

Survey of Problems of Jewish Resistance by an AK Officer in Charge of Jewish Affairs Department *1

....In the military field the demands of the Jews were directed towards obtaining arms and technical instruction for the preparation of the last, final battle for the Warsaw Ghetto. The Jewish Fighting Organization took a decisive stand, saying that the fate of the Warsaw Ghetto, like the fate of all the other concentrations of Jews, had been decided, and that total annihilation awaited it sooner or later. In view of this they asked to die with honor – that is, with arms in their hands. In December (1942), after insistent requests, the Jewish Fighting Organization received 10 revolvers and a limited amount of ammunition, by order of the Central Command. These weapons were in very poor condition and only a part were fit for use. The Jewish Fighting Organization considered this gift as covering only a very small part of their requirements. It therefore demanded incomparably more efficacious help, and said it was willing to budget a large part of the funds*2 which it had at its disposal at its central offices for the purchase of arms. This request could be satisfied only in very small part. Prior to January 17, 1943 *3 (the date of the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, which then numbered 50,000 souls), the Jewish Fighting Organization received another 10 revolvers,*4 instructions for sabotage action, a formula for the production of bottle fire-bombs and instruction in military operations. The period up to January 17, 1943 was marked by feverish preparations by the Jewish Fighting Organization for the coming struggle, persistent, continuous calls for help to the army, which reacted to these appeals with lack of confidence and much reserve. The liquidation of the Ghetto, which began on January 17, 1943, met with stubborn armed resistance that undoubtedly caused consternation among the German troops and caused the *Aktion* to be stopped after four days. The Jewish Fighting Organization judged its success to mean the postponement for a time of the final liquidation, and with unshaken vigor continued preparations for a second struggle, all the while with growing persistence demanding help from the army. By order of the Chief Commander I held three consultations with the Commander of "Drapacz,"*5 Mr. Konar.*6 Konar agreed to aid the Warsaw Ghetto with materials and instructions and spoke of the possibility of our units helping from outside the ghetto. Work was begun immediately under the direction of Chirurg.*7 Contact was established between

Jurek*8 of the Jewish Fighting Organization and our officers. The Jewish Fighting Organization received 50 revolvers, a larger quantity of bullets, about 80 kgs. [170 lbs.] of material for the preparation of "bottles" and a certain number of defensive grenades. A workshop was put into operation in the ghetto for the manufacture of bottles. In addition, it was made easier to obtain the arms which the Jewish Fighting Organization was providing for itself. The plan for the struggle in the ghetto was worked out jointly, and took into account help to be given by our unit. On March 6, 1943, Jurek was arrested (in the apartment in Wspolnej Street). This fact stopped the work process which had been carried out jointly by the Jewish Fighting Organization and "Drapacz." More than ten days after the arrest, I had a conversation with Konar. The subject of the conversation was defining the aims of the cooperation between our units and the ghetto fighters. The aim had been supposed to be to get as many Jews as possible away from Warsaw and give them shelter, something that I could do at any time. This plan was not carried out. No units moved out into the designated area. The Jewish Fighting Organization decided that it was to be avoided that their people should have to force their way through a distance of hundreds of kilometers, and the base for materials and shelter established by the order of Edward of "Len"*9 for "Hreczka"*10 proved to be insufficient help. It proved to be impossible to take Jews into our military units in the areas of "Drapacz" and "Cegielnia."*11 Instead, Konar agreed to organize the Jews into units for passive resistance. One such unit was set up in Warsaw. One of the officers was appointed to train this unit. He came to the place where the training was to be carried out, and arranged a meeting, but failed to come to the meeting. As a result of many interventions the above officer did come once more to the training area, but he arrived drunk. Further requests failed to produce results. The Jewish rebel unit received no military training and ceased to exist....

*1 The man in charge of Jewish affairs in the AK was Henryk Wolinski, whose name in the Underground was "Waclaw".

*2 The reference is to funds obtained by the Jewish Fighting Organization in the ghetto for the purchase of arms.

*3 The date is incorrect; it should read January 18. January 18 also was not the date of the final liquidation of the ghetto, which began only on April 19, 1943.

- *4 Receipt of this consignment is not confirmed by Jewish sources.
- *5 The secret name of the AK in the Warsaw District.
- *6 The Underground name of General Antoni Chrusciel, Commander of the AK forces in the Warsaw District.
- *7 The AK Chief of Staff in the Warsaw District, Stanislaw Weber.
- *8 Arie Wilner, representative of the Jewish Fighting Organization on the Aryan side of Warsaw.
- *9 AK Lublin District.
- *10 AK Volhynia District.
- *11 A district in the neighborhood of Warsaw.

Source: Y. Arad, Y. Gutman, A. Margaliot (editors), *Documents on the Holocaust, Selected Sources on the Destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland, and the Soviet Union*, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 1981, p. 307-309.