

Edelman, Marek

(b. 1921), One of the commanders of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Marek Edelman was also one of its few survivors.

Edelman was born in Warsaw. As a teenager, he joined the *Zukunft*, the Youth Movement associated with the Jewish-Socialist Bund Party. When the Nazis occupied Poland in 1939, Edelman was deported to the Warsaw Ghetto. He soon became a leader of the ghetto's underground resistance. When the young people in the underground began to distinguish themselves as influential activists, Edelman became a member of the *Bund's* central administration.

Edelman joined the ghetto's Jewish Fighting Organization (*Zydowska Organizacja Bojowa*, ZOB) in November 1942. Soon thereafter he was selected to serve as the *Zukunft* representative in the ZOB's management.

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising broke out on April 19, 1943, on the first night of Passover. Edelman helped lead the Jewish resistance when the Nazis began to close in on the fighters. At first, Edelman and his soldiers were in charge of defending the "Brushmakers" ghetto district. After the ZOB forces began to withdraw, Edelman and his men joined the fighters centered at 30 Franciszkanska Street. The Nazis progressively destroyed the Warsaw Ghetto and cut the Jewish fighters off from one another. Edelman was among one of the last groups to hold out in the ZOB's headquarters at 18 Mila Street. On May 10 he was able to cross over to the non-Jewish side of Warsaw by way of the city's sewers.

Edelman and other members of the ZOB took part in the Warsaw Polish Uprising, which broke out on August 1, 1944 and was only put down on October 2 of that year.

Right after the war, Edelman published a book called "The *Bund's* Role in the Defense of the Warsaw Ghetto," in Polish and Yiddish. A year later, he published a short history of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in Polish, Yiddish, and English, called "The Ghetto Fights." Edelman chose to stay in Poland after World War II, and became a cardiologist. During the early 1980s he was



active in Lech Walesa's Solidarity Trade Union Movement. (see also Jewish Fighting Organization, Warsaw and Resistance, Jewish.)