

## KONRAD DUDA

Pszczyna, 4 March 1947, 11.30 a.m. Investigative officer of the Citizens' Militia District Station in Pszczyna, Stanisław Siłuszczyk, head of the Criminal Section of the Investigative Services, interviewed as a witness:

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Name and surname	Konrad Duda
Parents' names	Tomasz and Maria
Date and place of birth	2 February 1914, Wartogłowiec, Pszczyna district
Education	elementary
Nationality	Polish
Marital status	bachelor
Occupation	chauffer
Military service	none
Involvement in combat	none
Criminal record	none
Place of residence	Pszczyna, [...]

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I have been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations pursuant to Art. 140 of the Penal Code.

On 22 April 1940, refusing to submit to the occupying force, I went to Hungary with my brother Stanisław, in order to join our family there. On 26 April 1940, I was caught in Slovakia. Five days later, I was transported to a prison in Czarny Dunajec. After a three-week detention, my brother and I were transported to the Montelupich prison in Kraków. I stayed there for five months and was subjected to no interrogations.

On 30 October 1940, I was transported to the concentration camp in Auschwitz. Since people in Auschwitz were starving, we collected leftover bread. I am not exactly sure but I think it was in June 1942 that *Rapportführer* [reporting officer] Palitzsch caught me picking up a piece of bread and punished me with three months in the penal company. There were about 180 of us in the penal company, isolated from the camp.

In August, about 220 “dangerous” prisoners from all over Poland were sent to this company. The newcomers came up with an idea to escape probably when they were on their way to work to regulate the river, three days after their arrival. On the same day that they escaped, 12 other detainees were shot. Two hours later, the rest of the newcomers were brought back from work and made to squat in the courtyard of the penal company with their hands behind their heads. At that time, I worked in the penal company block as a carpenter, and when these prisoners came from work, the rest of the block personnel was made to join the line of prisoners who were squatting down. In the afternoon of the same day, five SS officers came to the courtyard of the penal company. I remember Aumeier, former camp commandant at Auschwitz, and Hößler – former *Arbeitsdienstführer* [head of the camp labor service], who later became the camp commandant. I do not remember the other officers, because I was terrified. When the aforementioned officers came to the courtyard of the penal company, one of them took out a list with names of the newly-arrived prisoners. Having placed the list on a table brought from the block, former camp commandant Aumeier asked who had known about the escape. Since no one answered, former *Lagerführer* Aumeier said that he would shoot them on the spot if they did not confess and give up the names of those who had planned the escape. I had been the last one to run out of the block, so I was standing the closest. *Lagerführer* Aumeier spent a long time trying to persuade those who had known about the escape to confess. Since no one said a word, *Lagerführer* Aumeier ordered to call out ten prisoners from the list, had them stand by the block entrance and shot them individually with a pistol. I would like to stress that I stood a meter away from the collapsing corpses and distinctly saw former *Lagerführer* Aumeier shoot each of them in the back of the head, behind the right ear. In this manner he shot all prisoners whose numbers had been called out. Once they were shot, he turned to us and said, “If you do not confess, I will shoot all of you like that”, and repeated it several times. Since none of the prisoners said anything, *Lagerführer* Aumeier called out another ten prisoners from the list. He shot five of them in the same way and the other five were shot by *Oberscharführer*

Höbller, former *Arbeitsdienstführer* who later became *Lagerführer* while holding the rank of *Obersturmführer*. After the execution, the rest of the prisoners were told to quickly move the corpses to the side. We had to bury the blood of the victims with our hands while we were being beaten. The officers went away once the blood was buried. Near the evening, several SS men came and ordered the rest of the prisoners marked with red circles as "dangerous" to undress. The prisoners had their hands tied with a wire and in the evening they were transported outside the camp. I later learned from other inmates that those men were shot. I would like to clarify that this did not happen to the prisoners who had been assigned to the penal company by the camp authorities.

I would like to add that if I were to see the former *Lagerkommandant* Höß, I might be able to recognize him. All of this undoubtedly happened with his knowledge, and I also think that he was there in person.

I declare that *Lagerkommandant* Höß is fully responsible for the execution of the aforementioned prisoners, since he had the final word in the Auschwitz concentration camp. These people were killed with no judicial decision. After ten weeks in the penal company, I went down with typhus and was sent to the death block, that is block 7 in Birkenau, from which I was released to the camp after two months. I was detained at Auschwitz until 22 January 1945, when following the evacuation of prisoners I managed to get home, wounded.

I must add that I do not know the names of the murdered prisoners. I recall that one of them was called Julek, and before the occupation, he was going to represent Poland in boxing in a light heavyweight division. I would like to add that all of the victims had either higher or middle school education. In the beginning of 1941 and 1942, prisoners sent to the penal company were to last maximum three to four months there. They would usually die within that time as a result of the beatings or starvation.

The above is concordant with my oral testimony. I signed it after reading.