Wola massacre



What was the massacre of Wola? It began on August 5, 1944. To imagine the extent of this tragedy, we must realize that about 700 people were murdered every hour. Every minute, 12 inhabitants of Warsaw were killed by Germans.







We still don't know exactly how many people were killed. According to various estimates, the Germans murdered about 50,000 people within 10 days. The most tragic day was the "Black Saturday", when between 20-30 thousand people died in mass slaughter. Residents of Warsaw's Wola district. This is one of the greatest mass crimes in history.



The order was clear. Destroy Warsaw together with its inhabitants. No one was spared. The scale of bestiality was terrifying. On August 5, the patients and hospital staff in Wola also fell victims of the genocide. German soldiers entered the premises of the Wolski Hospital at 26 Płocka Street. The liquidation of the hospital resulted in a total death toll of over 360 victims. Among the murdered there were 60 hospital employees, including six doctors, and 300 patients.





What happened to those responsible for this massacre? None of the perpetrators of the Wola massacre was prosecuted after the war.

Erich von dem Bach



A few months after the end of hostilities, Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski was arrested by the Americans. During the main Nuremberg trials, he gave a few testimonies incriminating Nazi leaders, thanks to which the U.S. later refused to extradite him to Polish. He was never tried for crimes committed during the suppression of the Warsaw Uprising.

Heinz Reinefarth



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SS-Gruppenführer Heinz Reinefarth was not extradited to Polish because the American occupation authorities did not agree to it. In 1949, he successfully passed the denazification procedure. From 1951 to 1967 he was mayor of the city of Westerland on the island of Sylt, and from 1958 he was also a member of the state parliament of Schleswig-Holstein. He died in May 1979 – unpunished for the crimes committed in Warsaw.



Oskar Dirlewanger



Before the war, he was convicted of raping a 13-year-old girl, one of the greatest sadists in the SS, despised even by his comrades-in-arms and superiors. It was his soldiers – common criminals – who carried out bestial

murders on the defenceless inhabitants of Wola. He died in unclear circumstances in Germany in 1945. Probably after imprisonment, he was beaten to death by Poles.

Reiner Stahel



Reiner Stah

This Luftwaffe general was commander of the Warsaw garrison and led the German forces before von dem Bach took over his duties. He gave the order to kill every suspect who participated in the Uprising and recommended the use of hostages as so-called human shields. He died in Soviet captivity in the 1950s.

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Translated by: MZ

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Sources: 80 lat po Rzezi Woli (warszawa.tvp.pl)

Piekło na ziemi – 80. rocznica Rzezi Woli (https://muzeumwarszawy.pl)

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