; only when other Jewish underground groups commenced writing letters to house committees relating the same terrible truth—did a part of the Jewish youth of Warsaw finally begin to believe, although the majority of the Jewish population, particularly the older generation, even at that time, stubbornly refused to face realities, to recognize the truth. Even at that time, if anyone mentioned armed resistance, the reply of those Jews was: ‘It will only provoke disaster for us all. They will deport everyone of us. Don't you know the beastly manner in which the Germans apply collective responsibility?’

“After the first week of the deportation, the various identification papers, issued by all kinds of shops, factories, and institutions, were invalidated. The only untouchables left were the members of the Jewish Police. Throughout the deportation, our self-defense groups were on the alert, ready to resist and to die. We expected the momentary arrival of a large transport of the long wished for weapons. The ‘five member groups’ of our ‘Skif’ and ‘Zukunft’ were mobilized, as well as all available Party members. Everyone waited impatiently for the promised weapons, but they did not come. . . . We were finally compelled to demobilize our resistance groups.

“It was of great import to us to provide the members of our defense organization with means to escape deportation. We had not given up hope for an armed resistance, and they were our best fighters. We established close connections with the Polish Socialists who helped us substantially in our task to hide our future fighters. Some of them were rescued four or five times from the Umszlag Platz (the deportation place where Germans gathered the doomed Jews—ed.). We want to mention comrades Marjan Merenholt,

Olek Kasman, Jerzy Hertz, and Mietek Domb, who especially distinguished themselves by rescuing our members from deportation by the Nazis. They willingly risked their lives whenever we needed them.

“After the so-called ‘cauldrons’ (we don't know just what the ‘cauldrons’ refer to—ed.), when such a tremendous number of our comrades perished, the Umszlag Platz was still in operation, although the deportations were temporarily stopped. We utilized this time to rebuild our own Resistance Organization. We simultaneously again tried to contact the representatives of the Z.K.N. (Jewish National Committee—ed.) in an effort to establish a mutual resistance organization.

“At the end of October, 1942, a Coordinating Committee was appointed, consisting of one representative of the Z.K.N. and one of the ‘Bund’ (Jewish Labor Movement of Poland—ed.). Our representative was A. Blum (died a soldier's death—ed.). We also appointed our comrade X as our representative in the Z.O.B. (Jewish Armed Resistance Organization—ed.). At that time, the membership of our own resistance organization became quite numerous. The trouble was that we had so few weapons.

“The officer in charge of our resistance detachment, which operated on the territory of the brush factories, was Grylak and, of the one who operated on the territory of Tebens (a German military production firm in Warsaw—ed.) was Szloma Paff. We had resistance detachments assigned to all other territories, but they had no fire arms. The small number of such weapons, which we finally received in December, 1942, from the Underground Polish forces couldn't satisfy even a fraction of our needs.

“Two attempts to assassinate the chief of the Jewish Police, Jacob Leikin, and the liaison officer with the Germans, Israel First, lent popularity to the Z.O.B. The Jews already knew the truth about Tremblinka and consequently no longer trusted the German denials. The Jewish masses finally understood that their death verdict had been signed and that their only hope to rescue themselves was—armed resistance against the murderer, and passive resistance of those among them who were unarmed. Some people in the ghetto dug hiding spots for themselves in order to escape deportation by the Germans, which was bound to start

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

again, sooner or later. The Z.O.B. simultaneously began liquidating hirelings and servants of the Jewish Police and the Gestapo. Members of our Party, outside of the Z.O.B., were of great help in the work of cleansing the ghetto of the above-mentioned elements. However, we were still not entirely prepared to meet the second deportation of the remnants of the Warsaw Ghetto by the Germans.

"We had already received weapons at that time. The trouble was that they were not yet distributed among the members of the Z.O.B. The weapons were still stored in our clandestine Central Warehouse. That is why only the resistance groups located in the vicinity of this Warehouse were able to wage armed resistance. During the days of those first flashes of armed resistance, Abram Fajner, our faithful comrade, died in action.

"Although the armed resistance waged at that time, in January, 1943, did not embrace the entire ghetto, because of the mentioned circumstances, and was confined to a rather small section of it, the significance of this first attempt can hardly be overestimated. During this first armed battle against the Germans, the legend of an invincible German, holding the life or death of hundreds of thousands of Jews in his hands, perished. Our fighters, concentrated in five spots, mainly waged guerrilla warfare against the Germans. Nevertheless, several more important armed battles took place.

"The biggest battle broke out on the corner of Zamenhofa and Stawki Streets. The Germans, totally surprised by the armed resistance of the Jews, stopped the deportation after two days. This unexpected success greatly increased the prestige and the role of the Z.O.B. The authority of the Z.O.B. (Jewish Armed Resistance Organization—ed.), after the January battles, grew steadily from day to day.

"At that time, the Z.O.B. governed the entire life in the ghetto. For example, at the request of the Z.O.B., the Jewish Community Council contributed one million zlotys towards the sole purpose of buying weapons. This amount was paid in cash within a period of three days.

"Being unable to perform their planned deportation of the Warsaw Jews by means of lies and false promises, the Germans finally resolved to deport the remaining Warsaw Jews forcefully. On the 19th of

April, 1943, at 2 o'clock in the morning, the Germans surrounded the ghetto walls with many guards (every 25 meters), consisting of German, Ukrainian and Latvian Fascist soldiers. Carefully, in singles, in twos and in threes, the German soldiers entered the ghetto. But, this time we were prepared. At 4 o'clock, before dawn, all our resistance groups were mobilized and at their assigned positions. They were prepared to meet the hated enemy. The number of armed resistance detachments were: eight in the center of the ghetto, five in the territory of the brush factories, and seven in the vicinity of the big Shultz and Tebens factories.

"At 6 o'clock in the morning, on the 19th of April, 1943, 2,000 armed S.S. men, along with tanks and cannons, three trucks loaded with ammunition and an ambulance, entered the Central Ghetto. The entire German deportation staff followed the S.S. army. Among the members of this deportation staff were the following officers of the Gestapo and S.S.: Michelsen, Handke, Hoffle, Mireczko, Barteczko, Brand and Mende. There were no Jews to be seen anywhere. All of them were hidden in subterranean, previously prepared trenches and holes of all sorts. Only the members of the Z.O.B. remained on the surface and were on the alert. Our fighters were concentrated to defend three strategic points, barring entry into the main streets of the ghetto. The first armed battle took place on Nalewki Street, where two resistance units, behind barricades, defended the street. The battle there lasted six hours and brought about the first defeat of the Germans. The Germans retreated leaving behind many of their soldiers who had been killed. Simultaneously the main battle raged on the corner of Zamenhofa and Mila Streets. Our fighters, after building barricades to shut off the four corners of those streets, daringly attacked the main German detachment, which had entered the ghetto. After the first salvos from machine guns and hand grenades were successfully aimed at the compact ranks of S.S. men, the entire street was deserted. The green uniforms of the Germans were no longer to be seen anywhere. They took shelter in nearby stores and gates, and exchanged some shots with the defenders of the ghetto. After a cessation of fifteen minutes, tanks appeared. They came quite close to the spot where our fighters were gathered. After a while, incendiary bombs, calmly and carefully aimed, set the first tank on fire. The flames spread with unexpected swiftness and soon there was an explosion. The tank was lost. The oth-

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

er tanks immediately left together with the panic-stricken Germans. Their retreat was covered with renewed gunfire and grenades. The German casualties numbered two hundred, killed and wounded. We lost only one soldier. After two hours, the Germans brought cannons, which were placed outside of the ghetto, and successfully bombed the spot of their previous defeat. They took our defense strongholds, and freed the entrance into the ghetto.

"Suddenly, from the windows on the other side, Zamenhofa 29, grenades were thrown. This was the second attack against the Germans, which was being carried out on the same place by one of our resistance groups, that had deliberately not participated in the previous battle, lest its whereabouts should be discovered. Fifty Germans were killed. Our group escaped without any casualties. At five in the afternoon, there were no longer any Germans in the ghetto. They left the ghetto in order to gather somewhere on a deserted territory nearby. Our temporary success had been a result of the suddenness and quickness of our resistance, performed from well-disguised spots.

"The second day of the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto, the 20th of April, 1943, began with a large concentration of S.S. detachments, along with artillery, on the territory between the ghetto and the Aryan districts (Plac Krasinski). However, they had not as yet dared enter the populated ghetto streets. At about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a detachment of three hundred S.S. men arrived near the gate to the district of the brush factories. They stopped for a little while, but this brief pause was sufficient for our fighters to cut an electric wire which caused a mine explosion under the very feet of the S.S. men. The Germans ran away leaving eighty to one hundred killed and wounded. Only after two hours did they come back. After the previous costly experience, they were now more careful and alert. Thirty S.S. men entered the gate to this district. Our fighters, hidden in selected spots, waited for them. Grenades and incendiary bombs met the Germans. Only two of the thirty S.S. men escaped. Those, who were not hit by grenades, burned alive. But, now the Germans brought their artillery into the battle. The district was shelled from all four sides. In the meantime, two high officers of the S.S. came into this district. They appealed to our fighters to put down their arms and proposed a fifteen minute truce. Our fighters replied with more gunfire.

From the other side of the district, somewhere near Franciszkanska Street, a second detachment of S.S. men tried to reach our fighters. Met by several well aimed shots, this detachment gave up also and turned back. Once more the entire district was clean of Germans. That was the second complete victory for our fighters. On the same day, the 20th of April, 1943, in the vicinity of the large Shultz and Tebens factories, the Germans called upon the Jews to volunteer for forced labor camps, but their appeal was in vain. All the inhabitants of this district, just as the inhabitants of the Central Ghetto, were hidden in subterranean caves. The management of Shultz and Tebens kept prolonging the time limit in which the Jews could volunteer, but met with no success. When the management of Shultz and Tebens declared that it was compelled to apply the same methods as in the Central Ghetto, our resistance groups, that were concentrated in this district, attacked a detachment of S.S. men with bombs and grenades somewhere on the Aryan side of the city, as well as German detachments who were on their way to the Central Ghetto through Nowolipie and Smocza Streets. The Germans suffered forty killed and many more wounded.

"Executing a personal order, issued by the Chief of the German Police in Lublin-Globocnik, who came to Warsaw to lead the Battle of the Ghetto, the Germans started setting the entire ghetto on fire on the second day of the uprising. At first, they set fire to the buildings and street blocks where they had suffered from our resistance—Nalewki 33, 35, 37, Mila 28, 29, Zamenhofa 28 and, finally, the entire district where the brush factories were located. This was the first large conflagration. Thousands upon thousands of people perished in the flames. People were burned alive in their hideouts as well as in their homes and on the rooftops. A jump from the third or fourth floor usually put an end to the lives of burning Jews. Those, who succeeded in escaping the fire, were shot on the street by the Germans. Many corpses were found in a sitting position. Those were people who had been killed while sleeping. A very common spectacle were corpses of women with children in their arms.

"In retaliation for the ghetto fire, our fighters set fire to all the German "Verterfassung" stores (war material collections—ed.), as well as to their large shops, which were worth millions of zlotys.

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

"Conflagrations did not stop our resistance. The Germans hunted for our hideouts. It was not difficult for the Germans to find them, because the terrible heat drove the Jews out of their hiding places, particularly at night, when they gathered in their backyards. They usually left traces leading to their hideouts. The Germans successfully employed the use of blood hounds and sounding devices to find the hidden Jews. At that time our fighters had already dropped their offensive tactics and were on the defensive. Their task was to rescue, as far as possible, those who were still alive in their hideouts. This task required a regrouping of our armed forces.

"Our detachments were now assigned to defend many of the still existing hideouts. On the sixth day of the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto, the 24th of April, 1944, defensive battles occurred in the territory of Shultz and Tebens. Our fighters barricaded themselves in some buildings and on rooftops in an effort to prevent the Germans from reaching the hidden Jews. For many days our fighters defended the Jewish population that was in hiding. The bloodiest of these fights took place at Nowolipki 41, Leszno 78, 76, 74, Nowolipie 67, 69. All in all, our offensive and defensive battles lasted ten days.

"Our meager ammunition was already disappearing. The bits that were left were used exclusively for self-defense and guard duty.

"According to our accounts, the Germans suffered about 1,200 casualties in killed and wounded. Sporadic fights, waged by our fighters against the Nazis, took place long after the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto was over. They occurred primarily at night. The Germans burned the ghetto systematically. After two weeks the entire ghetto, as well as previously decimated districts, ceased to exist. Lack of water and food rendered impossible the life of those who still fought. The Germans then commenced burning down buildings. They hoped to destroy, together with the houses, the remaining dugouts and nests of our fighters, and to break their will to fight. The Germans used gas bombs. . . .

"During this final period of the last struggle against the Germans who invaded and seized our dugouts one after another, or suffocated the fighters by means of gas bombs, the majority of the ghetto defenders died. A large number of the officers in charge of the Jewish Armed Resistance Organization gathered in a special

dugout and committed suicide, in order to escape from the clutches of the Germans. Only a small fraction of them was able to escape through the city's sewers and reach the Aryan districts. The four resistance groups, that still remained in the ghetto, waged guerrilla warfare against the Germans for a month. All of the members of these four groups perished. Thus, the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto lasted almost seven weeks.

"Our Party was a member of the Jewish Armed Resistance Organization more than six months (from October, 1942, until May, 1943). We joined hands with all Jewish Zionist underground organizations. Our comrades lived and worked with the others, just as members of a close family. A mutual aim united us. During this entire period of over half a year, there were no quarrels or struggles, which are common among adherents of different ideologies. All overworked themselves in organizing the mutual defense of our dignity. All fought equally in this historic life and death struggle. There was no difference between the members of our Party, and the others, in regard to sacrificing themselves or performing their soldier's duty until the very last. . . . However, we are reporting here primarily about our own members.

"At the beginning of the battle, in January, 1943, we possessed four well organized resistance detachments of our own. The officers in charge of them were: Jurek Blones, Welwel Rozowski, Lejwik Granzal and Dawid Hochberg. Our comrade X led the entire resistance of the brush factories' territory. Our comrades, who had been active before the January, 1943 battles, were on the Coordinating Committee and the General Staff of the mutual Jewish Armed Resistance Organization. The following of our comrades were members of the Auxiliary Committee of the Z.O.B., located in the Aryan districts of Warsaw: Frydryk, S. Fund, Ceremanski, Wladka, Peltel and Fajga. Michal Klefisz led and organized the entire production of hand grenades and incendiary bombs in the Aryan districts, as well as in the ghetto. The majority of all our fighters was killed in action, either in the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto or immediately after reaching the Aryan districts through the sewers. Jurek Blones, who led our resistance group in the district of the brush factories, was one of the most brilliant and gallant fighters. Twice during the battle he rescued his detachment from sure death by alone engaging an entire detachment of attacking Ger-

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

mans. Mejlach Perelman, on his beat around the ghetto walls, though wounded by three German shells, nevertheless for a long time successfully covered the escape of his comrades. When he could no longer stand on his feet, he turned his gun over to one of his comrades, knowing how precious weapons were. We took him to the backyard, near the dugout of his group, but he could not walk in. He was too weak. We carried him upstairs and put him in a certain room. When our man who was on duty called on him and wanted to help him, Perelman did not permit him to stay. 'Take the rest of my weapons,' he said. 'I cannot use them any more, but you will need them.' On the following day, the Germans set fire to the building he was in and he was burned alive.

"Tobcia Dawidowicz, a liaison officer of our resistance group on the Shultz and Tebens territory, though wounded in the leg, nevertheless successfully led her group towards the sewers in order to help them escape. Not wanting to become a burden to her comrades, she remained in the ghetto after all her comrades had entered the sewers.

"Dawid Hochberg was another officer, in charge of a resistance detachment in the central ghetto. When the Germans discovered the dugout of his comrades, he handed his gun over to one of them and barricaded the entrance into the dugout with his own body. It took the Germans fifteen minutes to remove his body from the small entrance. In the meantime, the fighters of his group, along with other Jews that were hidden in the cave, escaped through another exit.

"We can relate many other stories such as these about our fighters who struggled and died as heroes. Those comrades who functioned as collaborators with the Z.O.B. during the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto also died. They were: Luzer Klog, Grylak, Kiersz, Bluma Klog, Renia Pizyc, and many others.

"The Jewish Armed Resistance Organization continues her activities even now, after the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto, establishing new contacts, and maintaining the old ones. Our representative is still on the General Staff of this Organization and in the Coordinating Committee, which supervises its work.

"The representative of our Party in the Aryan district branch of the Z.O.B., who was in contact with military and civil authorities of Underground Poland in conjunction with the entire existence of the Warsaw

Ghetto was comrade. . . . In July, 1943, the Coordinating Committee appointed two of its members for the same purposes, one in behalf of our Party, and the other in behalf of the Z.K.N. (Jewish National Committee—ed.).

"The Z.O.B. now has several detachments, one of which is active in Warsaw. The others are located in various country places. Our comrades, who were put at the disposal of the Z.O.B., are the messengers, who always contact the detachments in the country, and provide them with money, clothing, medicaments, letters and weapons. One can guess what a difficult and dangerous job it is to maintain such contacts. The ranks of the armed detachments of the Z.O.B. are today sparser because of the counter measures applied by the Germans and the activities of certain vicious bands (we don't know what kind of bands the report refers to—ed.). In general, the task of maintaining our contacts with the country is growing more and more difficult.

"On the first anniversary of the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto, the Coordinating Committee resolved to publish two books; one of them relating the story of the death camp in Tremblinka; the other, on the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto.

"The author of the book about the Tremblinka death camp is Jankiel Wiernik. He was held prisoner there for a full year. Together with others, he organized a successful uprising there, set fire to and destroyed the camp, killed the German and Ukrainian jailers and escaped with a large group of other Tremblinka victims. I spoke with him personally. He told me that he obtained his elementary schooling in the "Bund" organization during the years 1904 and 1905, and his higher education in the self-defense organization of the 'Bund' in Tzarist Russia. Later he became an artisan and was a member of the Chamber of Commerce. He did not participate in politics. Enclosed you will find his book on Tremblinka (already received in London—ed.). It will impress you greatly. The events, that the author depicts, are dreadful.

"The second book, on the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto, which simultaneously is the history of the activities of the Z.O.B., is being published jointly by us and the Jewish National Committee. The material is already prepared for print. The book is being edited by the Coordinating Committee. You will, of course, receive a copy of the book."