

## From the Memoirs of Emanuel Ringelblum on the German Propaganda during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

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.

### “Little Stalingrad” Defends Itself

In order to prepare the ground for their cruelties with proper German orderliness, the German command and press announced that they were suppressing a revolt of the Jews, who had organized partisan detachments to murder German soldiers. The German soldiers were told that bandits living in the Ghetto were hiding in bunkers and preparing to attack the German Army from there. Rumours were spread that besides the combatants in the Ghetto there were Soviet parachutists, Bolshevik prisoners-of-war who had fled from German captivity, and German deserters, all of them well supplied with arms, equipment and food, which was being dropped to them systematically from Soviet planes. It was also announced that the Ghetto was expecting Soviet help in the form of weapons and reinforcements. Belief in this help was so widespread that on Good Friday, according to an eye witness, the whole surviving population of the Ghetto was on the look-out for a white patch in the sky, supposed to be the parachute of a Soviet parachutist. This was the only

ray of hope for the *morituri* in the Ghetto and for the remnant of the combatants still fighting in blocks not yet burnt down.

**Source: Joseph Kermish (ed.), *To Live with Honor and Die with Honor! Selected Documents from the Warsaw Ghetto Underground Archives* "O.S" ["Oneg Shabbath"], Yad Vashem 1986, p. 601.**