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The Workshop at Aleja 14

The Germans created the "Small Ghetto" in November 1942. It held over 5,000 Jews (about 3,500 "legal" and the rest "illegals" who were in hiding). The "Small Ghetto" encompassed a few of the city's oldest and dirtiest streets. The tiny little houses, in a semi-collapsed state due to age, absorbed the thousands of Jews, who were driven, before dawn, to forced labour and who, in the evening, returned dead tired and battered, without any prospects for the morrow.

During this period, the leader of the *kibbutz*, Comrade Aryje (later killed in the forest near Częstochowa), came to my carpentry workshop at Aleja 14 and informed me that my workshop was to become the cross-over point from the ghetto to the railway station and back. The building at Aleja 14 was outside the ghetto and there was a row of workshops there, where Jewish craftsmen worked for German clients. Only "Aryans" were allowed into the building.

As soon as my workshop had become the cross-over point, almost every day, various young people slipped by, either travelling to or coming back from the "outside world". I also recall the appearances of the young lads and girls who, for the first time - in a state of shock - went out onto the street and, after a few weeks, returned as brazen and courageous fighters.

Around the end of 1942, Comrade Aryje notified me that on the coming Sunday, a "conference" would be held at my workshop. At the appointed hour, a young Christian came in, who gave the password and presented himself as the delegate from Żarki, where there was [also] a *kibbutz*. Immediately afterwards, Comrade Aryje arrived with a young man of medium height, with little black whiskers. He presented himself as Comrade "Aniek" from Warsaw. I was later told that this was Leizer Geller.

The "conference" lasted almost an entire day, during which armed resistance was decided.

At the end of January 1943, Comrade "Mojtek", M. Zilberberg, came to my workshop with a small package of revolvers.

In March 1943, the Craftsmen's House at Aleja 14 was liquidated and we were transferred to the "Small Ghetto". There, I took over the carpentry and locksmith workshops, which had been mechanised.

The ŻOB made gun parts at the *Wulkan* foundry, which were then smuggled into the ghetto. With my arrival in the ghetto, the production of gun parts was relocated to the mechanised workshop. This work, with great commitment, was carried out at great risk by the Ziskind brothers, Leizer Szmulewicz, Zvi [Hersz] Wiernik, Abram Czarny and others. Of these, Ziskind, Wiernik and Mrs Czarny have survived ([they are] in Israel).

Later, for security reason, the manufacture of gun parts was moved to the cellars of ul. Garncarska 44.

The ŻOB prepared underground tunnels in order to facilitate going out to the "Aryan" side and perpetrating acts of sabotage there. On 22nd March 1943, railway tracks were laid under the city. Twenty-five Jewish workers were killed then, among them was the ŻOB member Awiw Rozyner, born in Tel-Aviv.