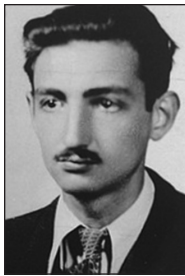


PERSONAL TESTIMONIES

From the founding meeting of the Jewish Fighting Organization (Z.O.B.)¹

“On July 28, 1942, a meeting of ‘HeHalutz’ was held. It was decided that a Jewish Fighting Organization would be established [...] however, the sum total of the ghetto’s weapons at the time was only one pistol!”

From an interview with Marek Edelman, a Warsaw ghetto fighter²



Marek Edelman

“Then we collected weapons.

We smuggled it from the Aryan side (we took money by force from all kinds of institutions and private people)...”

Interviewer: How much would you pay for a pistol?

From three thousand to fifteen thousand. The closer to April, the more expensive: the demand in the market increased.

Interviewer: And how much did it cost to get a Jew to the Aryan side?

“Two thousand, five thousand. All kinds of prices. It depended on whether the person looked like a Jew, if he spoke with an accent, and if it was a man or a woman.”

Interviewer: That means that for one pistol, it would have been possible to hide one, two or even three people for a month. If you had been offered the choice at that time: one pistol or the life of one person for a month...

“Such a choice was not offered. Perhaps it was even better that it was not offered.”

From the last letter of Mordechai Anielewicz, smuggled from the Warsaw ghetto to the underground courier Antek Zuckerman³



Mordechai Anielewicz

“It is impossible to put into words what we have been through... I feel that great things are happening and what we dared do is of great, enormous importance... It is impossible to describe the conditions under which the Jews of the ghetto are now living. Only a few will be able to hold out. The remainder will die sooner or later. Their fate is decided. In almost all the hiding places in which thousands are concealing themselves it is not possible to light a candle for lack of air. With the aid of our transmitter we heard the marvelous report on our fighting by the *Shavit* radio station. The fact that we are remembered beyond the ghetto walls encourages us in our struggle. Peace go with you, my friend! Perhaps we may still meet again! The dream of my life has risen to become fact. Self-defense in the ghetto will have been a reality. Jewish armed resistance and revenge are facts. I have been a witness to the magnificent, heroic fighting of Jewish men in battle.” —Mordechai Anielewicz, April 23, 1943

From the testimony of Zivia Lubetkin at the Eichmann Trial⁴



Zivia Lubetkin

“It is difficult for me to describe life in the ghetto during that week, and I had been in this ghetto for years. The Jews embraced and kissed each other; although it was clear to every single one that it was not certain whether he would remain alive, or it was almost certain that he would not survive, nevertheless that he had reached the day of our taking revenge, although no vengeance could fit our suffering. At least we were fighting for our lives, and this feeling lightened his suffering and possibly also made it easier for him to die.

I also remember that on the second day—it was the Passover Seder—in one of the bunkers by chance I came across Rabbi Meisel. There had been contacts between us and him, since the days of the Halutz underground in ordinary times as well. The Halutz underground, in its operations, had not always had an easy time on the part of the Jewish population—they did not always accept us. There were those who thought that we were bringing harm to their lives—as I have pointed out, the collective responsibility, the fear of the Germans. But this time, when I entered the bunker, this Jew, Rabbi Meisel, interrupted the Seder, placed his hand on my head and said: *May you be blessed. Now it is good for me to die. Would that we had done this earlier.*”

From the words of Zalman Gradowski, one of the fighters in the Auschwitz-Birkenau revolt⁵

“Dear finder, search every part of the ground. Buried in it are dozens of documents of others, and mine, which shed light on everything that happened here... As for us, we have already lost all hope...

...The future will judge us on the basis of this evidence. May the world understand some small part of the tragic world in which we lived.” —Zalman Gradowski, September 6, 1944

NOTE: The revolt in Auschwitz-Birkenau attempted to put an end to the murder by disrupting the operation of the crematoria, and also to create a memory and a testimony to the tragedy of the lives and deaths of the hundreds of thousands of people who were killed in front of their eyes. After writing down and documenting the events, they buried them near the crematoria. This document was written by one of the organizers of the uprising.

From a 1968 interview with Yitzhak “Antek” Zuckerman on the 25th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising⁶



Yitzhak Zuckerman

“I don’t think there’s any real need to analyze the Uprising in military terms. 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. This isn’t a subject for study in a military school. Not the weapons, not the operations, not the tactics. If there’s a school to study the human spirit, there it should be a major subject. The really 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: Treblinka or Uprising. I don’t know if there’s a standard to measure that.”

End Notes

¹Yitzhak Arad, Yisrael Gutman, and Avraham Margalit, eds., *Documents on the Holocaust, Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1981), 293–294.

²*Preceding God – An Interview with Marek Edelman of the Warsaw Ghetto Fighters*, trans. from Polish by Hanna Krall (Jerusalem: Adam Publishing House, 1981), 57.

³Supra note 1, at 315–316.

⁴*Attorney General v. Adolf Eichmann*, 36 I.L.R. 5 (Dist. Jerusalem 1961), *aff’d*, 36 I.L.R. 277 (S.Ct.1962) (Israel), Trial Transcript. Retrieved from nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/Sessions/Session-025-04.html.

⁵Ber Mark, *The Scrolls of Auschwitz*, ed. Isiah Avrech, trans. from Hebrew by Sharon Neemani; adapted from the Yiddish original text (Tel Aviv: Am Oved Publishing House, 1985), 205.

⁶Yitzhak (“Antek”) Zuckerman, *A Surplus of Memory: Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, trans. from Hebrew by Barbara Harshav (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).