ZOFIA SZMIDT

[Warsaw,] 5 marca 1945 r.

Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes
Warsaw

Testimony of Zofia Schmidt, resident of Grodzieńska Street 15, flat 8

Regarding: detention and internment at Auschwitz of Mieczysław Schmidt, born 10 October 1910, resident of Grodzieńska Street 15, flat 8. Recorded by Anna Juzwa.

On 12 August 1940, my husband, Mieczysław Szmidt, was captured during the first roundup in Warsaw, in the vicinity of Widok Street. Until 14 August, he had remained in the barracks in Szwoleżerów Street, from where he was transported, together with two thousand others, to Auschwitz.

After six weeks, I received the first letter from my husband, in someone else's handwriting, only signed by him.

On 9 February, my husband returned home, his health utterly ruined, with a 41-degree fever. Dry marrow, hip effusion, bruises on the head, and wounds on the arms. He weighed 31 kilos, and before he was deported, he had weighed 74 kilos.

My husband told me they had worked in the freezing cold in scanty denims, doing the hardest construction work, that is, building barracks, dismantling the old, dilapidating houses on the camp's grounds. It needs to be emphasized that at that time the Auschwitz camp was only just being established. The hunger was so great that when a wagon with beetroots and cabbage arrived, the prisoners pounced on the vegetables and ate them raw, for which they did not get lunch for the next three days. The German supervisors tortured prisoners for no reason, beating them on the slightest pretext.

The hygienic conditions were terrible. People slept in barracks without doors and windows, two per one mattress. Bugs were the greatest plague at the camp. My husband had wounds all over the body, gnawed out by lice.

The sick had no medical assistance at all. If some of them could not walk, they would be sent to the so-called hospital block, where they would lie and await death without any medical assistance.

On 2 June, my husband died from exhaustion and sickness, despite every effort from the doctors of the Lord's Transfiguration Hospital [Szpital Przemienienia Pańskiego].

I have testified truthfully. I have read the testimony before signing it.