

**PERSONAL PROPOSALS OF RELEASE TO KORCZAK
IN DESCRIPTIONS OF 'THE LAST JOURNEY'**

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Nearly all the texts reviewed, mentioned an offer of release that Korczak received:

When was the offer made?	Where was the offer made?	Who offered	source
Just before boarding the train cars .	At the Umschlagplatz	The Germans	Mortkovich-Olchakova
–	–	The Germans	Zilberberg
–	–	"The Murderers"	Levy-Lissner
–	–	Germans	Spielman
Cited from descriptions of other authors		A German officer	Rotem
Just before boarding the train car	While marching ahead of the children	Brand, head of the Gestapo in the Warsaw ghetto	Schlengel
When the children have already been loaded into the train cars	at the train platform	Brand, head of the Gestapo in the Warsaw ghetto	Sharpstein
When the children were already in the train cars.	at the train car door	von Blutnau	Zeitlin
When almost all were already on the train cars	near the train	SS officer engineer Frank Holke, organizer of the transport	Zingman
–	while it was known in the ghetto that Korczak and the children were leaving	A release was offered, not specified by whom	Perle
–	–	General description - there was an offer, it is not specified who made the offer	Hartley- Mark
When the children were already in the train cars.	At the entrance to the train platform	Doctor Puigt	Appenschlach
before boarding the train cars.	At the Umschlagplatz	Jewish policemen (Judenrat)	Berman



- **Remba** - says that he himself suggested to Korczak that they both turn to the Jewish community for help. This is not a release offer, not a letter allowing Korczak to return home, but an idea to be tested. His offer did not result in a release offer, as Korczak refused it.
- **Weingarten** - did not refer to a release offer in his text.
- **Rudnitsky** – explicitly denies any release offer, as part of his shattering the myth. He does not ignore it; rather he specifically claims that it never took place. And yet, even in his description the very relating to a release offer reinforces Rudnitsky's main message in the description of 'The Last Journey'.

The starting point in this analysis is that historical truth cannot be established. Therefore, we will try to examine what the descriptions contribute to the myth. We must keep in mind that the descriptions have been written over the course of years, starting a few days after the events, and up to years later.

Comparison shows that some of the proposals came from Germans, and sometimes their names, positions, and ranks are indicated; Some - from Poles and Jewish police officers, and in some of the descriptions it is not detailed who made the offer. Some authors place proposing the offer on the way from the orphanage, in the Umschlagplatz and on boarding the train cars. In some descriptions the offer was made when Korczak was with all the children, and in others - when the children were already on the train and Korczak was still standing at the door.

In all the descriptions, Korczak immediately and totally refused the offer, without hesitation. Some authors describe, in addition to the refusal, an expression of protest, contempt or refer to the ignorance of those who could even consider making such an offer.

The question arises: why did almost all the authors describing 'The Last Journey' in this review describe a release offer to Korczak, which he refused?

In my opinion, the description of the release offer is intended to glorify Janusz Korczak's character. Not only did he stay with the children and went with them on this difficult and horrible journey; Not only did he choose to live with the children all his life, and chose not to abandon them in the most difficult moments; Even at the very last moment, when he was offered to release himself and save his life - he chooses once more, for the last time, to stay with them and not save himself. This enhances his heroism even more than it was before the offer of release. He is a unique and different person, above others, loyal to his ways, acting according to his values without hesitation and without deviating from them. Janusz Korczak preserves his humanity,



and the human dignity, both his and the children's, as he has done his entire life. Refusing the release offer strengthens Korczak's character as a symbol.

On the other hand, those who proposed the release are portrayed as evil, cynical - who submit an offer that would serve their own interests; lacking in basic understanding, ones who cannot begin to understand the absurdity and impossibility of their proposal; The very thought that Korczak could be offered salvation alone - without the children indicates lack of human understanding. These descriptions are based on the writers' perception of Korczak's character and his humanistic worldview, whether from personal acquaintance with him or from acquaintance with or knowledge about the life in the orphanage over the years.

The descriptions of a release offer made to Korczak near the end of 'The Last Journey' serve to reinforce the myth. They strengthen each of the perceptions highlighted by the various texts - heroism, leadership and leading, humanity-humanism, fatherhood perception, Jewish perception, protest and defiance. Each of the perceptions contributes to the creation of the myth, and to Korczak's character within it.