

Pechersky, Aleksandr

(b. 1909), Leader of the uprising at the Sobibor extermination camp. Pechersky was born in the Ukraine. As an officer in the Soviet army, he was called up for service when the Germans attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941. In October he was taken prisoner by the Germans. In August 1942, after the Germans discovered that he was Jewish, Pechersky was moved to a SS camp in Minsk.

In September 1943 Pechersky was sent to Sobibor along with 2,000 Jews from the Minsk Ghetto and from the SS camp. Soon after his arrival he was contacted by the camp's underground. As an officer, he accepted the position of underground commander and agreed to lead its members in an uprising. On October 14, 1943 the prisoners at Sobibor revolted under Pechersky's command. They succeeded in killing most of the SS men. Many prisoners were killed, but some escaped, including Pechersky. He joined a Soviet Partisan unit, and fought with it until the summer of 1944, when the Soviet army reached the area and the partisans joined regular military units. After being badly wounded, Pechersky returned to his hometown.

After the war, Pechersky served as the main witness at the trial of 11 Ukrainians who had worked as guards at Sobibor.