

Honorable Mention

Division I – Writing

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Hope And Resistance: The Unbreakable Bond During The Holocaust

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Hope And Resistance: The Unbreakable Bond During The Holocaust

World War II ended, not just because of big armies, but also by small acts of resistance, which helped restore hope to people around the world. All resistance stems from the hope of something better. The hope that could not be shattered by hate and cruelty fueled the acts of resistance that greatly aided the Jews during the Holocaust. People who never lost hope during the Holocaust had the courage to stand up for their freedom and the freedom of countless other innocent Jewish people.

One small act of Resistance can fuel the bravery of another to resist. Celebrating Jewish culture despite the consequences, slowing production in labor camps, holding armed uprisings, escaping from concentration camps, making false papers, and all other forms of resistance gave others the hope to do the same. Having hope and resisting is not an easy task. When Jewish inhabitants of the ghettos and camps celebrated Hanukkah, they were beaten and tortured. However, they continued to celebrate their holiday. In an article by The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, it states, "In response to their imprisonment, around one hundred underground resistance movements developed within the ghettos. These movements resisted Nazi rule through distribution of illegal newspapers and radios, sabotaging forced labour efforts for the war, aiding escape from ghettos, and armed uprisings." This shows how many ways the Jews resisted the Nazis. The more these acts happened, the more people had the courage to join in and oppose the Nazis.

It is crucial to realize the bond that hope and resistance have. World War II was drastically affected by acts of resistance, but without hope, there is no reason to resist. One person resisting gives hope to another person that feels powerless against the Nazis. The combination of these small acts played a huge role in the Holocaust.

Hope is fixed within every act of resistance that brought an end to World War II. When people think of resistance, they usually think of violent protest, or uprising. While this is one type of resistance, there are others: Armed resistance, Everyday resistance, and Spiritual or Moral resistance. Large-scale uprisings are useful, but individuals can make a difference as well. Losing a few Nazi officers would mean nothing to the 18 million soldiers. Keeping traditions and customs might not have won the war, but it gave Jews the strength to live. In 1944, Jewish authorities in Palestine knew that there were many innocent Jews that were captured, and wanted to help. They sent parachutists to camps in Hungary and Slovakia to help free captured Jews, and Jews in hiding. An example of everyday resistance is when citizens of Europe sheltered Jews and hid them from Nazis. Spiritual resistance was when Jewish people kept their customs even when in

concentration camps. These forms of resistance gave the Jews hope that one day they might be freed. All types of resistance were useful and necessary to help restore people's hope .

Resisting can be very powerful. In The Warsaw Ghetto, the prisoners heard a rumor about being moved to the Treblinka Killing Center. The prisoners were worried, but had to resist the Nazis. They organized an armed revolt against the guards at the camp so they would not be transferred. They fought for days, despite being heavily outnumbered. In the end, the Jews lost this battle, but during this chaos, many Jewish prisoners were able to slip away from the camp unnoticed. This act of resistance showed how courageous the Jews were. They were willing to risk their own lives to save a few others. The partisans were also some of the most brave Jews during the Holocaust. They were people who would go and sabotage the Nazis however they could. They would blow up warehouses, steal ammunition, guns, and food, and derail supply trains. Their actions sparked hope in people that had felt powerless.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum states, "A large group of partisans in occupied Soviet territory hid in a forest near the Lithuanian capital of Vilna. They were able to derail hundreds of trains and kill over 3,000 German soldiers." This greatly helped Jews reach freedom. Each German soldier had taken countless lives. By killing them, thousands of Jews were saved. Another example of resistance was when forces in Jerusalem took thousands of children to freedom in Britain or Palestine. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum said, "The Youth Aliyah... under the auspices of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, managed to bring more than 14,000 unaccompanied children to Palestine and Britain between 1933 and 1945." This shows how everyone helped in any way they could. These actions would light a spark of hope in the hearts of millions that were hopeless. Those are a few of many operations by parachutists, partisans, and allied military forces that changed the course of the war.

In conclusion, Hope and Resistance during the Holocaust were woven together. There are many types of resistance that are all important. Without hope there is no reason to resist. We should let the Holocaust serve as a lesson to always have hope and to always resist, even in the hardest of times. Hope and resistance were the building blocks of the Allied forces during World War II. In the end, it wasn't only the armed uprisings and violent fights that made all the difference in the Holocaust. It was also the smaller acts of defiance towards the Nazis that gave the Allies an edge in the war. In a war meant to kill people, choosing kindness, faith , hope, and resistance became proof that the Nazis failed in their goal. Hope and resistance were the Jews' strongest weapon during the Holocaust and were important because they gave the Jews the ability and the reason to live one more day.

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