



PIOTR MIREK

Warsaw, 24 June 1946. Judge Antoni Knoll, as a member of the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, interviewed the person specified below as a witness, who testified as follows:

My name is Piotr Mirek, I am 53 years old, son of Józef and Józefa, residing at Ząbkowska Street 7, flat 15 in Warsaw, bookbinder, Roman Catholic religious affiliation, no criminal record.

Up to the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising in 1944, and after that up to 9 August 1944, I lived in Warsaw at Furmańska Street 9. On that day, at 9 a.m., the Germans came to the courtyard of the house where I lived. They ordered everyone to go out to the courtyard, warning that if anyone stayed inside they would be killed, since they were going to throw grenades into the basements.

I don't know what their unit was, they had grey uniforms with rolled-up sleeves and they were holding petrol canisters.

In the courtyard we were lined up in twos; men were not separated from women and children. From Furmańska Street we were taken to Karowa Street, and taking the stairs we reached Krakowskie Przedmieście Street. From Krakowskie Przedmieście we were herded to Ossolińskich Street, to some house, I don't remember the number, I only remember that it had a gate made of wooden planks. Not only were the residents of the house at Furmańska Street 9 taken to that house, but people from other streets as well. In there, we were separated from the women and children. Men were counted and then re-joined with the women and taken, through the Saxon Garden [Ogród Saski], to the first market hall behind the Iron Gate [Żelazna Brama]. Women and children were again separated from the men there. The men were searched by the gendarmerie standing in front of the hall. The women were not searched.



I should note that after the women and children had been separated from the men, the women were herded in the direction of Wola.

After we had been searched and all valuables such as watches and jewelry had been taken away from us, we were ordered to strip from the waist up, that is to take off our jackets and shirts, and we were forced to work, namely to carry bricks, which were used to construct a barricade. I estimate that this work continued from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m.

I must add that the work was being carried out in very bad conditions: the insurgents were shooting from the directions of Ciepła Street, to which Germans responded, so we had to cover the distance between the demolished houses, from where we took the bricks, and the barricade creeping stealthily, during which if one of the Germans got shot or killed, his comrades, holding rifles by the barrel, would hit us with the rifle on the back of the neck.

Out of the total number of men detained to do this work, which was equal to one hundred or one hundred and fifty, a few were killed by such blows. I remember that when one of ours got shot in the arm, he was approached by a German who asked him whether he was able to work. Having received a negative answer, the German killed that man with two handgun shots. Around 6 p.m. the Germans took me and three other men to the square between the first and the second hall (by the first hall I mean the one from the side of the Saxon Garden). A corpse lay there. A German ordered us to take the corpse and transport it to the second hall. There was a pile of wood around one meter high burning there. We were ordered to swing the corpse and throw it onto the pyre.

While we were throwing this corpse, a German shot me from behind two times in the neck. I don't remember what happened immediately afterwards, since I lost consciousness. I regained it lying on the pyre. Having figured out what was happening, I slipped from the pyre like a barrel, during which my hands fell into hot ash.

As a result of being thrown onto the pyre, my arms and back got burnt (the witness shows burn scars, on the left and right arm in the area of the elbows and on the little finger of the left hand). While I was lying near the pyre and wondering how to escape from the hall, the same German who had shot me came up, and seeing me lying next to the pyre, apparently wanted to check whether I was still alive. He did this by kicking me. Seeing that I had not moved, he left me where I was. After he left, I crawled over to the stairs leading to the basement.



I don't know at what time that happened, it was already getting dark.

It was quite dark in the basement. When my sight adapted to the darkness, I saw a pile of suitcases and bundles in the middle of the basement, and about thirty corpses around it. Since I was half-naked, I looked for a jacket for myself. Having rested for some time, when it had already gotten completely dark, I went out to the hall, taking the same way I came into the basement, and then exited to Chłodna Street from the side of Jonasz's Bazar [Bazar Jonasza].

I didn't notice whether the pyre in the hall was still burning.

On the street, around a hundred and fifty or two hundred meters in the direction of Solna Street, I noticed machine guns aimed in the direction of Grzybowska Street, and from the side of Grzybowska Street, approximately the same distance, also machine guns aimed in the direction of Solna Street. Crawling on my knees in the direction of Grzybowska Street I managed to get to Wielopole, and having crossed it, I found myself behind the wall of a ruined house between Wielopole and Graniczna Street. I rested there for a couple of minutes and then I went in the direction of Grzybowska Street. Having taken just a few steps, I was halted by insurgents. On my way from the hall to the corner of Wielopole I was shot at with a machine gun.

The insurgents took me to the hospital on Grzybowska Street, I don't remember the number, where I got my wounds dressed. I stayed in that hospital until morning. I was then moved from the hospital to the Health Insurance Authority [Kasa Chorych] on Mariańska Street. Two weeks later, as Germans were approaching, all patients, even those walking on crutches, were directed to the children's hospital on Kopernika Street, near Krakowskie Przedmieście Street.

I don't know anything about the fate of the men who were with me near the market hall, or about the fate of the patients who were unable to leave the hospital on Mariańska Street due to their condition.

I stayed at Kopernika Street for about a fortnight and then, for the same reason, we had to move from Mariańska Street; together with all the wounded men I went to the hospital at Pierackiego Street 3/5. Patients who were unable to walk were carried on stretchers.

Only sick children, doctors, and nurses stayed in the hospital in Kopernika Street. What happened to them, I don't know.



I spent around three weeks in the hospital on Pierackiego Street. I left it when it was being bombarded by artillery. Only those who were able to walk on their own left the hospital. Patients with severe wounds stayed, and while in the street I heard moans and cries coming from under the rubble of the building.

I know that all the patients who stayed in the hospital and were in the ground floor rooms either died under the rubble or were burnt alive.

In Pierackiego Street we were detained by the Germans, and on the following day were transported to the camp in Pruszków with civilians. Having spent four weeks in Pruszków, we were loaded onto a train and displaced.

I don't know what the destination of this transport was, since I managed to escape in Końskie.

The report was read out, the interview was concluded.