



MIECZYŚŁAW MINIEWSKI

Warsaw, 18 April 1947. Member of the District Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, Judge Halina Wereńko, interviewed the person specified below as an unsworn witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the wording of Art. 107 and 115 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Mieczysław Miniewski
Names of parents	Julian and Emilia née Skędzielewska
Date of birth	16 May 1905 in Wolica powiat Błonie
Religion	Roman Catholic
Place of residence	Warsaw, Koszykowa Street 60
Education	secondary school
Profession	merchant

During the German occupation I was a provisioning officer in the "Róg" battle group under the pseudonym "Miś". When the Warsaw Uprising broke out, I found myself at Ogrodowa Street 19, in the "Gustaw" battalion. On 8 August 1944, the warehouses in Żytnia Street were captured by Germans.

Under fire I managed to get to Orła Street, from where I was escorted, together with civilians, by SS soldiers to Saint Adalbert Church in Wola.

There was a temporary camp for civilians, commanded by Gestapo, in the church. The Deputy commander of the camp was *Leutnant* Bem (probably related to Göring).

After we had been brought in front of the church, he selected me with a group of one hundred men for the so-called *Verbrennungskommando*, i.e. a formation designated to burn



corpses. We were quartered in a school on Sokołowska Street, on the third floor. The *Verbrennungskommando* was divided into two groups, each numbering fifty persons.

I belonged to the second group. Franciszek Zasada, among others, belonged to the first group. Groups of civilian men, employed by the Germans to do physical work, such as demolishing barricades, sweeping streets and the like, were also quartered on the first and the second floors of the school.

Both the transit camp in Saint Lawrence Church [sic] as well as the *Verbrennungskommando* reported to the Warsaw Gestapo, whose command was quartered in the church house adjacent to Saint Lawrence Church, from the side of Saint Adalbert Church. I don't remember the name of the most senior Gestapo officer.

The commander of the camp was a Gestapo man, *Oberleutnant* Neumann, a man of average height, with a red, craggy face with a ruffian's expression, and with blurry eyes. A day after our group had been separated from the civilians, Neumann delivered a special speech addressed to our group, in which he stated that we reported directly to the Gestapo, and we were to follow only the Gestapo's orders. He stressed that we were to refuse to follow any order even if given by a general of a different division.

Neumann distinguished himself through his cruelty. In my presence he several times, without absolutely any reason, shot dozens of civilians, including women, in various streets. More than once he gave orders to his subordinates to shoot civilians who were walking down Chłodna or Wolska Street in an attempt to leave Warsaw.

From our group he shot a Jew, whose name I don't know, because of his nationality, in a gate of the house at Wolska Street 6. After each murder he ordered the group to also burn that corpse.

The Deputy commander of the camp, as I have already mentioned, was *Leutnant* Bem, a calm man.

I don't remember the names of other senior Gestapo officers, but I could recognize many of them.



My escape from the camp was facilitated by a Gestapo sergeant, Henryk Vystrycht, who before the war had been a driver in the Kulesza and Lewandowski company located in Mirowski Square 9. Vystrycht was kind to us, he protected women from being raped by "Ukrainians", he was critical about his superiors. He had a considerable knowledge of the Gestapo authorities.

When I was employed in my group at burning corpses, I collected bodies in the following locations:

1. Near Sowińskiego Park we collected around three hundred single bodies, mostly men, from the street, from yards and flats. We burnt the bodies on the cobblestones in Sowińskiego Street near Wolska Street.
2. In the stretch between Sowińskiego Street and Gizów Street, we collected over thirty single corpses from yards and flats, and a bit fewer from the street, and we burnt them on the pavement and on the street.
3. In the Orthodox Cemetery, to the right of the main entrance, we burnt corpses several times, so that there could have been around fifteen hundred of them in total.

Each time we found the bodies of the executed persons lying or sitting inertly in piles, arranged the way they had collapsed during the execution. These were the corpses of elderly men, women, children and cripples. We burnt corpses there for the last time around 17 August 1944.

It was known to our group that in front of Saint Lawrence Church the Gestapo was taking elderly people, children, the sick and disabled out of the transports sent to the transit camp in Pruszków. These people were loaded onto cars and told that they would be taken to the West Railway Station [*Dworzec Zachodni*]. In fact, they were transported by cars to the Orthodox Cemetery and executed there. Their corpses were burnt on the spot.

4. From the house at Wolska Street 151, owned by Kamiński, we collected up to one hundred bodies, mostly women murdered in the yard, but also some in flats and in basements. The corpses were burnt in the Orthodox Cemetery.



5. From the 13th Police Station, we took out around a dozen corpses of men, maybe less. Judging by the way the corpses looked and by the type of gunshot wounds they had, these men must have died in battle. Their corpses were burnt in the Orthodox Cemetery.

6. On the stretch from Gizów Street up to Ordonia Street. we found single corpses of men, women and children in flats and in yards. We brought these corpses to the pyres in Sowińskiego Park.

7. In Sowińskiego Park and the vicinity thereof we collected a very large number of corpses of people – women, men and children – executed by shooting, victims, as it seemed, of a mass execution. It was possible to count the corpses in hundreds. There could have been around one thousand of them.

In Sowińskiego Park we burnt corpses on several pyres, the ashes were buried in several locations.

8. Near the forge in Wolska Street we collected a large number of executed women and men, apparently victims of a mass execution.

I am unable to determine the number, but in any case there were a bit fewer of them than in Sowińskiego Park. It was possible to count these corpses in hundreds as well. Two pyres were set up there.

9. At Wolska Street 86, in Gil and Wiśniewski's automobile factory, several single corpses lay in the yard.

10. At Wolska Street 82, in basements, in the yard, and in the flats, we collected around twenty corpses.

11. At Wolska Street 81 in Kirchmajer and Marczewski's agricultural tools warehouse, we collected around sixty corpses of priests wearing cassocks.

12. At Wolska Street 79, in a burnt-down house, in the yard, we collected corpses of around three hundred men wearing striped prison uniforms. The bodies were emaciated. We burnt these corpses around 12 August 1944. I don't think they had been lying there long. Later in



that location we burnt single corpses and corpses in groups. There were corpses of both women and men .

13. At Wolska Street 60, in the coffee substitute factory, around 10 August 1944, we collected about twenty corpses of men and women executed upon the order of Muller. These were civilians leaving Warsaw. I was there when this group was detained and Muller gave the order to execute them. On the following day, 11 August 1944, we burnt their corpses. Later, it was the first group and not ours that collected corpses from the grounds of the factory itself.

14. In Płocka Street, from one house after another we collected corpses from flats, basements and yards. I don't remember how many of them there were.

15. At Wolska Street 26, on 10 August 1944, we stopped with our group to wait in a line for access to water, and I saw that a gendarme from a troop that came from Poznań had detained an approaching group numbering twenty-odd people. These were mostly men, but I also saw young boys, students in school uniforms, with their hands in the air. Muller approached the gendarmes and ordered them to execute the group.

The group was then taken to the yard of the house in Wolska Street 26, and after a moment I heard shots. A few days later I saw a pyre in that yard.

Our group also at one time burnt around fifty corpses, probably of people executed after 10 August 1944.

16. At Wolska Street 6 and 8, there were corpses in the yards, and a smaller number in flats and basements. In total, from this area and from the neighbouring houses we burnt over one thousand corpses. These were mostly bodies of young men from the area of the mass executions in the "Ursus" and Franaszek plants. These corpses were burnt by the first group of the *Verbrennungskommando*.

17. Alongside Chłodna Street, between Ogrodowa Street on one end and Krochmalna Street on the other, in each house we found single corpses and corpses in groups.

18. We found a larger concentration of corpses at Chłodna Street 33. A mass execution of a group of Jews and inhabitants of the Old Town had taken place there during the first days



of September 1944. I saw this group of around two hundred persons being separated from the inhabitants of the Old Town in front of Saint Adalbert Church and taken away. On the following day at Chłodna Street 33 we burnt the corpses of recently executed persons.

19. Near the flyover in Górczewska Street, on both sides of the road, we burnt corpses from a mass execution of men, women and children. One hundred men were burning corpses there for an entire day. Bodies were lying in masses, I presume that there could have been over three thousand of them. More corpses were located deeper in Górczewska Street, but they were burnt by the first group of the *Verbrennungskommando*.

20. On the corner of Górczewska, Staszica and Młynarska Streets, almost in every house in Staszica and Młynarska Street, we found single corpses and corpses in small groups. These corpses were burnt by our group.

21. In Karol and Maria Hospital on Leszno Street, we collected corpses lying in masses by a wall in the yard, and also single corpses from the entire hospital. From the pavilions we took out corpses lying in beds, around thirty or forty persons. From the entire property we collected around two hundred corpses in total.

In one of the beds I recognized the body of "Ludwik", head of the fifteenth infantry regiment, whose commander was Paweł from the "Róg" battle group. We burnt the corpses on the western side of Karolkowa Street (the same side where the hospital was). In the courtyards on Leszno Street and up to Orla Street there were no corpses. I believe that this was because around there the street was under heavy fire, and people had left that area voluntarily.

22. On the corner of Żytnia and Młynarska Street, in houses and on the square in the direction of Szlenkierów Street, there were over one hundred bodies. We burnt a part of these bodies, and another part we threw into an anti-tank ditch (barricade), covering them with soil. Judging by the appearance of the corpses, that mass execution must have taken place during the first days of the uprising.



23. Near Żytnia Street, opposite the Ukrainian cemetery [sic] we collected around thirty corpses of elderly people and we burnt them in Żytnia Street. Judging by the appearance of the corpses, the execution must have taken place during the first days of August 1944.

24. In Skierniewicka, Dworska, Brühlowska and Kolejowa Streets, corpses lay in groups and individually in houses and in yards.

Together with my group I got as far as Teatralny Square and Krakowskie Przedmieście Street, we did not venture any further.

25. In the Mirowskie Market Halls [*Hale Mirowskie*], we burnt a few hundred corpses, partially throwing them into a pit and pouring petrol on them. In the area of the Mirowskie Halls we were burning corpses for a couple of days.

26. In the Grand Theatre [*Teatr Wielki*], the group burnt corpses in the basements and on the stage. I am unable to indicate the number of victims, since I was engaged only in carrying planks. In Powiśle, from the side of Kierbedzia Bridge, there were not many corpses, and only lying individually. I heard that a large number of bodies from a mass execution had been taken out of the house at Nowy Zjazd Street 5.

The Gestapo man Henryk Vystrycht took me in a car out of Warsaw on 17 September 1944. A car loaded with packages for the Gestapo men's families left Sokołowska Street every day, heading to Germany. The parcels contained valuable items of clothing robbed from flats in Warsaw.

We burnt the corpses in this way: we arranged the timber, then we put corpses on it, and then we put timber and corpses interchangeably. When the pyre was ready, we poured petrol over it.