



## DAWID KONIECPOLER

On 15 January 1948 in Częstochowa, the Investigating Judge from the region of the District Court in Częstochowa, with its seat in Częstochowa, in the person of the Judge M. Domagała, heard the person named below as a witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the wording of Article 107 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and the significance of the oath, the witness was sworn in accordance with Article 109 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and testified as follows:

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Name and surname	Dawid Koniecpoler
Age	51 years old
Parents' names	Szlama and Chana, née Prtel
Place of residence	Wolności Street 19, flat 23, Częstochowa
Occupation	painter
Religious affiliation	Mosaic
Criminal record	none
Relationship to the parties	none

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I first heard about the SS- und Polizeiführer of Radom, Herbert Böttcher, in June 1942. I learnt that he was sending all Jews [illegible]. As I was told by the head of [illegible] (whose surname I don't recall at the moment), who was present during the displacement of Jews in Radom, supervised by Böttcher himself, Böttcher was also shooting people and on his command German soldiers were taking Jewish children on bayonets and throwing them onto the cars. In September 1942, a mass extermination of Jews was carried out in Częstochowa. In the first days, Böttcher took part in the action and was in charge of it, as was the case in other parts of the Radom district. Böttcher cooperated with [illegible] Weinrich, who [illegible] as regards the extermination of Jews. A resident of Częstochowa and a long-time acquaintance of mine,



Silbestejn, the owner of a factory at Krótka Street, told me that in the first days of the action of exterminating Jews, Böttcher ordered him to make the rounds of the flats of more affluent murdered Jews together with him, and Böttcher and his people plundered them. Silbestejn recounted one incident to me: at 1 Maja Street 12 there was the Gruer pharmacy shop and Böttcher ordered him to open it. Then Böttcher stole all valuable objects from it, such as apparatus, binoculars etc. and a few gold coins which were hidden in the shop.

After the liquidation of the small ghetto in Częstochowa, which began on 26 June 1943, in the first days of July Böttcher arrived at the inspection. Then I saw him in person, as he came to my carpenter's workshop, which I run next to the *Schutzpolizei* at Garibaldiego Street 15. The Germans told me that on that day at the beginning of July on which he came to Częstochowa, Böttcher had ordered the blowing up of the small ghetto and on 22 July he carried out another extermination action in Hasag and also on Garibaldiego Street, where some 200 Jews were at the time. And so it happened, as on 22 July 1943, the whole Jewish police and members of their families were killed in Częstochowa, as were the Jews employed in Hasag and at Garibaldiego Street – approx. 800 Jews were shot at the Jewish cemetery in Częstochowa. In June or July 1944, Lublin was captured by Russian troops and at the time Böttcher and governor Lasch and Weinrich came to Częstochowa with several hundred boxes with stolen property – crystals, porcelain, furs, clothes, sewing machines, furniture, etc. The boxes bore the surnames of governor Lasch, Böttcher, and Weinrich. Stolen things [illegible] in Częstochowa [illegible] NMP Street 75/77. At that time the Germans left Radom. Böttcher and the *Schutzpolizei* head Beeker assumed command over fortifications in the area from Piotrków to Częstochowa.

Several dozen thousand Jews from various townships, including people caught in daily round-ups, were forced by the Germans to work at the fortifications. In December 1944, I was summoned from the labor camp in [illegible], where I had previously worked, to furnish a private flat for Dr. Böttcher. It was located at Dąbrowskiego Street 6 in a private villa.

Böttcher's distinctive traits were arrogance and despotism. His bodyguards and subordinate German officers stood to attention whenever he entered the room. Böttcher had a say in the tiniest details pertaining to the furnishing of his flat. His wife addressed him as Mister *Brigadeführer*. I helped with hanging the photograph of Hitler surrounded by important German officers. In that picture, Böttcher was sitting fourth from Hitler, and in another



picture sixth. I, as a Jew, was forbidden to touch the photographs. I was there only to hammer in the nails.

On 7 January 1945, I was delegated by Böttcher to furnish the officers' canteen, located at [illegible] 4 and I had [illegible]. On 15 January 1945, all Jewish laborers were fired and we had to pack the files from Böttcher's office. I then came across a decree to convene a meeting of merchants, craftsmen and people from the liberal professions on 17 January 1945 in the "Luna" cinema in Częstochowa. It was addressed only to the Poles, as there were no Jews at the time. The people who would thus gather were to be deported to Germany.

I remember that in November 1944, a few hundred Jews from Piotrków, who had previously been [illegible], were brought to Hasag. One of those Jews (whose surname I don't recall), who was assigned to the carpenter's workshop in which I also worked, told me that in his presence – he acted as a member of the camp board – and during an inspection in the camp, Böttcher gave the following order: *Dass deeck kommt weck*. It was obeyed, as a few days later they were deported from Piotrków. The women and the elderly were transported to Auschwitz, and men and healthy women to Hasag in Częstochowa.