



SZYJA WARSZAWSKI

On 9 October 1945 in Łódź, judge Z. Łukaszewicz, in the presence of prosecutor J. Maciejewski, interviewed the person named below as an unsworn witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for giving false testimony, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Szyja Warszawski
Age	34
Names of parents	Jankiel
Place of residence	Piotrkowska Street 18
Occupation	carpenter
Religious affiliation	Jewish
Criminal record	none

On 23 July 1942, I was brought to Treblinka in a transport from Kielce. The transport included 12 wagons, 100 people each.

The transport was directed to the railway siding of Treblinka camp (the ramp did not yet exist). On the railway platform by the tracks were corpses of murdered Jews and I recognized people from Kielce among them. After the wagons were removed, the Germans and Ukrainians with horsewhips rushed everybody to the yard, where they ordered us to lie down, face to the ground, and then proceeded to kill everybody with a shot in the head.

There were women, children, elderly and sick in the transport.

By accident, I was shot in the right arm and I remained lying down until evening, when I was thrown into a pit filled with bodies. Another layer of bodies was thrown on top. I lay that



way until dawn, and then, on hearing a conversation in Yiddish, I spoke out, and the Jewish laborers who were working by the pit helped me get out (it was early in the morning and there were no Germans). The workers took me to a barrack (detailed records were not kept yet) and I blended into the group and started as a laborer in the camp.

Next, I worked in a group of carpenters until I escaped from [the camp] on 2 August 1943, during the uprising.

Initially, I worked with corpses for two days. As regards that period, I remember the arrival of a transport from Międzyrzec, about 20 wagons. In these wagons, there were only bodies: of men, women and children, who had died of chlorine poisoning because the floor of the wagons, as well as the corpses lying on top, were poured over with a layer of chlorinated lime.

Essentially, the camp was divided into two units: camp 1, with the ramp, residential barracks, storehouses and workshops, and camp 2, with the gas chambers, one barrack for laborers, and pits where the corpses were buried.

I lived in camp 2 the entire time. There were six of us who specialized in carpentry, and we (including Mr. Wiernik) were permanently employed doing construction work; during work, we could go from camp 2 to camp 1 and back.

Working close to the chambers, I could inspect their set-up at close quarters. When I arrived at the camp, four concrete chambers supported by high foundations were already finished. The corridor inside the building which housed these chambers had entrances leading to each chamber, the size of the entrances only allowing one person to squeeze through. On the outside, each chamber had a hatch opening upwards, through which the corpses were thrown out. Each chamber could accommodate around 300 people, but in order to speed things up, up to 600 people were loaded inside, often onto the heads of those already in the chamber. The poisoning happened by means of pumping in exhaust gas from an engine installed next to the chambers in a special wooden shed.

In September or at the beginning of October 1942, another 10 chambers were built in one large building next to the existing chambers; they were set up similarly to the old ones, but were bigger, since each could accommodate around 800 people, and typically upwards of one thousand people were loaded inside.



Initially, people were killed in these chambers with chloride, and only later (around a month after launching) an engine was built; since then, the poisoning was effected with exhaust gas.

Between my arrival at the camp up until the beginning of January 1943, all the chambers were constantly filled with new victims. The chambers operated ceaselessly, every day.

I cannot specify the number of victims brought in daily, but I believe that at least 10,000 people were killed every day, while on the Day of Atonement, 18,000 people were poisoned.

After New Year's Day 1943, the frequency of transports decreased, and I suspect that from that day until the end of February 1943, around two transports arrived daily.

In March 1943, a transport of around 40,000 Jews arrived from the south, from Bulgaria, I think. If I am not mistaken, the final transport arrived on 11 May 1943 from the Warsaw ghetto.

As regards the incineration of corpses, it was not systematic when I arrived at the camp; there were attempts to burn heaps of bodies in pits, but this was not successful, so bodies were typically put in huge pits, 10 meters deep and wide and a couple dozen meters long. In January 1943, the burnings started to be carried out on a large scale, and in February 1943, a grate set up in a pit was first used. Since a pit of this kind was not too efficient, five or six grates were built aboveground. Grates constructed out of rails were supported on cement poles, half a meter above the ground. Such a grate was some 10 meters long and 4 meters wide. Underneath, a fire was lit and corpses were thrown on top with a dredger; once the corpses caught fire, they continued to burn.

Mass burnings began in 1943. After the burning, ashes were thrown into pits from which the corpses had been removed. Vetch was then planted on the surface and trees brought from the forest were stuck in, in order to conceal such spots.

I often worked as a carpenter in the watchtowers, so I know that not all the corpses were burnt. Dredgers removed only the upper layer of bodies from some pits while the remaining corpses were buried under a thick layer of soil, with the spot also concealed on the surface.

Aside from the abovementioned transport from Bulgaria, transports of Jews from Czechoslovakia and Germany also arrived at Treblinka.



I did not hear of any transports from other European countries.

In the territory of Poland, first, Jews from the General Government were exterminated in Treblinka and then, transports from the north and west arrived.

Apart from that, small numbers of Gypsies were brought in, and I heard of one transport of Poles.

With regard to the names of the Germans on the camp's staff, I recall Franz, Obersturmführer SS, nicknamed "the Doll," who was an aide to the camp commandant; Mathes, Untersturmführer SS, head of camp 2; Muller, Untersturmführer SS, supervisor of laborers in camp 2. I do not remember any more names.

At that the report was concluded and read out, and the witness signed it on every page.