



## KAZIMIERZ BASSALIK

Warsaw, 3 June 1946. Deputy Prosecutor Zofia Rudziewicz interviewed the person named below as a witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the content of Article 106 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the witness testified as follows:

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<b>Name and surname</b>	Kazimierz Bassalik
<b>Date of birth</b>	12 June 1877
<b>Names of parents</b>	Julian and Wanda
<b>Place of residence</b>	Warsaw, Krakowskie Przedmieście Street 26, flat 28
<b>Place of birth</b>	Brzezie, Pleszewo County
<b>Religious affiliation</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Occupation</b>	university professor
<b>Education</b>	University of Basel
<b>Criminal record</b>	none

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When the war broke out, I was a professor of plant physiology at the Mathematics and Natural Sciences Faculty and a member of the university senate. During the bombardment of the capital in 1939, the following buildings were completely destroyed: Kazimierzowski Palace, the Earth Sciences and Chemistry building, the building of the [Faculty of] Pharmacy, the Prosecutor's building, the Theoretical Medicine building and the [...] building were entirely destroyed in certain parts.

After the Germans entered, the university was taken over by units of the security police (Sicherheitsdienst, 4th battalion). The battalion headquarters was located on the second



floor of the library, and the police were stationed in important buildings. In December 1939, in connection with a party thrown by the police, there was a fire in the Auditorium Maximum and at that time this building and a part of the adjacent premises burned down.

The police threw furniture out through the windows and used it as fuel. Manuscripts were treated by the police as wastepaper. I saw this with my own eyes, since I went to the university grounds every day, trying to obtain permission for our [staff] to reside in their former flats.

In 1943, the police was replaced by German armed forces, the Wehrmacht (628th reserve battalion). Throughout the occupation it was only possible to enter the university campus with a pass issued by the German authorities (police or military).

Throughout their stay, the Germans did harm to Polish science and education:

1. Lectures at the university were not given at all. The university was closed. In October 1939 Rector Modrakowski convened a meeting of the senate outside the university, during which he communicated that a major of the police stationed at the university had told him that *die Universität existiert nicht* and would not let him into the campus. Thus, Rector Modrakowski declared that it was impossible to commence classes. As far as I am aware, the rector had never received any formal ordinance about the closing of the university. That the German civil authorities considered the fact of the university's closure as normal was confirmed by the fact that in December 1939 they allegedly permitted graduates from all the faculties to take their final examinations. Certificates of the taking of one's final examinations were issued by the Schulabteilung in the Warsaw district.
2. The Abwicklungsstelle für die Hochschulen in Warschau was created in the district for the purpose of terminating university affairs. Their objective was to take over university property, movables, and archives and to hand them over to the Germans. Such conduct is in breach of the rules of international law and was aimed at depriving the Polish nation of its intelligentsia.

The Germans were trying to wipe out Polish science altogether, thus pursuing any scientific activity was prohibited. From the superintendent of academic schools for the district (*Hochschulekurator*), Trzschaschel, I received a permit to carry out control analyses for the municipal board; the permit clearly stated that it did not authorise me to carry out



any scientific research. Professor Kopeć told me that he had been visited by Gestapo men at the Biology Department of the Faculty of Medicine, who had communicated to him that Poles were prohibited to carry out any academic work. In order to be able to stay at the department, Professor Kopeć had to solicit from Trzschaschel a permit for breeding mice for use in the bacteriological laboratories. During the 1939 bombardment, the departments of Comparative Anatomy and Cytology were partially destroyed; the surviving movables were transferred to the department of Systematic Zoology, which in turn, in October or November 1939, was systematically robbed of books and instruments by German officers. Throughout the whole time that the police, SD, was stationed in the university building, its commanders were confiscating the departments' property.

The Germans made numerous arrests among professors, assistant professors and students; only a handful returned, most of them died in camps or were executed.

I lived at Brzozowa Street 10, in the house of the professors' cooperative. On 1 September 1944, SS men came to the building and everyone was ordered to get out within two minutes. We were taken to the Brühl Palace under German escort. From there we were marched to Wola by *Vlasovtsy*. Their conduct was exceptionally brutal: we were beaten, shoved, robbed, women were raped. All this was happening before the eyes of a German commander. Many persons were murdered at this time, including Professor Lencewicz and his wife. From Wola we were marched to the West Railway Station [Dworzec Zachodni], where we were loaded onto railway cars and transported to Pruszków.