



BOLESŁAW STERNIŃSKI

Warsaw, 14 March 1946. Judge Stanisław Rybiński, 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 an oath therefrom, following which the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Bolesław Sterniński
Date of birth	17 January 1888
Parents' names	Ludwik and Kunegunda, née Bąkowska
Occupation	labourer
Education	two classes of village school
Place of residence	village of Wawrzyszew, Bajana Street 16
Religion	Roman Catholic
Criminal record	none

In 1943 I lived in the same place as I do now, in the village of Wawrzyszew, together with my wife, but at the time we were accompanied by our only son, Witold Sterniński (born on 9 May 1925). My son was a fourth year student at a vocational school run by the Marists in Bielany, and had also enrolled in clandestine classes.

On 7 November 1943, a Sunday, when my son was returning home from our church, German gendarmes drove up in a motorcar; they were conducting a round-up in the township. People saw my son being stopped by the gendarmes and, as a friend of his (who was also stopped) told me, they gave him a hard time because he did not possess a work card. I know,



however, that my son worked at Wende's laboratory. The gendarmes released my son's friend, whose surname I do not know. He related that the gendarmes searched my son and found a newspaper. The other boy, who had nothing compromising on his person, was let go, but my son was detained, and immediately after that the gendarmes arrived at our house to carry out a search. They were searching for weapons, but didn't find anything. They only took my son's clothes, shoes, and all of his personal items.

The Germans took my son directly from our house, to Zaborów. The next day my wife and I went to Zaborów to save our son. I was forced to entertain the gendarmes who had taken my son, hoping that they would release him. They promised they would, but in the end made a condition that I must tell them which of our neighbours were hiding weapons. This I did not tell them. They didn't free my son, and when I went there the next day, he was no longer present. The gendarmes told me that they had taken him to aleja Szucha, and from there to Pawiak.

I continued to make efforts to get my son released, I submitted an application in German, but my attempts were unsuccessful.

On 12 November I saw my son's surname on a poster containing a list of hostages. My wife tried to save our son on her own initiative. She sold her belongings and gave the proceeds – a dozen or so thousand zlotys – to some woman who had approached her with a proposal, saying she was the fiancée of a Gestapo officer and the acquaintance of another Gestapo man. And yet all this was in vain. On 17 November another list was put up, and my son now figured amongst those executed by firing squad. Two days earlier we had been approached [...] by some engineer, who told my wife that he had been released from Pawiak where he had shared a cell with our son, who – when saying goodbye to this man – asked him to tell us that when he faced death, he would remember his parents.

I don't know where my son was shot dead. I don't know the surname of the woman to whom my wife gave the money for saving our son, nor do I know her whereabouts. Furthermore, I don't know the names of the gendarmes who had stopped my son.

The report was read out.