

# Lansdowne architect aided Nazis, Justice Dept. charges

The government wants to revoke his citizenship.  
The complaint cites "murder and other persecution."

By David Lee Preston  
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

A retired Lansdowne architect, who has been a leader of Philadelphia's Lithuanian community for four decades, was accused yesterday by federal authorities of serving as a high-ranking officer in a volunteer unit that helped the Nazis murder Lithuanian Jews and other unarmed civilians in 1941 and 1942.

In documents filed in federal court in Philadelphia, the Justice Department said that Jonas Stelmokas, 75, of

the 200 block of Lansdowne Avenue, a former chairman of the Philadelphia chapter of the Lithuanian-American Community of the U.S.A. Inc., "advocated, assisted, participated or acquiesced in the murder and other persecution of Jews and other unarmed civilians in Lithuania."

The Justice Department charged that Stelmokas both concealed information and misrepresented his background when he applied for a U.S. visa in 1949 and when he applied for citizenship in 1954.

The department moved to revoke his citizenship. If it succeeds, it will seek to deport Stelmokas.

Neither Stelmokas nor his lawyer, John Rogers Carroll, could be reached for comment yesterday. Carroll's secretary said he was unavailable.

Local Lithuanian-American leaders expressed disbelief at the charges against Stelmokas.

The complaint, brought by the department's Nazi-hunting Office of Special Investigations, alleges that Stelmokas falsely swore that the only organization to which he had belonged before 1945 was the Lithua-

See **ARCHITECT** on A11

June 16, 1992, Stelmokas

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davidleepreston2001

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