

## Chapter 1 : The Jews Who Fought Back | War Is Boring

*Even today, there is disagreement over how many men volunteered to join the group, with numbers ranging from the low teens to almost forty. What is certain is that the majority of the members of the group were Jewish men that had fled from the onslaught of the German forces and had found their way to Palestine.*

The statement that Jews did not fight back against the Germans and their allies is false. Against impossible odds, they resisted in ghettos, concentration camps, and killing centers. There were many factors that made resistance difficult, however, including a lack of weapons and resources, deception, fear, and the overwhelming power of the Germans and their collaborators. Back to top How did the perpetrators know who was Jewish? German officials identified Jews residing in Germany through census records, tax returns, synagogue membership lists, parish records for converted Jews , routine but mandatory police registration forms, the questioning of relatives, and from information provided by neighbors and officials. In territory occupied by Nazi Germany or its Axis partners, Jews were identified largely through Jewish community membership lists, individual identity papers, captured census documents and police records, and local intelligence networks. Back to top What happened if you disobeyed an order to participate in an atrocity? Germans who refused to participate in atrocities were generally not punished, but risked peer, social, and sometimes professional exclusion or disadvantage. They could request other duties, such as guard duty or crowd control. There is no reliable evidence that German soldiers or police officials were killed for refusing to kill civilians. Non-Germans serving as auxiliaries and refusing to carry out direct orders to kill could be subject to discipline, dismissal, imprisonment, or even death. There is no reliable evidence, however, to suggest that the unknown grandfather was Jewish. Back to top Why were the Jews singled out for extermination? The Nazis falsely considered the Jews to be a race. Nazi antisemitism linked traditional negative and false images of Jews and their behavior with modern pseudo-scientific beliefs. Among these stereotypes were those derived from centuries-old Christian anti-Jewish thinking, which incorrectly presented Jews as murderers of Christ, agents of the devil, and practitioners of witchcraft. The Nazis used this belief to justify the discrimination, persecution, and, eventually, physical murder of Jewish people. Start with the overview of Antisemitism , and then read the related articles on antisemitism through the centuries. Back to top What did the United States know about the Holocaust and how did it respond? Despite a history of providing sanctuary to persecuted peoples, the United States grappled with many issues during the s that made living up to this legacy difficult. These issues included widespread antisemitism, xenophobia, isolationism, and a sustained economic depression. Unfortunately for those fleeing Nazi persecution, such issues greatly impacted US refugee policy, reinforcing an official and popular unwillingness to expand immigration quotas to admit greater numbers of people endangered by Nazi persecution and aggression at a time when doing so might have saved lives. Over the years, scholarly investigation into US responses in the era of the Holocaust has raised a number of questions, such as: What did the United States know? What did government officials and civilians do with this knowledge? Could more have been done? Scholars have examined US immigration policy, the reactions of the US government to reported atrocities, and sluggish efforts to organize operations aimed at rescuing European Jews. Debates have sparked over key events, including the voyage of the St. Louis, the establishment of the War Refugee Board, the role of the American Jewish community, US media coverage of Nazi crimes and violence, and the contentious question of bombing Auschwitz. The topic continues to evolve with the introduction of new documentation and revised hypotheses. Start with the overview of The United States and the Holocaust.

Chapter 2 : Warsaw Ghetto Uprising - Wikipedia

*Julius Keller's new book about Germany during the birth and flourishing of Nazism and its horrible effects on the Jews of Europe is a fine example of that disconcerting new form, the non-fiction novel.*

Would you like to merge this question into it? MERGE already exists as an alternate of this question. Would you like to make it the primary and merge this question into it? MERGE exists and is an alternate of. Please see related question for details. In those instances where they were armed and organized, such as in the Warsaw ghetto in , they fought back heroically. One really needs to ask: Resist or fight back at what stage? In the early stages the Jews knew of course that they were being persecuted - monstrously persecuted - but did not know they were going to be subject to mass murder. By the time they knew they were going to be killed, it was generally rather late to resist. However, as the links show, even at an earlier stage, resistance was beset with all kinds of problems. The predominant image is of lambs going meekly to the slaughter. This image is or was widespread among Jews as well as non-Jews. However, in Eastern Europe for example, parts of Poland and Belarus many of the Jews lived in identifiable communities and were better placed to resist. Early research tended to stress lack of resistance, but since the s there has been a growing emphasis on Jewish resistance to the Nazis. Bear in mind that: The Jews transported to extermination camps had often been in cattle trucks for days and were weak, hungry and thirsty on arrival. They had been subject to endless petty restrictions since , such as not being allowed to shop before 3. They were forbidden to own radios or buy newspapers, too, and they were subject to curfews. Their warm clothing had been seized. In many places they were banned from city centres and from theatres, cinemas and most cafes and restaurants. Many of the Jews sent to the camps had spent the previous years or so in ghettos, with insufficient food and no medication and in appalling conditions. Usually, Jews living in Western and Central Europe were rather scattered. Most Jewish communities in Europe had a long tradition of not trying to meet force with force: This time they did not know that disaster was inevitable, whether they resisted or not. Suggestions, such as those made by Paul Johnson in his History of the Jews, that there were long-standing Jewish cultural obstacles to armed resistance are very difficult to evaluate. However, the best known example is that of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in Obviously, inhabitants of the ghetto were physically weak and not well placed to take on the SS but they went down fighting. There were also uprisings in the Bialystock and Vilnius ghettos. There were also the uprisings and mass breakouts at Sobibor in October and at Treblinka At first there was no reason for most Jews to think they would have to fight. Even as late as , many got off the train at Treblinka and Sobibor thinking they were on their way to "resettlement in the east". There is no point in doing battle if you can trick your enemy into letting you kill them, and that is what the Nazis did. The Jews had two choices. Either they did what the Nazis told them to do The Nazis forced them into the cattle cars. If they had fought back, they would have been shot. The Nazis forced them into the ghettos. If they had fought back, they would get shot and killed. Lastly, the Nazis forced them into the concentration camps. Some further points Traditionally, many European Jews had been rather pro-German. They shared the general view of Germany as a highly civilized country There is some evidence that a number of Jews had great difficulty understanding what was really happening to them until it was far too late to do anything. Obviously, by the time they were in those cattle-trucks it was much too late. For example, in some places in eastern Poland they refused to board the cattle trucks. The result was usually a delay of perhaps hours to the planned departure of the train. One really needs to bear in mind how unevenly matched the Jews and the Nazis were. There was no armed Jewish resistance in Western Europe but some Jews were active in various resistance movements in occupied countries. There was also a group of Jewish resistance fighters in Lithuania and also in Belarus. There were, of course, also some individual acts of resistance and defiance. See also the links, which illustrate the enormous problems associated with non-cooperation, let alone active resistance.

**Chapter 3 : Did the Jews fight back against the Nazis? by Amber Stephany on Prezi**

*The Jews who fought back. to the point that they would immediately fight back. In one example, German authorities gave thousands of Jews post cards to fill out when they arrived at "work.*

According to one familiar narrative about the Holocaust, millions of Jews passively went to the Nazi death camps like lambs to the slaughter, unable to fight back against oppression and genocide. As the world commemorated in January the 70th anniversary of the Auschwitz liberation—and as thoughts turn toward the upcoming May anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany—another narrative is gaining ground. The Jews who fought back. Not only did they face death from the Germans and their European allies, they often endured dangerous anti-Semitism within their own partisan groups, fought with scant support from the Allies and lived under the most atrocious conditions. Yet despite these obstacles, Jewish partisans were among the most successful resistance fighters of the war. They destroyed infrastructure such as rail lines and power plants, harassed occupation forces and killed German soldiers whenever and wherever they could. The movie *Defiance* popularized the story of the Bielski partisans who fought in German-occupied Poland. Yet the full scope of Jewish resistance remains little known outside of scholarly circles and the dwindling group of surviving partisans. Braff said resistance often took many forms—imprisoned adults teaching fundamentals of the Jewish faith to children in concentration camps, Jews celebrating Jewish holidays despite persecution or just surviving everything the Nazis might do to a Jew. Many Jews also made a more militant choice—to pick up a weapon and fight back. Take the case of Harry Burger, born in Vienna in 1924. However, fate was not his side. Meanwhile, German occupation forces arrested Harry and his mother and moved them to a makeshift ghetto in Nice. The Italians did not abuse Jews and when he and his mother were moved once again they escaped. At right—Harry Burger describes his escape. Video courtesy of the Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation. Photo via Wikipedia He joined a resistance group, fought in the Italian Alps, destroyed power plants and aided the Allied cause. And shot dead a captured Gestapo officer. You pick yourself and you run away. He got up and ran away and I shot him in the head, and it was the greatest pleasure I could have. There was Eta Wrobel, who fought with a Polish resistance group. Wrobel refused to cook and clean—instead, she volunteered for patrols where she carried a weapon and set mines to destroy German vehicles. Once, she even dug a bullet out of her own leg with a knife. Video courtesy of the Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation Simply obtaining weapons was a struggle. Some partisan groups received small arms and munitions from the British Special Operations Executive or the American Office of Strategic Services, but many stole guns or removed them from the dead bodies of their adversaries. Anti-Semitism was rife in many partisan groups. There were instances where Jews kept their religion a secret because their fellow guerrillas might kill them as quickly as the Nazis would. Still, many Jews joined even hostile groups—deciding that if they were going to die, they would die fighting. Others were motivated to take revenge against those who killed their family and friends. Secrecy and careful manipulation of information kept Jews from feeling threatened to the point that they would immediately fight back. The Gestapo guards collected the post cards and mailed them—right before herding the Jews into gas chambers. Some Jews even dismissed eyewitness testimony of people who had escaped the camps or Gestapo murder squads. Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust. But their story lives on in succeeding generations, Braff said—and his organization works hard to tell the story of their resistance. If you have any problems viewing this article, please report it here. This site is owned and operated by Bright Mountain Media, Inc.

**Chapter 4 : Like Sheep: Why Didn't You Fight?**

*Remembering the Jews Who Fought Back Minute of silence held around the country as unique commemoration of Jewish heroes who saved their brethren gets underway outside Jerusalem. Arutz Sheva Staff.*

Moses Mendelssohn Though reading German books was forbidden in the s by Jewish inspectors who had a measure of police power in Germany, Moses Mendelsohn found his first German book, an edition of Protestant theology, at a well-organized system of Jewish charity for needy Talmud students. Mendelssohn read this book and found proof of the existence of God " his first meeting with a sample of European letters. Mendelssohn learned many new languages, and with his whole education consisting of Talmud lessons, he thought in Hebrew and translated for himself every new piece of work he met into this language. The divide between the Jews and the rest of society was caused by a lack of translation between these two languages, and Mendelssohn translated the Torah into German, bridging the gap between the two; this book allowed Jews to speak and write in German, preparing them for participation in German culture and secular science. In , Mendelssohn began to serve as a teacher in the house of Isaac Bernhard, the owner of a silk factory, after beginning his publications of philosophical essays in German. He also believed that revelation could not contradict reason. Like the deists, Mendelssohn claimed that reason could discover the reality of God, divine providence, and immortality of the soul. He was the first to speak out against the use of excommunication as a religious threat. At the height of his career, in , Mendelssohn was publicly challenged by a Christian apologist, a Zurich pastor named John Lavater , to defend the superiority of Judaism over Christianity. From then on, he was involved in defending Judaism in print. Speculating that no religious institution should use coercion and emphasized that Judaism does not coerce the mind through dogma, he argued that through reason, all people could discover religious philosophical truths, but what made Judaism unique was its revealed code of legal, ritual, and moral law. He said that Jews must live in civil society, but only in a way that their right to observe religious laws is granted, while also recognizing the needs for respect, and multiplicity of religions. He campaigned for emancipation and instructed Jews to form bonds with the gentile governments, attempting to improve the relationship between Jews and Christians while arguing for tolerance and humanity. He became the symbol of the Jewish Enlightenment, the Haskalah. In the late 18th century, a youthful enthusiasm for new ideals of religious equality began to take hold in the western world. Austrian Emperor Joseph II was foremost in espousing these new ideals. As early as , he issued the Patent of Toleration for the Jews of Lower Austria, thereby establishing civic equality for his Jewish subjects. Before , when general citizenship was largely nonexistent in the Holy Roman Empire, its inhabitants were subject to varying estate regulations. In different ways from one territory of the empire to another, these regulations classified inhabitants into different groups, such as dynasts, members of the court entourage, other aristocrats, city dwellers burghers , Jews, Huguenots in Prussia a special estate until , free peasants , serfs , peddlers and Gypsies , with different privileges and burdens attached to each classification. Legal inequality was the principle. The concept of citizenship was mostly restricted to cities, especially free imperial cities. Citizenship was often further restricted to city dwellers affiliated to the locally dominant Christian denomination Calvinism, Roman Catholicism, or Lutheranism. City dwellers of other denominations or religions and those who lacked the necessary wealth to qualify as citizens were considered to be mere inhabitants who lacked political rights, and were sometimes subject to revocable residence permits. In the 18th century, some Jews and their families such as Daniel Itzig in Berlin gained equal status with their Christian fellow city dwellers, but had a different status from noblemen, Huguenots, or serfs. They often did not enjoy the right to freedom of movement across territorial or even municipal boundaries, let alone the same status in any new place as in their previous location. With the abolition of differences in legal status during the Napoleonic era and its aftermath, citizenship was established as a new franchise generally applying to all former subjects of the monarchs. Prussia conferred citizenship on the Prussian Jews in , though this by no means resulted in full equality with other citizens. Jewish emancipation did not eliminate all forms of discrimination against Jews, who often remained barred from holding official state positions. The German federal edicts of merely held out the prospect of full equality, but

it was not genuinely implemented at that time, and even the promises which had been made were modified. However, such forms of discrimination were no longer the guiding principle for ordering society, but a violation of it. In Austria, many laws restricting the trade and traffic of Jewish subjects remained in force until the middle of the 19th century in spite of the patent of toleration. Some of the crown lands, such as Styria and Upper Austria, forbade any Jews to settle within their territory; in Bohemia, Moravia, and Austrian Silesia many cities were closed to them. The Jews were also burdened with heavy taxes and imposts. In the German kingdom of Prussia, the government materially modified the promises made in the disastrous year of 1787. The promised uniform regulation of Jewish affairs was time and again postponed. In the period between 1787 and 1807, no less than 21 territorial laws affecting Jews in the older eight provinces of the Prussian state were in effect, each having to be observed by part of the Jewish community. At that time, no official was authorized to speak in the name of all Prussian Jews, or Jewry in most of the other 41 German states, let alone for all German Jews. Nevertheless, a few men came forward to promote their cause, foremost among them being Gabriel Riesser d. He won over public opinion to such an extent that this equality was granted in Prussia on April 6, 1808, in Hanover and Nassau on September 5 and on December 12, respectively, and also in his home state of Hamburg, then home to the second-largest Jewish community in Germany. After the establishment of the North German Confederation by the law of July 3, 1871, all remaining statutory restrictions imposed on the followers of different religions were abolished; this decree was extended to all the states of the German empire after the events of 1871. The Jewish Enlightenment[ edit ] Main article: Haskalah During the General Enlightenment s to late s, many Jewish women began to frequent non-Jewish salons and to campaign for emancipation. Moses Cohn, appreciated secular culture. Aside from externalities of language and dress, the Jews internalized the cultural and intellectual norms of the German society. The movement, becoming known as the German or Berlin Haskalah offered many effects to the challenges of German society. As early as the 1780s, many German Jews and some individual Polish and Lithuanian Jews had a desire for secular education. The German-Jewish Enlightenment of the late 18th century, the Haskalah, marks the political, social, and intellectual transition of European Jewry to modernity. Some of the elite members of Jewish society knew European languages. Court Jews were protected by the rulers and acted as did everyone else in society in their speech, manners, and awareness of European literature and ideas. Isaac Euchel, for example, represented a new generation of Jews. Euchel was exposed to European languages and culture while living in Prussian centers: His interests turned towards promoting the educational interests of the Enlightenment with other Jews. Moses Mendelssohn as another enlightenment thinker was the first Jew to bring secular culture to those living an Orthodox Jewish life. He valued reason and felt that anyone could arrive logically at religious truths, while arguing that what makes Judaism unique is its divine revelation of a code of law. Faithful Christians who were less opposed to his rationalistic ideas than to his adherence to Judaism found it difficult to accept this Juif de Berlin. In most of Western Europe, the Haskalah ended with large numbers of Jews assimilating. Many Jews stopped adhering to Jewish law, and the struggle for emancipation in Germany awakened some doubts about the future of Jews in Europe and eventually led to both immigrations to America and Zionism. In Russia, antisemitism ended the Haskalah. Some Jews responded to this antisemitism by campaigning for emancipation, while others joined revolutionary movements and assimilated, and some turned to Jewish nationalism in the form of the Zionist Hibbat Zion movement. Geiger and Holdeim were two founders of the conservative movement in modern Judaism accepted the modern spirit of liberalism. Samson Raphael Hirsch defended traditional customs: Neither of these beliefs was followed by the faithful Jews; Zachary Frankel created a moderate reform movement in assurance with German communities, public worships were reorganized, reduction of medieval additions to the prayer, congregational singing was introduced, and regular sermons required scientifically trained rabbis. Religious schools were enforced by the state due to a want for the addition of religious structure to secular education of Jewish children. Pulpit oratory started to thrive mainly due to German preachers, such as M. Synagogal music was accepted with the help of Louis Lewandowski. Part of the evolution of the Jewish community was the cultivation of Jewish literature and associations created with teachers, rabbis, and leaders of congregations. Another vital part of the reorganization of the Jewish-German community was the heavy involvement of Jewish women in the community and their new tendencies to assimilate their families into a

different lifestyle. Jewish women were contradicting their view points in the sense that they were modernizing, but they also tried to keep some traditions alive. German Jewish mothers were shifting the way they raised their children in ways such as moving their families out of Jewish neighborhoods, thus changing who Jewish children grew up around and conversed with, all in all shifting the dynamic of the then close-knit Jewish community. Additionally, Jewish mothers wished to integrate themselves and their families into German society in other ways. In order for mothers to assimilate into German culture, they took pleasure in reading newspapers and magazines that focused on the fashion styles, as well as other trends that were up and coming for the time and that the Protestant, bourgeois Germans were exhibiting. Similar to this, German-Jewish mothers also urged their children to partake in music lessons, mainly because it was a popular activity among other Germans. Another effort German-Jewish mothers put into assimilating their families was enforcing the importance of manners on their children. It was noted that non-Jewish Germans saw Jews as disrespectful and unable to grasp the concept of time and place. In addition, Jewish mothers put a large emphasis on proper education for their children in hopes that this would help them grow up to be more respected by their communities and eventually lead to prosperous careers. While Jewish mothers worked tirelessly on ensuring the assimilation of their families, they also attempted to keep the familial aspect of Jewish traditions. They began to look at Shabbat and holidays as less of culturally Jewish days, but more as family reunions of sorts. What was once viewed as a more religious event became more of a social gathering of relatives. The increasing political centralization of the late 18th and early 19th centuries undermined the societal structure that perpetuated traditional Jewish life. Enlightenment ideas began to influence many intellectuals, and the resulting political, economic, and social changes were overpowering. Many Jews felt a tension between Jewish tradition and the way they were now leading their lives-religiously- resulting in less tradition. As the insular religious society that reinforced such observance disintegrated, falling away from vigilant observance without deliberately breaking with Judaism was easy. Some tried to reconcile their religious heritage with their new social surroundings; they reformed traditional Judaism to meet their new needs and to express their spiritual desires. A movement was formed with a set of religious beliefs, and practices that were considered expected and tradition. Some of the reforms were in the practices: In addition, the traditional Hebrew prayer book was replaced by German text, and reform synagogues began being called temples which were previously considered the Temple of Jerusalem. Reform communities composed of similar beliefs and Judaism changed at the same pace as the rest of society had. The Jewish people have adapted to religious beliefs and practices to the meet the needs of the Jewish people throughout the generation. This cemetery is in northern France. Inscription on the tomb: Ermann was murdered at Auschwitz.

**Chapter 5 : An Inquiry into the General Lack of Violent Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust**

*Did the Jews fight back against the Nazis? On October 14, , two SS men and a number of Ukrainian guards were killed, while trying to escape from the Sobibor concentration camp in Poland. Jews escaped, but many died in the mine field that surrounded the concentration camp they were in.*

After the war, many people, especially American Jews, including some members of my own family, asked me why we never fought back. Why, for instance, when they learned, kind Dr. Why did millions of Jews in Europe go passively to the camps and then to their deaths? This logical question deserves an answer. When I was first brought to Kamionka, there were Russian prisoners of war whom the German army had captured a few months earlier. To make room for the transport of Jews, some of the Russians were sent to other camps and others were killed. Killing POWs was against the Geneva Convention, but the Germans were beyond abiding by any rules of civilized conduct. They had become utterly savage. With my own eyes I saw the execution of POWs. Having been raised so close to the Russian border, I understood Russian and listened carefully to what the Russian POWs were saying as they were being selected for death. One man, about forty-five years old, was considered too old for a labor camp and so the Germans decided to shoot him. He stood tall and looked straight into the eyes of the German soldiers: They are on their way. Remember, you will pay for this. There was nothing the Russian could do in the face of many armed German soldiers. Polish soldiers, whose army had been swiftly defeated at the start of the war, faced the same situation. Later on in Kamionka, a small number of Germans did whatever they wanted with Russian soldiers, men who had been trained to fight battles. High-ranking officers were reduced to powerless, ordinary men when confronted with the lowliest German soldier and a gun. When the tide turned and the Germans began losing the war, I beheld the same sight in reverse: These soldiers had all been trained to fight, to use firearms, to survive under the harshest conditions. If they could not resist imprisonment, how were we Jews – a civilian population, with little or no firearm experience and no weapons, a tribe of merchants, artisans, scholars, women and children, all weak from starvation and exhaustion – able to rebel against a well-equipped army? If you are under the gun, there is little you can do. Certainly, there were a few, wonderful exceptions. The Warsaw Ghetto uprising, the first of its kind among a civilian population in Poland, is the most famous. Even in Warsaw, however, organizing to fight did not take place when there had been half a million Jews in the ghetto. Only when almost the entire ghetto had been liquidated and death was at hand did a few thousand remaining residents – right-wingers, leftists, Bundists, religionists, atheists, Jews of every political and religious stripe – band together, under the leadership of Mordechai Anielewicz, to fight since they knew their days were numbered. They realized they would not be able to beat the German army. But if they were going to die, they would at least take some Germans with them. Those of us in Kamionka who were young and still strong would have been more than willing to fight in an organized fashion if we thought we had the slightest chance of making a difference. For months after learning of the German defeat at Stalingrad, we waited for partisans who were rumored to be in the vicinity. It would have been a great honor, a tremendous opportunity, to join them, to fight to save the lives of innocent Jews and non-Jews under German occupation. We had heard that the partisans liberated a camp not far from ours. Many Jews had joined their ranks immediately. In the end, though, the partisans did not come near Kamionka until the camp had already been liquidated. He had just returned from Warsaw with Rebel where they had gone to purchase supplies. In Warsaw Lasovsky had heard about, and actually seen, the uprising during its second day. I saw it with my own eyes, German blood being spilled! The two of us began to sing and dance, crying and laughing, beside ourselves with joy. After two days of successful fighting, Mordechai Anielewicz said that killing German soldiers proved that they, too, were vulnerable, that the Germans were not invincible. Like Jews, they could bleed, and this resistance saved Jewish honor. Of course, within a few weeks the Germans had overrun the ghetto, killing almost everyone inside, and shipped the survivors to the death camps. But the thought of Jews defending themselves thrilled us beyond description. Even though we knew there were Jewish soldiers fighting in the Allied armed forces, we had become accustomed to feeling helpless under German occupation.

**Chapter 6 : Did the Jews fight back in the Holocaust**

*The Jews who fought back. More than 30, Jews joined armed resistance movements throughout occupied Europe during World War II. Not only did they face death from the Germans and their European allies, they often endured dangerous anti-Semitism within their own partisan groups, fought with scant support from the Allies and lived under the most atrocious conditions.*

Plaque commemorating two Home Army soldiers killed during the Ghetto Action. Of the remaining 50, residents, almost all were captured and shipped to Majdanek and Treblinka. The former Jewish quarter of Warsaw is no longer in existence. The large-scale action was terminated at Total number of Jews dealt with 56., including both Jews caught and Jews whose extermination can be proved. Apart from 8 buildings police barracks, hospital, and accommodations for housing working-parties the former Ghetto is completely destroyed. Only the dividing walls are left standing where no explosions were carried out. These figures did not include Jewish collaborators, but did include the " Trawniki men " and Polish police under his command. For propaganda purposes, the official announcement claimed the German casualties to be only a few wounded, while propaganda bulletins of the Polish Underground State announced that hundreds of occupiers had been killed in the fighting. Total of 19, Jews reported caught 24 April: Total of 27, Jews caught 26 April: Total of 29, Jews captured 27 April: Total of 31, Jews caught 28 April: Total of 33, Jews caught 29 April: Total of 37, Jews caught 1 May: Total of 38, Jews caught; killed outside the Ghetto 2 May: Total of 40, Jews caught 3 May: Total of 41, Jews caught 4 May: Total of 44, Jews caught 5 May: Total of 45, Jews caught 8 May: Total of 51, Jews caught; "Jews and bandits" shot outside the Ghetto 10 May: Total of 52, Jews caught 11 May: Total of 53, Jews caught 12 May: Total of 54, Jews caught 13 May: Total of 55, Jews caught 14 May: Total of 55, Jews caught 15 May: Total of 56, Jews caught 16 May: Total of 57, Jews either captured or killed [33] According to Raul Hilberg , "the number cited by Stroop 16 dead, 85 wounded cannot be rejected out of hand, but it is likely that his list was neither complete, free of errors, nor indicative of the German losses throughout the entire period of resistance, until the absolute liquidation of Jewish life in the ghetto. All the same, the German casualty figures cited by the various Jewish sources are probably highly exaggerated. MacLean endorse the accuracy of official German casualty figures. Warsaw Uprising Warsaw Ghetto area after the war. Thousands of people died in the camp or were executed in the ruins of the ghetto. At the same time, the SS were hunting down the remaining Jews still hiding in the ruins. On 19 April , the first day of the most significant period of the resistance, 7, Jews were transported from the Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka extermination camp, [38] where, purportedly, they developed again into resistance groups, and then helped to plan and execute the revolt and mass escape of 2 August From May to August , Executions in the ruins of the ghetto were carried out by: Ludwig Fischer , was tried and executed in Stroop was captured by Americans in Germany, convicted of war crimes in two different trials U. Hahn went into hiding until , when he was apprehended and sentenced to life for crimes against humanity ; he served eight years and died in Heinrich Klaustermeyer was tried for war crimes in and died in The ghetto had been totally destroyed by the time of the general uprising in the city, which was part of the Operation Tempest , a nationwide insurrection plan. These prisoners had been brought from Auschwitz and forced to clear the remains of the ghetto. In , members of the kibbutz published Daphei Edut "Testimonies of Survival" , four volumes of personal testimonies from 96 kibbutz members. The settlement features a museum and archives dedicated to remembering the Holocaust. This was a war of less than a thousand people against a mighty army and no one doubted how it was likely to turn out. The important things were inherent in the force shown by Jewish youth after years of degradation, to rise up against their destroyers, and determine what death they would choose: At the time, the action surprised many and was the focus of controversy, but it has since been credited with helping improve relations between the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries. Many people from the United States and Israel came for the commemoration. Two Jewish underground organisations fought in the Warsaw Uprising: His organization had three rifles in each area, as well as two land mines and one submachine gun. More weapons were supplied throughout the uprising, and some were captured from the Germans. Some weapons were handmade by the

resistance; sometimes such weapons worked, other times they jammed repeatedly. In his notes, which form part of Oneg Shabbat archives, he reported: They were armed with revolvers stuck in their belts. Different kinds of weapons were hung in the large rooms: Ghetto Action This article may lend undue weight to certain ideas, incidents, or controversies. Please help improve it by rewriting it in a balanced fashion that contextualizes different points of view. August Learn how and when to remove this template message The Polish Home Army also disseminated information and appeals to help the Jews in the ghetto, both in Poland and by way of radio transmissions to the Allies , which fell largely on deaf ears. Their failure to break through German defences limited supplies in the ghetto which was otherwise cut off from the outside world by a German-ordered blockade. Some Germans were eliminated every day.

**Chapter 7 : Armed Resistance to the Holocaust**

*By , the Jewish population of Germany had leveled off at ,, not including non-Jewish members of households; the total estimated 'enlarged' population of Jews living in Germany, including non-Jewish household members, is close to ,*

A year-old son of a milliner from the city of Vyborg, he was drafted into the army when the Soviet Union invaded Finland. In common with many Jews, he was determined to do his duty to the best of his ability, laying down his life for his country if necessary. Almost without exception, the Jews of Finland descended from Russian soldiers who had been posted to the region during their military service. Under Russian rule, Jews had been forced into the army at the age of 10 and made to serve for up to 25 years. They were viewed with some suspicion by the rest of Finland, which itself had been ruled by Russia until its independence in , and the war that broke out in , known in Finland as the Winter War, was regarded by the small Jewish population as a chance to prove they were loyal Finnish citizens. Livson fought in the Karelian Isthmus and, although the army was eventually forced to retreat by the far larger Russian force, he fought so valiantly, demonstrating such great skill and initiative, that he was promoted to sergeant. For a while, an uneasy peace reigned between Finland and the Soviet Union, but, when Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa , his surprise invasion of the communist state, Finland saw an opportunity to regain the territory it had lost in the Winter War and joined forces with Germany. He knew something about Kristallnacht , the attacks against German Jewish homes, businesses, schools and synagogues in November Livson is 97 now and a frailer version of the tough soldier he once was, but his voice remains loud and clear, his handshake firm and his opinions unwavering. As well as doing their duty as soldiers and proving their loyalty to their country, the veterans insist they were happy to fight for another reason: They were km north of my regiment. On the border with Russia, in the region of Karelia, Finnish and German troops fought side-by-side and Jews had to contend with two enemies: They lived in permanent fear of their identity being revealed, but, incredibly, on the occasions that it was, the German soldiers took the matter no further. The men were Finnish, they had the full support of their superior officers, and the Germans â€” while often shocked to find themselves fighting alongside Jews â€” did not have the authority to upbraid them. In fact, where they found themselves outranked by a Jewish officer, they were forced to salute. Ever since, there had been a concerted effort, led by a few brilliant politicians, to unite the country â€” to get the Reds and the Whites together. Jews were part of this act of bringing everybody together. If they had broken ranks, even for the Jews, it would have annihilated that argument. The Germans said nothing. Perhaps more uncomfortable are incidents, revealed by the Finnish historian Hannu Rautkallio, of friendships struck up between Jews and ordinary Wehrmacht soldiers. A scrapbook that belonged to Chaje Steinbock, a Jewish nurse in the main hospital in Oulu, miles north of Helsinki, contains several heartfelt messages from German patients. I do not want to know it, I do not want to hear it, because to know too much may destroy happiness. I will tell you just one thing: I would give you everything your heart desires. You are the woman I have loved over everything else. Until now, I had never believed that anything like this existed. Germans are even reported to have visited a field synagogue that was erected near the front line. The Jewish worshippers noticed that some of the Germans even showed a certain respect for the Jewish service. But most were in contact with relatives in Poland and other countries in Eastern Europe. A talented scientist whose career had been blocked by anti-Semitism in Finland, he had travelling salesmen in his family who had written to him about the gathering clouds over Europe. Nevertheless, as a doctor responsible for both German and Finnish soldiers, he refused to discriminate. The sector where Skurnik was stationed saw some of the fiercest fighting of the war and both his regiment, the 53rd infantry, and the German SS division with whom they were fighting, suffered heavy losses. Finally, with no sign of a let up in the Russian shelling, he took the decision that the field hospital had to be evacuated. That operation, across five-and-a-half miles of bogland, won him the Iron Cross, but, like Klass, who won his decoration for clearing a path for a German charge up a hill, and Dina Poljakoff, Skurnik turned his award down. He then told my father who thought it had to be a mistake and decided to see what happened when Berlin found out he was a Jew. But, after a while, General Siilasvuo came back to my father and told him the award had been approved.

Tell your German colleagues that I wipe my arse with it! Leo Skurnik, left, and Salomon Klass There were plenty of other acts of mini rebellion during the war. A doctor stationed in Oulu, who was less " or, some might argue, more " principled than Skurnik, refused to operate on Germans and was transferred to another sector. Such behaviour in another part of Europe would have meant their certain death. Nevertheless, after the war, as the horrors of the Holocaust revealed themselves, a discomfort about their special treatment spread, both among the Finnish Jews themselves and the wider Jewish community. At a meeting of war veterans in Tel Aviv in , the Finns were almost thrown out as traitors. Had it not occurred to them, they were asked, that, by helping Hitler, they had prolonged his time in power and thus ensured more Jews went to the gas chambers than would otherwise have been the case? That discomfort is still detectable today. Whatever they did there would always be one inescapable difference between them and their Finnish compatriots: What were they supposed to do? That is the question nobody can answer.

**Chapter 8 : The Jews who fought for Hitler: 'We did not help the Germans. We had a common enemy' - Te**

*On the border with Russia, in the region of Karelia, Finnish and German troops fought side-by-side and Jews had to contend with two enemies: one in front of them and one within their ranks.*

An Inquiry into the General Lack of Violent Jewish Resistance to the Holocaust by Ian McCollum

The Holocaust brings to mind visions of docile and helpless Jews being led to their demise in gas chambers, not visions of determined Jews fighting to defend their homes against German aggressors. Why did six million Jews allow themselves to be slaughtered like so many sheep? One must wonder, why did so few resort to violence to save themselves? For a Jew caught up in the Holocaust, there were many factors to consider when deciding on a course of action. For an individual considering armed, violent resistance, these included: Some sort of weapon is necessary, and would have to be acquired. By investigating the relative importance of these factors in several instances of armed Jewish resistance, it should become clearer what was required for the average victim to resort to violence.

**Cases Under Investigation**

**The Vilna ghetto.** After the first major Aktion in Vilna, the idea of armed resistance spread among youth Zionist groups and Communist groups. They formed an anti-Fascist federation The FPO, or United Partisans Organization with the express goal of defending the ghetto against a final liquidation, and at their peak had fighters. When the final liquidations began on September 1, the FPO issued a general call to arms, but it was completely ignored by the population of the ghetto. After one brief exchange of fire with German troops, the FPO decided to evacuate the ghetto and join partisans in the forests. The best-known example of violent Jewish resistance is the Warsaw ghetto uprising. Eight months later, when the final liquidation of the ghetto began they held off the Germans for more than a month with firearms and homemade bombs. In the end, the entire ghetto was demolished in an effort to defeat them.

**The Treblinka death camp.** While Treblinka had no large-scale forced labor program like Auschwitz, the Germans kept about Jews there to run and maintain the camp. The performed duties such as emptying gas chambers of corpses, moving and burning corpses, maintaining camp buildings, and the like. Having nothing to lose, they organized a plan for revolt. On August 2, they put their plan into action, shooting guards and lighting the camp aflame. About managed to escape the camp, and about 70 survived to the end of the war. After the revolt, Treblinka never functioned again.

**The Sobibor death camp.** The situation of Sobibor was similar to that of Treblinka. While Sobibor existed solely to execute Jews, there was a contingent of prisoners kept alive to run the camp. These ex-soldiers were experienced in fighting, and in cooperation with the Polish Jews who knew the ins and outs of the camp, they created a plan to steal weapons from the Germans and revolt. Their uprising took place on October 14, with mixed results. Several hundred prisoners escaped to the forests, but only about 40 survived the rest of the war. As with Treblinka, the Germans shut down the camp completely in the wake of the revolt.

**Concern for Dependents**

One of the most significant factors that could keep a Jew from fighting back against his Nazi oppressors was a concern for those dependent on him. As a general rule, Jews came into the ghettos as families. Those best suited to fight were also best suited to work, and because of the scarcity of food in the ghettos, their families were dependent on fit workers to keep from starving. For example, according to ghetto statisticians the Warsaw ghetto at the peak of its population had , inhabitants, only 27, of whom were gainfully employed. The result was that the few groups willing to fight that did form were almost exclusively composed of youth in their teens or early twenties. They were young enough to not have dependent families, but old enough to be effective fighters. In both Warsaw and Vilna, the main resistance groups were alliances of political activist youth groups, both Zionists and Communists. While this concern for the well-being of family members was an important issue for the Jews in ghettos, it was no factor at all for Jews farther along in the Nazi system. The usual fate of a Jew in a ghetto was deportation to an extermination camp and death in a gas chamber. The Jews who were used to run these extermination camps had already seen their families murdered either in the gas chambers or in other places months earlier , and had no such inhibitions about fleeing the camps. Camp policies held that in the case of escape or resistance by an individual Jew, the entire camp would be punished, often through summary executions of a large number of prisoners. However, this did not do much to hinder revolt plans. The type of

weaponry used by Jewish fighters varied depending on their environment. In the Vilna and Warsaw ghettos, Jewish resistance groups planned to defend the ghetto and drive out German police and military units. In the Treblinka and Sobibor death camps however, the fighters simply wanted to escape and flee. In an April 23 letter to Yitzhak Zuckerman, Mordechai Anielewicz the most prominent leader of the revolt explained that " We need grenades, rifles, machine guns, and explosives. Another source was the local partisan units, but they usually refused to supply any weaponry to the Jews. The weapons they ended up with were not ideal, but they were enough to fight with. In addition to firearms they were able to smuggle into the ghetto, the Warsaw fights also had a large number of Molotov cocktails homemade incendiary bombs , which they had manufactured inside the ghetto. Once fighting broke out in Warsaw, the fighters were able to augment their stores with weapons and ammunition taken from dead Germans, including at least one belt-fed machine gun. The resistance in the Vilna Ghetto used similar techniques to attain weapons. As well as buying arms from Polish Gentiles, they also stole a significant number of firearms and grenades from local German units where Jews were employed. The fighters in the death camps were not planning to engage in drawn-out fighting, and as a result they were more flexible in what sort of weapons they wanted. The main sources in both Treblinka and Sobibor were, surprisingly, the German armories. In Treblinka, the prisoners were able to acquire a copy of the key to the armory, and stole a large number of rifles and grenades, which were distributed to the prisoners before the revolt broke out. Another weapon used to great effect at Treblinka was fire. The prisoners had surreptitiously doused the camp buildings in gasoline and oil, and when the revolt began, they set alight virtually the entire camp, adding greatly to the confusion and distracting the guards. At Sobibor, the prisoners were not able to get firearms before acting, but were able to revolt despite this. They began by killing several SS officers with knives and hatchets, and taking their firearms and storming the camp armory, where they acquired a number of rifles and were able to engage the guards and escape. In all of these cases, weapons were an essential element of revolt, and nowhere were the Jews armed to begin with. However, despite the brutal Nazi control of the ghettos and camps, Jewish prisoners were regularly able to acquire the weaponry they needed. The need for weaponry was an obstacle to revolt, but a clearly surmountable one. The desire to place their faith in German humanity was very strong among the Jews, although it did decline as they made their way through the extermination process. In the absence of detailed, confirmed information about their fates, Jews in the ghettos refused to believe that their situation was worth fighting for. Since the Germans would not possibly plan to murder all the Jews, they were better off obeying German authority and thereby avoiding extra reprisals. General Bor-Komorowski, of the Polish underground army, wrote after the war about an incident when, having learned exactly what Treblinka the destination of deported Warsaw Jews was, his partisans offered the mainstream Jewish leadership weapons, ammunition, and aid. Their response typifies the common Jewish faith in their German overlords: So long as a person held this view or similar ones, like believing that the Germans were dependent on the Jews for labor , revolt was out of the question. The only cure for this ignorance of the true German intentions was information. These groups were able to acquire information about German actions across Poland, and synthesize them into a sufficiently accurate overview of the Final Solution. This information made it clear that passive obedience would have devastating consequences, and its importance in their planning can hardly be overstated. As a general rule, the rest of the general Jewish population of the ghettos either were unaware of German plans, or had seen little enough evidence that they were capable of denying it to themselves. In the Vilna ghetto, this ignorance and denial among the populace never ended. The main resistance group in Vilna, the FPO, had been planning their defense of the ghetto for almost two years, and when the Germans finally sealed the ghetto to liquidate it, they issued a call-to-arms for the populace. Flight and cowardice will not save life! Only armed resistance can save our lives and honor. The resistance fighters, knowing that their numbers were too small to be effective without community support, scrapped their plans and fled to the forests to join up with partisan groups. The Jews of the Warsaw ghetto had an entirely different reaction to the attempted liquidation of their ghetto. This rapid, gargantuan deportation broke the illusions of many inhabitants. In addition, the general population of the Warsaw ghetto sympathized and cooperated with the fighters. After the outbreak of fighting on April 19, many residents who were not members of resistance groups desired to fight, but had no weapons due to a lack of

preparation. The Jews who had been deported from their home or ghettos and were imprisoned in death camps had no illusions whatsoever about the German plans. Respected Leadership Any sort of organized mass action requires effective leadership, and the armed Jewish revolts during the Holocaust were no exception. These may seem like daunting tasks, but none of the example revolts suffered from a lack of adequate leadership. Because of their physical concentration, the Jews in captivity nearly always had capable leaders and respected personalities close at hand. The revolts in the death camps of Treblinka and Sobibor are excellent examples of flexible and spontaneous leadership. The revolts were planned by small groups which were formed for the sole purpose of escaping the camps. There were no rivalries over titles, positions, money, or power as none of these things existed for the prisoners and this made for very effective and cooperative planners despite the hardships of their environment. These planning groups were also able to endure the loss of key members without fragmenting. Much of the leadership for the ghetto revolts was actually in existence long before the ghettos were even created. The backbones of the ghetto fighting groups were formed by political youth groups, primarily Zionists and Communists. These groups had organized and effective leadership hierarchies before the war and when the decision to form fighting groups was made, the leadership elements of the groups merged fairly easily. For most of the ghetto fighters, their leaders were well known, trusted, and respected from the very beginning. Leadership for Jewish revolts was an essential element, but not a difficult one to fulfill. In most cases, the necessary leadership already existed or was easily found. Motivation Very few people will risk their lives fighting without a good reason, and without some motivating purpose, attempts at Jewish resistance would have been abortive. As with quality leadership, this necessary component of resistance was easily satisfied. The motivations varied with the fighters, but in a testament to the resilience of the human spirit, there were very few Jews who were unwilling to fight when the other necessary conditions were met. For many in the death camps, the compelling issue was a desire to survive so they could bear witness to the Nazi atrocities.

**Chapter 9 : Jewish Partisans in the Resistance | Facing History and Ourselves**

*The statement that Jews did not fight back against the Germans and their allies is false. Jews carried out acts of resistance in every German-occupied country and in the territory of Germany's Axis partners.*

More by Kopel on genocide and armed resistance. Contrary to myth of Jewish passivity, many Jews did fight back during the Holocaust. Indeed, Jews resisted at a higher rate than did any other population under Nazi rule. The experience of the Holocaust shows why Jews, and all people of good will, should support the right of potential genocide victims to possess defensive arms, and refutes the notion that violence is necessarily immoral. This Article examines the record of violent Jewish resistance to the Holocaust. It suggests that Jewish resistance was extensive, and succeeded in saving many lives. The record also explains that a key impediment to even more effective resistance was the lack of firearms, as well as Jewish unfamiliarity with arms during the pre-war years. The article dispels the myth of Jewish passivity during the Holocaust, and the myth that courageous civilians with firearms are helpless against a powerful, genocidal tyranny. Evil Jews

When we examine the record of Jews and the Holocaust, it is necessary to tell the story of some people who behaved very wickedly. Although their violations may have been the result of the great stresses and pressures of the time, it cannot be denied that these people performed terribly evil acts. If you, reader, are a pacifist, then you must not apply these words to the Nazis alone. For a committed pacifist, these words must also apply to the Jews who used violence to resist the Holocaust. If violence--especially deadly violence--is always and everywhere immoral, then the Jews who violently resisted Hitler acted immorally. Rather than killing the extermination camp guards at Sobibor, the Jews should have allowed themselves to be slaughtered. Rather than waging partisan warfare in the woods of Eastern Europe, the Jews should not have picked up guns. If you can honestly say that the story of Jewish resistance to Hitler is horrific rather than honorable, if you sincerely believe that the Jews did the wrong thing when they fought back, then you may wear the title of a consistent pacifist. If, on the other hand, you think that the Jews were not blameworthy for what they did, then you are not a complete pacifist. If Jewish violence against Hitler was right, then violence is not always and everywhere wrong. Different people may, of course, disagree about the prudence or the appropriateness of violence in different circumstance--but the disagreement is about circumstances. The nature of disagreement recognizes that, in at least some circumstances, violence is not wrongful. Indeed, the failure to use violence may itself be wrongful. Let us now examine the record of defensive Jewish violence during the Holocaust. Sobibor

Despite pleas from Jewish organizations, the Allies never bombed the train tracks leading to the extermination camps. Historians still argue about whether the Allied decision was correct; some argue that the missions were too dangerous, that the bombers were needed elsewhere, or that the tracks could have been quickly repaired. Whatever the merits of the Allied refusal, the fact remains that every extermination camp in Nazi Europe continued operating until Allied ground forces advanced to the general area. There was never any offensive aimed specifically at an extermination camp. The one camp that was put out of business early was the Sobibor extermination camp in Poland. As detailed in the book and movie *Escape from Sobibor*, and in memoirs of the survivors, Sobibor was a horribly efficient camp, gassing thousands of people per day. Much of the day-to-day work of the camp, such as carpentry, sewing uniforms, and processing the dead bodies, was performed by a crew of specially-selected Jews, who performed the work in exchange for, temporarily, being allowed to live. When some Soviet Jewish prisoners of war were brought into the camp, the P. Although there was a constant danger that Jewish spies, in exchange for favored treatment, might reveal the plans to the Nazis, the plan went forward. With crude improvised weapons, the inmates hurriedly killed a few Nazi officers, and obtained the keys to the camp armory. In the wild battle that ensued, prisoners tried to flee; about of them escaped the camp boundaries, and about half of them survived the land mine field around the camp. More escapees were caught later, but a band of 60 men and women, led by the Soviet officer Alexander Perchersky, made contact with the Soviet partisans. Thirty-eight Ukrainian guards were killed or wounded, while forty Ukrainian guards took the opportunity to desert. Sobibor shows that the platitude is a deadly falsehood. The Jews at Sobibor did their part. Sobibor was the site of the greatest violent revolt, but it was not the only one. Jews rose up at four other

extermination camps and eighteen forced labor camps or death camps. The prisoners used improvised explosive to set fires, and improvised knives to kill guards. The huge fire disabled much of Treblinka. About 1000 prisoners escaped, and of them, a dozen survived until the end of the war. Of all the German concentration and extermination camps that were built all over Europe, it was only the Jewish camps where there were revolts. Except for a rebellion by Soviet prisoners of war at the Ebensee camp. In the middle ages, Poland had been a welcoming, tolerant, and free nation, and many Jews emigrated there. But when Poland regained its independence in thanks to the Versailles Treaty, the nation quickly degenerated into a military dictatorship which encouraged anti-semitism. In Poland, as in other Eastern European areas under Nazi military rule. Movement in and out of the ghetto was very strictly controlled. Eventually, the Germans would begin deporting large numbers of people from the ghetto--ostensibly for resettlement in labor camps, but almost always for extermination. Eventually, the whole ghetto would be depopulated, and the area would be declared Judenrein Jew-free. In Warsaw, the large pre-war Jewish population was initially supplemented by large numbers of Jews who were shipped in from other cities. The Jews were forced to live on starvation rations, and many thousands in the ghetto died from starvation or contagious disease. The Germans eventually cut the size of the ghetto in half, consolidating the survivors into extremely crowded conditions. Deportations to the death camps continued to depopulate the ghetto. In late 1943, Emmanuel Ringelblum, the well-educated author of a diary about life in the Warsaw Ghetto, wrote: Whomever you talk to, you hear the same cry: The resettlement never should have been permitted. We should have run into the street, set fire to everything in sight, have torn down the walls, and escaped to the Other Side. The Germans would have taken their revenge. It would have cost tens of thousands of lives, but not now. Now we are ashamed of ourselves, disgraced in our own eyes, and in the eyes of the world, where our docility has earned us nothing. This must not be repeated now. We must put up a resistance, defend ourselves against the enemy, man and child. But on that day, an uprising began. In the beginning, the Jewish Fighting Organization had about 2000 volunteers; the Jewish Military Association had about 1000, and there were thousands more in spontaneous small groups. After four days of fighting, the Germans on January 21 pulled back from the ghetto, to organize better. Another diary written in the Warsaw ghetto exulted: In the four days of fighting we had made up for the same of Jewish passivity in the first extermination action of July, 1942. Not only the Germans were shocked by the unexpected resistance, Jews too were astonished. They could not imagine until then that the beaten, exhausted victims could rise against a mighty enemy who had conquered all of Europe. Many Jews who were in the streets of Warsaw during the fighting refused to believe that on Zamenhof and Mila Streets Jewish boys and girls had attacked Germans. The large-scale fighting which followed convinced all that it was possible. The Warsaw Jews also manufactured their own explosives, including Molotov cocktails. But, wrote Ringelblum, "their most potent weapon was their deep sense of national pride and responsibility. The plan was to give Hitler a Judenrein Warsaw as a present for his April 20 birthday. Since September 1939, they had eaten the bitter herbs of slavery. Now, they were drinking the wine of freedom. The Nazi Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, wrote in his diary, "the joke cannot last much longer, but it shows what the Jews are capable of when they have arms in their hands. The Jews were ready with explosives. First one tank and then a second were immobilized in the middle of the street, in flames, their crews burned alive. Now the fighters as well as the non-combatant Jews who have crawled out of their hiding places have reached the pinnacle of jubilation". According to one eyewitness account, "The faces who only yesterday reflected terror and despair now shone with an unusual joy which is difficult to describe. This was a joy free from all personal motives, a joy imbued with the pride that that ghetto was fighting. There was hardly any gun culture among European Jews of the 1930s, so few Jews had the equipment for "reloading"--the home manufacture of ammunition. Stymied in house-to-house fighting, the Germans began to burn the ghetto to the ground on April 19, 1943. But he could not. The poster promised, "You have seen and will see that every doorstep in the ghetto is and will continue to be a fortress. We may all perish in the struggle but we shall not surrender". Long live the brotherhood of weapons and the blood of fighting Poland! Death to the murderous and criminal occupants. The explosion could be felt all over Warsaw. Yet on that very day, Jewish fighters carried out more attacks in Warsaw. Fighting continued until July. Some Jews managed to hide in the ghetto until August 1943, when they joined the Polish uprising that month. They decided that it was better to die

fighting than to die in a gas chamber. It was better to kill at least some of the killers, than to let them massacre Jews with impunity. Ringelblum wrote, "We took stock of our position and saw that this was a struggle between a fly and an elephant. But our national dignity dictated to us that the Jews must offer resistance and not allow themselves to be led wantonly to slaughter. On April 23, the Jewish commander, year-old Mordechai Anielevich, had written, "I have a feeling that great things are happening, that what we have undertaken is of tremendous significance.