

# Jewish resistance during world war 2

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During WWII a 17-year-old Jewish boy that felt the need to retaliate spent his time standing in his home holding a handgun and a molotov c\*\*\*tail getting ready to go into the heat of battle. Sweat beating down his head and the sound of his heart an overwhelming thud over the sound of firing bullets and screaming people right outside his door in the heat of battle. He opens the door to find bodies massacred. Germans and Jews were firing weapons and throwing hand grenades.

He lifts his gun to shoot a German soldier that is headed his way. Sadly he is slightly too late and the German soldier blasts bullets into his chest. This was the life for many Jewish people that sensed it was their duty to fight for their people. Many men and women fought in Germany during WWII. They came from all walks of life; however, a large chunk of the soldiers were Jewish. These Jewish soldiers are the brave men and women that do not get enough recognition for their efforts in the war.

During this war era, there were Jews in Germany and Poland that organized uprisings against the Nazis. Also individual men and women that felt like it was their duty to put a damper on the Third Reich's efforts in genocide to their race. The Germans thought that they were theSupremerace; however, the Jews that fought showed them that they could and would be stopped. The Jews were driven to fight because they knew that they would rather die fighting than be defenselessly massacred in German extermination camps. The Jewish people knew that they couldn't just sit around as they were being forcefully enslaved and exterminated.

An overwhelming majority of Jewish resisters including one Hanna Czarnoka, a Polish woman who was a prisoner of war (POW) at the Auschwitz extermination camp said, " We just simply had to fight" (Mulley 11; Kogan 113-114). These people knew that they couldn't sit and let the Germans persecute them so they started their long and tedious battle to fight the Nazis'. The Jews knew that if they lost they would end up being put into camps. According to Clare Mulley, an author who has a masters degree in social and cultural history, " Under the terms of the cease-fire the Home Army were obligated to deliver Jews to be sent to POW camps" (Mulley 9). The Jews that fought with the Home Army knew very well that fighting with the resistance would very well be a death sentence; however, they knew that they could never live with themselves if they didn't fight back.

They kept fighting until they could no longer fight. One of the most important times in the Jewish resistance was when the people in the Warsaw Ghetto rose up to defeat the Germans. The uprising started when the residents in the ghetto got word of what was happening to the 40, 000 people who got deported. The 60, 000 people who were still alive in the ghetto decided it was their time to retaliate and try to take down the Nazis'(Zabecki 2). The men and women of the ghetto founded the Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa (ZOB or Jewish Fighting Organization) in order to coordinate a planned attack against the Germans.

When there was finally a plan, they moved forward with guns blazing and after 63 days of relentless fighting they had suffered 13, 000 deaths in battle and another 56, 000 people were executed on the spot(Zabecki 5). David Zabecki a former major general of the US army explains this event " On April <https://assignbuster.com/jewish-resistance-during-world-war-2/>

18th, 1943 the second wave of Germans came into the Warsaw Ghetto and were met with the ZOB firing pistols, hand grenades, and Molotov c\*\*\*tails. 1 The German soldier died and 74 were wounded and the next day the Jews were met with heavy gunfire. At the end of 28 days, 16 Germans had died and 90 were wounded" (Zabecki 4-5). This loss is what showed that Jews were such a destructive force. Though the Jews lost, they had blown a hole in the Germans' ego.

David Zabecki goes on to talk about the impact this made on the Germans: "For the first time in the short horrific history of the third Reich, it's Jewish victims fought back en masse- and the mighty master race had come away with a bloody nose."(Zabecki 1). The Germans were outnumbered 2: 1; however, they had much better weaponry and still won the fight. After the long and burdensome fight, the Germans methodically destroyed the Warsaw Ghetto in order to kill as many resisters as possible. Rudolph Chelminski, an author who has done extensive research on the Jewish resistance, explains " No other city in Europe-not even Berlin or Stalingrad- was taken down so methodically"(Chelminski 5).

The Germans knew that the people of the Warsaw Ghetto was an imminent threat to their grand plan. They knew that if they didn't destroy the ghetto that they would be stopped because the Jews had the will to fight even if they knew they would lose. All of the people in the ghetto including women fought in the uprising: " Women used ferocious guerilla warfare they would attack using pistols in both hands"(Gottfried 4). The women, as well as men, were important to the entire process of attempting to take down the Nazi

army. This was a vital uprising in the resistance of the Jews and will always be remembered as such.

The Warsaw Ghetto's ZOB is just one example of the many organized militias that had Jewish people fighting. Another group of people that fought was the Juden Haben Waffen. This was a group that when sieged by the German army shouted " Juden Haben Waffen" which means " the Jews have arms" at the sound of this the Germans turned around and ran because they were afraid that they would be beaten because the Jews had so many people on their side willing to fight. Another organized group of Jewish resistors was the Home Army; they were comprised of many ethnic groups but many of them were Jewish such as Hanna Czarnoka a female Jewish resistor that was in Auschwitz after being captured she said " I was sent to collect white and red armbands with the Polish eagle to be worn openly, I knew the rising was imminent"(Mulley 6). Hanna was part of the home army and she was also living in a ghetto at the time so when she found out that she could wear the Polish eagle she knew that the rising was on its way and that she would no longer be persecuted in Germany.

All of these organizations were very important to the defeat of the third Reich and they all played a critical part in boosting the moral of Jewish people in their communities. All of these instances show that these men and women fought bravely because they believed that they had a duty to fight for their right to live freely and without persecution and the only way to do that was to fight and not give up until they had achieved the goal that they had set for themselves. In the Warsaw Ghetto, all of the people living in that area banded together to make sure that they would benefit the community

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with the least amount of casualties. In the same way, all of the organized militias came together for the good of everybody to make sure that the Germans did not commit total genocide to the Jewish race. The Jewish people fought long and hard with the help of many other fighting forces that eventually defeated the Third Reich and brought justice to the Jews.