

STEFAN SEWERSKI

On 12 April 1948 in Łódź, Associate Judge R. Jezierska of the 1st District of the Regional Court in Łódź, with its seat in Łódź, interviewed the person specified below as a witness. Having advised the witness of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the importance of the oath, the Judge administered the oath, pursuant to Articles 109 and 111 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The witness then testified as follows:

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| Name and surname | Stefan Sewerski |
| Age | 48 |
| Parents' names | Abram and Jura |
| Place of residence | Piotrkowska Street 132, flat 39, Łódź |
| Occupation | accountant |
| Criminal record | none |
| Relationship to the parties | none |

In October 1942 an action was carried out in the Piotrków Ghetto, where I was residing. After the liquidation, a number of Jews who remained alive were detained in the small ghetto, which was taken over by the *Schutzpolizei* in November of the same year. It was headed by defendant [Böttcher]. At the end of November Böttcher came to Piotrków, to the command of the ghetto. After he left, we were told that too many Jews had survived, following which 600 people were imprisoned in a synagogue, where they were to await Böttcher's decision. They remained there for several weeks, in terrible conditions resulting in a high mortality rate. The local German police kept telling the detainees that they were going to be sent to work.

At some point at the end of winter – in December, I think – 40 Jews from the synagogue were taken to the so-called Raków Mały near Piotrków, where they were ordered to dig pits

and then strip naked. They were all shot to death. Thanks to the fact that it was dark, a few of them managed to escape and they told us what had happened. On the following day all the remaining Jews from the synagogue were marched outside and shot in Raków as well. It was widely known that the order had been issued by Böttcher.

In March 1943, Böttcher gave an order to carry out the so-called Purim action. 10 members of the Jewish intelligentsia from the Piotrków ghetto were supposed to be transported to Radom. The Jews were driven in a car which at first indeed was headed in the direction of Radom, but then turned to the cemetery where the Jews were then shot. On that day (it was a celebration of the so-called German victory) such operations were taking place all over Poland.

In July 1943, the small ghetto was liquidated in the following way: some Jews were deported and others were assigned to factories in Piotrków. According to Böttcher's order issued at the time, craftsmen could sign up together with their children for a transport to the craftsmen's camp in Bliżyn. Many Jews obviously agreed to it in order to prevent separation from their children. I witnessed the loading of these Jews onto trains. At the last moment their children were taken away. The adults were sent by train, while the children stayed in the *Schutzpolizei* headquarters in Piotrków, at Böttcher's disposal. These children were to be released, but they later disappeared. Strictly speaking, they were cremated [?], for none of us ever saw them again.

When in August 1943 we were assigned to work in the Bugaj factory, the following incident took place: one of the Jews walked up to the wires wanting to receive bread from the Poles, and the supervising *werkschutz* [factory security man] shot him dead. This *werkschutz* later felt remorse and tried to explain that he didn't mean to kill the man and that he didn't understand how he could've hit him from such a distance – it was clear that he truly regretted what he had done. Böttcher paid a visit to the camp in Bugaj after this incident and having learned about it, he summoned the *werkschutz* and rewarded him with cigarettes and vodka. I know this because the *werkschutz* told me.

Everyone knew that the arrival of Böttcher was a sign that someone was going to die. Jews and children who were too good-looking had to hide, because he hated them most fiercely. After Böttcher's last visit in Bugaj – during my stay there, in any case – we were all transported to concentration camps. I was transported to Buchenwald.

The report was read out.