



## MARIA KIETLIŃSKA

Warsaw, 19 July 1949. Magister Norbert Szuman, a member of the Main Commission for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland, heard the person named below as a witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

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Name and surname	Maria Kietlińska
Date and place of birth	24 July 1927 in Warsaw
Parents' names	Hieronim and Jadwiga Kraszowska
Religious affiliation	Roman Catholic
State affiliation and nationality	Polish
Occupation	student at the University of Warsaw
Place of residence	Warsaw, Chełmska Street 18
Criminal record	none

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When the Warsaw Uprising broke out I was in my house at Chełmska Street 18. Until 27 August, the Germans – whose closest positions were in the barracks on Podchorążych Street (corner of Nowosielecka) and in the Brühn-Werke workshops at Belwederska Street 12 – were not very active. I haven't heard of any crimes committed at that time in the vicinity of my house, only that German patrols hindered the free movement of local residents. In the first ten days of August 1944, I don't remember the exact date, the Ujazdowski Hospital was evacuated to the almshouse (the so-called Pryjut) run by the sisters of the Family of Mary at Chełmska Street 19. From the very beginning, the premises and the buildings taken up by the hospital were clearly marked with Red Cross emblems.

Around 20 August, the first insurgents arrived. On 27 August the first larger insurgents' troops from the Kabacki Forest entered our grounds, along with support troops from Upper Mokotów. The insurgents took control of an area bounded (approximately) by Czerniakowska Street, Kaszubska Street, Tatrzeńska Street, and Sobieskiego Street, including Sadyba. The relative calm in our district came to an end.

Before this happened, however, I mean before the arrival of the insurgents, beginning around 20 August, the Germans had already started to "pacify" our district. This involved setting fire to particular houses or blocks of houses, and the inhabitants either ran away or were captured by the Germans and sent to Pruszków.

German behavior towards civilians varied – sometimes they acted decently, sometimes they took men to the barracks. I know in detail the story of the house at Jedwabnicza Street 4/6, which the Germans burned down in revenge for shots fired at them from it, and the men from that house, about a dozen, were taken to the barracks at Podchorążych Street. Nobody has heard from them since. It was, if I remember correctly, on 15 August. On the same day the Germans shot a gardener, Janyga, who – since he had German permission – wanted to save his shop from fire.

First and foremost, the "pacification" was carried out in the close vicinity of the German barracks, and then proceeded in the direction of Sadyba, covering, among other places, Czerniakowska Street and the streets running parallel and perpendicular to it. The operation was suspended when the insurgents entered our district.

At the end of August, despite the fact that it was clearly marked with a Red Cross sign, the hospital at Chełmska Street 19 was bombed. It was bombed four times (the last time on 14 September), which caused heavy losses among the injured there. After the first bombings, the evacuation from Warsaw began, and it was basically over by the beginning of September – only the most seriously injured remained on Chełmska Street.

When Sadyba was captured, the German forces attacked our district. At first the attack came from Sadyba (that is from the south) and from the barracks (that is from the north), but when the threat of Polish and Russian troops taking Praga became more pronounced, the Germans also launched an assault from the direction of the Vistula – that is from the east (Siekierki).



Chełmska Street was taken by the Germans on 15 September. At that time I was at Czerniakowska Street 1, and on 15 September I was taken from there by the Germans (Wehrmacht) marched under escort along with others to St. Boniface Church in Bernardynów Square. We spent a few hours there, waiting for the evacuation of all of Chełmska Street and for more people to be gathered. I learned from the inhabitants of my house that the people in the larger house were taken by the Germans without harassment, whereas five people who were in the smaller shelter, including my father, my 13-year-old brother, Jan Sołtysiak and his son Mieczysław, were executed by German soldiers. Allegedly this crime was committed by the Ukrainians. As far as I know, nobody witnessed the crime.

The corpses of the victims were found and buried after the Uprising, in February 1945.

The civilians who were "evacuated" from our district were sent to Pruszków.

I have not heard about other crimes committed in our district.

At that the report was concluded and read out.