

# He did not turn himself over to the Germans alive

**Today, Albert Stankowski, Director of the Warsaw Ghetto Museum and Professor Daniel Blatman, the Chief Historian of the permanent exhibition, laid a wreath at the Anielewicz Mound to commemorate the 76th anniversary of the death of the commander of the Jewish Combat Organization (ŻOB).**

“On May 8th the ŻOB’s High Command was surrounded by German and Ukrainian troops. A fierce battle lasts two hours. When the Germans saw that they would not manage to capture the bunker in combat, they threw a gas bomb inside. Those who had not died from a German bullet, who had not been poisoned by gas – committed suicide. It was clear that there was no way out of here and nobody had even an idea of turning themselves over to the Germans alive. Jurek Wilner called all fighters to commit a collective suicide. Lutek Rotblat shot his mother and sister, and then himself. Ruth shot herself seven times. 80 percent of the remaining fighters died in this way again, among them ŻOB’s Commander Mordechaj Anielewicz.” (Marek Edelman, “The Ghetto Fights”)

In the bunker at 18 Miła Street, members of the Jewish Combat Organization died along with Mordechaj Anielewicz. The precise circumstances of the death of 120 insurgents are unknown. Anielewicz’s girlfriend, Mira Fuchrer, died in the bunker as well.

Before the war, Mordechaj Anielewicz was an organizer of self-defense against the anti-Semitic actions of the National Radical Camp (ONR). In the Warsaw Ghetto, first he co-organized the Anti-Fascist Bloc, and then he became the Commander of the Jewish Combat Organization. He was 24 years old at the moment of his death. He was remembered as a self-controlled, humble, and a good organizer.

Anna Kilian