



BOGDAN GLIŃSKI

Presiding Judge: Please usher in the witnesses subpoenaed for today's proceedings. Witness Bogdan Gliński, please.

I am advising the witness in accordance with art. 107 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the obligation to tell the truth. Making false declarations is punishable by conviction with a maximum penalty of 5-year imprisonment. Do the parties wish to file motions as regards the procedure of interviewing the witness?

Prosecutor: We are exempting the witness from taking the oath.

Defense: As are we.

Witness: Bogdan Gliński, 26 years of age, medical student, Roman Catholic, no relationship to the parties.

Presiding Judge: What can you say about the conditions at the Auschwitz camp and about the treatment of prisoners on the part of the defendants?

Witness: I arrived at Auschwitz in February 1941 and I was sent to block 3. I worked with the constructions *kommando*, where I met suspect Müller for the first time.

One day, before the evening roll call, I was summoned by defendant Plagge, who informed me that he had been watching me the entire day and had decided that I had not been working. Consequently, at the *kapos'* sentry box, he handed out 25 blows by a rod to me. As a result, I developed a wound, a so-called phlegmon, and was designated for the hospital at block 28, where I subsequently also worked. I contracted pneumonia and after I recovered I stayed there and worked washing the laundry at block 28.

In October 1941, I was transferred to the surgical block, where I worked as an orderly.

At that time, i.e. in October 1941, the first gassing took place at Auschwitz, which looked as follows. After an evening roll call, or during it, a camp doctor would come to the hospital and carry out a selection of sick prisoners. The sick prisoners selected were taken to block 21, opposite the block where the penal company was housed. On that occasion, around

160 people were selected. As orderlies, we had to carry the sick into the bunker, but we did not know what was going to happen to them. That night, we heard screams coming from block 11, because our window at block 19 looked on to block 11. On another occasion, I saw a group of some 500 people who had been taken to block 11. You could tell from their uniforms that these were Soviet captives. We saw this group at night, under electric light. Then, for the first time, I saw that all the SS men who had escorted that group had gas masks hanging over their shoulders. These people were taken to block 11 and then silence descended. I also need to add that block 11 had been completely emptied three days earlier. Nothing happened over the next three days. On the night of the third day, *Rapportführer* [report leader] Palitzsch came, gathered the hospital personnel, and said that nobody was ever to mention what was about to happen. He divided us into two groups, *Rollwage* [rolling cart] 1 and 2, and sent us to block 11. We were ordered to get inside and remove the bodies of the gassed people. There were around 160 prisoners taken from the hospital and around 500 Soviet prisoners. Their documents had not been taken away from them and they lay scattered on the floor. Having read a few names, because I know Russian, I determined that these were Russian officers. The dead patients were taken to the yard at block 11, where they were loaded onto carts and moved to crematorium I, which was located outside the camp's perimeter.

In November 1942, I was locked up in connection with a letter sent to me by Leon Kukiełka, who had been sentenced to death. This was on 1 or 2 November. Some 180 prisoners were executed then, mostly from the Lublin transport. Because my friend worked at block 28, he wrote the letter when he was already at block 11. He delivered it to me through Obojski, who worked as a so-called *kalefaktor* [cleaner]. At that time, I was already at Birkenau and I came to the main camp quite often, to collect various medicines or bread. The letter reached me on the same day. Meanwhile, five of the convicts, among them one captain from Wilno, my comrade Kukiełka, and Dr. Frank from Warsaw, right before the execution, attacked an *Oberführer* and caused a ruckus. They were shot dead immediately and the political department investigated the case, suspecting the involvement of the underground. Following a denunciation made by the *kalefaktor*, who told Lachman that Kukiełka had sent a letter to someone, Lachman, on the very same day, came to Birkenau, carried out an inspection, and moved me to the main camp, where I was locked in cell 16. Then, I was taken to an interrogation, which was attended by Grabner. The interrogation was supposed

to prove that the convicts and some elements at the camp were planning a move. Lachman, who spoke very good Polish, said to me, "Look, the late Kukiełka said you are a traitor, because you failed to turn up on time". I replied that I had no idea what *Oberführer* Lachman meant. As a response, he took me to the second floor, where he administered to me the pole punishment. I passed out before the hour mark and I was taken to a room downstairs. Lachman asked me where the letter was. I told him that I did not know anything about any letter because it was my life at stake. Lachman replied that prisoner 195, Obojski, was under arrest and had testified that the letter to me had been delivered. So, I admitted that it was true, saying that the letter only contained sentiments from the deceased to his family, whom I knew. I was given another hour at the pole. Then I was taken to the bunker, where I stayed for four months and six days. Then I was taken to the hole, to cell 20. Doing time there were vice-prosecutor Borczyk from Nowy Sącz, *kalefaktör* Obojski and a number of prisoners locked in the bunker for some minor offenses.

At that time, I had the opportunity to come across Gehring, who was head of the detention facility at Auschwitz. Gehring did not treat prisoners well.

I can recall the following case. One of my friends, Stefan Kluska, a resident of Kraków, while in interrogation at the political department, "rustled up a cigarette", brought it with him after the interrogation, and we smoked it. There were five of us in the cell. To our misfortune, Gehring was carrying out an inspection just then. He burst into our cell; it was dark, because the window was covered with tin, but after switching on the electric light, the smoke was perfectly visible. Gehring asked who had been smoking. Initially, we maintained that nobody had been smoking, but he did not believe it and he personally hit me in the face and kicked me, and did the same with Obojski and the others. He punished us with five days of starvation, supposedly for violating the rules, but I noticed that in this case Gehring's actions were not only informed by the rules, because his tone of voice suggested he was deriving pleasure from depriving us of food for five days. He kept saying, "You won't grab a single bite for five days", and he counted these days, one by one.

Two weeks later I came across Gehring again, under similar circumstances. He was with a Jewish *kalefaktör kapo* and he ordered him to administer proper punishment to us. This man was probably a boxer or a coach, which we found out to our cost, because he massacred us within two minutes. So much about Gehring.



Cell 20 was completely dark, as I have already mentioned. It was at the far end of the corridor and its window gave directly on to the “death wall”, where executions were performed. As a result, I could determine with my very own eyes, or rather ears, that Gehring was personally firing weapons. This statement is based on the following premises: present at executions were always *Lagerführer* [camp leader] Aumeier and most of the time Grabner, but someone from the political department always also had to be in attendance. I noticed that, at least in this case, Aumeier was a pawn. When the cell door opened, we reported on the number there. In the foreground, I then saw Aumeier, who asked a question to each prisoner individually about what he was doing time for, and the prisoner gave some answer. It was apparent that Aumeier was not making decisions himself, because at the same time he looked back at Grabner, Lachman, Boger, or anyone from the political department. Since I had been in the bunker for more or less four weeks, I could observe this scenario closely, because such selections took place three times a week. When one of Grabner, Lachman, or Boger nodded their head, Aumeier, with a loud scream – known to every prisoner and which I could tell from any other voices – dashed forward, saying, “*Heraus-sofort*” [Get out, now]; then, the prisoner would step out, often kicked in the process, and was taken to the washroom, where he undressed, had a number put on his leg, and proceeded to the wall. Let me state that Gehring directly participated in an execution, because of the above three always present at an execution, Gehring was the only one who had a parabellum revolver, whose sound, as a serviceman and member of the resistance, I can clearly tell from other gunshots. The shots we heard at cell 20 were fired precisely from a parabellum. I saw myself that many times during such operations Gehring was completely drunk. Once, Aumeier, during a selection, ordered me to step out. I was sent with the others to the washroom, where I was told to undress and I was tagged with a number. This fact was witnessed by prisoner 808, Pilecki, who was the bunker scribe. Then, when the execution was already underway, Lachman burst into the washroom. He was in charge of my case relating to the camp’s underground network. He skimmed across the other faces of those still alive, looked at me, and asked me what I was doing there. I replied that he could see what I was doing. Lachman then shouted that it was a mistake and ordered that I be taken back to the cell. The way this happened was that Gehring simply threw me off the stairs, kicking me on the way, and locked me in cell 20. Then I noticed that he was drunk. The execution was carried out.

I had remained at the bunker for a while yet, and then I was sent to Buchenwald.

At that time, the *Blockführer* [block leader] was *Unterscharführer* Müller, who was essentially a very rare presence at the cells downstairs. One thing struck me about Müller. Shortly before Christmas, we asked for permission to write letters to our families, because we had been here since November, that is for two months, so we thought that our families could think we were already dead. So we asked *Rottenführer* Bringmann to supply us with forms to write letters. We wrote these letters and in the evening, before coffee was served, we gave them back to Bringmann. Next day, *Unterscharführer* Müller came, carrying our letters, torn into a thousand pieces. Throwing them into the cell, he said, "You don't need to write any more, you're like dead men already". It was clear that he derived pleasure from being able to pass this message on to us.

I would like to add that during my four-month spell in the bunker, some 500 camp prisoners passed through the cells of the camp's detention facility, all of whom were executed.

Illustrative of *Lagerführer* Aumeier's conduct is the following: one evening, shortly after roll call, a prisoner, number seven thousand-something, from a Warsaw transport, was thrown in our cell. After the cell was locked, the customary presentation followed and information concerning what he was doing time for. Then the prisoner, who had been at the camp only for three or four weeks, said that he had not doffed his cap to the *Lagerführer* promptly enough. The latter hit him – as the prisoner put it – "in the snout" and took him to the bunker. Prisoner Borczyk, who was doing time with us, comforted him, saying, "You'll get 25, tops, they'll lock you up for a couple days, you'll be fine". Next day, during the selection, this prisoner was pulled out of the cell by the *Lagerführer* and executed. I learned about it from one of the *kalefaktors*, Mietek from a Tarnów transport.

At that time, following the supposed discovery of the first military organization on the camp grounds, a number of civilians were brought to the bunker, among them a young, 16-year-old girl from Oświęcim called Jadzia, who was interrogated with me a couple of times at the political department. Since she was interrogated before I was, I could hear what this interrogation at the political department was like. This young girl was beaten unconscious. Returning with her from the political department to block 11, I could see that aside from being beaten she had black eyes, and was bleeding from the forehead. This girl was executed a few days later.

I also remember an event from the period when I was doing time at the bunker in which a group of 30 Poles from Katowice, charged with sabotage, was brought in. They were

crammed like sardines in a can in cell 19, just next to us. In the evening, when none of our masters were at the bunker, we found out what these people were doing time for. Some of them had worked at the leather factory and were accused of deliberately sabotaging works. A few days later, this entire group was executed.

Once, I heard as Aumeier pulled Lieutenant Wróblewski, from Warsaw, out of his cell; sitting three cells away, I could clearly hear his words and crass insults.

As regards defendant *Unterscharführer* Plagge, I had the opportunity to come across him back when he was still the *Blockführer* of the penal company in 1941. Work finished, say, at 5.00 p.m. The penal company returned to block 11, and no later than 15 minutes after returning, the scribe from the penal company's block 11 had brought 20, 25, or 30 death certificates from block 17, which at that time was the headquarters where all deaths were processed. It was clear and I knew that these people had been killed immediately after returning. From conversations I had with Obojski, a corpse carrier, and Teofil, a familiar figure at the camp, I know that immediately after receiving death certificates they wanted to go to block 18, where the morgue was located. The scribe from the penal company told them that it was not the time yet, that these people were still alive. They would die as a result of "sport", which Plagge was in charge of. What Plagge called "sport", regardless of whether the prisoner was old or sick, consisted of doing 10-minute circuits with hands up, *Entengang*, whereby the prisoner, squatting, had to race across the pitch or do circuits of the yard, rolling farther and farther. This "sport" took place between blocks 10 and 11, which was then designated 13. In this way many prisoners died and their bodies were brought to block 18.

There is one characteristic thing of which *Unterscharführer* Plagge knew full well, because he was often present as it happened. It concerns issuing food at block 11. This happened as follows: members of the penal company entered the block individually. In the corridor, there was one prisoner who held bread in one hand and a piece of cheese or some sausage in the other. Defendant Plagge was very often present at the issuing of food. Prisoners would come up to the *kalefaktor*, and in the meantime, Plagge would kick the prisoner, who would drop the bread and he would leave empty-handed.

As regards *Hauptsturmführer* Aumeier, he was typically present during selections at the bunker. Aumeier made decisions concerning prisoners' offences committed at the camp, and as regards political offenses, relevant decisions were made by the political department. Intra-



camp offenses included instances whereby a prisoner did not work well, stole a portion of bread, or did not doff his cap to one of the SS masters. In such cases, it was Aumeier himself who decided if the prisoner was to be stood against the wall. These cases were rather frequent.

Presiding Judge: In your last sentence, you said that Aumeier decided on the punishment for intra-camp offenses; was someone ever executed on his orders?

Witness: Yes, Aumeier decided if the prisoner was to be stood up against the wall.

Presiding Judge: You mentioned that you did time at the bunker. Can you describe it?

Witness: It was the *Blockführers* who sentenced people to time at the bunker for intra-camp offenses. Aumeier made decisions concerning 14-day sentences at the standing bunker and 4-week sentences at the sitting bunker. I was doing time in cell 20. The cell had no floor and there was a square hole in the wall which led directly to the wall where the executions took place.

Presiding Judge: How many people could the bunker house?

Witness: Depending on the turnout, from 20 to 30 people.

Presiding Judge: And what was the nutrition of the prisoners?

Witness: It was coffee in the morning, unsweetened, half a liter per person, and a piece of bread; at noon, dinner: soup on *patefony*, that is sliced Swedish turnip; and supper at 5.00 p.m., during which the prisoner received a quarter or one eighth of a loaf, and very often received nothing. The *Blockführers'* head should know something about the fact that prisoners very often did not receive bread. Concerning the feeding of prisoners at the political department, the late Zdzisiek Wróblewski told me about it, and he had no reason to talk drivel. He said he had not been given anything to eat or drink.

Presiding Judge: Did you see Grabner taking part in executions?

Witness: I know that he took part in selections. I remember one execution, during which Colonel Karcz from Warsaw was shot. Standing on my comrades' shoulders, I heard a number of shots and I heard the sound of bodies falling to the ground. This is how we counted the number of people shot dead on a particular day and reported it to other comrades of ours.



Presiding Judge: You have testified concerning defendants Plagge and Müller. Aside from the fact that they tortured you, did you see either of them carrying out executions themselves?

Witness: Shortly after the war with Russia broke out, around 14,000 prisoners were brought to the camp and they were put in the same camp, but only fenced off with barbed-wire. At that time, since I knew Russian, together with Dr. Pizgała and prisoner Herłowicz, I was transferred to the Russian captives' camp, to the camp hospital. At that time, I saw defendants Plagge and Müller come there rather frequently, despite the fact that this camp was not under their command, and they were present at a morning roll call at block 3a, where the function of *Blockführer* was back then fulfilled by Stiwitz, whom they often aided in his executions. Before the *kommando* left for work, Stiwitz would kill 8 or 10 prisoners with a shovel used for stirring the soup. He hit them on their necks, which led to spine rupture. Plagge and Müller did the same.

Presiding Judge: And where did you come across Gehring?

Witness: I came across him at the bunker. At the camp, I was told that he had previously been at Sachsenhausen, where he was known as the Iron Arm. This is because he administered whipping and the beaten person always would have cuts all over his body.

Presiding Judge: Are there any questions for the witness?

Prosecutor Pęchalski: You have testified that when the Russian captives were brought in, Grabner, Müller, and Plagge participated in their gassing. Who did you see when the bodies of the gassed were being taken out? Were any of the defendants in attendance present?

Witness: I saw Lachman on that occasion, but he is not here. Of those present today, I do not remember anybody, because we were driven and beaten to work faster, so I did not really have a chance to watch anything.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Are you aware that Soviet captives were designated for the hardest labor, at the so called *Kiesgrube* [gravel pit]? How were they treated during this work?

Witness: I witnessed myself as a transport of around 600 prisoners came in to the camp and were placed in block 14, because at that time the Soviet prisoners' camp did not exist yet, and they worked at the *Kiesgrube*. At that time, they worked digging up sand behind the kitchen. Being at block 28 I could clearly see from this block's upper level the labor site of the Russians.



Prosecutor Pęchalski: What did you see?

Witness: Back then, for a few days, extraordinary things happened. The political department issued a *carte blanche*, meaning that SS men, openly and in front of the prisoners working in the kitchen or at the hospitals, shot at prisoners, while the *kapos* stood on their necks, murdering them that way. These captives, since they had only been at the camp for a few days, did not yet know the tricks of the SS men. An SS man would take off the prisoner's cap, throw it a couple yards forward, and then order the prisoner to run and pick it up. The prisoner who ran to pick the cap was shot at from behind. The SS man then had the pretext that the prisoner was running away. At that time, at the location where the Russians worked, a *Rollwage* stood all the time, because the death toll would reach 20 or 30 in a few hours. The hospital personnel had to cart off the dead. The atmosphere in the process was very unpleasant, because being forced to do what was essentially an undertaker's job we were beaten and kicked, since, according to the SS men, we did not fulfil these tasks fast enough.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Do you recall that one of the Russian captives was finished off? Did you see Grabner finish him off?

Witness: Correct. I also wanted to say that I saw Grabner personally shoot at a captive who was lying in a box serving as a coffin, and who, groaning, was still showing signs of life. Then Grabner finished him off personally. I also remember that Grabner, pointing at the Russian captives, said, "They are to blame for the fact you people are here". The way we interpreted this was that we were there because Germany had declared war on the Soviet Union.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: So Grabner said that these Russian captives were to blame for the fact that Poles were interned at the camp?

Witness: Correct.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: And do you remember the execution, in May or June 1941, of around 130 Poles, who were executed in groups of 20?

Witness: I do.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Was someone watching? Was someone present at the execution?

Witness: Yes.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: And the families of SS men?

Witness: Yes. Before the execution, I was sent to the *Kiesgrube*, where this execution took place. Then, prisoners from the penal company were taken out: dressed up in the worst uniforms, they were paraded through the camp barefoot, their hands tied behind their backs. They left through the main gate and arrived at the execution site. They executed people in groups of 20. Around the pit, dug particularly for this occasion, there was an area enclosed with soil banks, and on these banks stood the families of SS men. I saw it myself: there were women with children and SS officers. They filled the entire bank and by the bank the executions took place. I remember that at one point a wheel of the cart we were using to transport the corpses came off and the cart got stuck. We all rushed to collect the wheel as fast as possible, and Grabner ran up to us and beat us with the butt of his gun, and, addressing Klehr, said, "What's that crew of yours that can't work?"

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Were prisoners executed in groups of 20?

Witness: That is correct.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: And the remaining prisoners were waiting their turn, watching?

Witness: Correct.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: You saw German mothers, wives, and children at the scene. How did they act? What was their reaction when these people were going down? Did they express some emotions, did they shout, or did they only treat this as a show?

Witness: They only treated this as a show.

Prosecutor Brandys: Returning to Aumeier, I wanted to ask if you know that Aumeier took part in selections.

Witness: Yes. I remember one case, concerning a group of 500 prisoners. These prisoners were in post-typhus quarantine, meaning they had recovered from typhus and they were now in the three-week period during which the disease could recur. However, they were fully fit and after the quarantine they were supposed to get back to work at the camp. One day, vans drew up, and all of the quarantined, all 500 people, were transported to the gas chambers. Aumeier was present on that occasion, and he personally kicked the prisoners,



"helping" them in this way to get on the vans faster. Since one prisoner managed to escape this transport, he could bear this out.

Prosecutor Brandys: Was Plagge present at the execution of the 130 Poles and what role did he play?

Witness: Plagge was a spectator and did not participate directly, because the execution was performed by a platoon under the command of an officer unknown to me.

Prosecutor Brandys: You have testified concerning the pole punishment. Was there a pole also at block 11?

Witness: There was, in the attic.

Prosecutor Brandys: And in the yard?

Witness: In summer, the pole punishment was very often performed outdoors, with the sun beating down, so as to aggravate the prisoner's suffering.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: You have testified about Lieutenant Wróblewski. Do you know if he was executed on Grabner's orders?

Witness: That is correct.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Do you know if Lieutenant Wróblewski remained in his cell unrestrained or tied up?

Witness: Initially, he was unrestrained, and after one interrogation after starvation he returned from the political department with his arms tied behind his back. I saw it myself because I opened the peephole and could then catch a glimpse of what was going on in the corridor. Then I saw that his hands were tied behind his back.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: Do you know that he had spent two weeks like that?

Witness: Yes.

Prosecutor Pęchalski: So how did he eat with his hands tied?

Witness: They placed a bowl next to his tied hands and he ate on his knees, like a dog.



Defense attorney Kruh: You have testified that during the killing of the Russian prisoners Müller was also present. Was he a spectator?

Witness: That is correct.

Defendant Aumeier: The witness has testified that I ordered the arrest of a prisoner just because he had not taken off his cap. I would like to state that I never had a prisoner arrested for such a trifle. There must have been some other reason, such as, most likely, theft. Otherwise, Höß would not have been in a position to sanction such an arrest. Also, the witness claims that I ordered this prisoner shot. I would like to say that the witness cannot possibly know if maybe a death warrant had in the meantime come that had been issued by some other authority or by a court.

Presiding Judge: Does the witness wish to add anything?

Witness: I would like to answer the defendant. If a court sentence had come in the meantime or if this man's fate had been decided on by some higher authority, then it would never have been in the *Lagerführer's* purview to decide, but the political department's.

Presiding Judge: Do other defendants have any questions?

(Nobody has any questions)