"A grievous blow has struck the ghetto. They are asking us to give up the best we possess - the children and the elderly. I was unworthy of having a child of my own, so I gave the best years of my life to children. I've lived and breathed with children, I never imagined I would be forced to deliver this sacrifice to the altar with my own hands. In my old age, I must stretch out my hands and beg: Brothers and sisters! Hand them over to me! Fathers and mothers: Give me your children!

I had a suspicion something was going to befall us. I anticipated "something" and was always like a watchman: on guard to prevent it. But I was unsuccessful because I did not know what was threatening us. The taking of the sick from the hospitals caught me completely by surprise. And I give you the best proof there is of this: I had my own nearest and dearest among them and I could do nothing for them! I thought that would be the end of it, that after that, they'd leave us in peace, the peace for which I long so much, for which I've always worked, which has been my goal. But something else, it turned out, was destined for us. Such is the fate of the Jews: always more suffering and always worse suffering, especially in times of war. Yesterday afternoon, they gave me the order to send more than 20,000 Jews out of the ghetto, and if not - "We will do it!". So the question became, 'Should we take it upon ourselves, do it ourselves, or leave it to others to do?' Well, we - that is, I and my closest associates - thought first not about "How many will perish?" but "How many is it possible to save?" And we reached the conclusion that, however hard it would be for us, we should take the implementation of this order into our own hands. I must perform this difficult and bloody operation - I must cut off limbs in order to save the body itself. I must take children because, if not, others may be taken as well - God forbid.

I have no thought of consoling you today. Nor do I wish to calm you. I must lay bare your full anguish and pain. I come to you like a bandit, to take from you what you treasure most in your hearts! I have tried, using every possible means, to get the order revoked. I tried - when that proved to be impossible - to soften the order. Just yesterday, I ordered a list of children aged 9 - I wanted at least to save this one aged-group: the nine to 10 year olds. But I was not granted this concession. On only one point did I succeed: in saving the 10 year olds and up. Let this be a consolation to our profound grief. There are, in the ghetto, many patients who can expect to live only a few days more, maybe a few weeks. I don't know if the idea is diabolical or not, but I must say it: "Give me the sick. In their place we can save the healthy." I know how dear the sick are to any family, and particularly to Jews. However, when cruel demands are made, one has to weigh and measure: who shall, can and may be saved? And common sense dictates that the saved must be those who can be saved and those who have a chance of being rescued, not those who cannot be saved in any case... We live in the ghetto, mind you. We live with so much restriction that we do not have enough even for the healthy, let alone for the sick. Each of us feeds the sick at the expense of our own health: we give our bread to the sick. We give them our meagre ration of sugar, our little piece of meat. And what's the result? Not enough to cure the sick, and we ourselves become ill.
course, such sacrifices are the most beautiful and noble. But there are times when one has to choose: sacrifice the sick, who haven't the slightest chance of recovery and who also may make others ill, or rescue the healthy. I could not deliberate over this problem for long; I had to resolve it in favour of the healthy. In this spirit, I gave the appropriate instructions to the doctors, and they will be expected to deliver all incurable patients, so that the healthy, who want and are able to live, will be saved in their place. I understand you, mothers; I see your tears, alright. I also feel what you feel in your hearts, you fathers who will have to go to work in the morning after your children have been taken from you, when just yesterday you were playing with your dear little ones. All this I know and feel. Since 4 o'clock yesterday, when I first found out about the order, I have been utterly broken. I share your pain. I suffer because of your anguish, and I don't know how I'll survive this - where I'll find the strength to do so. I must tell you a secret: they requested 24,000 victims, 3000 a day for eight days. I succeeded in reducing the number to 20,000, but only on the condition that these be children under the age of 10. Children 10 and older are safe! Since the children and the aged together equals only some 13,000 souls, the gap will have to be filled with the sick. I can barely speak. I am exhausted; I only want to tell you what I am asking of you: Help me carry out this action! I am trembling. I am afraid that others, God forbid, will do it themselves. A broken Jew stands before you. Do not envy me. This is the most difficult of all orders I have ever had to carry out at any time. I reach out to you with my broken, trembling hands and beg: Give into my hands the victims! So that we can avoid having further victims, and a population of 100,000 Jews can be preserved! So, they promised me: If we deliver our victims by ourselves, there will be peace!!!

(shouts from the crowd about other options....some saying "We will not let the children go alone - we will all go!!" and such)

These are empty phrases!!! I don't have the strength to argue with you! If the authorities were to arrive, none of you would be shouting! I understand what it means to tear off a part of the body. Yesterday, I begged on my knees, but it did not work. From small villages with Jewish populations of 7000 to 8000, barely 1000 arrived here. So which is better? What do you want? That 80,000 to 90,000 Jews remain, or God forbid, that the whole population be annihilated? You may judge as you please; my duty is to preserve the Jews who remain. I do not speak to hot-heads! I speak to your reason and conscience. I have done and will continue doing everything possible to keep arms from appearing in the streets and blood from being shed. The order could not be undone; it could only be reduced. One needs the heart of a bandit to ask from you what I am asking. But put yourself in my place, think logically, and you'll reach the conclusion that I cannot proceed any other way. The part that can be saved is much larger than the part that must be given away!"