

BOLESŁAW KORZENIAK

Warsaw, 11 March 1948. Judge Halina Wereńko, a member of the District Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes, interviewed the person named below as a witness, without taking an oath. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Bolesław Korzeniak
Parents' names	Jan and Władysława, née Bieniak
Date of birth	13 June 1895, Stawiska, district of Węgrów
Religion	Roman Catholic
Education	can read and write
Place of residence	Warsaw, Spokojna Street 13
Occupation	stoker at the Municipal Board
Citizenship and nationality	Polish

When the Warsaw Uprising broke out, I was in my flat at Okopowa Street 55a. Józef Kuran (currently residing in Warsaw at Krechowiecka Street 6, flat 56) lived in the same house.

On 1 August 1944 the school building at Okopowa Street 55a was occupied by the command headquarters of the "Zośka" battalion (I saw the following inscription on the door: Administrative office of the command headquarters of the "Zośka" battalion). Initially, this area was fired upon from a train on the narrow-gauge railroad, while on 11 August in the evening, after it had been encircled, the insurrectionists left the school premises and broke through to the Old Town. Kuran and myself remained at the school.

Immediately after the insurrectionists withdrew, the school was occupied by some German detachment.

I don't know their unit.

Looking through a hole in the wall onto the property at Okopowa Street 55, I saw German soldiers shoot two men dead who were in the house. At the time, Kuran and myself were hiding in the cellar. Five or six days after the arrival of the Germans, and thus starting from 16 – 17 August (I don't remember the exact date), I heard individual shots every evening, and sometimes during the day. These were fired from small arms – pistols or sub-machine guns – and definitely came from the square located to the rear of the property at Okopowa Street 59. On one side, this property reached to Okopowa Street, sideways to Kolska Street, while its rear was the wall of the Jewish Cemetery; on the other side it bordered on a vegetable garden at Okopowa Street 57. When leaving our hiding place in the evening, Kuran and I saw a burning pile in the square at Okopowa Street 59, near the well, and the characteristic smell of burning human bodies reached our cellar.

Around midnight on 20 August (I don't remember the exact date) Kuran and I went out to search for food and vegetables. We got as far as the gardens at Kolska Street, passing through the entire square at the rear of property at Okopowa Street 59. Near the well, close to the chimney from the side of the buildings standing on Okopowa Street, I saw a burning pile, but I could not make out what was being burned. Sneaking through, I heard Ukrainian and German voices coming from the buildings located at Okopowa Street 59. We moved away and, walking over logs of wood (which were arranged parallel to Kolska Street, with the beginning of the row more or less 25 m from the gate of the middle building and ending some 50 m from the wall of the Jewish Cemetery, the logs being placed in a line of some 80 m), I saw that some of the logs nearer to the gate of the middle building were burnt, while in the freshly-made hearth we saw blackened human remains, and I also smelled the characteristic whiff of burning human bodies.

More or less one week later, around 27 August, Kuran and I once again went to the gardens at Kolska Street, using the same route as before. On that occasion I did not see any flames near the chimney, while closer to the Jewish Cemetery I saw a burning pile where the logs of wood had once lain. As before, I recognised the characteristic smell of burning human bodies. In the garden adjacent to Kolska Street we met Stanisław Komar (I don't know his

address) and a man unknown to myself. They told us that they were hiding in the Jewish Cemetery and the vicinity, and had observed executions carried out in the square. The executions were performed daily, by firing squad, and the bodies were being burned.

Later (I don't remember the date) I met Father Zaleski and Stanisław Trzciński. Father Zaleski was hiding in the area and had observed the executions, while Trzciński was in a group of civilians who had been taken from the Old Town and were destined to be shot, but had managed to escape. From then on, I would hear the sound of gunshots from the direction of the square daily, right up to the end of September; I don't remember the exact dates.

I did not witness the victims being led to their execution, for from my hiding place I was unable to observe Okopowa Street and the premises of Pfeiffer's factory. Nor did I go to the premises of Pfeiffer's factory at the time. Only once, around the middle of September (I don't remember the exact date), Kuran and I looked through a window that opened onto Okopowa Street and saw civilians being driven on foot along the road. Kuran recognised some acquaintances from Żoliborz. I observed the marching group along the section between Okopowa Street 61 and Niska Street, and thus I could not see whether these people were subsequently taken to the premises of Pfeiffer's factory.

At this point the report was brought to a close and read out.