

The Editor (Toronto Star):

Re: 'We'd see corpses in the streets', April 8 (A1, A10)

Hank Rosenbaum's description of the relationship of armed forest Jews and villagers during the World War II German occupation of Poland omits important information.

Armed Jewish groups did not buy food from Polish villagers or leave IOUs. For the most part they took food and other belongings by force. Often they terrorized villagers who had no quarrel with them. This in turn led some villagers to report them to the German authorities.

One does not have to rely on Polish testimonies for this information. Lily Fenster, a Jewish woman who was sheltered by Poles in the Lukow area mentioned by Rosenbaum, recalled: "A bunch of Jews, still young ones, were running from farm to farm and doing terrible things. If they didn't like them, they went out, took a torch, burned the farm. How long could those Goyim take something like that? So then the Germans were looking for them."

According to Eta Wrobel, another Jewish woman who survived in the Lukow forests, "our practice was that any non-Jew who wandered into the forest and discovered us never left the woods alive."

Such stories may not have been the norm, but they certainly did occur quite frequently.

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