



FELIKS SKOWROŃSKI

Warsaw, 11 June 1946. Deputy Prosecutor Zofia Rudziewicz interviewed the person specified below as a witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Feliks Skowroński
Date of birth	29 May 1894
Names of parents	Feliks and Wanda
Place of birth	Jaksice, Inowrocław county
Place of residence	Poznań, Słowackiego Street 34, flat 9
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Occupation	manager of the "Cegielski" enterprise
Education	faculty of law and philosophy of the Jagiellonian University [Uniwersytet Jagielloński]
Criminal record	none

When the Warsaw Uprising broke out, I lived in Włochy near Warsaw, at Dr Father Chrościcki's place. I was the head of the operation for providing aid to Poles evacuated from Warsaw to Włochy, and at the same time a spokesperson and a translator for the Catholic parish in Włochy.

After the fall of the uprising and the evacuation of the entire population, Bishop Szlagowski and Father Chrościcki began to wonder whether it would be possible to save the churches in the capital city. Upon their proposal, I agreed to accept the power of attorney authorizing me to rescue church property. The original document granting me this power of attorney was made out in German, dated 26 October 1944, and signed by Bishop Szlagowski and



the chancellor, Dr Father Majewski, under number 4256 (I hereby present it). On the basis of this power of attorney, I approached Governor Fischer, at that time staying in Sochaczew, where the district authorities were located. I was received by Pollard, Fischer's deputy, who ordered me to go to the *Räumungskommando*, to the head of this institution, Dr Rodig, for him to resolve the case.

On 28 October 1944 I approached Rodig [who had his office] at Wolska Street. Rodig was a district official; this I gathered from the conversation I had with him, since he was claiming that he had received instructions from the district, and he wore navy blue clothing like that of the district officials. He was the head of the *Räumungskommando* and handled the evacuation of private, church, and commune property. Further, there was a troop of SS gendarmerie by the *Räumungskommando*, which specifically handled the evacuation of state property and the appointing of guards for persons who were allowed to evacuate equipment from Warsaw. The gendarmerie was subordinated to *SS-Polizei Brigadeführer* Geibel, who stayed in Ożarów Mazowiecki; Brandstätter commanded the guards.

Rodig gave me a permit to enter Warsaw covering the period of one week. He only allowed me to take church vestments, liturgical objects, and civil registers. He did not agree to rescuing church linens, sculptures, libraries, valuables, or church apparatus. This clearly indicated that the Germans wanted to destroy cultural property and national heritage.

In November 1944 I once again approached the district in Sochaczew to get permission to evacuate the library of the theological seminary in Warsaw. I was received by the head of the chancellery (*Amtschef*) Harbon, who issued to me a letter to Rodig with instructions to commence the operation of saving the seminary library. Rodig did not honor this letter, however, and directed me to Geibel. Geibel would not see me. I conferred with his adjutant (whose name I don't remember), but he treated me in a disrespectful and scornful manner and stated that he could not issue a permit to me, since the Germans wanted to commence their own operation. I do not know what he meant by "their own operation". I received from Rodig an extension of the previous permit for the evacuation of church property within the previous scope until 13 November 1944 inclusive.

During the period from 30 October 1944 until 13 November 1944 we went to Warsaw every day. Priests from the relevant churches and a few wagons would come with me. We evacuated the items covered by the permit. This took place under the escort of gendarmerie



guards. On the first day, 30 October 1944, our guards were capturing Poles returning to their homes, hoping to save at least some of their property. The gendarmes executed people irrespective of their age and sex. On the following day, the guards would not let us go into the Old Town; only after a few days did we receive a permit to do this. They were acting brutally all the time. The conduct of SS auditors who were stealing items from our wagons was even worse. One of them rummaged through communicants, searching for gold. We were not allowed to take the priests' personal underwear and clothing.

After the fall of the uprising, the churches were still standing. Later the following churches were blown up and destroyed by the Germans: church of the Holiest Savior (kościół Najświętszego Zbawiciela), church of St. Barbara [kościół św. Barbary], church of St. Charles Boromeo [kościół św. Karola Boromeusza]. Bishop Szlagowski told me that the Germans had destroyed the church of St. Barbara even though they had promised to spare it. When I was in Saint John Cathedral [katedra św. Jana], the Germans blew up the church twice, destroying the façade, what was left of the pillars, and one of the chapels. Also, they were stealing whatever they could, both from the cathedral and from the church of St. Alexander [kościół św. Aleksandra], from which they took away suitcases of money and valuables.

The Germans turned the church of St. Stanislaus [kościół św. Stanisława] on Bema Street into a stable, and church banners and copes into horse blankets. Inside the church of Saint Anne [kościół św. Anny] we found horses and cars, the pews were used as fuel. In the Powązki chapel, we found corpses scattered around.

During my daily trips to Warsaw, I saw that houses in Krucza Street, Marszałkowska Street, Wspólna Street and so on were initially still standing, but then were systematically burnt down. The same happened in Śniadeckich Street, Piusa Street, Wolska Street and so forth. During these thirteen days of going around Warsaw, I saw entire streets and even entire quarters on fire. The operation was carried out by the *Räumungskommando*, a special column of arsonists, composed of gendarmes and SS-men.

During the first half of October, Germans were brought from the Reich to rob Warsaw. I know this, since at that time I received a pass to transport coal from the gasworks to Włochy for the impoverished Polish population. I could then observe trains with Germans evacuating various items from Warsaw. A storage for pharmaceuticals was created in Włochy; these products were sent to Germany.



As the head of the district to whom the *Räumungskommando*, gendarmerie and *SS-Polizei* reported, Fischer is responsible for the destruction following the Warsaw Uprising.

I wish to add that the gendarmerie executed very many people who had passes and who, having come to Warsaw, wanted to salvage gold or leather products. I myself saw corpses lying in Wolska Street, in stacks of ten, with the sign "bandits" to scare others away.

As the head of the operation of providing aid to civilians evacuated from Warsaw in Włochy, I approached the head of the health department in the Warsaw district many times. He would say that it was the Poles who had started the brawl, so they had no right to expect any help. He also refused to lend medical assistance and he emphasized that in his worldview, the Red Cross did not exist.