



MICHAŁ KULA

Fourth day of the hearing

Presiding Judge: Please summon witness Kula.

(*Witness Kula enters the courtroom.*)

Please provide your personal details.

Witness: Michał Kula, born on 7 September 1912, religion – Roman Catholic, a mechanical engineer by profession, 35 years old, unmarried.

Presiding Judge: I hereby instruct the witness, pursuant to the provisions of Article 107 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, that you are required to speak the truth. The provision of false testimony is punishable by a term of imprisonment of up to five years. Do the parties wish to make any motions as to the procedure according to which the witness is to be interviewed?

Prosecutors: We release the witness from the obligation to take an oath.

Defense attorneys: We too.

Witness Michał Kula: I arrived at Auschwitz on 15 August 1940. I was given number 2718. Amongst the accused present here today are five *Blockführers* [block leaders], who were in Auschwitz by then and remained there until the end of the camp's existence. Our train drove up to the side ramp of the camp at 4.30 a.m.

We were greeted by the SS men and *Blockführers*, and by *kapos* with sticks and dogs, so that we soon lost our caps and parcels. They arranged us in fives. We were led into the main camp, the gate to which was adorned with the words *Arbeit macht frei*. We were convinced that we had come to a labor camp and awaited further instructions. The guards arranged us in rows in the roll call square, which was graveled (it was formerly used as a riding arena for the artillery). SS men and 30 *kapos* immediately stepped in between the ranks of prisoners. They searched those in the first row for necklaces, medallions and rings, looking for gold and other valuables. Three people from our transport had been shot dead along the way.



At the time, the camp had only one well. The number of inmates was approximately 3,400. We were woken up and summoned for roll call at 4.30 a.m., and worked between 5.30 a.m. and 12.00 p.m. and, after an hourly break for dinner, from 1.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Before work we would have exercises, while new arrivals had to go through quarantine and a number of other torments, about which other witnesses have already spoken. The SS men did everything to humiliate us and create conditions in which prisoners would die off within at most three months.

The living conditions were terrible, and indeed the majority of prisoners were unable to survive in the camp for more than these three months. Beatings and whippings were frequent during each afternoon and evening roll call. The Germans set up a special buck, upon which they beat any prisoner who committed some offense, such as finding a potato or possessing a piece of sheet metal that he used as a knife. If you were sentenced to a whipping, you received 25 blows, and both the camp command and the prisoners would always be present at the event. Whippings were ordered by the SS men.

Each newly arrived prisoner had to be registered in the files and given an ash box marked with his number, which contained a can, similar to the ones used for tinned food. These cans were kept in the SS men's block next to the crematorium (where the SS hospital was located), arranged in the attic in wait for [the earthly remains of] their "owners". Initially, the death rate in the camp was around 10 people per day. Later, however, it increased with great rapidity. Despite all the difficulties, we Poles could not be broken down, and so after one evening roll-call *Lagerführer* [camp leader] Fritsch, seeing how strong our attitude was, summoned all of the SS men and prisoners, and said: "The Polish intelligentsia must forget about Poland ever being reborn – you will never work in your professions again. All you engineers, doctors and professors should sign up as stoneworkers and learn stonework and quarrying, and if you do, then after three years you will be allowed to bring in your families, you will be given oranges and other fruits, etc.". A load of empty promises. But many heeded his words and indeed signed up. They were sent to Mauthausen, where they soon perished. In this way Fritsch tried to eliminate the intelligentsia from Auschwitz.

And since the mortality rate grew and the small crematorium could no longer cope, they started work on new crematoria in Birkenau. At the time I worked in the locksmith's shop. Some 140 qualified workers were employed there. We built the camp in Birkenau – we made



the fences, the crematorium doors and grates. The accused Grabner was very interested in the first gassing that took place in Birkenau. And the first order that he gave us was to produce and install a ventilator for the crematorium. Three of us carried out the task – Sablewski, Steciński and myself. Grabner personally inspected our work and hurried us on. We finished at around 11.00 a.m. and installed one ventilator on the roof. After we returned to the locksmith's shop and collected our clothes, the SS men led us away to the camp. While we were walking back, we saw some 200 completely naked people being herded through the camp gate and into the crematorium. At the time we lived in block no. 22. Only the SS hospital divided us from the crematorium. You could hear all the screams perfectly. This was the first gassing carried out in the crematorium. Earlier, however, they had gassed some Russians at block 11. In July 1941 the camp received a transport of Russians; they were thin and haggard, dressed in rags, and barefooted. After all the *kommandos* had gone off to work, the SS men and *kapos* turned their attention to these people. They gave them something to do near the *Blockführerstube* [guardhouse], where there was a gravel pit. By noon, 50 of the Russian had been killed with shovels or pickaxes. One of the *Blockführers*, who is not present amongst the accused, had a special method of killing prisoners: he would order the poor wretch to heap up some earth and then lie down in it face first, while he himself stood on the man's shoulders. The victim would soon suffocate. None of the other Russians went out to work in the afternoon. The Germans took some 200 prisoners from the sick block, gave them dressings, and had them carried off to block 11 – the bunker. The remaining Russians were also led there, whereupon the whole group was gassed.

This was the first gassing carried out in Auschwitz. These prisoners were left in the bunker until the next day, for there was a holiday of some sort and we were let off work in the afternoon. Finally, Palitzsch and one of the *Blockführers* entered the structure wearing gas masks. They soon determined that some of the victims were still alive, and so they gassed them again. These people suffocated to death, biting themselves and those around them; many had their arms and legs bitten off. When they were being loaded onto the roller weigher, parts of their bodies simply fell off. All the corpses were transported to Birkenau, to a specially dug pit. The prisoners who ferried them (among others Stanisław Budzki) went mad. I had known Budzki previously and I can state that he is no longer sane. But the bodies started to swell and ferment, and soon a mound grew – a year or so later it exploded. The stench was so terrible that we could barely breathe. And so flamethrowers were brought in



in order to burn the heap of bodies. The corpses of the gassed victims were incinerated, and the pit dug afresh. Next, the Germans started building enormous crematoria. These were organized in such a way that the victims did not know where they were being taken. Some crematoria had two gas chambers – one for 1,500 and the other for 2,000 people. They were fitted with special concrete platforms: when people were thrown onto them, they rose up, causing the victims to fall directly into the gas chambers. The chamber was approximately two meters high, and surrounded by small channels – a brick wide – equipped with ventilators. There was also makeshift piping, which resulted in the gas chamber resembling a bath; in consequence, the people who were led there thought they were going to bathe.

The doors to the chambers were insulated with a special type of felt and were provided with strong ferrules, which were made on the spot, in the locksmith's shop. Grabner was interested in the project and ordered that the doors be thoroughly checked before the first gassing, which was attended by *Reichsführer* Himmler himself. So as to ensure that the "guests" would be able to view the course of the killing, Grabner ordered that special eyeholes be made in the doors – these allowed those who were outside to observe how the victims were behaving. Grabner checked personally whether the glass was of the appropriate thickness, so that no one could poke it out with their finger.

Those locked in the gas chamber suffered for up to 15 minutes. Three cans of Zyklon B were used. Once the chamber was opened, the ventilators were switched on, forcing the gas out through the channels. A *Sonderkommando* [special squad] dragged out the bodies, whereafter the interior was washed. For this purpose the personnel were provided with special sprayers, which introduced a characteristic hospital smell into the chambers. And then the next batch would go in. The undressing of victims was conducted thus: there were wooden slats with numbers on the walls of the hall which the people entered, and only a single SS man kept order. He would tell them: "Hang your clothes and remember the numbers, so that you do not quarrel later. You can deposit your valuables or leave them in your clothes, nothing will be stolen from you here". Every fourth person was given a towel and a bar of soap, and then they walked into the chamber. When the gassings reached a peak, the crematoriums could not keep up. One had eight furnaces, and another 16; these were the so-called muffle furnaces, in which the corpses burned quicker. The furnace grates and ferrules were made in the camp, in the locksmith's shop. Gassings were accompanied by the digging of pits, to which the bodies were taken on carts. First, a layer of branches



and small logs would be laid down in the bottom of the pit and some bodies placed upon it; these were then covered with another layer of branches, with one more layer of corpses being arranged on top. The piles would then be doused with liquid paraffin and set alight with flamethrowers. Another method consisted in arranging women's bodies separately, for they were more delicate and burned faster.

That would be all as regards the gassings. But there were other execution techniques, too. Shooting executions were carried out in a number of ways. The victims of such killings would be new arrivals who were not entered in the camp register. Shootings were even carried out on the grounds of the camp, in the small crematorium. Usually, they were performed by *Unterscharführer* Lachmann, who worked in the political department. Other prisoners who were condemned to death were sent in by the Gestapo, and their sentences simply followed them.

Executions were carried out on the grounds of the camp in the presence of Grabner and the *Lagerführer*. Depending on the circumstances, various functionaries were present at executions. There were also instances when the Germans, having determined that some sort of underground organization was operating in the camp, locked people up in the bunker – mainly officers of the Polish Army. These people were not put before a court. Three functionaries would just walk up: a *Lagerführer*, someone from the political department, usually the accused Grabner, and the caretaker, who would open the cell door. They simply set a number and selected those who were to die. These people would be taken from the bunker upstairs, where they were undressed, and then led through the side door to the courtyard of block 11. They were walked out by the block leader, who would give each his arm; he stood by them at the “wall of death”.

Palitzsch was the regular executioner. He had a 15-shot small caliber carbine, which had been made by us in the locksmith's shop. Initially, the weapon was manual action, and so Palitzsch ordered us to modify it for automatic firing in order to speed up the killing. The block leader of block 11 would lead out two prisoners. Each Catholic wanted to cross himself before dying, and so he made the sign of the cross. Then Palitzsch would say: *noch einmal* [once again]. And when the victim lifted his hand, he would be shot; the block leader would then let go of his hand and allow the body to fall. Then they walked over to the next man.



Those 12,000 Russians were exterminated in one of two different ways, that is by gassing or by being starved to death, for all they ever got to eat was water with rutabaga in barrels; they even had no utensils, no spoons or bowls, just empty food tins. The majority died of hunger. The executions of those Russians who were shot dead at block 11 usually took place in the evenings, after 9.00 p.m. At this time I was in the very next block, and at night you could hear each shot with clarity. A hundred naked Russians would be herded to the spot, where Palitzsch – as always – would shoot them dead. There was an incident when one of the condemned Russians, a well-built man, threw himself at Palitzsch, but Palitzsch's assistant, a prisoner – I do not know his nationality, he was called "Wacek" – defended him, for otherwise Palitzsch would have perished. From that moment on, all of the prisoners had their hands tied with wire behind their backs.

Next were the executions of the Lublin transport, in the course of which 261 people were killed. The prisoners were led to their deaths by Palitzsch and Brodniewicz, a *Lagerältester* [camp elder]. When they entered block 11 and walked up to the first floor, they knew what was going to happen. Machine guns were set up and the execution commenced. But a revolt soon erupted and an SS man came up from the political department and said that the execution would not be carried out, that the case had been made known to Berlin by telegraph, and that the people's death sentences would be rescinded. But a greater number of SS men then came up, and in the afternoon all 260 prisoners were shot dead.

The second execution took place in the early days of the camp at Birkenau, and it was administered personally by Aumeier and Palitzsch. The victim was from Upper Silesia, and he had been sentenced for his involvement in a clandestine organization. In the morning hours the prisoners were dressed up and sent to the penal company in camp A. At the time, Szczęśniak and Obrębski were in this company, working on the construction of the bath. In the afternoon Aumeier rode up on a small horse – as big as himself – and entered the women's camp, riding on the animal from room to room, beating people. Next, he proceeded to the camp, where there were 40 people in the penal company; they were herded through the gate, which was in fact a small opening in the wall. Aumeier stood on one side and Palitzsch on the other – the prisoners milled around and, while doing so, they were dispatched with shots to the back of the head. After half an hour or so Aumeier walked out, satisfied, and got onto his horse and rode away.



The accused Grabner was a specialist when it came to instruments for torturing prisoners, and he had them made in the locksmith's shop. These included bucks, instruments for squeezing fingers and handcuffs that locked automatically. He had all of them made in the locksmith's shop, and they were used at the political department. Once the prisoners arrived at the political department, the SS men bound them with manacles of the medieval type. What was the procedure followed by the Germans? A prisoner would be brought to the locksmith's shop, placed near the anvil and have two sets of bars riveted together around his arms and legs. This task was usually carried out by locksmiths Łabados and Szewczyk, who tried to be as gentle as possible, however they were hurried on by the SS men, who in turn wanted the prisoners to suffer as much pain as possible.

Some of the new arrivals at Auschwitz were placed by the political department in block 2. In block 2, everyone was forced to lie face down on the floor all day, and the SS men kept guard to make sure that the order was obeyed.

Every day people would be brought into the political department, where they were terribly beaten. Nearly all of these people perished. While those who were not killed at the political department were taken to the *Krankenbarack* [hospital barrack] and finished off there.

I would like to ask the accused Grabner about the fenced block to which no one had access. In 1943, some 80 young people arrived there; they spoke in various languages, but all spoke German. Before noon, these people attended lectures. The lecturers were "professors" from the *Sicherheitsdienst*. Even the *Blockführers* were not allowed to talk with them. They wore green uniforms with Bulgarian-type badges. At noon, they went for a meal to the SS canteen, while in the afternoon they had physical exercises. These people remained in the camp for some three months, whereafter they were taken away – but I do not know what happened with them. Maybe Grabner could tell us?

Various people would arrive at the camp, sent by the *Führer* himself, and – as it was said – by the *Obermedizinalrat* [chief municipal physician] Dr. Schumann, and also Dr. Clauberg, who carried out experiments at block 10, where the women were incarcerated. Schumann used block 10, and at the same time conducted sterilization experiments in Birkenau, where two apparatuses were installed. People were supplied for these trials by the camp authorities. Schuman even turned to the *Lagerführer* [for prisoners], while in Birkenau the *Arbeitschef*



[labor chief] assigned mainly Jews for these purposes. Schumann said if things continued at the present pace, there would be no Poles alive in 40 years. Thus, there was no need to gas them, for over these 40 years people would still be needed for work. This was the fate planned for all Slavic nations.

Now, as to the course of the sterilization procedure. There were two X-ray machines, each powered with a high voltage current (250,000 V, 40 milliamperes). Men were castrated using the machine set up at block 30. There was a 10-meter lead plate there and two glass plates, through which Schumann observed his experiments. Since the apparatuses required maintenance, Schumann turned to Grabner with a request that he assign him someone. He selected Stanisław Ślęzak (a Czech). He was very talented, this Czech, and he could not possibly refuse, for refusal would have been tantamount to the penal company, which itself was tantamount to death. Having been thus entrusted with the electrical maintenance work, he would turn to the locksmith's shop with requests for various electrical items. The head of the shop was one Schwarz, the father of *Lagerführer* Schwarz. He had recommended me to Schumann, saying that I knew about these things. I went to Birkenau and had a good look at the machines, and this is how I got to know about the sterilizations. When Schumann was conducting his experiments, I tried to be absent, so that he would not start thinking that I was spying on him.

Whenever Schumann went to Berlin with his experimental materials, with the burnt-up testicles amputated from the victims, his place would be taken by two other doctors who continued the experiments. I was there at the time and I observed everything.

The subjects – men – were completely naked, and they stood on stools. One machine irradiated one testicle, while a lead plate sealed off the other. In this way they calculated the "R" value and controlled the results, at the same time ensuring that the subject did not die, for initially the procedures had always ended in death. They applied various currents, and this resulted in the burning of the testicle. The prisoner was kept in the isolation ward for a month after being castrated. Later, the experiments were extended to women. Some were locked up with the sterilized men in order to determine the level of infertility. After a month, the prisoner's testicle would be cut out. Schumann would put it into a glass vessel and take it to Berlin.



The women were frequently irradiated using X-ray machines. The irradiated body parts would drop off. Everyone who went through the X-ray experiments ended up in the gas chamber. At Auschwitz, various procedures were performed on children as well. But the majority of them were either killed on the spot or thrown into the furnaces.

The children who arrived with parents following the Warsaw Uprising were sent to the male camp, while their mothers were put in the female camp. The boys would often approach the wire fence in order to meet up with their mothers. But the fence was live, and the high voltage current that surged through it caused electric shocks and even death. So as to provide them with work, the boys were ordered to push carts, with 10 or 15 being assigned to each.

The leader, who drove around with them, was their block leader, one Bednarek. These children pulled the roller weigher and used it to remove rubbish and scraps from the kitchen; they also carted off other wastes from the male camp, and indeed from many other areas of the camp. One roller weigher would be pulled by 15 – 20 kids. Quite often, while riding around certain sections they could meet up with their mothers, and all of them volunteered for such work.

Aumeier testified that he was never present at executions. Aumeier was always present at executions by hanging, which were carried out in front of all the prisoners. There was one particular incident when the victim who was to be hanged was not an inmate, but an outsider, a civilian who had helped some prisoners escape. And, by way of an exception, the gallows was erected not next to the kitchen, but just in front of block 4. When he stood under the gallows, Aumeier turned particular attention (and I saw this excellently well, for I was standing in the first row, only 10 meters from the structure) to the method of placement of the noose. The thing was that when one end of the rope went up behind the ear, death was instantaneous. But Aumeier instructed the SS men to place the noose in such a way that the rope would run near the man's mouth. As a result, the victim suffered awfully for some 10 minutes. He looked terrible – he swelled immediately, so you could not even see the rope, and his face became red and bloated. Aumeier stood near the hanging corpse with a satisfied expression, clearly proud that the incorrect placement of the rope – with it running not behind the ear, but parallel to the nose – had not resulted in immediate death.



Presiding Judge: I hereby order a recess until 4.00 p.m. The session was adjourned at 1.00 p.m.

(Following a recess)

Presiding Judge: Does the witness recognize any of the five *Blockführers* whom he previously mentioned?

Witness: Yes, I recognize Müller.

Presiding Judge: Does the witness recognize any other of the accused?

Witness: I do not remember surnames, but I can say that there are a few among them who were less zealous in fulfilling their duties.

Presiding Judge: And who were the more zealous?

Witness: First of all Grabner and Aumeier, and partially also Müller.

Presiding Judge: How did their zealousness manifest itself?

Witness: In the way they persecuted, beat and tortured people, and through their participation in all of the executions.

Presiding Judge: Does the witness remember any specific instances of maltreatment?

Witness: These were commonplace. And Aumeier excelled. In any case, Auschwitz went through various phases, so-called changes of approach. These also occurred during Liebehenschel's tenure. But such "changes of approach" would last no more than a few days. They were brought about by the fact that the German garrison, and in particular the political department, knew full well that the Polish prisoners were excellently organized and that there existed some sort of organization [in the camp] which in spite of a large-scale intelligence campaign, even with the assistance of the Gestapo, simply could not be disclosed – although this organization included a large number of prisoners of a great many different nationalities. They saw that they risked overstepping the mark, and there was even an incident when two prisoners – who subsequently escaped – killed an SS man. As it turned out, the SS man leading the inmates to work had been drunk and had announced to the prisoners that he would shoot them. Fearing for their lives, they took his rifle and, knowing that they would be executed for appropriating it, they shot him in order to stop him from preventing their escape.



The repressions were very severe. In retaliation for these men's escape, 22 members of their families were brought to the camp. There were children among them, and they were hanged in the courtyard of block 11. The entire camp – and the SS garrison – talked about nothing else but the decimation of prisoners.

We prisoners were well organized at the time, and the tension was such that we were ready for anything. Seeing this, the camp administration and the political department instructed the block leaders to inform prisoners that there would be no more shootings on the grounds of the camp. This period of grace lasted around one week. For within a week the Germans organized the mowing *kommando*. The *Arbeitsdienstführer* [head of the camp labor service] is present in the courtroom, and he knew about the *kommando* and for what purpose it had been established. Namely Müller and Josten. During this time, *Untersturmführer* Söhn was also involved. The *kommando* was watched over with particular care by the political department, i.e. the accused Grabner, Lachmann and Woźnica. This detail was staffed, among others, with SS men from the political office and those about whom it was known that they wanted to go on leave and were eager to shoot. The workers in the *kommando* changed daily. Those who were sentenced to death were not always killed on the grounds of the camp; some would be assigned to the mowing *kommando* and feigned escape attempts would be organized, in the course of which these people were shot by the *Blockführer*. He was given the numbers of those whom he was to shoot. And how did such a feigned escape attempt look? Usually, an SS man would take a rake outside the *Postenkette* [network of guard posts] and order a prisoner to bring it back. The inmate would be shot while attempting to fulfill the order. Sometimes one of the guards would simply take a man's cap and throw it, and thereafter shoot the prisoner whom he had told to fetch it. After such a *kommando* returned, a roller weigher would be sent out to bring back the bodies of the murdered victims, covered with grass to ensure secrecy.

I can also say a few things about the accused Mandl, for I was in the women's camp nearly every day. Since I had a special pass from Schumann that allowed me to access the building where the X-ray machines were located, I saw the accused, assisted by Dr. Mengele and Rhode, select women for the gas chamber. *Bloksperre* [close barracks] would be ordered, and the women would be forbidden to exit their blocks. All were then herded into block 25, while trucks drove up in front and took them to the gas chamber. But sometimes the selectees had to wait for as many as three days, without any food. How did the collection from block



25 proceed? A truck would drive up, steps would be placed at its side, and the women would be led out – some completely naked, others in shirts. The women earmarked for gassing behaved completely calmly. They boarded the vehicle as if it was to take them on a trip somewhere. The accused [Mandl] would be present, accompanied by SS men. But when the sideboards were closed, the women would start screaming terribly, stopping only when they reached the crematorium.

The accused walked around with a dog and set it on the victims; some she would order to kneel as punishment, and beat them viciously. The selections that took place outside the camp, near the gate, were regularly attended by the accused [Mandl]. While the *kommandos* were returning from work, the accused would stand near the gate with a ginger-haired SS man; he was later killed in the crematorium. When the women reached the gate, the ginger-haired SS man would set a cane at a height of one meter, like a makeshift hurdle; the women had to jump over it, and those who failed would be sent to block 25 for gassing. If a woman cleared the obstacle, the SS man would lift it higher. As regards the gassings, all of the SS men were fully aware of what went on at the camp. None of them – irrespective of his former position – can excuse himself by saying that he knew nothing and did not take part.

One day, this ginger-haired SS man was at the crematorium when a transport of French women was being gassed. Inebriated, he was accompanied by a friend, one Emmerich. The two started poking fun at the naked women. The women knew what awaited them. One of them struck the ginger-haired SS man in the face, and when he fell over and dropped his pistol, the woman shot him with it. Emmerich was wounded in the leg during this incident, and he later walked around with a stiff leg. Thus, they all took part in the gassings.

I would like to inquire whether the accused Grabner remembers the first gassing carried out on the grounds of Birkenau (when the crematorium had not yet been built) in the crematorium at the *Stammlager* [parent camp], in the so-called white house? This was a small building, and its original residents had been evicted. Thereafter it was used for gassings. These took place mainly at night. Some 80 people would be led inside, and a can of Zyklon B thrown in after them. In one instance the prisoners managed to escape, but since they were exhausted and unable to swim across the River Soła, which flows nearby and thus cut off their escape route, they were all captured and shot dead.



As regards the accused Liebehenschel and his statement that the camp was a “sanatorium”, I would like to say – first of all – that it was not, and next that whatever improvements were made were not of his doing. It is true that when he took over command conditions in the camp got better, but I have already explained why the camp authorities decided to change tactics. However the gassings continued unabated. Does the *Arbeitsdienstführer* remember how he assigned the “Muslims” – people unfit for work – to be used for dog training? None of the SS men who carried out dog training are present in the courtroom today. By noon every day, at least 25 people would have been torn to pieces by the animals. Now, as regards the course of “dog training”: a prisoner would be ordered to run and the dog would then be set loose. The prisoner was not allowed to defend himself, and so the dog would tear at his clothes and body. Training took place in the camp, near the pigsty.

As concerns the SS men who acted as *Blockführers* and therefore came into contact with us, some – when not observed by their superiors – behaved humanely, while others were cruel and inhuman. There was one whom I did not encounter anywhere, at any of the executions, and I do not know his surname – this older man (he points towards the dock). It turns out that he is Bogusch.

(Next, the witness points to the *Blockführers* from the *Bauleitung* [construction company], the accused Götze and Dinges.)

Regarding *Blockführer* Müller, he used to punish inmates with whippings. He was the leader of block 11 for some time, and he should know about all the executions. He was the best behaved of all the SS men who served there. But he was most zealous when observed by his superiors. When he held the position of *Arbeitsdienstführer* and noticed that a prisoner wanted to rest, he would turn away in order not to see this transgression. Nevertheless, he was still a zealous SS man.

As for the accused Josten, I must say that I never once saw him hitting a prisoner, although he was very scrupulous in carrying out his duties. He always had a gloomy look, and he never talked with the prisoners.

This is all that I wanted to testify.

Presiding Judge: Do the Prosecutors have any questions?



Prosecutor Cyprian: The witness has informed us that the bodies of gassing victims were incinerated. Were their teeth and hair removed beforehand? And what happened with these items?

Witness: Those earmarked for gassing walked naked to the gas chamber. After they had been killed, the corpses passed through a so-called medical office, where [gold] teeth were torn out and gold ribs (if found) removed, while the women were searched for hidden gold and gemstones; all the corpses had their hair cut. This procedure was carried out with great thoroughness, and afterwards the bodies were placed in lifts which took them to the furnaces.

Prosecutor Cyprian: What happened with these items?

Witness: The less valuable articles were taken away in wagons, while the gold was taken to the block that housed the SS hospital. The prisoners who worked there melted the gold and packed it into cases.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: Does the witness remember block 5 towards the end of 1940, and the children who were placed there? Where were they from, and what was their fate?

Witness: They were young boys, mainly Poles, who had been separated from us and placed in block 5. These boys were taught German from morning until noon. The then *Lagerführer*, Mayer, gave them his word of honor that they would become *Reichsdeutschers* if only they studied hard.

But the Polish prisoners soon took these boys under their wing and sabotaged the *Lagerführer's* effort. Thus, they were reorganized into squads. We had people in the camp who worked on the education of youth. To name but two – Professor Florczyk, a mathematician, and engineer Kubisz from Mościce.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: Who were Baldasiński and Wierzbica?

Witness: Baldasiński was a block elder, and he maltreated these boys. "Bloody Stefan", that is Wierzbica, was his deputy. This was the torture block.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: And so there were losses?



Witness: Immense losses. In the autumn, and even in winter, the kids would be driven out into the courtyard; tubs had been set up there, and the boys were forced to wash their legs in the cold.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: The witness mentioned that the *Arbeitsdienstführer* chose prisoners who were later tortured by dogs. I ask the witness to provide his surname.

Witness: There were two such men – Müller and Zeller, who is not present here today.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Does the witness remember what happened with the sick who were unable to work standing? Were there any “sitting” jobs? What was the practice?

Witness: When an inmate was incapable of performing hard labor, he would go to the infirmary and the doctor would give him a certificate allowing him to perform sitting work. The prisoner would then go to the *kapo* and say: “Sir, I have a sitting job, for I am no longer able to work standing”. *Kapo* Konrad, who supervised the cleaning of bricks, would then sharpen a stake, embed it in the ground – with the sharpened end pointing upwards – and order the prisoner to sit on it, patting him strongly on the shoulder. This was how the “sitting” jobs looked in practice. Prisoners were not allowed to stand up – they had to sit firmly on the stake.

Defense attorney Kruh: The witness has testified that the accused Josten and Müller headed the mowing *kommando*. For how long?

Witness: All the time.

Defense attorney: What was their role?

Witness: They sent the *kommando* to work. The rest was administered by Grabner, who assigned people.

Defense attorney: Did the witness see Müller and Josten shooting at people?

Witness: No.

Defense attorney: The witness has testified that as *Blockführer* of block 11, Müller was better than the others? How much “better” was he?



Witness: He was better because the others sent such large numbers of prisoners to the bunker that they suffocated. Müller sent smaller numbers.

Defense attorneys: Is it possible for the witness to state whether Josten was only the commandant of the fire brigade and the anti-aircraft defenses, and had no contact with the prisoners?

Witness: I only know that for some time he was the deputy of the *Lagerführer*.

Defense attorney: The witness has testified that the accused did not mistreat the prisoners personally, but sent others who committed acts of maltreatment. How did the witness establish that this was the case?

Witness: Once, I saw Josten (he was a hunter and would often go on chases) arrive at the *Waffen-Meisterei* [armory] with a double-barreled shotgun, whereupon he determined that the prisoners were not working with the requisite diligence. And although he himself did not mistreat these prisoners, he made such a terrible scene that the *Blockführer* felt compelled to beat up them up. I would just like to ask Grabner to explain what happened with the people at block 6.

Presiding Judge: Are there any questions?

The accused Aumeier: Today in the morning the witness declared that when Fritsch was camp commandant, one of the standard punishments would be a flogging. I would like to ask whether the flogging was administered forthwith, right after the offense, and also who gave the order for it to be carried out?

Witness: Floggings were meted out for even the slightest infringements throughout the entire period of existence of the camp – not only when Fritsch was commandant. The *Lagerführer* was always present at whippings, as he was at all executions, which took place immediately after roll call, before the gathered prisoners. I have just remembered one more instance: a man, previously sentenced to death, was about to be hanged, and Aumeier, Höß, Grabner, Woźnica and Lachman were all in attendance. But Aumeier suddenly remembered that the prisoner had been sentenced to a flogging for smoking a cigarette. So Aumeier ordered that he first be flogged (25 strokes), and only then hanged. Some of the *Blockführers* who assisted in this execution are present here today. Do they remember the incident?



(Silence in the dock.)

Presiding Judge: Are there any further questions?

The accused Mandl: I would like the following question to be put to the witness: did he see me attending the experiments carried out by Dr. Schumann?

Witness: I never said that I had seen the accused doing so, for I had not.

The accused Mandl: Please ask the witness whether he saw me at the selections that were made for these purposes?

Witness: No, I did not. The accused only gave out some instructions and provided numbers – that was sufficient. She did not have to be present at the selections.

The accused Mandl: I asked the witness to state whether he saw me present during selections of people for Dr. Schumann's experiments?

Witness: I have already said that the accused was not present, she only gave orders, and this was sufficient.

The accused Mandl: Was it I who issued orders when people were being selected for the so-called *Sonderaktion* [special action], or the doctor?

Witness: The witness was present in the company of doctors, she walked around the blocks and they did this together – the doctors because they were duty-bound, and the accused by virtue of her office.

The accused: Was I present at the gassings in the crematorium?

Witness: She was present only when the transports were being directed to the crematorium, and she selected people.

Presiding Judge: Accused Josten.

The accused Josten: I would like to pose a question to the witness, and also make a declaration concerning my indictment. I was never a member of the *Arbeitseinsatz* [labor deployment office] and neither was I its head. I was only assigned to the *Arbeitseinsatz* as an inspection manager. My duties were to check the numerical strength of *kommando*



guard details. In other words, I was responsible for security. Thus, if a *kommando* had been deployed, but I ascertained that the number of guards was clearly insufficient, I would turn that *kommando* back to the camp.

Witness: I have not testified anything different.

Presiding Judge: The same. Accused Grabner, please speak.

The accused Grabner: May I ask the witness about a certain formation or *kommando* that functioned in the camp? In what year was this?

Witness: In 1942.

The accused: As regards the previously mentioned *kommando*, which was supposed to wear brown uniforms, then I remember that such a *kommando* did actually exist, and it comprised people from the Caucasus Mountains. They were known as activists. I do not know why they had been sent to the camp. I know only that they were soon transferred from Auschwitz to Birkenau, where they were commanded by some *Obersturmführer*. May I ask the witness a question concerning my purported participation in the assignment of electrotechnicians to the activities of Dr. Clauberg? Was this prisoner sent from the political department or elsewhere? I do not know what this is all about.

Witness: All of us who worked at the crematorium – Jews and Poles alike – were subsequently eliminated. Jews would be gassed every three months, while Grabner also selected five Poles for death. They were liquidated at Mauthausen in 1944, where they were taken before Christmas. Grabner attached Stanisław Ślęzak to the group that had worked at the crematorium. Ślęzak had been assigned by the political department and care was taken not to allow him to leave the camp with any of the other transports, for this man knew too much and had been marked for death; he was killed on 22 January 1945 in Mauthausen together with the five Poles who had worked at the crematorium.

Now as regards the final phase, when the camp was being liquidated. I left Auschwitz on 21 January 1945. Grabner sent people from the *Politische Abteilung* [political department] with each transport. These people had a supply of ammunition and two pistols each, and they would finish off those prisoners who were no longer able to walk. The entire road right up to Pszczyna was strewn with bodies, there was a corpse every 20 meters – literally. The fate of



such prisoners was terrible. The wretch would walk barefoot and, being unable to keep up, throw down his blanket and his bread ration in order to get rid of the weight and prolong his existence for even a short while. But when he had no strength left, he would sit down by the roadside. An SS man from the *Politische Abteilung* would then walk up, shoot him, and push him down into the ditch. All those who survived the evacuation know of these happenings, as well as the local residents, for some of the bodies were buried there, while others were loaded onto trucks, all this to obliterate the traces.

Presiding Judge: Does the accused have any further questions?

The accused: I would like to ask the witness when all this occurred?

Witness: During the liquidation of the camp.

The accused: I would like to declare that I left the camp in the autumn of 1943.

Witness: The accused left the camp for a week of leave. He returned after a week and continued his work as zealously as ever.

The accused: I will provide proof of where I was at the time.

The accused Grabner: I would like to ask again: did I assign an electrician to assist Dr. Clauberg?

Witness: Dr. Schumann turned to the political department, for he could not select a prisoner who might well have escaped after some time, whereas Ślęzak was followed to make sure that he did not divulge the secrets that he knew.

Presiding Judge: Does the accused have any further questions?

The accused: Can I ask them later?

Presiding Judge: Yes. And the witness may step down.