

Retiree won't answer inquiries in Nazi case

The U.S. says Jonas Stelmokas helped in mass murders 50 years ago. He is keeping silent.

By David Lee Preston
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

A retired Philadelphia architect has taken the Fifth Amendment in response to key sections of a federal denaturalization complaint charging that he helped the Nazis kill Jews and other unarmed civilians in Lithuania in 1941 and 1942.

Jonas Stelmokas, 76, of the 200 block of Lansdowne Avenue, Lansdowne, has been a leader of Philadelphia's Lithuanian community for four decades. The Justice Department accused him in June of having served as a high-ranking officer in a

volunteer Nazi unit that participated in mass murders.

In moving to revoke his citizenship, the department charged that Stelmokas concealed information and misrepresented his background when he applied for a U.S. visa in 1949 — the year he came to the United States — and when he applied for citizenship in 1954. Stelmokas became a U.S. citizen in 1955.

If the department's case succeeds, it will seek to deport Stelmokas.

In a response filed last month, Stelmokas asked for dismissal of the complaint, declining to answer 10 crucial paragraphs "on the ground that his answers could be used against him in criminal proceedings in the United States and other countries." The response was filed in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia by

See **STELMOKAS** on B5

Sept. 4, 1992, Stelmokas

Clipped By:



davidleepreston2001

Thu, Nov 9, 2017