



ALINA BREWDA

Warsaw, 26 November 1945. Investigating Judge Mikołaj Halfter interviewed the person named below as an unsworn witness. Having advised the witness of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the obligation to speak the truth, the judge received a solemn pledge therefrom, following which the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Alina Brewda
Age	40 years
Parents' names	Gabriel and Zofia
Place of residence	Warsaw – Praga, Targowa Street 63, flat 23
Occupation	doctor at the Central Polyclinic of the Ministry of State Security
Religion	none
Criminal record	none

On 18 January 1945, in connection with the general evacuation of the camp in Oświęcim, I was removed from Oświęcim (camp N 1), where I had been working as a doctor in the hospital. During this time, some 70,000 people (male and female inmates) were deported from the camp. Everyone was driven on foot, in groups and along various roads, in the direction of Pszczyna, Jastrzębia Góra [Jastrzębie-Zdrój] and Wodzisław. We left Oświęcim at 7.00 p.m. and walked until 10.00 a.m., when we arrived in Pszczyna. We marched non-stop; those who were unable to keep up the tempo and lagged behind were shot dead. We were given no food along the way. There was a stopover in Pszczyna, which lasted until 2.00 p.m. Thereafter we left and, at 7.00 p.m., we reached Jastrzębia Góra [Jastrzębie-Zdrój], where all of us, some 2,000 people, were locked up in a shed. Again, we were given nothing to eat. We had water with us [illegible]. We walked out of Jastrzębia Góra [Jastrzębie-Zdrój] at 10.00 a.m. and reached Wodzisław at

6.00 p.m. Crowds of prisoners had been gathered there. The prisoners were being loaded onto trains. We waited for our turn in the machine shop. We were put into an open wagon on 21 January, arriving in Ravensbrück only on 25 January at 6.00 p.m.

When leaving Oświęcim, I and a group of patients were provided with warm clothes, and each of us put on two sets of underwear. Thanks to this we survived the journey. But the men and other women from Oświęcim who had not received additional clothing died en masse along the way. While we were being transported by rail, we were given practically no food (with one exception, when bread was indeed supplied to the wagons, but in a quantity of one loaf for 10 – 12 people). Initially, they took us to the camp in Gross-Rosen, but we were not accepted there, because that camp was also being evacuated.

In Ravensbrück, after we had been unloaded from the wagons, we waited in the camp street until 11.00 p.m., when we were finally marched off to the so-called *Jugend* or *Jugendlager*. There, they placed all of us (1,700 people) in the hall of some cinema, I think it was. We sat there with our feet tucked up under us, for there was hardly any room; when one of us needed to leave the hall in order to relieve herself, she literally had to tread on people. They kept us in the hall until 4 February 1945. Throughout this whole time only once or twice did we receive a loaf of bread, which had to be divided between seven people (in other words, each one of us got approximately 20 decagrams), and twice soup. The death rate was colossal. All of the sick women whom we had taken with us died.

Once we arrived in Ravensbrück, I immediately reported (when we were being led to the *Jugendlager*) to the sick room, from which I would from time to time bring some drugs for our patients.

In this way, through my own observations and conversations with other inmates (regulars), I realized that the *Jugendlager* was intended for finishing off the elderly, unfit for work, and children. This plan was implemented by waking the prisoners up at 4.00 a.m., arranging them for roll-call in the square, and keeping them there, in the biting frost, until 7.00 a.m. Next, roll-call would be held, however afterwards the inmates would not be let back into their blocks, but left in the freezing cold until noon. After every such roll-call, some 10 to 15 bodies would be brought to the *rewir* [sick room, hospital – from the German *Revier*; translator's note]. At 12.00 p.m. we would finally be allowed to return to our blocks (which

were not heated; what is more, prisoners from the *Jugendlager* would have at most one blanket each). At 3.00 p.m., after lunch, the inmates would once again be herded into the square for roll-call, standing in the biting cold until 6.00 p.m. Finally, we would be allowed back to the block. Once every three days we were given soup, and once every three – four days bread (one loaf weighing 1.4 kg for 10 persons).

As a result, prisoners in the *Jugendlager* died off quickly. I think that the average death rate in the camp was around 20 people per day. I also think that on average there were some 2,000 people in this camp.

I remained in this camp until 4 February 1945, whereafter our transport was led back to Ravensbrück. I was kept there for two weeks. While there, we received standard camp food, that is soup once daily and a loaf of bread (1.4 kg) for 7 people. I remained in Ravensbrück until 16 February, after which date I and 3,000 other women were sent to Neustadt-Glewe (Mecklenburg).

During my period of detention in Ravensbrück I was not employed as a doctor. My co-prisoners told me that while I was there no experimental operations were performed in the camp. I only know from friends of mine – doctors who were imprisoned along with me (for example Rosenzweig or Rosengart Frumy and Dr Alina Przerwa-Tetmajer, Ministry of Health; I do not know their exact addresses at the moment) – that the food of tuberculosis patients was mixed with some powdered poison, which usually caused them to die within 24 hours.

It may be that the Soviet authorities seized some data (various digital materials) in Ravensbrück, as they captured the camp very soon after – maybe even a few hours after the SS-men had left.

I heard that the camp in Ravensbrück had been established as early as 1938.

The report was read out.