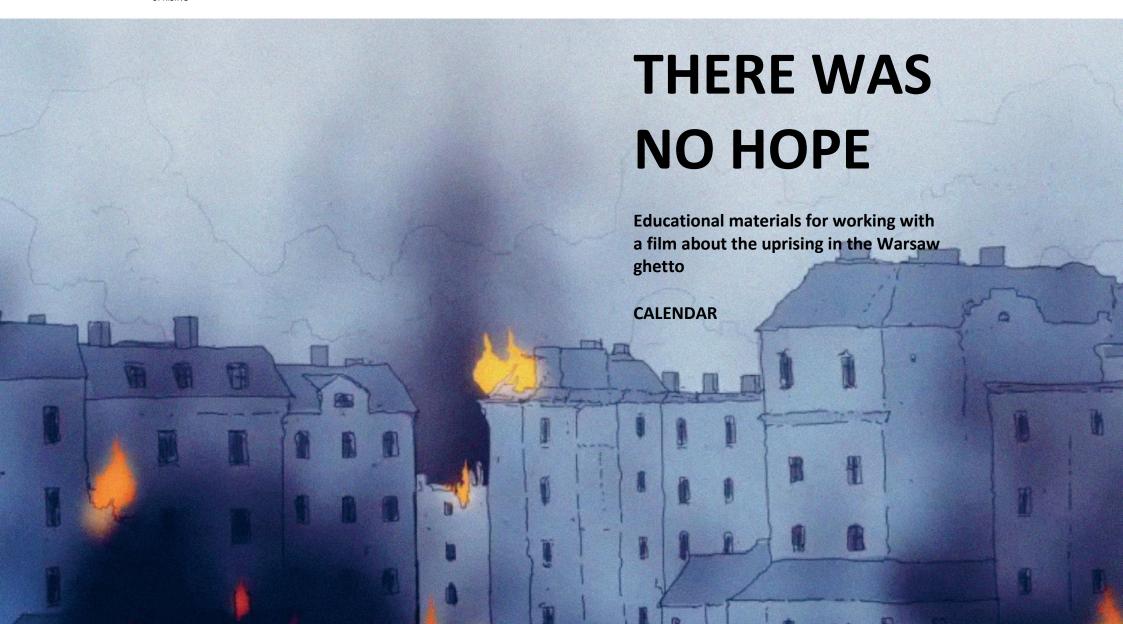
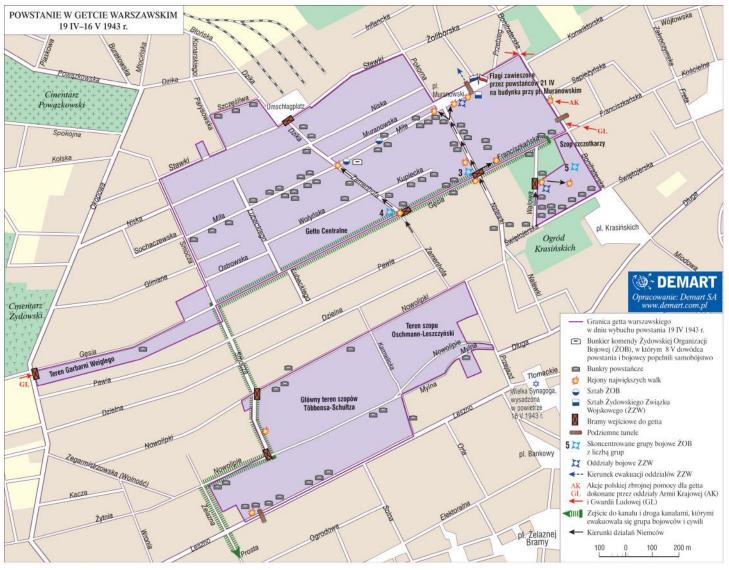


19 April 1943 WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING





WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING 2



POWSTANIE W GETCIE WARSZAWSKIM 19 IV–16 V 1943 r.	WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING April 19 - May 16, 1943
Opracowanie: Demart SA	Prepared by: Demart SA
www.demart.com.pl	www.demart.com.pl
Granica getta warszawskiego w dniu wybuchu powstania 19 IV 1943 r.	The border of the Warsaw Ghetto on the day of the outbreak of the uprising – April 19, 1943

WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING

Bunkier komendy Żydowskiej Organizacji Bojowej (ŻOB), w którym 8 V dowódca powstania i	Bunker of the command of the Jewish Combat Organization (ZOB – Zydowska Organizacja	
bojowcy popełnili samobójstwo	Bojowa), in which the commander of the uprising and the insurgents committed suicide	
Bunkry powstańcze	Insurgents' bunkers	
Rejony największych walk	Areas of the fiercest fights	
Sztab ŻOB	ŻOB Headquarters	
Sztab Żydowskiego Związku Wojskowego (ŻZW)	Headquarters of the Jewish Military Union (ZZW - Żydowski Związek Wojskowy)	
Bramy wejściowe do getta	Entrance gates to the ghetto	
Podziemne tunele	Underground tunnels	
Skoncentrowane grupy bojowe ŻOB z liczbą grup	Concentrated ŻOB battle groups with the number of groups	
Oddziały bojowe ŻZW	ŻZW combat units	
Kierunek ewakuacji oddziałów ŻZW	Direction of evacuation of ŻZW units	
Akcje polskiej zbrojnej pomocy dla getta dokonane przez oddziały Armii Krajowej (AK) i Gwardii	Actions of the Polish armed units of the Home Army (AK – Armia Krajowa) and People's Guards	
Ludowej (GL)	(GL- Gwardia Ludowa) in support of ghetto insurgents	
Zejście do kanału i droga kanałami, którymi ewakuowała się grupa bojowców i cywili	Descent to a sewer and path through sewers, along which a group of fighters and civilians	
	evacuated	
Kierunki działań Niemców	Directions of the Germans' actions	
Cmentarz Powązkowski	Powązki Cemetery	
Cmentarz Żydowski	Jewish Cemetery	
Flagi zawieszonej przez powstańcowi 21 IV na budynku przy pl. Muranowskim	Flags put up by the insurgents on the building at Muranowski Square on April 21	
Szop szczotkarzy	Brush makers' shed	
Getto Centralne	The Central Ghetto	
Ogród Krasińskich	Krasinski Garden	
pl. Muranowski	Muranowski Square	
pl. Krasińskich	Krasinki Square	
Teren Garbarni Weiglego	The area of Weigel's Tannery	
Teren szopu Oschmann-Leszczyński	The area of the Oschmann-Leszczynski's shed	
Główny teren szopów Többensa-Schultza	The main area of Többens-Schultz's sheds	
Wielka Synagoga wysadzona w powietrze 16 V 1943 r.	The Great Synagogue blown up on May 16, 1943.	
pl. Bankowy	Bankowy Square	
pl. Żelaznej Bramy	Żelaznej Bramy Square	

WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING

Day one

April 19, 1943 14 Nisan 5703

Great Monday

Jewish Easter - Passover,

Seder – the first night of

Passover

Early in the morning two columns of German troops enter the central ghetto. The goal is to start deporting its inhabitants under the order issued by Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler. The operation is headed by Ferdinand von Sammern-Frankenegg, commander of the SS and police in the Warsaw District. On 33 Nalewki Street and at the intersection of Zamenhof and Miła streets, the attackers encounter strong resistance from the Jewish Combat Organization (ŻOB) units under the command of Mordechaj Anielewicz.

Germans are shot at and grenades are thrown at them. Support from the tank and armoured vehicles does not help. Taking heavy losses, German troops are withdrawing from the ghetto.

The second attack starts at around 8 am. It is led by Brigadeführer SS, Jürgen Stroop, who was brought to Warsaw to take over the command. Under the pressure of attacking German troops, ZOB insurgents are forced to leave their positions in Nalewki and Zamenhof streets.

In the afternoon, the battles around the fortified positions of the Jewish Military Union (ZZW) at Muranowski Square begin. The fighters equipped with a machine gun are commanded by Paweł Frenkel. On the roof of one of the buildings, most probably a townhouse numbered 7-9, white-red and white-blue flags are hoisted. Most of the ghetto's population descends to previously prepared bunkers. The attackers manage to capture only a small number of Jews. In the evening Germans are withdrawing.

There is a mood of elation in the ghetto.

At 7pm, a unit of the Warsaw Kedyw (acronym for Kierownictwo Dywersji – Directorate of Diversion) commanded by Capt. Józef Pszenny "Chwacki" tries to blow up a fragment of the wall at the corner of Bonifraterska and Sapieżyńska streets, to enable the escape of Jewish militants. The action fails.

In the confrontation with the Germans and the Polish Blue Police, the Home Army fighters suffer serious losses. According to official data, German losses on that day amounted to one killed and 24 wounded.

Day two

April 20, 1943 15 Nisan 5703

Great Tuesday
The first day of Passover,
second Seder evening

At 7 am nine assault units enter the ghetto. Again, heavy battles take place at Muranowski Square, where the ŻZW insurgents defend their positions. The ghetto defenders suffer losses and are forced to change positions several times.

In the early afternoon, fights begin in the area of brush makers' sheds at Świętojerska Street. Fighters led by Marek Edelman's detonate an explosive, which temporarily stops the attackers. The calls to the Jewish population to leave the fighting area fall on deaf ears. German artillery opens fire towards insurgents' positions, forcing defenders to move. Michał Klepfisz from Bund perishes. The attack is interrupted by falling darkness.

Germans also appears in the vicinity of the Többens and Schultz's sheds, encountering the resistance of eight 20B units and of a 2ZW unit.

Articles appear In the Polish underground press about the defence of the ghetto. The first description of the fighting is published by Dzień Warszawy, a daily published by the Government Delegation for Poland.

Members of the Jewish National Committee (ŻKN – Żydowski Komitet Narodowy) and the representative of ŻOB, Icchak Cukierman, who are outside the ghetto, conduct a frenzied activity aimed at organizing aid for the combatants. ŻOB starts issuing announcements on the course of fights in the ghetto.

Day three

April 21, 1943 16 Nisan 5703

Great Wednesday The second day of Passover, holiday

Day four

April 22, 1943 17 Nisan 5703

Great Thursday The third day of Passover, half-holiday

Day five April 23, 1943

18 Nisan 5703

Great Friday
The fourth day of Passover,
half-holiday

Germans change the tactics of the fight. Smaller units are scouring the central ghetto, trying to eliminate the resistance points and bunkers. Defenders are shot on the spot or are taken to the Umschlagplatz.

The action is taking place in the area of the brush makers' shed at Świętojerska Street. Unable to eliminate the resistance, Germans, on Stroop's orders, set fire to the buildings. At night, ŻOB units break through to the central ghetto, to the bunker at 30 Franciszkańska Street.

The preparations for the 'evacuation' of the employees of the Többens and Schultz's sheds to the Umschlagplatz begin. Most of them, not seeing any chance to find a hiding place, come voluntarily. They will be taken to a labour camp in Poniatowa in the Lublin region.

Setting fire to residential buildings becomes the occupant's method of fighting the insurgency. More and more houses are burning. Residents are trying to save themselves by jumping out of the windows.

Despite the raging fire, individual positions are putting up resistance. Clashes take place in all parts of the ghetto. Insurgents are moving from place to place. A dozen or so bunkers are captured and blown up. Germans execute about 200 Jews, and more than a thousand are taken to the Umschlagplatz.

ŻOB fighters hear a broadcast of London radio station Świt (Dawn) broadcasting in Polish about the "heroic fight of the Warsaw Ghetto".

Another group of ŻZW fighters goes to the 'Aryan side', using previously prepared tunnel leading to the building at 6 Muranowska Street. From there, some of them will get to Michalin near Warsaw.

People are trying to save themselves by going down to the sewers. Knowing this, Germans throw gas grenades into the manholes.

Stroop divides the ghetto into 24 sections, which are to be systematically scoured by reinforced assault troops.

Their goal is to detect and defeat the resistance. Germans detects 48 bunkers, they shoot 200 people and drive hundreds of others to the Umschlagplatz. Among the executed are members of the Jewish Council.

Life in bunkers is becoming ever more difficult. A young woman, Maryla, who hides in one of them, writes in her diary on that day: "Although a few days ago I thought about the next few weeks of my life, now I am considering the possibility of losing it in every coming hour, at any moment. As much as two days ago I was still terrified by the thought that this new tempest surprised me completely unprepared for the shelter, because I was still counting on a different way of saving myself and I did not prepare food that anyway dwindles away from day to day at an alarming pace, today this does not bother me at all, because after the last shocking experiences I'm ready for every most desperate act or to put an end to life when I will have enough of it."

There also appear a proclamation to Poles signed by ŻOB. In the next days it will be dispersed among the people of Warsaw.

Icchak Cukierman, via a messenger, receives a letter from Mordechaj Anielewicz, ending with the words: "The dream of my life has become a reality. Jewish self-defence in the ghetto became a fact. Jewish armed resistance and revenge have come true. I was a witness to the magnificent heroic fight of Jewish insurgents."

German authorities warn that "entry to the former Jewish residential district is strictly forbidden" and anyone who will be caught in this area will be shot. At the same time, the action of capturing Jews who are hiding on the "Aryan side" continues.

Near the walls of the ghetto, the Home Army and other organizations undertake several small combat actions.

Day six

April 24, 1943 19 Nisan 5703

Great Saturday The fifth day of Passover, half-holiday

Day seven

April 25, 1943 20 Nisan 5703

Easter Sunday
The sixth day of Passover,
half-holiday

Day eight

April 26, 1943 21 Nisan 5703

Easter Monday The seventh day of Passover, holiday

Day nine

April 27, 1943 22 Nisan 5703

Tuesday, Eight day of Passover, holiday

At 10 am, 24 assault troops enter the ghetto from all sides, counting on surprising the residents. Germans are more and more efficient in detecting bunkers. They enter the warehouse area at Niska and Pokorna streets. Having met resistance, they set fire to buildings. Groups of insurgents are putting up resistance at Leszno Street.

"Jews and bandits" - writes Stroop – "preferred to go back to fire rather than fall into our hands. The Jews were keeping shooting, almost till the end of the action." 330 people are shot on the spot, many die in flames; over 1,800 Jews are driven to Umschlaplatz. Stroop assures that the action will end on Easter Monday.

At 1 pm seven assault units enter the ghetto area, a total of about 500 troopers, in order to methodically search through the assigned districts. Arson is an integral part of the action. Resistance continues in many parts of the ghetto, but it is brutally suppressed. Bunkers are blown up and backfilled. Over 270 people are shot and 1,690 captured for deportation to the Treblinka extermination camp. Many people are killed in destroyed bunkers.

Defenders are hiding in bunkers, from which they come out at night. ŻOB liaisons who were sent via channels to the "Aryan side" get killed.

From 10 am, assault troops again scour the buildings they entered the previous day. Everywhere they meet resistance and immediately suppress it. "It turns out more and more clearly," - reports Stroop — "that the time has come for Jews and bandits who are most dogged and most capable of resisting." The conditions of staying in the shelters deteriorate; there is a lack of air, water and food. Fire is set to successive buildings. Mass shootings are continuing - in this way over 1,330 Jews are killed, and 362 perish while bunkers are captured. The pacification action, contrary to Stroop's announcements, cannot be ended.

The fights are of a spontaneous nature, various combat groups, unrelated to the underground organizations existing in the ghetto, take part in them.

The ghetto is constantly burning.

Assault units divided into smaller groups penetrate the ghetto in search of bunkers.

In the area of Niska Street an assault group clashes with defenders.

A few bunkers at Leszno are taken. Among others, the heroic liaison of ŻOB, Chana Płotnicka, is killed.

At the same time, the deportation of shed workers to the Lublin region continues.

The brutality of the attackers increases. On this day, as Stroop reports, about 550 of the 2,500 captured Jews were murdered on the spot.

This is the largest number of victims since the outbreak of fighting. An unknown number of people perish in the bunkers.

In the afternoon, an assault unit surrounds the townhouses at 6 Muranowska Street, where some of the ŻZW fighters are hiding in one of the flats. Stroop reports on the shooting of 24 and the capture of 52 "bandits" and the liquidation of one of the founders and leaders of a military organization.

	The assault units are scouring the ghetto. Stroop reports about "finding a strong resistance that has been broken". More and more bunkers are detected.
Day 10 April 28, 1943 23 Nisan 5703 Wednesday	A woman of unknown name, hiding in one of the bunkers at Miła Street writes in her diary: "Today is the tenth day of our live in a bunker. Ten days of fighting against our bloodiest enemy who intends to destroy us completely. The same that began with grenades and ends with burning houses. We have perseverance and we hope that we will survive. We fight for justice and for the right to live. Meanwhile, the bombing and shelling calmed down and the danger turned away from us. People wash, share coffee, cook food - everything is done in peace. All people and guards work bravely, all according to the instructions of the bunker commander. The day passed normally."
	1,655 Jews are captured, 110 of them - according to the Stroop report – "were shot in combat." In addition, many people perish in burning houses and blown up bunkers. The end of the action takes place at 10 pm.
Day 11	The Hallman's shed at 59 Nowolipki Street is set on fire by one of the assault groups. Further bunkers are detected. Stroop reports on the capture of 2,359 Jews, with 106 of them shot on the spot.
April 29, 1943 24 Nisan 5703	Symcha Ratajzer and Zalman Friedrich exit the ghetto through a tunnel under Muranowska Street. Their mission is to organize the evacuation of fighters.
Thursday	The article entitled Ostatni akt wielkiej tragedii (The Last Act of the Great Tragedy) is published in the Home Army Biuletyn Informacyjny (Information Bulletin). It contains an appeal for help to escapees from the ghetto.
Day 12	Stroop is forced to admit: "Although huge blocks of houses have been completely burned out, the Jews are still in bunkers located at a depth of 2-3 m underground", which are very difficult to detect. Germans clear out 30 bunkers, destroys detected passages to the "Aryan side." 1,599 Jews are captured, of whom 179 "were shot in combat." At the Umschlagplatz 3,855 people are loaded onto wagons.
April 30, 1943 25 Nisan 5703	A group of 40 ŻOB fighters under the command of Eliezer Geller, from the area of Többens and Schultz's sheds, tries to get out of the ghetto. They descend to the canal at Leszno Street. After a dozen or so hours, they come out at the corner of Ogrodowa and Żelazna streets. They are transported by truck outside of Warsaw.
Friday	A group of about 40 ŻZW fighters is detected in Michalin by the gendarmerie and attacked. 12 insurgents are killed, other members of the group disperse and return to Warsaw one by one.
	Stroop reports to his superiors that from the beginning of the action 37,359 Jews were captured. He announces its continuation the following day.
Day 13	Germans enter the ghetto at 9 am. The action carried out by ten units and a special combat group lasts until 10 pm. 1,026 people are drawn out from the bunkers and canals, 245 of them are killed by Germans on the spot. Any suspicion that there is a bunker somewhere results in sappers firing explosives. Entrances to the sewers are filled in to prevent further groups of Jews from escaping.
May 1, 1943 26 Nisan 5703 Saturday	The insurgents are trying to attack Germans scouring the ghetto. For the first time, small reconnaissance troops remain in the ghetto overnight. There is a firefight with the defenders.

At the same time, there are "hunts" for escapees on the "Aryan side", also outside of Warsaw.

Saturday

Day 14

May 2, 1943 27 Nisan 5703

Sunday

Ghetto scouring begins at 10 am. One of the goals is the complex of sheds at Stawki Street. All resistance is mercilessly suppressed; the defenders are shot or driven to the Umschlagplatz. Germans set fire to further buildings and detect 24 bunkers. There is a clash with a group trying to get out of the ghetto. Four Orpo (Ordnungspolizei) police officers and three blue policemen are injured.

Friedrich Wilhelm Krüger, the Higher Commander of the SS and Police in GG, who arrived from Krakow is present during the action.

From the area of brushers' shed Leon Najberg comes to Muranowski Square. He sees that the whole area has been burned out.

Day 15

May 3, 1943 28 Nisan 5703

Monday

The action starts at 9 am. 1,422 people are captured, 95 are killed on the spot. Stroop reports: "In most cases, the Jews resisted with weapons in their hands before leaving the bunkers. As a result, there were two injuries. Some of the Jews and bandits fired pistols held in both hands." Once again, his report mentions that women are involved in the fighting.

Among the detected bunkers, there is a shelter at 30 Franciszkańska Street, where ŻOB battle groups from the area of the brush makers' shed are quartered. Many defenders are killed in a hopeless fight. Others move to the bunkers at 22 Franciszkańska and 18 Miła streets.

There are about 50 ŻOB members at Franciszkańska Street. Due to the lack of ammunition and food, the insurgents are helpless in the face of Germans' tactics which include systematic arson. The situation of fighters is getting worse, during the day they have to protect themselves in bunkers. For several days there was no contact with the "Aryan side."

Day 16

May 4, 1943 29 Nisan 5703

Tuesday

The main German forces are directed to the area of the Többens and Schultz's sheds to "clean" buildings and destroy them. Fire is set to force Jews to leave hiding places. Of the 2,283 captured, 204 people are shot dead on the spot. There are clashes with insurgents desperately defending their positions.

During the night, German reconnaissance units remain in the ghetto, fighting against the insurgents.

Day 17

May 5, 1943 30 Nisan 5703

Wednesday

Day 18

May 6, 1943 01 Iyar 5703

Thursday

Day 19

May 7, 1943 02 Iyar 5703

Friday, Sabbath evening

With the help of explosives, Germans destroy 40 bunkers, retain 1,070 people, and murder 126 on the spot. Stroop reports: "Also today in various places the Jews resisted their capture." From the Többens' shed at Prosta Street (the so-called large Többens) the deportation of workers to labour camps begins.

Homes digested by fires during previous days are being searched. Out of 47 detected bunkers, Germans drive out 1,553 people, 356 are shot on the spot.

"Hunting" for escapees on the "Aryan side" is intensifying. The whole time the blue police take part in it. Stroop writes about them: "induced by cash prizes, they try to bring to the commander's office every Jew who will show up in the city."

Germans enter the ghetto at 10 am, and depart at 9 pm. 49 bunkers fall prey to them. Over one thousand people are captured and 255 killed.

Germans locate the bunker at 18 Miła Street, the headquarters of ŻOB. It shelters over 100 insurgents and several dozens of other people. Built by smugglers after the great deportation action in the autumn of 1942, the bunker stretched under the townhouses bombed in September 1939. It was very well stocked with water and supplied with electricity. From the beginning of May, ŻOB fighters were leaving it only at night.

Day 20

May 8, 1943 03 Iyar 5703

Saturday, Shabbat

In the morning, the SS-men block all entrances to the ŻOB command bunker. They throw in smoke and gas grenades. Arie Wilner and Lutek Rotblat appeal not to surrender. Some defenders commit suicide, some suffocate. Stroop reports on the capture of 60 people and the liquidation of 140, including the "deputy commander of a Jewish military organization."

Only a few fighters manage to escape by an accidentally discovered passage. They recount about the agony in the bunker to the comrades encountered in the ruins. The inhabitants of other bunkers also put up resistance. Out of 43 bunkers, Germans drive 1,091 Jews, including armed women. 280 people are shot. Two SS men are killed, two others are wounded.

In one of the detected bunkers at 36 Świętojerska Street, the poet Władysław Szlengel perishes. Other buildings are set on fire. Stroop declares that he is "determined to continue the great action until the last Jew is killed."

Day 21

May 9, 1943 04 Ivar 5703

Sunday

Germans detects 42 bunkers and murders 319 people. ŻOB members are awaiting help from the "Aryan side."

Symcha Ratajzer goes down to the canals with Polish guides. He manages to make contact with his companions. Among them there is a group rescued from the bunker at 18 Mila Street.

Day 22

May 10, 1943 05 Iyar 5703

Monday

Day 23

May 11, 1943 06 Iyar 5703

Tuesday

Day 24

May 12, 1943 07 Iyar 5703

Wednesday

The ghetto is scoured by assault troops. Stroop reports: "The resistance put up by Jews was not weaker today."

At 5am, a group of about 50 ŻOB fighters comes out through manhole at Prosta Street. Most of them get into a truck that has been organized in cooperation with people associated with the PPR (Polish Workers' Party). Among them are Marek Edelman, Cywia Lubetkin and Hirsz Berliński. A dozen people stay in the sewers. Germans are arriving too late. However, they manage to capture a few fighters.

The truck gets to the forest near Łomianki, where there is a group of fighters from the sheds area. Most of them will be later transported to the outskirts of Wyszków and will undertake partisan activity. Some will return to Warsaw.

Improvised insurgent groups operate in the ghetto. Leon Najberg joins one of them, consisting of 25 people hiding in the area of the former brush makers' shop.

Since the morning, German reconnaissance units have been searching the area of the burnt out ghetto, then the assault troops are moving into action. 913 people are captured, 53 of them are murdered on the spot. Stroop complains about the lack of smoke grenades, as a result of which "it was not possible to repeat the systematic smoking up of the sewers"

German units detect 30 bunkers and out of 663 people caught murder on the spot 133.

Germans set fire to the small ghetto at Prosta Street. The buildings are blown up. Transports from the Umschlagplatz are going to the Treblinka extermination camp.

Day 25

May 13, 1943 08 Iyar 5703

Thursday

Day 26

May 14, 1943 09 Iyar 5703

Friday, Sabbath evening

Day 27

May 15, 1943 10 Iyar 5703

Saturday, Shabbat

Day 28

May 16, 1943 11 lyar 5703

Sunday

Members of the assault units capture 234 people and murder 155.

All the captured are transported to the Treblinka extermination camp.

"Currently captured Jews and bandits belong to the so-called battle groups. They are mostly young boys and girls 18-25 years old."

During the fight to capture the subsequent bunker, there came to "a real armed struggle" - reports Stroop.

Defenders are firing from pistols and throwing grenades. One of the girls being escorted activates grenade and throws it at the attackers. It is probably about a bunker at 3/5 Bonifraterska Street.

At night, Soviet airplanes bombard Warsaw causing heavy losses.

The proclamation of the Governor of the Warsaw District, Ludwig Fischer, to the population of Warsaw is being posted. It informs that Jews are responsible for the mass murder of Polish officers in Katyń, and the ghetto was destroyed because it constituted a communist base.

The text ends with an appeal to denounce the fugitives: "Whoever informs the authorities where a communist agent or a jew resides, fulfils only an obvious duty towards himself and his relatives."

At night there are clashes between members of small battle groups and German reconnaissance units. Three SS-men and one Orpo policeman are wounded. In one of the bunkers, where about 100 people are hiding, Germans find a stock of weapons. Subsequent townhouses are blown up. The last insurgents are looking for a way out to the "Aryan side." Knowing this, Germans throw smoke grenades into 183 manholes.

Articles appear In the Polish underground press about the defence of the ghetto. Nowy Dzień (The New Day) publishes an article entitled "Gloria victis!": "The defence of the Nalewki will go down in history, along with the defence of Zaragoza, Alcazar, Westerplatte, Stalingrad, every place held with blood."

Assault troops encounter only individual Jews in the ruins. The last inhabitants of the ghetto defend themselves with the help of gasoline bottles, pistols and grenades. 68 people are shot, 87 are caught.

The last buildings in the ghetto and the Jewish cemetery at Okopowa Street are destroyed.

Stroop reports: "180 Jews, bandits and subhumans have been liquidated. The former Jewish residential district ceased to exist.

The great action ended with blowing up the Warsaw synagogue at 8:15 pm. (...) The total number of captured and certainly killed Jews amounts to 56,065." The whole ghetto, with the exception of 8 buildings, has been demolished.

Survivors of battle groups and residents of undiscovered bunkers remain in the ruins of the ghetto.

One of the few colour photographs of the burning ghetto made from Praga - a district of Warsaw located on the right bank of the Vistula.

Photo from the collection of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews



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