

ZYGMUNT OGRODZKI

Warsaw, 26 April 1946. Investigative Judge Halina Wereńko, delegated to the Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, interviewed the person named below as a witness. Having advised the witness of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the significance of the oath, the Judge took the oath, following which the witness testified:

Name and surname	Zygmunt Wojciech Ogrodzki
Parents' names	Edward, Leonilla née Jedlińska
Date of birth	2 May 1907
Occupation	vice-chief of the Presidential Office of the Municipal Board
Education	Higher School of Trade
Place of residence	Warszawa, Marszałkowska Street 8, flat 30
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
Criminal record	none

During the German occupation I was holding the post of vice-chief of the Warsaw Housing Office. In 1940, a German Residential Office was created by the *Stadthauptman's* office, led by a *Leiter* (director) appointed by the *Stadthauptman*, who signed all the decisions, commissions and correspondence in his name (*im Auftrage*). It was a strictly German office, formed as a supervisory control over the Housing Department of the Municipal Board. The chief of the Housing Department of the Municipal Board was colonel Czerniawski, former chief of the Military Department of the Municipal Board. From 1941, his successor was Kazimierz Rzeczyński who remained in that post until the Uprising's outbreak in 1944. From 1 December 1941 I was moved from the function of vice-director of the Commissionary

Office of the Warsaw Mayor to the function of a vice-chief of the Housing Department. The head of the German office was Makowski (a German), later major Stoll, Braun (a Gestapo man), and after he was executed by the Polish Underground in November or December 1943 [...]. All of them worked on behalf of the *Stadthauptman*, while the range of their competences was unlimited, they weren't tied down with any kind of instructions. They acted very distrustfully towards the Housing Department (the Polish one). The department was hampered by ordinances and opinions from its German counterpart. From autumn 1940 a decree was issued by the German housing office – I can't recall whether it was signed by Leist or Fischer – creating the Jewish district. From the moment of its creation, a whole range of directives, which were changing the ghetto's borders, were introduced. Initially they were presented in the form of announcements, later – as decrees signed by the heads of the German Housing Office *im Auftrage*. I don't recall exactly whether the displaced Jews were able to take their furniture with them at the beginning – probably not. Makowski, and Stoll – for a shorter period – were directing the German Housing Office while the Jewish district was being created. I heard that Makowski was withdrawn from Warsaw after losing his two sons on the war front. Stoll, as far as I know, was moved to Lwów.

Responsible for implementing the decree was the German police (military uniforms, swastikas on helmets): resettlement was done by the Polish housing office and the Jewish commune housing office in cooperation. Due to fact that in the process of the ghetto's formation furniture was collected in huge amounts, it was all put in the synagogue on Tłomackie street, and even driven out of Warsaw. Where to, it's hard to say. In spring 1941, there was a decree to create a German district, I remember it was signed by Leist. Poles' resettlement was carried out chaotically, sometimes as a repressive measure, for example for killing some German on the corner of Litewska and Marszałkowska in the summer of 1943, after which the displacement all the Poles on Litewska street was executed within 24 hours. That decree was signed by the German Housing Office *im Auftrage Stadthauptman*. Whether such a repressive displacement was thought up by the Gestapo, I do not know, but I feel it was. Eviction of the Poles was chaotic and didn't make sense, it was exaggerated or possibly it was supposed to be strategic. In this last case, all the Poles were evicted from the corner houses and – as we found out unofficially – SA members were housed there, whose general was a person with the title of *Brigadenführer*. While evicting the Poles, various methods were allowed, for example taking the furniture or confiscating the apartment

along with the furniture. In most cases though, furniture could be taken. Its requisition took place on the request of the German, who was going to acquire the apartment and furniture after the Poles. Resettlement orders were issued directly by the German Housing Office, sometimes – not always – forwarding a copy of such order to its Polish counterpart. I handed all the documents of the Polish Housing Office, including a file on the German district with information on which Germans, *volksdeutsches* or Ukrainians were assigned which flat, to the City Archives on Długa Street, and part of the German Housing Office file to a city pawnshop by the town hall (Teatralny Square). As I managed to verify, all these documents were burnt or destroyed in the debris during the Warsaw Uprising.

What happened to Alertz, I don't know. I should point out that Alertz, being a trained official (Braun was trained to be a gravedigger), approached his job more professionally and gave us the impression that he wasn't cooperating with the Gestapo on his own initiative.

Before taking up the post of the Housing Office director, Braun was Leist's adjutant.

Among Leist's other officials was Dr. Schrempf, well known for his cruelty towards Poles. He often tortured the hospital patients, and supposedly there had been incidents of him shooting at the hospital staff.

Also known for mistreating Poles was the director of supervision over Polish personnel in the *Stadthauptman's* board in the years 1943-1944, whose surname I can't recall right now, but if I do, I will notify the Judge. The aforementioned German personally threatened to send me to the Auschwitz camp for saying "A German decree still doesn't decide everything".

Kazimierz Rzeczyński presently works for the Department of Culture and Art in the Voivodeship Office in Olsztyn.

Allow me to add that towards the Poles, Dürrfeld was the most anti-Polish among the officials. I know that he deported workers of the Municipal Transport Office to concentration camps. Engineer Niepokojczycki, a vice-chief of the Trams Board, was deported by him and died in Auschwitz.

The report was read out.