



## JÓZEF KUŹMIŃSKI

On 16 October 1945, in Siedlce, Judge Z. Łukaszewicz interviewed the person specified below as a witness, without swearing him in. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations, the witness testified as follows:

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<b>Forename and surname</b>	Józef Kuźmiński
<b>Age</b>	36
<b>Names of parents</b>	Józef
<b>Place of residence</b>	Siedlce, 10 Lutego Street 4
<b>Occupation</b>	employee of Polish State Railways
<b>Religious affiliation</b>	Roman-Catholic
<b>Criminal record</b>	none

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At the beginning of January 1943 I was transferred to the Treblinka railway station, where I was to work as a stationmaster. I worked there until the arrival of the Red Army. Before my arrival, I had already known from people's accounts that there was a camp next to the Treblinka railway station for the extermination of Jews and another one in which Poles were kept.

All the transports intended for the extermination camp arrived at the Treblinka railway station, since there was a siding running from the station to a gravel pit (gravel mine). This branch had another branch directed to the camp.

During my work, a dozen or so transports of Jews arrived at the extermination camp in Treblinka, each consisting of 5,000 people on average. Among these transports, there was one from Greece, one from Belgium, there were two from Białystok and the remaining ones from the Warsaw Ghetto.



I am completely certain about the transports from Greece and Belgium, since they were completely different from ordinary transports from Poland. They usually arrived in locked freight wagons under the supervision of armed guards (Ukrainians and Lithuanians), whereas the foreign transports arrived in completely different conditions. These trains consisted of Pullman carriages, with each passenger holding a ticket and having a lot of luggage; there were luggage wagons in the train.

As for the transport from Greece, I had ticket stubs (their spines) left from the passenger tickets that had been issued (these stubs went missing at the Treblinka railway station during military operations). The tickets were issued to 6,500 people, since I specially checked the number.

As for the transport from Belgium, I am also absolutely certain, since I talked to the people on the train and learnt from them where they were coming from.

It is necessary to explain that people from foreign transports were able to leave their train freely at stations, and they were confident that they were going to a labor camp.

During my work, apart from the two transports I mentioned, there were no other foreign transports. From the accounts of my friends who worked at the Treblinka railway station before me I know that during the most intense period (autumn, winter 1942), there were two transports arriving at Treblinka daily on average, but there were days on which even six transports arrived. Each transport consisted of 60 wagons intended especially for transporting Jews. These trains usually ran as so-called shuttle trains.

Because of my work at the Treblinka railway station, I know exactly what the procedure for a transport was from its arrival at the Treblinka railway station. The train's arrival was announced in a phone call made from Siedlce or Małkinia, depending on the direction from which it was coming. It was done with a code, which the Polish personnel did not know, but it was clear that when the announcement was made with a code, what was meant was a transport of Jews.

Ordinary freight transports had shipping lists and they were registered in the railway station records. Transports of Jews arrived without any shipping lists and it was forbidden to register them in the records.



There were two special members of the German personnel who dispatched transports from the station onto the camp ramp. A transport was usually divided into parts, each consisting of 20 wagons, which were pushed onto the camp ramp by a shunting steam engine. However, the engine driver and the engine personnel did not enter the area of the camp, but, after they had pushed the transport in through the gate, they shunted the engine backwards and after 10 minutes, on a given signal, they moved up to take the empty wagons away, and then shunted in another part of the transport. The period between the arrival of a full train at the station and the delivery back to the station of its already emptied wagons lasted over half an hour.

I want to add that when such manoeuvres were performed with a transport of Jews, the Polish personnel of the Treblinka railway station was forbidden to leave their posts, in order to make any observation more difficult. As I know from the notices on the wagons, they held from 50 to 100 people.

In the winter of 1943, a short time after my arrival at Treblinka, I went to the gravel pit to collect wagons full of gravel (the railway track leading to the gravel pit ran in the vicinity of the extermination camp). I could see, from inside the steam engine, men, women and children being driven out of a transport that was on the camp ramp at that time and being forced to put their coats and hand luggage in a pile. I could not continue my observation since they started shooting at the steam engine from a watchtower. However, I could hear screams, crying, shooting, barking, and what was most interesting, an orchestra playing music.

I do not know what method was used in the camp to kill people. However, I know that there were operational chambers in there. I also do not know if the chambers were used to kill people with gas. However, I suppose it was done in a different way, as there were no transports coming to the Treblinka railway station that would enable one to work out that they actually contained gas. On the other hand, there were transports arriving which consisted of tanks that contained some kind of liquid, which were immediately taken away by the personnel of the camp. I suppose that this liquid facilitated the cremation of corpses.

As for the cremation, it was done when I arrived, but it was still not very intense. Then (a little time after my arrival), the cremation started to be done on a large scale and lasted day and night until the uprising in the camp on 2 August 1943. During the cremations, *Bagier* diggers



were used to extract corpses from the pits. I saw with my own eyes (also when I was inside my steam engine on the way to the gravel pit) *Bagier* diggers lifting corpses.

After the uprising, during which the residential huts, chambers and a fuel depot were burnt down, the liquidation of the camp was started. They began to transport dismantled huts away (those that had not been burnt down), *Bagier* diggers and the contents of the storehouses, and so in the spring of 1944 there were only three Ukrainians left in the camp, whereas the area of the camp itself had been ploughed and sown with various plants. These Ukrainians escaped before the arrival of the Red Army. Generally speaking, the personnel of the camp consisted of SS-men and Ukrainians.

I do not remember their names.

The witness interview report was read out to the witness and he confirmed it by signing it on each page.