

ww II

# THE GHETTO

*speaks*

No. 14

AUGUST 1, 1943

LIBRARY New York, N. Y.

NOV 8 1944

## Table of Contents

## PRESS RELEASE

STATEMENT OF THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATION OF THE GENERAL JEWISH WORKERS' UNION OF POLAND ABOUT RUSSIAN-POLISH RELATIONS

TREMBLINKA DEATH CAMP IN POLAND

REMNANTS OF JEWS IN POLAND SLAUGHTERED  
A NAZI DOCTOR SQUEEZED A FORTUNE OUT OF  
TYPHUS STRICKEN JEWS

GERMANS STEAL PACKAGES ADDRESSED TO  
JEWS

MARTYRDOM OF THE POLISH JEWS DEPLORED  
AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH  
LABOR PARTY

ANTONI SLONIMSKI PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE  
MEMORY OF THE HEROES OF THE GHETTO  
OF WARSAW

UNDERGROUND FRONTS OF INDEPENDENCE IN  
BELGIUM SUPPORTS JEWISH POPULATION

YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE BANS ALL  
ANTI-SEMITIC LAWS

NAZIS' ANTI-JEWISH PROPAGANDA IN SLOVAKIA  
HAS FAILED

MICHAL KLEPFISZ

S. ZYGIELBOJM'S LETTER REGARDED AS A HISTORICAL DOCUMENT

RESISTANCE OF THE JEWS IN POLAND BROADCAST TO GERMANY

THE DEATH OF GENERAL SIKORSKI

**SHOULD YOU MAKE**  
use of this release, please  
forward a clipping to us.

## *Statement of the American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland About Russian-Polish Relations*

---

During the past four years since the beginning of World War II, the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland has time and again stated that the Jewish working people of Poland are striving that Poland — fatherland also of the Jewish masses of that country — should, after victory over Hitlerism, be reconstructed as a truly free, democratic, and Socialist country — endowed with full rights as an independent unit of the European Federation of free nations.

It is for such an independent, democratic, and Socialist Poland that our underground movement has bled, and is making sacrifices even today. For such a Poland, our members, sons of the Jewish laboring masses, are now fighting as soldiers in the Polish and other United Nations' armies. For such a Poland we, too, placed in involuntary exile as we are, fight on with all means at our command.

In accordance with that viewpoint, we have all the while maintained that the wide influence which the reactionary elements are exercising in the Polish Government-in-Exile is a hindrance in the struggle for such a Poland and, for this reason, our attitude to this Government has been an oppositional one throughout. We have held, and still maintain, that for Poland's struggle of liberation today, as well as for its renaissance tomorrow, it is necessary to have a Government conducted by the Workers' and Peasant Movement, the two forces representing the overwhelming majority of Poland's population and of its entire democratic camp.

While the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland has, during the present war and in prewar years, opposed Polish reactionary elements generally and their antagonistic attitude to Russia in particular, our organization has, at the same time, fought all forces which utilize reactionary tendencies of certain Polish

circles as an excuse for denying the elementary rights of Poland and its population to a free, independent, and national statehood existence. It is not intervention or protection from without, but, rather, the unhindered, fighting determination of the broad masses of our country that can, and will, assure unhampered development in the new postwar Poland.

Our organization is convinced that the fate of Poland, as well as that of the entire European Continent, depends upon whether the suffering European population shall, after the military defeat of Fascism, secure the opportunity to rebuild its entire life upon new Socialist foundations, unhampered by the victorious armies of the West or East. In view of this, the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland deems it necessary, with reference to the Russian-Polish dispute, to set forth the following:

1) The direct reason which ostensibly motivated the Soviet Government to sever diplomatic relations with Poland, has actually been removed. The Polish Government itself no longer supports its request to the Red Cross concerning the fallen Polish officers.

2) Despite this fact, USSR's attitude to Poland has not only not improved, but has become even more acute. This condition has particularly manifested itself in the formation, on Soviet soil, of Polish entities, controlled by the Soviets, and even of a USSR Polish military division, within the sphere of the Soviet Army. These moves on the part of the Soviet Government might undoubtedly become a threat to the independent existence of our country.

3) Settlement of the boundary dispute concerning the Eastern parts of the former Polish Republic should be postponed until after the war. Annexation of the Eastern part of Poland, carried through on the

basis of a pact between Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany, in the same manner as the sham elections subsequently conducted in these areas (that had been seized with Germany's consent), cannot be regarded as valid. In the event that, after the war, a solution is not found to the Polish-Russian boundary dispute, with approval of the directly-interested parties, the populations of the areas involved should then, in accordance with the right of self-determination of nations, settle this issue by free election. We trust that a Poland in which all citizens regard themselves as free and equal co-partners of the State, a Poland in which all enjoy full rights for unhampered, national development, will be able to attract, and maintain, as an entity, all national minorities in our land.

In view of the grave international situation which has resulted from the Soviet-Polish dispute, the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland deems it as its duty to set forth the following:

1) The right of Poland to an existence as a truly free and independent State, does and must remain undisputed.

2) Every attack upon the freedom and independence of Poland constitutes a danger to the freedom and future of postwar Europe and a hindrance in the path of European Labor to realize its great historic mission.

3) The good-neighbor relations between Russia and Poland, which our Jewish Workers' Union has defended in the course of all of Poland's existence, are now, and after the present war, more necessary than ever before. Such good-neighbor relations between Russia and Poland can, however, be maintained only in the prevalence of equal treatment of both parties.

4) The Russian-Polish dispute weakens the alliance between the United Nations and thus hinders mobilization of all forces for the winning of the war in the shortest possible time. Settlement of this dispute and reestablishment of normal Russian-Polish diplomatic relations on the basis of equality of both parties is an urgent call of the hour.

## **THE TREMBLINKA DEATH CAMP IN POLAND**

### **Inside the Tremblinka Death Camp**

The village of Tremblinka is situated near the railway line running from Warsaw to Bialystok, in a region of forests and sands. Its population is chiefly Polish, consisting of peasants and forest laborers.

In 1940, the Germans established a Penal Concentration Camp called "Tremblinka A" in a sandy region on the outskirts of that village. It was intended for Poles who were guilty of acts against the occupant as for example, failure to deliver sufficient grain. The punishments were very severe and the prisoners were shot for the smallest offense.

In March, 1942, the Germans began a new Concentration Camp, called "Tremblinka B," which was intended for Jews, both Polish and those deported from other countries. The work was done by Poles in nearby concentration camps and Jews from neighboring villages. By April the central building of the Camp was put up and was called "Death House Number 1."

"Tremblinka B" is surrounded by barbed wire and a young forest. Guards, most of them Ukrainians, are placed in strategic positions around the Camp, carrying machine-guns. Strong searchlights have been installed to detect escaping prisoners. A special railway siding has been built to bring the prisoners directly from the freight-trucks into the Camp. Nearby there is a platform which can hold 3,000 men. A strange building is situated along a side road. It is newly erected. It has no windows. An eye witness reports that it consists of a long corridor with small cells on both sides. A special arrangement of pipes supplies liquid gas into the cells. This is "Death House No. 2."

"Death House No. 1" is also provided with special execution machinery. Not far away is a large cemetery and special grave diggers work there en-masse. The slaughter-house is headed by an S.S. Captain called Zauaer. He is feared by everybody and is known for his brutality and cruelty.

The Germans also established a Jewish Guard, whose job it is to sort the clothes of the victims. Jews employed as Guards cannot carry on this work for

# T H E G H E T T O S P E A K S

more than a fortnight because of the inhumanly cruel treatment they receive from the Germans. They are maltreated, beaten and often shot. Sometimes they will report to their Chief that they cannot carry on any longer, and beg for mercy — to be shot. The executions take place in a special square. The victim stands on the edge of the grave and is shot on the back of his head. The next in turn is ordered to throw the body of the previous victim into a large pit. It is reported that one day 500 such Guards were shot in turn, the executions going on from 7 o'clock in the morning until 3 in the afternoon. New guards are recruited from newcomers.

Two transports of victims are brought to Tremblinka daily, sometimes more. The trucks in which they are brought are cleared very quickly. The Jewish Guard is ordered by the Germans to give them instructions.

"You can be confident of your future" is the first thing that greets a newcomer to Tremblinka staring at him from a huge poster. The poster continues to inform him that he will go East to work and his wife will be in charge of his household. But before he goes on to his destination, the newcomer is told that he must be bathed and deloused. "You must deposit your money and valuables with the cashier. You will receive a receipt and the goods will be returned to you later."

When Tremblinka was first established, an Officer of the S.S. addressed the newcomers and with an innocent expression on his face gave them the directions that are now on the posters. But when more and more transports began arriving the speech was substituted by the poster. In order to create the impression that this is really segregation for purposes of work, various posters with the following inscriptions are hung over the platform: Tailors, shoemakers, joiners, etc. It is obvious that there was never any segregation intended.

This is the procedure that follows every transport: The man in charge of the auxiliary Jewish police, called Kapos, orders all men to stand in rows of ten, to take off their boots and all their clothing, and to prepare for a bath. Everybody is entitled to a piece of soap and is allowed to take his documents with him. Meanwhile the members of the Service take away his clothes. The order to strip their clothing applies to women and children as well.

**The Last Act.** The terrorized mass of naked men, women and children are now on their way to death. In front are the women and children, beaten and whipped by the Germans who accompany them. They are forced to move faster and faster, their shouts and cries piercing the air.

The Chief appears at the entrance to Death House No. 1 with a whip in his hand and drives the women and children into the interior. The floor in the cells is slippery. People slip and fall and cannot get up again as more and more people are driven in. When the cells are filled to capacity, the doors are hermetically sealed and the process of asphyxiation by liquid gas begins. The gas pours in through the apertures in the pipes. The process lasts about fifteen minutes.

The execution of men is carried out in a similar way. They are driven along the same road through the forest to the death house. The reaction of the individuals is different. Some pray, others shout, still others are stunned into silence. Sometimes there are so many victims that there is no room for them in the execution chambers. Then the surplus is held in the forest nearby, where they can hear the voices and cries coming from the slaughter house.

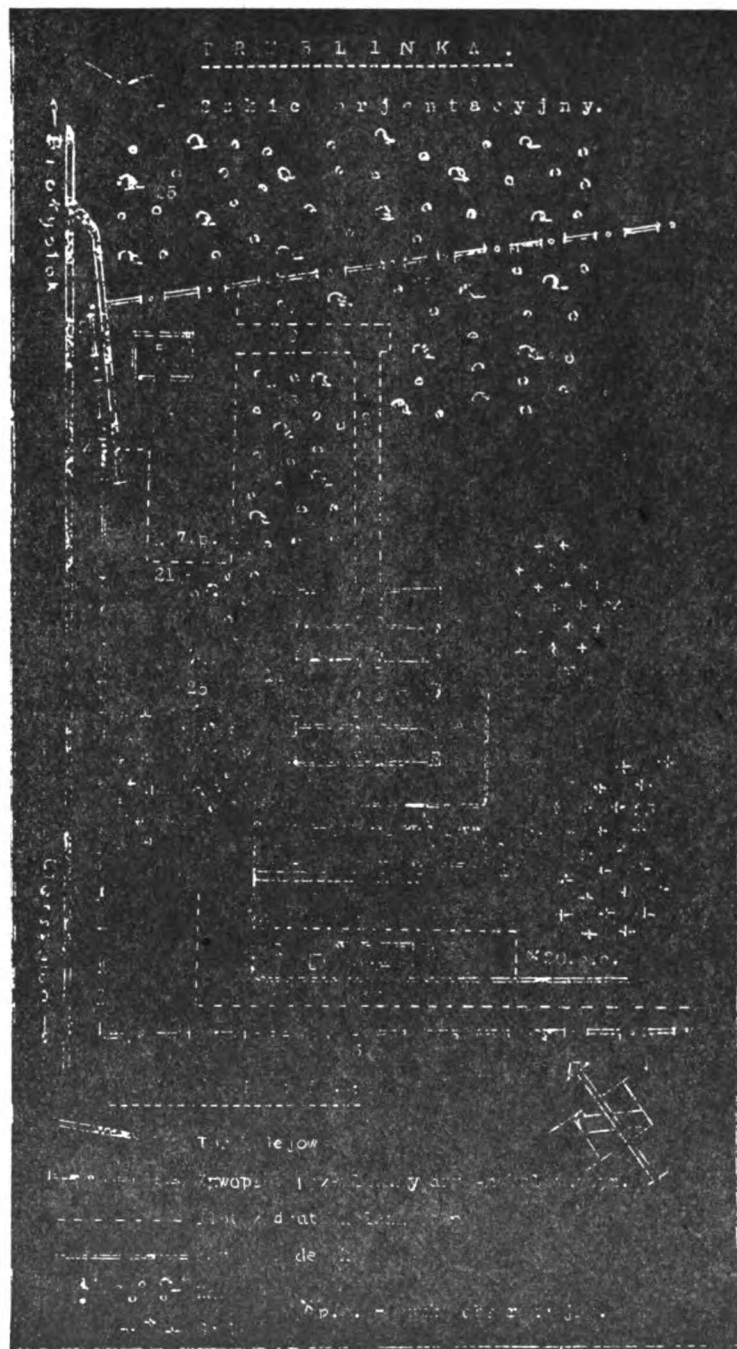
Next comes the work of the grave-diggers. They are driven to work by the Germans and their task is to remove the bodies of the victims from the execution chambers. Liquid gas operates in a very peculiar way. It makes the corpses stick together — bodies, legs, hands — one shapeless mass. In order to enable the grave-diggers to remove the bodies separately, they are sprayed with cold water. Then the bodies are placed on the platform and are taken away. The work has to be done very quickly, and the latest order issued by the Chief of the slaughter house is: "One man, two corpses." This means that each of the grave-diggers has to bury two victims.

It is obvious that the Germans intend to increase this process of extermination, as a new slaughter house with a capacity of eight to ten thousand victims daily is now being built.

The Tremblinka slaughter-house has been in operation since March, 1942.

# T H E G H E T T O S P E A K S

THE FOLLOWING IS A PLAN OF THE TREMBLINKA DEATH CAMP, WHICH THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATION OF THE GENERAL JEWISH WORKERS' UNION OF POLAND SUCCEEDED IN GETTING OUT OF POLAND.



Note: "Objasnienia" — explanations,  
 "Tor kolejowy" — railroad tracks.  
 "Zywoplot przeplatany drutem kolczastym"  
 — barbed wire fence.  
 "Plot z drutu kolczastego" — barbed wire  
 gate.

"Parkan z desek" — wooden fence.  
 "Las" — forest.  
 "Groby" — graves.  
 "Punkt obserwacyjny" — observation point.

## REMNANTS OF JEWS IN POLAND SLAUGHTERED

The Polish underground publication "Agencja Prasowa," in its issue No. 11/153 of March 17th, 1943, brought the following news:

"We recently received advices from various parts of our country, that the very remnants of the Jewish population, who escaped death during recent mass-slaughters, and were left to serve some of the military needs of the Germans, are now being murdered. In Wloszczowa (Kieleckie), for example, the local police killed the remaining sixteen Jews, among them one who, from the beginning of the war, allegedly provided the German police with confidential information. It is interesting to note, that the murderers regard their bloody deeds as a protection for the Germans in Poland, since the possibility still exists, that the Bolsheviks may win the war. In Szczerc (near Lwow), the hangmen killed the one hundred and eighty Jews who were left there after the general liquidation. The victims were ordered to remove their clothing and jump into a pit, which had been made by means of an explosion. The criminals then shot at the human beings, for the sake of fun."

## A NAZI DOCTOR SQUEEZED A FORTUNE OUT OF TYPHUS STRICKEN JEWS

The Swedish newspaper "Svenska Dagbladet," recently reported the following:

"Poland has again been hit by a severe epidemic of typhus. Its death rate is tremendous — above 15%. The survivors are weakened to a degree, which makes them unfit for work long after the sickness is over. This deplorable state is caused by a lack of nourishment and of accommodations to nurse the patients.

"The German authorities, heedless of the epidemic, which is constantly spreading, do not permit the Jews to make use of preventive anti-typhus injections. Nevertheless, the head of the Institute of Hygiene of Warsaw, a German doctor named Deuhler, sold the prohibited injections to the Jews of Warsaw, on the sly. He did this because of sheer greediness. In this manner, he amassed a fortune, appraised in millions of zlotys."

## GERMANS STEAL PACKAGES ADDRESSED TO JEWS

The Swedish General Post Office in an announcement dated July 17, 1943, reports that German au-

thorities are now confiscating all parcels addressed to Jews in Gouvernment General without compensating sender.

## MARTYRDOM OF THE POLISH JEWS DEPLORED AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY

The forty-second annual conference of the British Labor Party took place on the 14th of June, 1943. The opening address, which was held by Chairman Alfred J. Dobbs, J.P., absorbed the attention of public opinion throughout the world. We now quote his noble and moving words dedicated to the martyrdom of the Jews under the Nazi heel:

*"Language fails me when I recall the foul assault upon the helpless Jewish people beyond the reach of our immediate aid — men, women, children, even babes in arms — 'killed all the day long,' by the orders of the German Government, under circumstances of the most systematic and scientific brutality. This bestial crime, and its authors, will be execrated throughout the ages. At this solemn moment let us remember the devotion and sacrifice of our dear comrade, Szmul Zygielbojm. We have a debt to pay. Victory is urgent. Victory one day sooner means the saving of thousands of innocent lives. Victory delayed by incompetence, idleness, or the absence of a sense of personal responsibility, costs lives. Victory, unless it comes quickly, may be but dead sea fruit — certainly for the Jews of Europe — and possibly also for those who suffer from hunger and cold in the countries under the heel of the oppressor."*

## ANTONI SLONIMSKI PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF THE HEROES OF THE GHETTO OF WARSAW

One of the most prominent Polish men of letters, Antoni Slonimski, addressed an assembly of the Jewish Pen Club in London with the following words:

*"On behalf of the Polish PEN Club I rise to pay tribute to the memory of Hilel Zeitlin, Israel Stern and other Jewish poets and writers who were murdered by Hitler hangmen in their native city, Warsaw. In paying homage to the memory of departed colleagues, it is customary to dwell on their work, emphasize their contributions to the civilization of the world, and enumerate the treasure with which they enriched their native language. But the fate which has overtaken Hilel Zeitlin is so unlike the fate of other writers of the world, that I feel our memorial meeting ought to extend beyond conventional speeches."*

*"It is our duty today not to speak of the murdered victims, but of the murderers. For there is only one way in which we can honor the memory of our dead colleagues, and that is by fighting, — by fighting for a world in which racial and class hatred will no longer find any room. It is the inescapable duty of Polish and Jewish writers to engrave in the memory of the coming generation a complete picture of the crime, and to demonstrate the depth of iniquity to which overbearing and unscrupulous nationalism can descend. It is not easy these days to shake the conscience of the world, it is not easy to impress human imagination. We see the emotional exhaustion and reluctance of readers to take in the descriptions of cruelties and crimes. There was a time when the death of two men — Sacco and Vanzetti — stirred the imagination of the world more powerfully than the death of an entire nation can stir it today. The supreme sacrifice of Szymul Zygielbojm, who threw his death as a challenge to the indifference of the world, passed almost unnoticed.*

*"It is true that we are at war. And as every evil, war begets evil. The indifference to human suffering may even appear as a necessary evil. But we must remember that our war, the war of writers fighting for a new world will not come to an end with the hour of military victory. It may be that only then will our time arrive. We shall fight against oblivion. We shall not allow even the smallest detail of the greatest crime ever committed on the body of humanity to be forgotten. It will be our task, our duty to record in the annals of history the martyrdom of the Polish and Jewish nations, of Zeitlin and Stern, the death of Boy Zelenski and the torture of the Professors of the Jagiellon University in Cracow, who were murdered in Oranienburg, the heroic death of Dr. Janusz Korczak, the Polish writer who refused to abandon the children in a Jewish orphanage and of his own will went with them to the place of execution. It is for us, by power of our imaginations to imprint in the memory of future generations hitherto meaningless names — Oranienburg, Oswiecim, Dachau, Palmiry, Madjanek, Tremblinka — and make sure that they will remain forever a terrible reproach, a threat, a warning.*

*"The death of Zeitlin and other Jewish writers is but a small detail, a minute episode in the most dreadful tragedy ever enacted in recorded history, the tragedy of the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto, in which hundreds of thousands of Jews perished. In the last phase of this massacre, Jews in the Warsaw ghetto defended themselves with weapons in their hands. Several hundred S.S. men were killed. Germans had to use tanks in order to overcome the heroic Jewish resistance. Where did the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto obtain the weapons — who supplied them with rifles and hand-grenades? We know now that*

*they received them from the Polish underground organization. We believe that the time will come when the same hand which gave weapons to the fighting Jews will meet in heartfelt clasp the hand of the Jew in the new, reborn Poland, that unfortunate country which is the motherland of the two saddest nations in the world."*

## UNDERGROUND FRONT OF INDEPENDENCE IN BELGIUM SUPPORTS JEWISH POPULATION

*The Underground Front of Independence in Belgium, which is being led by the former Socialist Labor Movement, recently distributed a document containing suggestions for all its provincial committees on ways and means of aiding the bitterly oppressed Jews. The document, which is entitled: "Practical Measures to Aid the Jewish Population," reads:*

**"1. Informing everyone about the crimes committed against the Jews.** The kept press is significantly silent on this subject. Only the population of a few big cities knows what is going on. The occupant is afraid of the people's wrath. This wrath must be aroused by letting every Belgian know what is happening at Brussels, Antwerp, Charleroi, Ghent, etc.

**"2. Helping the Jews resist the raids.** The least you are obliged to do is to leave your apartments when a raid is on, start a street fight against the Gestapo agents, shout your scorn at the soldiers who are helping them, and where riots break out, actively intervene to aid the Jews resist and escape.

**"3. Helping the Jews Hide.** Here the aid of provincial Committees is particularly valuable. You must distribute the Jews among the non-Jewish population to hide them from raids by the Gestapo, which, as everyone knows, has to work with relatively limited forces.

"Here are a few suggestions which local committees should read carefully:

**"1. Saving the children.** A.) Will non-Jewish families agree to house free or for a minimum fee one or several Jewish children? If the fee is 15 francs or over per day, it would be better to place the children in establishments where they can continue their studies.

"B.) Is there, somewhere in your community, a children's sanatorium, a school, a nursery, a private boarding school, a convent, which would agree to house Jewish children?

**"2. Saving the Adults.** A.) Find families who will agree to reserve a room for a Jewish tenant.

"B.) Find people who would agree to move into a larger apartment, a part of which would be reserved

for a Jewish family. In such a situation, many Jewish families, being fairly well off, could pay the cost of moving, the difference in rental, or even the entire rent, allowing the first party to live there for nothing.

"C.) Look for hotels in the community willing to take one to four Jewish boarders without registering them.

"D.) Investigate institutions in the community (convent, asylum, hospitals, etc.).

"E.) Look for well-to-do families who would agree to take a Jewish servant, or a husband and wife, the former to work around the house or pay some sort of rent.

"F.) Look for small businesses, farms, etc., who would agree to take a Jewish worker or a Jewish hired man.

"Concerning all these tasks, it is better to stop by the Center, or at least let us know at once what has been done.

## "JEWS,

Save your life by hiding. If you are unable to do so, then resist the raids by force. Barricade yourselves in your homes. Arouse your neighbors. Snatch the arms from the Gestapo brutes and strike them down like dogs. By resisting, your fate could not be worse than if you allow yourself to be taken to the slaughter houses of Poland."

## YUGOSLAV GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE BANS ALL ANTI-SEMITIC LAWS

The head of the Yugoslav Government in London, Premier Jovanovitch, issued the following statement: "I have the honor to confirm that the Royal Yugoslav Government has taken the unanimous resolution that they will not recognize the legal validity of any orders, decrees and enactments of anti-Semitic character which were made in Yugoslavia during the period which preceded the entry of our country into the present conflict. The aforesaid enactments are contrary to the Yugoslav Constitution and to the liberal traditions of our country."

The Jewish population of Poland, as well as the truly democratic elements among the Poles, are still waiting for a similar decree to be issued by the Polish Government-in-Exile.

## NAZIS' ANTI-JEWISH PROPAGANDA IN SLOVAKIA HAS FAILED

From Slovakia, a small puppet state created by the Nazis, after their conquest of Czechoslovakia, the following characteristic information has slipped out:

*"Opposition to the Nazis and their Slovak henchmen manifests itself distinctly in the attitude of the people towards the Jews. Anti-Jewish propaganda has utterly failed. Anti-Jewish decrees are widely disregarded. The newspapers of the Hlinka Guard and the German Nazis in Slovakia are filled with reports of trials of violators of the anti-Jewish laws. For example, the district court of Kosice, sentenced the farm hand Josef Drotar to five months imprisonment because he had sheltered eight young Jewish refugees in his hut. An article in the 'Grencbote' of April, 1943, complained bitterly, that 'the Slovak population in eastern Slovakia still tries to protect Jews and to keep them in jobs.' Catholic and Protestant clergymen are openly taking issue with the anti-Jewish policy enforced by the Nazis. The 'Gardista,' organ of the Hlinka Guard, reported that a Greek Catholic priest, Father Michal Slabata of Laslovce, had been sent to the concentration camp of Ilava because he 'baptized thirty-six Jews to save them from deportation.'"*

## MICHAL KLEPFISZ

One sentence in code sent out by secret wireless from Warsaw said: "Engineer Klepfisz, member of the 'Bund,' one of the main pillars of the armed resistance, died the death of a hero."

Who was this hero of the battle of the Warsaw ghetto? Lifelong member of the "Bund," his father was a worker in a wholesale chemists' business, his mother head mistress of an elementary school in Warsaw. They both, during Poland's struggle against Czarist oppression, tasted prison bread. They were quiet simple people but always ready to sacrifice themselves for the ideals they cherished.

Michal Klepfisz's father was a member of the Executive of the Association of Jewish Office and Commercial Workers at Zamenhofa 5. His mother was chairman of the Executive of the Association of Jewish Teachers in State Elementary schools.

It was in this atmosphere that their daughter, Helen, and son, Michal, grew up. Both, when still at school, belonged to the "Bund" Youth Movement, "Zukunft," and as university students took an active part in the "Bund" Student organization, "Ogniwo." They were also members of the Workers' Sport organization "Jutrznia." Michal was a first class sportsman and acted as a sports instructor. At that time he was also one of the leaders of the Youth Militia organization, called "Zukunft-Szturm."



# T H E G H E T T O S P E A K S

Before the war he married a girl worker, member of his party. He then had a job as a wireless engineer in a factory. He did not earn very much but was happy at his trade.

When war broke out, he immediately volunteered but was rejected. He joined the workers' defense organization and fought in the siege of the city where he was always to be seen where there was most danger.

When the underground Jewish workers' resistance movement was formed he enlisted the first day. And in the catacombs of the Warsaw ghetto, he helped to organize the fight — defensive and offensive.

In April, 1943, the Germans decided to liquidate the remnants of the Warsaw ghetto. It was decided by the Bundist leaders that rather than be deported and slaughtered in the Nazi gas chambers they would each man die fighting. This decision was carried out with a determination and courage seldom equalled. Against overwhelming enemy forces, with ancient machine guns operated by men who had not had a proper meal for more than three years, they held out for days knowing that at the end death would be their only reward.

These ghetto heroes, before whom we bow our heads, were lead by the 32-year-old engineer, Michal Klepfisz.

## S. ZYGIELBOJM'S LETTER REGARDED AS A HISTORICAL DOCUMENT

The Congressional Record, July 1, 1943, Appendix page A-3622, contains the letter from Szymul Zygielbojm, member of Polish National Council, written to Premier Sikorski, in which he calls upon the conscience of the world to prevent the complete annihilation of the Jews in Poland. This letter was included in the Congressional Record, where it will be preserved as an historical document on the proposal of Congressman William Langer.

## RESISTANCE OF THE JEWS IN POLAND BROADCAST TO GERMANY

The B.B.C. in London, on the 17th of June, 1943, at 6 a.m., reported the story of the armed resistance of the Jews in the ghetto of Warsaw, to the German working masses. This broadcast, in which Lucjan Blit participated in behalf of the Jewish Underground Movement of Poland, was beamed in the German language.

The following is a literal translation of the broadcast:

COMMENTATOR: *"We have finished with the most important news of the day. Now let us commence with the freedom-reports to the German worker.*

*"The Central Committee of the Jewish Underground Labor Movement of Poland sent an appeal to its representation abroad, the "Bund," on the 29th of April, 1943, which begins with the following words:*

ANNOUNCER: *"Today is the ninth day that the ghetto of Warsaw has been fighting. S.S. men and regular German soldiers swarm through the ghetto. Cannons and flame throwers are being used. Airplanes are throwing bombs and incendiaries on the forty thousand Jews who are still in the ghetto. The Germans are demolishing every building where resistance is being waged. The ghetto is burning and all of Warsaw is under a cloud of smoke. Every man, woman and child, that hasn't been burnt to death, is being murdered. Water facilities are cut off.*

COMMENTATOR: *"Twelve days have elapsed since that appeal was made. On the 11th of May, the Central Committee of the Jewish Underground Labor Movement sent a second report. It read:*

ANNOUNCER: *"Heroic resistance in the ghetto of Warsaw is continuing. Some parts are still being defended with unusual courage.*

COMMENTATOR: *"The report further described the terrible odds against which the defenders of the ghetto of Warsaw were struggling. These did not leave the slightest doubt as to the ultimate end of their resistance. The names of those who were already killed by the Germans were announced. It was through complicated and tedious ways that the reports and appeals from Poland reached us here, in England. They were addressed to Mr. S. Zygielbojm, member of the Central Committee of the Jewish Socialist Labor Party 'Bund.' Who is S. Zygielbojm? The Nazi newspaper, '12 Uhr Blatt' wrote on the 12th of May:*

*"The Ghetto Jews are now concerning themselves with a Hebrew from Warsaw who, after a run around the world, finally landed in England and committed suicide in London allegedly because of a broken heart. The reports of the fate of his racial brethren are supposed to have broken him. However, we think it more reasonable to assume, that S. Zygielbojm's annoyances were caused by business troubles."*

COMMENTATOR: *"This comment of the '12 Uhr Blatt' is typical and stands well for the barbarism of the Nazis. Terror has always been connected with lies. Who was, actually, S. Zygielbojm? Fortunately, one of his friends, also a member of the Central Committee of the Jewish*

*Socialist Labor Party of Poland 'Bund,' is now with us. We call upon that gentleman, Mr. Blit.*

L. BLIT: *"The Gestapo hangmen should know only too well who S. Zygielbojm was. He was their prisoner once. He was one of the twelve hostages taken by the Gestapo from the population of Warsaw, after that city surrendered. The Gestapo had a very good reason for taking S. Zygielbojm as a hostage. He represented the Jewish labor organizations of Warsaw. The overwhelming majority of the 350,000 Jews in pre-war Warsaw consisted of workers. Zygielbojm was one of them. He started working in a factory as an eight year old child. While still very young he gained the confidence of his comrades in the leather industry, and became one of the most outstanding trade-unionists. When Hitler overran Poland and besieged Warsaw, S. Zygielbojm organized the Jewish workers in battalions to defend the city. After the conquest of Warsaw, the Gestapo took him as a hostage. However, S. Zygielbojm did not give up his life-struggle. He made an effort to escape the clutches of the Nazis. Though hunted and wanted by the Gestapo, he worked as an illegal, underground fighter in Poland, until the movement sent him abroad on a new, dangerous mission. He succeeded in outwitting the Nazis and left Poland. S. Zygielbojm, who commenced his fight against the injustice of the world as a young boy, did not stop this struggle for his ideals in his new environment abroad. He went on with his fight as a Socialist, as a Pole and as a Jew. In May, 1942, he became a member of the Polish National Council in London, as a representative of the Jewish Socialist Labor Party 'Bund.' In this capacity he received all the reports and appeals for help from Poland. The last cries of those, who were being murdered in the death camps of Tremblinka and Belzec, reached his ears through underground channels. He witnessed the slaughter of three million men, women and children. It was to S. Zygielbojm that the inhabitants of the ghetto of Warsaw sent their last reports, in April and May, about their decision to wage desperate armed resistance, a heroic deed without precedence in the history of mankind. Not before cannons, flame throwers, airplanes and tanks destroyed the very vestiges of the ghetto of Warsaw, and the remaining thousands of Jews were slaughtered, did S. Zygielbojm decide to put an end to his own life. Since he could not fight together with his brethren, as their worthy comrade, he decided to die together with them. S. Zygielbojm's voluntary death was his last protest against slavery, terror and mass-slaughter."*

## THE DEATH OF GENERAL SIKORSKI

The American Representation of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland sent the following wire to the newly elected Polish Premier, S. Mikolajczyk, and to the Polish Ambassador in Washington, Jan Ciechanowski, in conjunction with the tragic death of the Polish Premier and Commander in Chief of the armed forces, General Wladyslaw Sikorski:

**WE MOURN THE TRAGIC DEATH OF POLAND'S PRIME MINISTER WLADYSLAW SIKORSKI.**

The representative of the General Jewish Workers' Union of Poland in the Polish National Council, Dr. E. Scherer, sent the following wire to Stanislaw Grabski, President of the Polish National Council:

**I JOIN GRIEF OF ALL POLES BECAUSE OF TRAGIC DEATH OF POLAND'S PRIME MINISTER WLADYSLAW SIKORSKI.**

Since the first World War, General Sikorski played an important part in Poland's history. However, he became particularly prominent after the military defeat of Poland, in September, 1939. He was made premier of the Polish Government-in-Exile and commander in chief of Poland's armed forces.

General Sikorski represented the conservative-democratic faction. However, he always opposed the pre-war Pilsudski dictatorship and its followers. This strengthened his position after the military defeat of Poland, when the moral defeat of the old regime became so clearly defined.

During two important phases of the present war, General Sikorski's actions assumed a particularly important aspect: after the fall of France, when he decided to continue waging war hand in hand with the then isolated England; after Hitler's attack on Russia, when he established a peaceful relationship between his country and Russia, despite all the wrongdoings, that the latter had inflicted on Poland. His work was not impeded despite the attacks he had to suffer at the hands of reactionary Polish elements.

General Sikorski was far from the Socialist ideals, for which our movement stands. In his Cabinet there were such persons who, in our opinion, should not be part of a government of our country. That is why we were opposed to his government. However, we pay tribute to him as a person of great political and military ability. His sudden, tragic death is a great loss to the difficult fight, that our country is waging, for freedom and independence.