Speech given by Dr. Datner (in Jewish)

over the open grave of 7 Jews

murdered in Sokoly (17.II.1945r)

Funeral arranged by the Jewish Community in Bialystok 22.II.1945 in Bialystok

Jews, brothers and sisters! Jews died, Jewish was their language, in Jewish I bid them farewell... 800 years ago we came to this land from the West. We came from Germany. Crusader Germans and non-Germans, after a cruel crackdown on the Jews at the ren forced the remnant of the living to wander eastwards. We were few then and we are few today. Between these two events lies the History of Polish Jewry, one of the most magnificent pearls in the Jewish crown. Today a handful of a few hundred Bialystok Jews bid farewell to their fallen brethren. This is all that remains of a once 50,000-strong community. Of Poland's 3.5 million Jews, a few tens of thousands remain. Who caused this? The Germans again. The Germans stand like a bloody spectre at the birth and death of Polish Jewry. Do you remember the final moments of this demise? Do you remember the terrible words that made the palest faces pale and the bravest tremble? Do you remember the action 'Aktion'? Do you remember the dates 2.11.1942? 5.02.1943? I 6.08.1943? Do you remember the empty streets of Bialystok during the Aktion? The silent death marches, the transports? That nightmare is behind us, we have been free for half a year, but today we are standing over the open grave of 7 of our murdered brothers and sisters, when we remember that recently 11 Jewish victims fell in Bialystok district, I have to declare to you clearly and distinctly: "The action continues".³ Hitler murdered99% of the Jewish people, his hand and his spirit arm the hands with which he wants to destroy this rest. It seems to them that there are too many of us left, infected by Hitler's spirit, fascist murderers of their own breeding, they want to finish off the handful of miraculously surviving Jews. The situation is different today. We no longer hide in burrows and shelters, we no longer wade through swamps and forests. We can defend ourselves openly against the dangers that threaten us. And we will defend ourselves, and the state apparatus is geared up to protect our lives. Our attitude to the danger that threatens us must be one of resistance and struggle. Thanks to the fact that we did not want to give in and that many of us took up arms, we held out. This mobilisation to fight must and will be carried out. We are not alone in this fight, because with us is the whole democratic part of Polish society, which has declared a life-and-death struggle. That victory will be ours, both over the Germans and their accomplices, no one doubts today. That the battles with the black forces will be fought, as has always been the case, on our skin, that innocent victims will continue to fall, we must unfortunately reckon with this. I know it is difficult to console you, mother, for whom your son was your whole life, more than your life, after all, you would have willingly given your life to his if you had been allowed to choose. You know you gave birth to a child and raised a man and your treasure was violently taken from you, there is nothing to console you with, so weep, mother, over your lost son, weep if you can still weep. Many of us no longer know how to cry. The fountain of tears has dried up in me and I do not know the blessing of tears. Cry mother's grief and despair for millions of mothers after their children were murdered .Their maddening pain when they were torn from their children. Cry out the pain of mothers when their own brothers suffocated their children in shelters. Weep for the mothers who suffocated their children in the shelters with their own hands, may your tears soothe the despair of the father, who here, petrified with pain, bids farewell to his two sons for ever. Weep, Mother, the pain of a husband saying goodbye to his wife, weep the tragedy of the girl who survived the Gutau camp and the bloody irony of the miracle of the Auschwitz death camp survivor. Both of them were able to emerge alive from hell. The hand of the cowardly reached them in Sokoly. But what shocks us most is the little chick lying in front of us. Have you seen it lying there with its blue eyes open with a face so serene, trusting that no one will harm the little one. Who can kill a child? And truly, brothers, a dead child with its occiput shot through is a sign of the greatest dishonour of humanity, a vote of no confidence in humanity. What is humanity? Where is humanity? If there was a hand that could direct an automaton at a child, then culture, progress and humanity (in Polish) are a lie. Citizens of Poland-allow me to say a few words to you as we bid farewell to our murdered brothers here, I will emphasise from the outset that we do not blame Poland or the Polish people for this heinous murder. A representative of political parties and trade unions today spat them out of the womb of the Polish nation and cursed the mothers who gave birth to such monsters. Although they spoke Polish - they were not Poles. We know that you were shocked by this murder and that you condemn it, and your heart is with us, as your presence here testifies. I ask you, however, to remember one thing: the murders will be repeated, it will not help the Militia and the Security officers if only with their own means and you

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