



JAN CHLEBOWSKI

Eleventh day of the hearing, 5 December 1947

Chief judge: Would the next witness Jan Chlebowski, please stand.

(the witness Jan Chlebowski stands up.)

Chief judge: Please identify yourself.

The witness Jan Chlebowski, aged 39, white-collar worker, no religious affiliation, no relationship to the accused.

Chief judge: I must warn the witness of the obligation to speak the truth pursuant to Article 107 of the Criminal Code. The submission of false testimony is punishable by imprisonment of up to five years. Do the parties submit any requests regarding how the witnesses should be interviewed?

Prosecutors: No.

Defense: No.

Chief judge: Therefore, the witness will testify without oath. Please indicate under what circumstances did the witness arrive at the camp, how long did he stay, which of the defendants he recognizes and what he can say about the case.

Witness: I was arrested on 6 May 1940 by the Przemyśl Gestapo on the charge of belonging to an underground organization. Then I was taken to Dubiecko, and from there to Tarnów and on 14 June I was transported to Auschwitz with a group of 728 people. There I first met the accused. As for those who served in 1940 in Auschwitz, I recognize Plagge, Kirschner, Szczurek, Bogusch, Kollmer, Bülow, Grabner. From 1943 I remember Aumeier, Möckel, Liebehenschel; from October 1943 I remember Gehring, Müller, who was the *Arbeitsdienstführer* [work manager] in block 11, Buntrock, Josten, Lorenz, Schumacher. I remember all their faces.

On 14 June 1940, when I arrived in Auschwitz and after *Lagerführer* Fritzsche made a speech, I became acquainted with the defendant Plagge. He was given command of the prisoners,

or rather he had the task of conducting sport activities that would adapt us to the camp conditions. This would last 12 hours a day. We exercised in civilian clothes and barefoot. Since I could no longer stand these exercises, we volunteered for *kommandos* formed by the *Arbeitsdienst* and *kapo* Fischer: for the printers' *kommando* and to excavate the terrain. Józef Polaczek was standing next to me, and I asked him where he came from and what he was doing time for. This caught Plagge's attention, who ordered me to report to him. As punishment, I was ordered to do three rounds of *Staatsgebäude* [a camp office building] in jumps and starts. Because I was weak, I couldn't do it, so Plagge kicked me mercilessly. When I fell down, he gave me a couple in the face.

Plagge was, at that time, the *Kommandoführer* of everyone in the quarantine.

When I had an accident in July (a large mound of earth fell on me while I was digging ditches), I ended up in the camp hospital. At that time, Plagge took in a transport from Kraków. Many of these prisoners are no longer alive. I'll give their names: Swierczyna – hanged, Rakowiecki – shot, Rablin and another one, Dyndar, who are alive. Plagge carried out those exercises with them, and at the beginning everyone got 30 lashes. The injured part of the body was smeared with iodine using a large brush. I saw with my own eyes how Plagge had encouraged *Lagerälteste* [camp elder] Wieczorek, a German, to beat people. Leo Wieczorek was so strong that he would kill with one punch; Plagge helped him and used his stick to beat people.

I also remember Plagge from block 11. I worked in several *kommandos* in the camp, for example as a paver, a mower, digging ditches, as a glazier, a painter, and even a servant. Very often, as a result of an execution at which Plagge was always present, I was instructed to repaint individual cells that were dirty and smeared with blood. There, in November 1940, I saw a dozen or so naked prisoners who were kneeling around Block 11 under the death wall. I saw them being soaked with water and in the morning they were frozen to death.

The bunker commanders, as well as the *Blockführers* and other members of the crew, had been specially trained in other camps, such as Mauthausen, Oranienburg, before being hand-picked by Höss and Fritsch for Auschwitz.

I recall from the stories of a late Inspector Paradysz, Koszyk, Baczyński, who were deported or killed, that during the time of the standing punishment, which took place on 4 July in



connection with the escape of Wiejowski, *Blockführer* Plagge forced even sick people, whose bodies were falling off their bones, to stand for hours as a punishment.

The same reception was prepared for the Silesian transport in the first days of November. The same team took in the Silesians, accused of belonging to PIO [Polish Insurgent Organization?].

As far as Plagge is concerned, he performed various roles in the camp and was eventually made *Unterscharführer*.

I came across Grabner for the first time during the standing punishment in July when, suspecting that the prisoners were cooperating with civilian workers, and in connection with the escape, he arrested dozens of people in the camp. Grabner conducted interrogations along with the staff of the political department.

Working in the 1940 in the painters' *kommando*, I saw an order for the painting of a small crematorium, *Auftrag* in German. I didn't want to go to work there, and I asked a *kapo* who was fair to all the prisoners to release me from this job. He told me: "Go and have a look, then you'll tell me how it looks in there".

So I went to this job. Grabner entered the crematorium. It was customary to remove our caps. I took off my cap, and Grabner told us to paint the pipes. From all this it was obvious that he wasn't just in charge of the staff, but generally everything.

I know cases of gassing in the small crematorium. I can name Gebdeszycki, who was among the group that was gassed in the small crematorium. Another one from this group was Okoniecki from the Lublin region, a boy aged 15 when he came to the camp. From his papers it turned out that he was doing time for his brother who had run off with the partisans. Then, along with some other suspects, after the roll call, they were brought to the small crematorium. The lamenting, crying and insults addressed to the SS men leading them are already known to the tribunal. The SS men who escorted them to the small crematorium were all *Blockführers*, the same ones who monitored everyone every day when they went out and came back to the camp, and to whom we had to report as we passed through the gate. They would often conduct searches according to their own rules, and they often came in drunk at night, waking us. Obviously, getting up from the bunks in the small rooms didn't go quickly, and as a result, there would be about 10 people kicked and beaten, lying on the ground.

In August 1942 Dubois, one of the members of the “resistance” in the concentration camp, was called to the political department. Grabner had a personal conversation with him. Dubois had received a package from Sweden around that time. Dubois’ number, as far as I recall, was 3904. That was Saturday. When I returned to camp on Monday, I ran to Kuryłowicz, because I’d heard the news that Dubois had been shot.

Kuryłowicz told me that he had seen Dubois, after being shot, lying over by block 28. Hence, my conclusion, as a result of a direct conversation with Stanislaw Dubois and witnesses, is that Grabner was directly involved in reviewing his files and ordered him to be shot.

In 1942, in April or perhaps early May, the political office – which was under Grabner’s command – called for a huge gathering of our fellow inmates at the kitchen, directly before the *kommandos* left, and from there they were sent to Birkenau. Some were shot on 20 June 1942, like Maron and Pniok, two brothers (whose surnames I don’t remember very well), like Warczewski from Warsaw – those charged with shooting or poisoning Igo Sym – and some of the others were shot while trying to escape the punitive unit. I was told by a tailor whose name escapes me at the moment, Ligoń or Pigoń, lying with me in Block 22a, that Grabner, Aumeier and Hessler shot the stragglers that couldn’t get through the wire – and a dozen or so passed through the wire and fled – picking off each one individually, so that all these people were eliminated, and there were several hundred of them in the SK [*Strafkompanie*] in Birkenau.

I remember Grabner from his exploits when it came to the prisoners. Smiling at everyone individually, he created an entire network of informants. There was a rat named Olpiński – he ended up getting finished off by the prisoners in the camp – who was the apple of Grabner’s eye. That Olpinski sent a dozen or so people a day to death, by throwing flammable material around the grounds of the DAW [*Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke*, armament factory] or other *kommandos*, and then supplying Grabner with the basis for finishing people off. Grabner would often get SS men to dress up as prisoners and have their hair cut to disguise themselves as prisoners coming to the camp and ask, or rather overhear, what was going on in the camp. There were cases when fellow inmates would avoid the so-called *Birkenstrasse* (Brzozowa Street), because among the prisoners there were rats on a special mission to gather intelligence for Grabner. He gathered intelligence in the camp, and his assistant was Woźnica, who gathered intelligence among civilian workers employed in the so-called



Gemeinschaft, a labor camp for civilian workers. They were also slaves, albeit a bit different from us, because they were not beaten, but when they fell afoul of the Germans they were sent over to us or shot.

A large group of civilians were brought to the small crematorium and shot there with Grabner's knowledge and his direct involvement. I know this from Jewish inmates who worked there and there was a Pole working there too, "Mietek", and they told us about these things. There was a case when among the civilians who were shot, one survived. He asked to be let go. Grabner was informed, and gave the order via one of the employees of the political department to shoot him.

In 1943 these documents were burned. That was at that time when Liebehenschel and Josten arrived. I know this from the German communists, and also from a *kapo* with a green badge who told us about it. Someone overheard a conversation between Liebehenschel and Josten during which they voiced concern that these materials could be used as evidence against them after the war as proof that Poles, Belgians, Dutch, Romanians and others who had apparently died of natural causes (pneumonia, meningitis, heart problems and other types of natural death) had actually been finished off by them.

I will come back to the Russian transports. In September, or at the beginning of October 1941, the transport of Russian officers came in. They were locked in the bunker in block 11 and were gassed there. Around 200 Poles were selected from the camp hospital, and were [gassed] together with the Russians. I worked for several days as a painter along with some others and saw with my own eyes the names of the Soviet soldiers written in blood, the names of Poles written in blood, those who were then gassed there. On Sunday, on the pretense that they were taking care of the prisoners, we had *Bettruhe* [bed rest] in the camp. On Sunday afternoon, in order not to raise any doubt or suspicion that in block 11 people were being finished off, poisoned and carted off, we had to lie "quietly" in bed and were not allowed to move. We had to lie down, and all the *Blockführers* together with the *kapos* then hauled off the bodies of those poisoned in block 11.

In October or at the beginning of November, they brought in Soviet prisoners of war who were later finished off. I was told that I should try to get into the Soviet POW camp and I was there. There was a political office for Soviet soldiers and officers and a political office for prisoners—the *Häftlings*. In the political department, the Soviet officers were forced to

admit that they belonged to the Communist Party, and ordered to name their profession. All of the Soviet intelligentsia got numbers tattooed. As in 1943 we got tattooed after Stanisław Jastro's escape and a number of others, like in 1941 the Soviet soldiers were tattooed with "A.U." I saw with my own eyes a Soviet doctor, Grisha Kalinin, get tattooed. On the night of 31 December to 1 January, I managed to get over there to make contact with them. From 1 January I worked there as a barber.

The whole Soviet intelligentsia was killed in block 11. The Soviet soldiers were beaten to death with shovels in front of all the German officers. They were killed by the *kapos* and *Blockführers*.

The so-called commissars were brought to the kitchen. They were ordinary soldiers and officers, who were murdered directly at the kitchen, thrown to the dogs who then bit into their bodies. In this way, those who arrived, the Soviet soldiers and officers, were liquidated.

I'm sorry I'm jumping around, but it's been 52 months.

On 23 December 1940, about 60 people were brought in from Jarosław to Tarnów and then on to Auschwitz. There were a hundred of them at the station. I spoke with Fischer and the others whom I knew before the war and met during the underground operations of 1939. Some of them escaped at a station in Kraków. It was decided that the order would be issued to give the prisoners a green badge. A certain number of them were selected for block 17 but what happened to them, I don't know. As the Fischer family told me, Antoni Fischer died in Auschwitz. We, as I recall, in block 3a, room 11, dressed him up warmly and were convinced that he should go to another block or to some other camp and that the punishment would be dropped.

I remember a group brought in from Kraków, from Montelupich Street, about 40 people on whom they did the so-called "manège". They had to run around the square during the winter. They were just finished off.

I remember that some of those remaining from the "Muslim" block were transferred to block 11 and given the task of chipping away the mortar from the bricks using iron rods. The work was so heavy that these people died.

As for Aumeier, I remember how he watched when in 1943 the *Arbeitsdienstführers* selected people who were tired out from work. They were sent to block 15 and then to the gas.



As for Gehring, I remember that he worked in the so-called *Gärberei* [*Gerberei*, tannery]. The manager was Grenke, a criminal who was pardoned by Himmler on the request of Höss for the murder of Poles and others. He was appointed foreman. Of course, every officer from the crew at Auschwitz as well as the *Blockführers* often came to the *Gerberei*, because uniforms and boots were made for them there. Bloodbaths took place there. There were German criminals and *kapos* who beat and tortured prisoners. When there was any kind of stir among the prisoners, Grenke pulled out a gun and shot; Gehring didn't react, and the others encouraged the *kapos* to murder the prisoners in the tannery.

As for the direct beating at the kitchen, I saw an execution during which the defendant Plagge thrashed some prisoners.

As for Müller, he bashed and beat the prisoners at every turn. When he became a *Blockführer* in 1943, he softened a little. The news was that the huge German victory had begun to weaken, and each of them caught hold of a prisoner, struck up some kind of conversation with him and asked, "Maybe you've got some gold and watches?" and tried to treat him well. Sometimes these *Blockführers*, who came into a block and behaved terribly, went over to the block leaders who stole margarine for them, and they gave them vodka in return, and it was then that the drunken block leaders mistreated the prisoners. It was also common for SS men to bring food to prisoners in exchange for their valuables, or simply order them to get these things for them.

As for the defendant Liebehenschel, he arrived in October, or November 1943. He walked around in a well-sewn leather coat. He made a fiery speech at the kitchen to the *kapos*, and officially banned beatings but nevertheless, the prisoners were still beaten and bashed, but this was now done with the assistance of a doctor. Liebehenschel announced that he would completely change the mood in the camp and that this would be another period in the camp's life. However, as we were aware of the politics, we knew that the Germans had been given a good hiding in Stalingrad and that the change was due to this defeat.

The shootings took place at Birkenau at that time. Prisoners would be escorted there and gassed, not even in gas chambers, but in cars – the Red Cross's cars. We got a real fright when we saw this car. One night when I returned to the camp, I learned that no more "Muslims" would go to the gas. Our block leader, Mrozek, the so-called green badge, said that Liebehenschel had given the officers the word that the "Muslims" would not be taken to the

gas. As I learned later, they were in fact taken to the gas after all. Nothing in Liebehenschel's time changed. In 1944 he was replaced by *Lagerkommandant* Thumann and then Berg, who came from other camps to replace Liebehenschel. Often prisoners came to Auschwitz from other camps, where the Germans could not finish them off, and they told us that Liebehenschel, while a commandant in other camps, behaved much like in Auschwitz, or often even worse.

Grabner's political department set up the *Sonderkommando-Zeppelin* [special unit]. Russian officers were brought into block 12, where they were dressed properly and given better food, while the SS men treated them nicely in the hope that they would pass on some info on Soviet troops, Russian ammunition factories, tank factories and aircraft. Then they were transferred to a junior high school in Auschwitz, where I was working as a painter. In the commandant's office, they were interrogated and forced to testify. They were told there that Hitler would ensure peace in the world and prosperity in Europe, as well as for them. I often asked the Russians whether they believed those words. They told me they didn't believe it, but they had to do as they were told. Most of them were shot while some joined the *Vlasovtsy* [Russian Liberation Army].

As for the defendant Kirschner, I know him as a *Blockführer*. Later, he wore a metal plate on his chest with the inscription *Lagerpolizei*. He beat and bashed the prisoners at every turn and kicked them to death. Later he was transferred to another *kommando* where he did the same.

Several *Blockführers* terrorized us, but because of the fact that they were all afraid of each other, they all tried to beat as hard as they could.

I met the defendant Ludwig when digging up swedes. On Sunday, when we thought we were going to rest, we were forced out to dig up rotten swedes. Ludwig was there, beating people and breaking their arms with a stick. He did the beating himself and with the help of a *kapo*.

I know Bülow, he behaved just like Plagge, Kirschner, Müller, Aumeier and others. Thanks to them, men and women who came from Birkenau were finished off.

Breitwieser didn't behave any better than everyone else.

I know Josten well. He first led the SS *kommando*, and thanks to his merits earned in the field of criminality he became *Unterscharführer*. Later he was in charge of



the *Luftschutzkommando* [air defense *kommando*], constantly talking about the need for water and sand. The prisoners laughed at this concern.

In Auschwitz, I met Langenfeld, whose father I got to know in Glinik Mariampolski. This face stuck in my memory. I asked what he was doing there, and he replied that he was a *Volksdeutscher*. He was an *Unterscharführer* and boasted to me about his experiences on the eastern front. One day, Langenfeld led some gypsies, who were on the block, out of Auschwitz, with Josten helping him out. When I met him a few days later, he stated that all the gypsies had gone to the gas. They finished them off in such a way that first they finished off many gypsies directly and then they promised the healthy ones that they would go to other camps. The gypsies were under the illusion that they would be deported from Auschwitz. They even started to push them to work so that next time they, along with their children and wives, would be sent to the gas. Among them were even officers of the German army, so-called *Mischlings*, who often received a mass of decorations for their battles on the fronts.

Josten had a swimming pool built in the parent camp and we were told that the prisoners would be able to bathe in it. We found out, however, that this pool was to serve another purpose. When a huge mass of Jews, Belgians, Frenchmen were brought in, the Red Cross came with them, bringing medicine and food. They were told that they would get land and houses etc. [The Germans] picked out some good-looking, well-dressed Jews and gave them cigars, and then took photos with them at the swimming pool to counter radio broadcasts, to show the foreign propaganda how good it was at the concentration camp in Auschwitz, even though Moscow was reporting news of the crimes being committed in Auschwitz. They were told, with the knowledge of the political department and the camp commandant, to write letters that they were doing well, to bring in their families and discover their addresses. These Jews were then transported for gassing. Money, gold, diamonds were taken to the *Geldverwaltung* [financial administration building], which was also administered by Möckel. This money was sent to Berlin.

In 1943 I was instructed to paint a window sill in this block. I went to work and saw a huge mass of gold, money, dollars, diamonds. There were the weights used to weigh the valuables; they were sorted, then the cars would arrive and the valuables would be loaded into them in suitcases and sent to Berlin. Everything that didn't end up in the pockets of the SS men was sent to Berlin to continue the war effort.

Möckel took over the general administration from Bürger, which included deliveries of food and all sorts of *Baubetriebdienststelle* [office for construction work] repairs. Krötzer, his subordinate ranked *Untersturmführer*, recorded the money the prisoners received from their families. Obviously, we didn't get this money back, because it got stuck in the pockets of the Germans. I held the document where *Obersturmbannführer* Bürger issued a permit to sell the clothes of those murdered in Auschwitz to the SS men for 35-50 marks. The same thing happened later, however, at an increased cost, probably up to 75 marks for clothes, shoes, etc.

Möckel belonged to the general council of the camp. Although there were various divisions, there existed the so-called *Beirat*, a kind of collective including the heads of the various sections together with Commandant Höss and later Liebehenschel. For example, there was the *Schädlingbekämpfung* – a division for fighting parasites. This was one of many cryptonyms, and the underlying meaning was the gassing of people – the same [substance] used to kill mosquitoes was used to kill people who, according to the Germans' claims, were "parasites" harmful to the Reich.

As for Muhsfeldt, in his company there should be that one who – I don't know his name at the moment – brought in cans of gas on his motorcycle; wearing a helmet and an oilcloth coat, he brought in gas to Birkenau.

As for Seufert, he was no different from his SS colleagues in the camp.

As for Bogusch, he was a *Blockführer*, and he did the same as everyone else, because it was about promotion, it was about decorations, about getting into some sort of command unit, so that – so it was said – he could siphon off some of the gold, diamonds, dollars and pounds sterling which came in there.

When it came to the gassing, all the *Blockführers* took part. Some might take part in order to obey orders or because he belonged to a particular staff, and others because this gave them the opportunity to get the attention of their superiors by beating and kicking, so that then they might be able to fill their pockets with gold.

All the prisoners of the camp know Schumacher. If he ever gave a piece of bread, then he had to break someone's head beforehand. He behaved like all the SS men. For sure there won't be very many people who would be able to say anything good about him, unless they benefited directly from his favor.



In 1941, before an execution at the *Kiessgrube* behind the *Blockführerstube* [block commander's office], Kollmer brought in a firing squad. I often asked the German kapos whether these SS men were going to kill people on orders. I was told they had volunteered to join the firing squad.

At block 11, Poles, Russians and others were shot with rifles, and then they used a device for slaughtering animals. In our country some time ago people were upset that cattle were being killed with an automatic pistol ... Then they were shot with so-called *shorts* – a small caliber weapon. It looked like this: a small head, a crack like an air gun, and Plagge or Gehring, Müller, Palitzsch, Schwarzhuber and the others would use this to shoot with. You could often see the Germans firing this carbine through the *Blockführerstube* window in the direction of the camp. They would binge in their room and then walk with this carbine openly through the camp to block 11.

Szczurek belonged to the old SS crew at the Auschwitz camp, just like everyone else.

Was he there until the Soviet army liberated the camp, I don't know, because I was sent to Buchenwald as a punishment, because I got busted for a radio.

Nebbe, "Spisa", really kept the SS men in check, but he also bashed and beat the prisoners. My *kapo* once ordered me and my colleague, the artist-painter Brodak, to go and perform some work. I was supposed to report to Nebbe to paint his room. When a prisoner came to his room, he had to knock, take off his cap, ask: *Dürfe ich eintreten?* [May I come in?]. Then Nebbe would come out, kicking and beating, and you had to go through this several times before you could talk with his royal highness the prince. Nebbe knew about transports going to the gas. He was trusted by his trustees and was privy to everything. By 29 September 1944, until my departure from Auschwitz, he had been promoted to *Oberscharführer*.

I also recognize the faces of other SS men who made up the Auschwitz team. I am absolutely convinced and completely objectively state: none of these men, sitting on the bench of the accused, for one moment showed any human feelings. Always this fanaticism for Hitler towards the destruction of all the people who were in Auschwitz, and no amount of crying, lamenting, screaming or pleading softened the hearts of those who sit on the bench of the accused.

As for the women, in 1943 at the beginning of October I went with the late Kostek Jagiełło to Birkenau. The first time I was in Birkenau was in 1942 to find out what happened to



the Russians. I came across some women there, including the one sitting here on the bench of the accused – *Oberaufseherin* [senior overseer] Mandl. I knew her because I often used to work in the *Stabsgebäude*, where there were SS women who had hairdressers, servants; they were like royal princesses.

Working in the building itself, I encountered a huge number of bottles robbed from the prisoners who had brought in wine and cognac. Other fellow inmates marveled at the splattered walls, and when we asked a German woman prisoner, a Bible student, she replied, "If only you knew what was going on here all night, what a bunch of drunks ..."

They drank all night and then, half-drunk, they took it out on the prisoners.

I remember sitting on the roof, because I was a *Dachdecker*, when a few thousand naked women stood at the sauna, where they had their hair shaved and were then smeared with some disinfectant –it was the so-called delousing. This was October, it was very cold, with lots of mud, rain, and when the women were shivering from the cold, the kapos hit them with their sticks, and the German prostitutes, labeled with black badges, were the *Aufseherins* here.

During what was probably my three-week stay here I met a female spy, a German, who caught the attention of the defendants Mandl and Drechsel, because they were afraid she would report everything to the political department. She was transferred to Rajsko and they finished her off there.

As for Orlowski, I know her from Budy, like some of those sitting here on the bench who worked with Dr. Cezar, who cultivated plants for the good of Germany. And there I came across Polish women, Russians, French and other nationalities in appalling conditions. They lived in a block without any heating, where there was no floor. And the barracks for 200,000 people were being built there, where Churchill, Molotov and Stalin were supposed to do time.

There was no floor, and the "dictator" was hitting the prisoners with a stick, this beauty Orlowski, with her cap at a jaunty angle.

I remember that the more handsome the SS man who was leading the *kommando*, the more the *Aufseherins* would hit the women with sticks. And if he was some wimp, they were calmer and didn't show off their stick skills so much.

The defendant Hoffman was in the political department of the gypsy camp. When the gypsies were brought in, they were left to their own fate. They had huge amounts of gold.

I remember that one of our colleagues, Roman Frankiewicz from Poznań, who belonged to a leftist group, was sent to work as a clerk. However, his chance fell through because he got drunk. Hoffman interrogated him, getting into a conversation in which Frankiewicz told him that the Germans should change their attitudes to people because they would all be finished off soon. Relations in the camp made it possible for Frankiewicz to secure his release. It cost him a lot of gold, which was taken by the “influential” SS men, if you know what I mean. Frankiewicz was taken out on a transport, *Bauzug*, and was killed during a bombardment.

As for Hoffman, his reputation was the worst.

That would be all I could say about it.

Chief judge: The session will resume after a few minutes’ break.

(After the break)

Chief judge: Would the witness Chlebowski please stand. Are there any questions for the witness?

Prosecutor Szewczyk: I heard that the witness was interested in the Auschwitz camp life. Could the witnesses say something about transports from the Zamość region that arrived in October 1942, and among them a great number of children. What happened to them?

The witness: I remember this quite well, I was working in the tannery at the time. Grenke, the manager, had to take in shoes, bags and prams for repair at the tannery, which were later given to the children of the SS men living near the camp. We often found medallions, prayer books written in Polish and various photographs with the signatures of Poles from the Zamość region. We became interested in what happened to the parents of these children. Three of our fellow inmates solved this issue – namely, Bydłowski, Goczał and a young boy called “Bursztyn” [Amber] – who had been to the crematorium and said that these people had gone to the gas.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: Can the witness say how big these transports were?

The witness: It’s hard for me to say, but I remember that in 1943, I was supposed to paint a dozen rooms for children in block 15. Hössler asked us painters to paint some



fairy tale scenes on the walls. So we painted some mushrooms, dwarfs and many other things. The children chosen for this block were in a remarkably good state of health, but they disappeared after a while. They were rumored to have been sent to Germany to be Germanized. Others said that they had shared the fate of their parents.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: Can witness not confirm this?

The witness: I can't confirm that, no.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: Did they go for Germanization or up the chimney?

The witness: I don't know for sure.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: The witness mentioned a general council in the camp. Did he also not say that Möckel was one of its members? Does the witness know what cases that council dealt with?

The witness: It is difficult for me to explain, in any case, the council existed for the purpose of communicating on matters of transports, procedural issues and many others.

Prosecutor Szewczyk: What were the resolutions made there?

The witness: It is hard for me to say, because there were camp seniors, and they never revealed these matters.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: The witness mentioned that when the German army's defeat began, the SS men mellowed. The question is whether the witness is aware of how it was in the early days when the Germans were winning. Were they different then?

The witness: Absolutely yes. I remember when we were brought in from Tarnów. On the way we were constantly beaten. We got hold of a copy of "Goniec Krakowski", where it was written that France and Paris had fallen. At the time, everybody had been counting on foreign states and the promises of our dignitaries. In Auschwitz we felt that victory. The SS men would walk around drunk and beat us constantly. Every SS man walked with a rifle ready to shoot. This was their attitude towards us throughout the entire period of their successes. Similarly, during the outbreak of the war with Russia on 22 June 1941, their behavior was very jolly, as we could feel on our skin. But when the defeat at Stalingrad came,

they mellowed somewhat. Of course, this wasn't a 100% or even a 50% change. But there was a change compared with the old days of the camp.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: The witness observed the camp life for five years. Were the executions carried out arbitrarily, or was there some kind of plan to destroy people? How does the witness see this issue?

The witness: There were executions carried out against prisoners directly as a result of sentences given or because someone ratted on them from outside the camp. The defendant Grabner and his people carried out the interrogations, and often the Gestapo from Katowice or Kraków, who often took prisoners back for interrogation to Kraków, Nowy Targ, Tarnów.

There were shootings following some denunciations in the camp, because the SS men from the political department often provoked them.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: I mean, did the witness notice that in the first place the intelligentsia was to be wiped out? Did the witnesses therefore find any means to protect themselves?

The witness: First of all they thought that if someone was wearing glasses, he was intelligent and should be destroyed. In addition, they tried to create a rift between the intelligentsia and the workers and continue the campaign against the Jews in the camp. The intelligentsia was revealed from the professions or education they declared, so if someone was an engineer, doctor, professional officer then in the camp he became a concrete mixer, floor-layer, carpenter, etc. Initially, while the prisoners were still naive, they gave their real professions.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Does this mean that one could sense that it was a matter of priority to destroy the intelligentsia?

The witness: Yes. Therefore, when everyone saw that these people were being liquidated, the prisoners went to the office and tried to get their fellow inmates to change their stated occupations.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Soviet POWs are said to have been sent to the concentration camp, for whom there was supposed to be a special camp. A camp within a camp. In this regard, were the POWs under the protection of international law, the Geneva Convention, and were they treated respectfully or not?



The witness: No, they weren't recognized as POWs.

Prosecutor Pęchalcki: And how long did these 12,000 prisoners last before being finished off?

The witness: Two and a half months.

Prosecutor Pęchalcki: Did they also do away with other nationalities at the same time?

The witness: No, only the Russian POWs.

Prosecutor Pęchalcki: With particular speed and methods?

The witness: Yes.

Prosecutor Pęchalcki: Does the witness know that there was a special punitive unit just for Russian POWs?

The witness: Yes, in block 9, then this block was no. 24. They were also interrogated in the political department. On 31 December I met these Soviet POWs in a room in the political department.

Prosecutor Pęchalcki: The witness mentioned that the political department had developed a political network within the camp. Did this network also operate in the vicinity of the camp and was there a network of spies organized by Grabner?

The witness: Yes. Grabner ordered a spy network. SS men from the political department even dressed in prison uniforms and thus caught anyone in the vicinity who wanted to throw some bread to the prisoners.

Prosecutor Pęchalcki: Does the witness know something about the gassing of the *Sonderkommando* which served the bunkers in Birkenau, and that this happened on Grabner's orders in the small crematorium?

The witness: Yes, in 1942 several hundred people, selected from those who worked in the crematoria, were brought in and gassed in a small crematorium under Grabner's charge.

Prosecutor Pęchalcki: Grabner denies participation in the gassing. The witness was also destined to be killed in the gas chamber, is that not the case?

The witness: At the beginning of March 1943, Matuszewski and Baranowski came to me and told me that my number was in the file. This list was drafted by the political department. I had just recovered from a bout of typhus, but my fellow inmates helped me escape. The prisoners who had had typhus were dressed in Soviet clothes (some old, worn uniforms) to keep up the appearance that only Soviet soldiers were taken to the gas chambers. With the help of my fellow inmates I managed to get put on a different *kommando*.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Did this list come from the political department?

The witness: Yes. Even when these people were assigned by Entress, they were approved by the political department.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Does the witness know what methods the political department used to interrogate the prisoners? Do you know anything about Jurkowski's case?

The witness: He was an activist in the Union (Trade Union) of White-Collar Workers in Warsaw. During his interrogation in the political department, as I was later told, in front of Grabner, his face was forced shoved against the tile of a heated stove to compel him to testify.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: The witness mentioned escape attempts. Grabner and Aumeier were involved in the investigations. Grabner is trying to get out of that one. Does the witness know that in connection with this action, someone from the punitive unit was hanged at Grabner's behest?

The witness: Yes. I remember: a tall blond guy, Stanisław Malarz from Warsaw, along with another guy, whose name I can't remember, escaped to Birkenau and were later both hanged. I was in block 17 at the time. I would like to point out that those who ended up in the punitive unit were the guys who were sent over by the political department, including Mieczysław Zubel from Tarnów.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Does the witness know that at the camp, at the behest of the political department, prisoners were recruited to sign the *Volksliste*?

The witness: At the time when Dziama, Mosdorf and many others were shot, the political



office came up with a proposition for people to sign the *Volksliste* right there in the bunker. In any case, squad members who had any relatives in Germany, or were of German origin, were encouraged to sign it.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: The political department did this at Grabner's behest?

The witness: Yes.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Does the witness remember Schornstein's escape? What were the consequences of that, what steps were taken by the political department?

The witness: I remember Schornstein perfectly well. A tall blond man with glasses. When the Russian transport arrived, he was a *Dolmetscher* [interpreter] over there and brought us a lot of information about those gassed in the bunker. Then Schornstein worked in "Buna" and then in the brick factory. After his escape, several dozen civilians were brought to the camp. Some of them were shot dead, while others – regarding whom there was no evidence whatsoever – remained in the camp.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Was this escape in the vicinity of Auschwitz?

The witness: Yes, near the brickyard.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Does the witness know that these hostages, who were brought from Auschwitz, were Poles?

The witness: Yes.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: From time to time there is a testimony that a particular SS man would give a prisoner some butter or brought him a letter. Does the witness know of such incidents, and if so, what was the reason for that?

The witness: They didn't do this with any affection. Only if they got something from the prisoner. First, he bashed his head in and then brought him a piece of margarine or even vodka – they received half a liter of vodka a day – and he took gold from him.

Prosecutor Brandys: Does the witness personally know the defendant Dinges, a *Bauleitung* [construction management] chauffeur, and can he cite specific facts about his activities? Maybe the witness can see him (Dinges stands up).



The witness: I know him from some stories I was told and I know that he was a chauffeur, but I didn't have any direct contact with him. He worked in the *kommando* that brought food and building materials. I remember that once he was driving with the head of the chimney sweep team, Eberle, and with the prisoners, and when he saw some *kommando*, who after a few hours of work in the rain and cold were returning to the camp with shaking legs, he deliberately ran into a prisoner, who turned out to have been a Jew, and killed him. This was on the way to Harmęże or Budy.

Prosecutor Brandys: Does the witness know that *Bauleitung* cars were sometimes used to transport people from the ramp to the gas chambers?

The witness: I know that a huge bunch of cars were used to carry people from the ramp. I find it difficult to say whether the *Bauleitung* cars were also involved.

Defense attorney Kossek: The witness stated that Liebehenschel's arrival in the camp was preceded by a bad reputation and that he had been the commander of other camps before. How does the witness know this?

The witness: From what my fellow inmates told me. We had friends who came from different camps, including those who came from Sachsenhausen – 600 strong and healthy people who were thrown into the *Bauhof* [construction yard] and after some time they got finished off.

Defense attorney Kossek: I just mean that these people told the witness that Liebehenschel was in other camps and people knew him from his worse side. So did the witness believe them?

The witness: Yes, I believed them.

Defense attorney Kossek: And would the witness believe me today if I said that Liebehenschel had not been in any camp at all?

The witness: I know this from people who are better informed than those who pretend to know everything. I know that Liebehenschel was the inspector of the *Arbeitseinsatz* [labor deployment] in Berlin, appointed by Pohl himself, and if someone occupied this position and was in direct contact with Himmler, then you know what he could be.



Defense attorney Kossek: The point is that the witness stated that he was in other camps. Or maybe the witness will tell me how the flogging punishment looked in the camp? Were they hit on a particular part of the body, or at random?

The witness: At random.

Defense attorney Kossek: The witness said Liebehenschel forbade beating. Did he forbid beating all over the body, or did he ban flogging outright?

The witness: That's difficult to determine because officially he could have forbidden it, but said quietly: carry on beating wherever you can.

Defense attorney Kossek: The point is, can the witness say that the flogging was carried out on the basis of verdicts issued from Berlin?

The witness: This would be impossible because the execution of the penalty was either immediate or the next day, after the prisoner's number was recorded. When in 1943 Emmerich wrote my number down in the afternoon, the next day I got 25 lashes. It happened like this that when the SS-man wrote down the prisoner's number, it went to higher authority, that is to the *Rapportführer*, who read the prisoner's number, the prisoner appeared and got 25 straightaway.

Defense attorney Kossek: Liebehenschel might not have known that.

The witness: He was the commandant of the concentration camp, he was hanging around in the camp during the morning when the *kommandos* left for work, he came during the roll call, he was interested in camp life.

Defense attorney Kossek: Did he stay outside or inside the camp?

The witness: Outside and inside. He roamed around the entire camp.

Defense attorney Kossek: The witness stated that department 2 was the master of life and death and that there were beatings of prisoners there that Liebehenschel was responsible for.

The witness: Because Liebehenschel was the commandant and he must have known everything about what was going on in the camp.



Defense attorney Kossek: The witness said that in 1943 some so-called “Muslims” were selected for gassing, that there was some bargaining. Who was bargaining?

The witness: In 1943 the prisoners worked differently, there was a resistance organization, foreign radio talked about what was going on in the camp. Therefore, Liebehenschel ordered to keep the prisoners misinformed so as to keep them calm.

Defense attorney Kossek: The witness didn’t answer my question, who was bargaining?

The witness: My fellow inmates who worked, were sent by the organization to Birkenau, they brought back news of how many had gone to gas, how many were shot, the underground press reported, the radio reported, contact with society was alive and well, even photos from the gas chambers were sent out. There are people who are still alive and can confirm this.

Defense attorney Kossek: Will the witness be able to determine that the so-called Liebehenschel era brought in some improvements, that the bunker was removed, the criminals removed, the flogging abolished?

The witness: That wasn’t Liebehenschel who did this; he was ordered from above.

Defense attorney Kossek: But in his time?

The witness: Yes, in his time.

Defense attorney Rappaport: The witness testified that the defendant Bülow, like Plagge, Müller and Kirschner, tormented and kicked the prisoners. Because there were two Bülows, and one of them is here, I wanted to ask if it was this Bülow sitting here and then ask for the facts regarding any beating performed by him.

The witness: There were two Bülows, both of whom I know, brothers who didn’t differ in any way and his brother should be sitting here for the same deeds he did in the camp because he bashed and murdered prisoners, and beat women.

Defense attorney Rappaport: But could the witnesses give me more specific facts?

The witness: I can’t give their names because I did 52 months in the camp, so I can’t remember all the names.



Defense attorney Rappaport: The witness reported that the defendant Dinges was riding with the chimney sweep named Eberle and killed a Jew. Does the witness know this through hearsay? Could the witness not say that it was just an unfortunate accident?

The witness: I declare to the Supreme National Tribunal, this was not an accident, because in Auschwitz, four million Jews died and Dinges, like the others, served his *Führer* and committed murder.

Defense attorney Rappaport: Does that mean that the witness assumes so?

The witness: The people know, those who were in the camp, experiencing the ups and downs of the camp. I believe in the facts the same way that the guy who told me them believed in them. Every SS killed in the field because he got leave if he shot 10 people. Everyone shot people.

Defense attorney Minasowicz: Does the witness recall that Bogusch was a *Blockführer*?

The witness: He hung around the camp, was in the command and made himself out to be a great official. Once, Bogusch led out a prisoner who had stolen a potato or a swede – he strongly disapproved of the act and proceeded to bash the prisoner in, murdering him.

Defense attorney Minasowicz: Did someone tell the witness about this?

The witness: I saw it.

Defense attorney Minasowicz: Was he responsible for this kind of enforcement?

The witness: I declare to the Tribunal, it was every *Blockführer's* job to keep order. The idea was that the prisoners wouldn't organize anything, not look for food, because the principle was that in Auschwitz a prisoner was only supposed to live three months.

Defense attorney Minasowicz: The witnesses have been quite reticent about Bogusch until now; was he a *Blockführer*?

The witness: Bogusch went everywhere, he roamed around everywhere, he had a lot of things to do, he was sniffing around everywhere, and wherever he met someone he meted out a bashing.



Defense attorney Kruh: And if Kollmer shot the prisoners, did the witness state this based on his own observation?

The witness: Yes, he shot people in block 11.

Chief judge: Are there any questions or statements?

Defendant Mandl: Your Honor! I wish to make a statement. The witness testified about the children in the women's camp and said that he does not know whether they went to Germany or to the crematorium. I wanted to say that this was about the Russian and Polish children, who were sectioned by the head of the camp, Hössler, in the women's camp, and from there they were sent to a children's camp near Poznań. There were two transports, one escorted by a former female overseer named Kog, who is currently on Montelupich Street, and who can clarify this.

Defendant Bogusch: Your Honor, I wish to ask permission to question the witness whether as a *kapo* of the painters he was employed in a box factory, located 300 m outside the camp. The witness claims he saw me near the kitchen where I was supposed to have beaten the prisoners. I would like to know the name of the prisoner and the date when it was. Since I served as a writer and was kept very busy, I would go to the camp only rarely. Besides, I had no other interest in beating defenseless people.

The witness: I declare to the Tribunal that I was not a *kapo* of the painters. In 1943, after surviving typhus, I was assigned to a *kommando* that was later moved, along with all the people belonging to it, to some barrack where there were cows and pigs. From here every day I could watch what SS men were up to at the camp and saw numerous transports arriving in Auschwitz, saw who was going to Birkenau and who came from Birkenau.

Defendant Bogusch: I want to put one more question to the witness. The witness described me as a *Blockführer*. I don't know how the witness understands the functions of a *Blockführer* and a writer. If I was a writer, then I wasn't a *Blockführer*. It is not true that I was a block manager.

The witness: As for the defendant Bogusch and the other defendants here, as I have heard and read in the press, everyone is trying to downplay their involvement in what went on in Auschwitz. Each of them gives a false date of arrival at the camp and a false *kommando* that



he led. It is hard for us prisoners to remember everything. All the SS men walked around, looked around, sniffed around, sentenced people to death or made sure that the people in the camp got finished off. It's not only me who knows Bogusch, but many other people know him too. I assert once again with a clear conscience that Bogusch, like everyone else, was among those who caused the greatest harm to the prisoners in the concentration camp.

Defendant Kollmer: Your Honor, I would like to ask the witness, in which month of 1940 I was supposed to have led the firing squad.

The witness: I know, and with full conviction, assert that Kollmer had a German helmet on his head and led a firing squad and issued orders to shoot people.

Defendant Kollmer: Where did this take place?

The witness: It's difficult for me to determine, but if the Tribunal allows, I will ask the defendant Kollmer one question. Let him say how the roll call square looked when he led the firing squad.

Defendant Kollmer: What roll call square do you mean?

The witness: Let the defendant say where the roll call square was at that time?

Defendant Kollmer: I declare to the Tribunal, I never led a firing squad.

Chief judge: The question was asked so that the defendant might say how the roll call square looked when the defendant was in the camp?

Defendant Kollmer: Which roll call square?

The witness: The large one.

Defendant Kollmer: The one for the prisoners in the camp or for the military troops in the yard?

The witness: I will remind him. When he led the firing squad, there were no large buildings yet. It was 1940 and 1941, only ditches and wire.

Defendant Kollmer: I have not yet received a reply to the question to the witness. The witness said that in 1940 I led a firing squad at the gravel pit.



The witness: At the time when the transports came, the firing squad was led by Kollmer, and he shot at block 13. The prisoners were shot with rifles.

Defendant Kollmer: Did the witness personally see that I was in command of the squad?

The witness: Yes. I assert with full conviction and the clear conscience of a Pole that he commanded the firing squad platoon in Auschwitz and I can clearly remember his evil black eyes.