

Remember the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising!

written by Lev Koufax
April 21, 2020



Captured fighters from the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943.

April 19 marked the 77th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. On that day in 1943, approximately 500 Jewish fighters launched an attack against Nazi forces occupying the city of Warsaw, Poland.

With its invasion of Poland in 1939, Nazi Germany began a major effort to concentrate the country's Jewish population into segregated neighborhoods, also known as ghettos. In Warsaw, some 400,000 Jewish people were packed into less than three square miles of space.

For the four years leading up to the uprising, Jews living in the Warsaw Ghetto experienced constant terror and violence from the Nazi forces. These terrors included torture, starvation, executions and random delivery of Jewish people to Nazi death camps. The Nazi regime was determined to complete its genocide of the Jewish people.



Dorka Goldkorn, a communist and member of the Jewish Combat Organization during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

Leading up to the 1943 uprising, Jewish resistance organizations took control of the ghetto. The most prominent of these was not only a Jewish organization, but also a communist one. Its name was Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa. The English translation from the Yiddish name is "Jewish Combat Organization." It was led by Jewish communists such as Mordechai Anielewicz and Zivia Lubetkin.

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising was not just one of Jews against Nazis, but of the working class against fascism. Without the communist political pole in the resistance

movement, the uprising likely would not have happened.

The start of the revolt was planned to coincide with the first night of the Jewish holiday, Passover. The uprising lasted almost a month. The Jewish socialist forces continued to fight regardless of being outnumbered and outgunned. As retaliation, 57,000 Jews were murdered or deported to death camps.

On the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, it is important to remember this act of Jewish and socialist resistance. All too often, mainstream media and historians peddle the myth that “the Jews just walked into the camps.”

The brave revolutionaries who gave their lives in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising 77 years ago might beg to differ. On this day, we remember their sacrifices in the struggle against capitalism and fascism.

