



## WŁADYSŁAW CZERNY

Gdańsk, 23 May 1946. Investigative judge W. Kępiński interviewed the person named below as an unsworn witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

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<b>Name and surname</b>	Władysław Czerny
<b>Age</b>	47
<b>Names of parents</b>	Franciszek and Zofia
<b>Place of residence</b>	Gdańsk, Grottgera Street 31
<b>Occupation</b>	vice-mayor of the city of Gdańsk
<b>Religious affiliation</b>	Roman Catholic
<b>Criminal record</b>	none
<b>Relationship to the parties</b>	none

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From February 1940 until the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, I was a liaison officer between the Polish Planning Department of the Municipal Board in Warsaw and the German construction council for the occupation administration of the county. I know that right after the capture of Warsaw, a group of German architects created an office of new urban planning for Warsaw in the municipality. It seems that this group operated on the basis of instructions brought from the Reich. I base this assumption on the fact that Engineer Suppinger from the Stuttgart magistrate, who held the office of intendant to the council for some time in 1940 and was removed from this position for disloyalty, had spoken of centrally imposed projects with contempt.

A new rough plan of the city was developed during the winter of 1939/40. This plan was prepared by the German offices and was kept secret from the Polish staff of the Planning

Department. The head of construction for the district, Nürnberger, who was a particularly zealous supporter of National Socialism, took a vital part in developing this plan. The time in which the plan was prepared indicates that the Germans totally disregarded the conditions they had found upon arrival, and treated Warsaw as if it were an empty field on which one had to construct a new city. The most rudimentary studies of the city's existing condition would have required a much longer time than that devoted by the Germans to the preparation of this plan. It was drawn up in 1:10,000 and 1:2,500 scale, with a relief model. In the course of personnel changes in the post of the German construction superintendent, it proved possible, in the later years of the war, to get these plans out of German concealment, and they were stored partly in the archives of the Planning Department of the Municipal Board, at Nowy Świat Street 14, and partly by Engineer Przewirski. According to these plans, a totally new city was to be constructed, absolutely unlike Warsaw, much smaller, concentrated above all on the left bank of the Vistula between the high escarpment, the Gdańsk Railway Station [Dworzec Gdański], the peripheral railway track, and the cross-city line. According to this plan, the central railway station was to be located on the edge of the city, and the areas south of Aleje Jerozolimskie were marked as undeveloped green areas. A big military camp was planned, to be located in Żoliborz. In the city center, there were a few undeveloped strips, each around two hundred meters wide, crossing the city from north to south. One of them ran through Nowy Świat Street, Krakowskie Przedmieście Street and Saxon Square. Completion of this project would require all the distinctive, historical buildings of Warsaw to be torn down. At the end of this wide strip on the northern side, in the vicinity of the [Royal] Castle, approximately in the location of the Church of St. Anne, a great skyscraper was planned, which was to dominate the city skyline. The Castle was not on the plan. The project was titled: Plan of the German City of Warsaw (*Plan der deutsche Stadt Warschau*).

This plan included an appendix in 1:20,000 scale, drawn with colored pencils on Polish measurement paper, whereon the entire city was divided into a number of districts labeled with numbers, each of them marked with a different color. It was titled: Demolition Plan for the Polish City of Warsaw (*Abbau der Polen-Stadt Warschau*), and the legend explained the colors and numbers of districts as areas of gradual demolition of the city.

In 1942, a new German construction superintendent arrived, Pabst from Dortmund, a graduate of the German Gdańsk Polytechnic. He was the first occupation-era construction superintendent in Poznań, and then in Łódź. He was killed in an attack on Daniłowiczowska Street in 1943.



Pabst worked closely with the Gestapo and SS and most probably belonged to the SD (Sicherheitsdienst). This is supported by the fact that upon the Gestapo's order he tried, under a professional pretext, to summon Engineer Stefan Nowicki, an employee of the Planning Department (who was killed in the headquarters of the People's Army [AL – Armia Ludowa] on Freta Street) on the day when the Gestapo was blocking his flat. Among others, Pabst intended to make a name for himself among his superiors with the project of demolishing the ruins of the Royal Castle and of constructing a great NSDAP palace in its place. Using the funds of the Warsaw Municipal Board, he ordered a design of his idea (from his colleague in Berlin). This project, together with perspective drawings, was later in our possession and was stored together with the already described plan of German Warsaw.

Pabst told me many times that the Warsaw Castle had to be demolished so that no trace of it would remain. He presented his plans to Governor Fischer, City Captain Leist, and Frank. Also, the officers of the German county authorities, Friboli and Dürrfeld – the latter a famous supervisor of public service enterprises – were interested in these plans.

There is no doubt whatsoever that Fischer, along with the entire German governing elite in Warsaw, was vitally interested in the plan, and I can definitely say that the plans for demolishing Warsaw had been presented in the district, or more precisely in the General Government.

When I was summoned to the urban planning office in the district, on the basis of questions I was asked and the materials demanded from me, I figured that the rumor had been true that in 1943 and 1944 the Warsaw SS command was to take sole control over Warsaw and its closest, possibly most dense surroundings. This area was to be separated from the remainder of the Warsaw district, and surrounded by a cordon disabling the imports of food to Warsaw and the evacuation of people from Warsaw. This happened approximately at the same time as the Warsaw ghetto was being liquidated. The Warsaw ghetto had been given to the SS formation to exploit for its own use. At that time it had just been fully exploited, and thus it was necessary to acquire new territories for destruction and plunder.

The slogan written in the hall of the Zachęta gallery (the so-called *Haus der deutschen Kultur*), put there by Pabst and reading: "No nation lives longer than the documents of its culture – Adolf Hitler" indicates that this was the Germans' principal inspiration in destroying Warsaw's historical heritage.



In connection with this, it needs to be mentioned that in the autumn of 1939 the head of construction for the district, Nürnberger, reporting directly to Fischer, tried to trick the Poles into handing him two million zlotys for refraining from blowing up the Warsaw Castle.

I know about this circumstance from the account of Professor Jan Zachwatowicz. The offer was supposedly presented through an "acquaintance" of Nürnberger's from the technical university, Juliusz Nagórski from Warsaw, who was known for cooperating with the German construction authorities in 1939 and 1940.