

Calls For An Armed Struggle Made By the Jewish Resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto

The famed Uprising, in April and May, 1943 in the Warsaw Ghetto, is universally regarded as a turning point, an absolutely new departure, not only in the chronicles of Jewish resistance to the German oppressor, but also in the history of the general struggle for the liberation of Warsaw. This was the first time when Jews took part in a major, indeed large-scale battle of that struggle. For the first time, after the defeat in 1939, the thunder of cannon and the echoing clutter of machine-guns were heard again in the capital city of Poland. The Jewish Uprising induced changes in the struggle of the Polish underground movement, which until then had concentrated its efforts mainly on acts of sabotage, and on acquiring arms and ammunition by disarming German soldiers and police. April 19, 1943, became a symbol of the Jewish public's contribution to the fight for freedom from the Nazi regime, and a motivating factor in the war of the Polish underground.

ARISE AND FIGHT!

Do not lose hope in the possibility of rescue!

You should know that rescue is not to be found in going to death passively like a flock of sheep.

It lies in something considerably higher: In struggle!

He who fights for his life stands a chance of saving himself!

He who in advance gives up – has lost straightaway! Only disgraceful death in the asphyxiating machine of Treblinka awaits him.

ARISE, PEOPLE, AND FIGHT!

Summon up courage to do reckless deeds!

Down with the shameful acceptance of statements such as “We are all doomed to death!”

This is a lie!

For us, too, a life future was destined! We, too, have the right to it!

It is only necessary to fight for it!

It is no achievement to live *when your life is spared only as a favor!*

It is an achievement to live when someone else wants to wrest this life from you.

ARISE, PEOPLE, AND FIGHT FOR YOUR LIVES!

Let no father acquiesce at the death of his children!

Let the disgrace of the first act of our extermination never repeat itself!

Down with resignation and self-distrust!

Let the enemy pay with his own blood for every Jewish life!

Let your homes become fortresses!

ARISE, PEOPLE, AND FIGHT!

Your survival is in struggle!

He who fights for his life has a chance to save himself.

We are rising to struggle for the lives of those helpless masses to whose rescue we want to come, whom we must rouse to action!

We do not want to fight for our own lives only. We shall be permitted to save ourselves only after we have fulfilled our duty!

OUR SLOGAN:

Not one Jew will perish in Treblinka anymore!

Down with the traitors of the nation!

Relentless struggle against the invader to the last drop of our blood!

Prepare for action!

BE ON YOUR GUARD!

Source: Kermish, Joseph (Edited and annotated by), *To Live With Honor And Die With Honor!...Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives "O.S" ["Oneg Shabbat"]*, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 1986, p. 590-591.

