



BERNARD CZARDYBON

On 16 September 1947 in Katowice, the deputy prosecutor of the Court of Appeal in Katowice with its seat in Katowice, K. Jarzębiński, with the participation of court reporter Władysław Giemza, in conjunction with article 20 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, heard the person named below as a witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the significance of an oath, the witness testified as follows:

Name and surname	Bernard Czardybon
Age	46
Parents' names	Andrzej and Jadwiga
Occupation	secretary general of the Union of Veterans of the Silesian Uprisings
Place of residence	Stalmacha Street 7 in Chorzów
Criminal record	none
Relationship to the parties	none

From 18 December 1940 until 8 May 1941 and from the end of March 1942 until 18 January 1945, I was imprisoned in the Auschwitz concentration camp as a political prisoner.

During the period from 8 May 1941 until the end of March 1942, I was in various prisons in Katowice, Bytom, Gliwice, Wrocław, Frankfurt, Głogówko and Moabit. From the list of suspects shown to me, I know the following people: Hans Aumeier, Max Grabner, Kirschner (I would like to mention that there were three Kirschners, and I know the one from the Political Department), Kuny, Lechner, Liebehenschel, Maria Mandl, Möckel and Josten. I met all those I just mentioned during my stay in the camp and knew them by name.



1) I met Hans Aumeier in 1942 as the *Lagerführer* [head of the camp]. He was very harsh towards the prisoners and personally took part in their beating. I heard that Aumeier personally shot some prisoners. I often saw him running with his revolver drawn, but I didn't see him shoot in person. From what some prisoners told me, I know that Aumeier shot about a hundred people during the rebellion in the punitive unit, I think in 1943. The shooting of these people was said to have taken place in the squatting position.

It was during Aumeier's time that the most severe repressions were inflicted on the prisoners, such as flogging, hanging on a post and the *Stehbunker*. The *Stehbunker* was a concrete cell without air, designed for one man, about 50–60 cm in size. You had to crawl into this cell on your stomach. Up to four prisoners were put there for the night, and of course all physiological needs had to be dealt with on the spot. The *Stehbunker* punishments were administered [in terms of time] from one to 15 nights, while the prisoner had to work normally during the day. This punishment was dished out by the *Lagerführer*, who was Aumeier.

2) Max Grabner. I met him for the first time in 1941, when ten [other] prisoners were shot because one prisoner had escaped. Grabner personally selected the prisoners who were to be shot. He was the head of the Political Department of the Auschwitz concentration camp. Also in 1941, Grabner ordered a few standing punishments of several hours for the prisoners in order to find the prisoners from the photo he was holding who were suspected of belonging to an underground organization. He then chose about 40–60 people, some of whom didn't come back.

The prisoners who were interrogated in the Political Department led by Grabner returned from the interrogation bruised, bleeding, beaten, and some were even carried out on a stretcher to the hospital. There were also cases of transferring a prisoner from there to the old crematorium, where the prisoner would then be shot.

Grabner often took part in the block inspections, during which some prisoners would be pulled out and then shot. The shootings were carried out *en masse* in the courtyard of block 11. I know one case of the interrogation of a man named Bolesław Lerczak from Mysłowice, Oświęcimska Street 20, who was beaten unconsciousness across a vaulting horse. I heard that a certain Kral, I don't know his address, but I think he lives in Kochłowice [?], was personally interrogated by Grabner, and he can provide some more detailed information himself. After the interrogation, Kral was so badly beaten that he couldn't walk.



Grabner terrorized all the prisoners in the camp, and everyone was scared to death of him. A prisoner who'd been summoned to the [Political] Department, said goodbye to his fellow prisoners because he was convinced that he wouldn't return from there, as it was in 90% of the cases.

3) [Hermann] Kirschner I knew as a member of the Political Department. He was the worst of the Kirschners, because there were two more besides him, one was in the outside packaging center, and the third in the so-called *Bekleidungskammer* [clothing storerooms]. I heard that prisoners were robbed of the contents of their packages. I personally received four empty packages, and I didn't receive six packages at all. I never knew the Kirschners' first names, but I would recognize them if they were shown to me.

4) Gustav Kuny supervised the prisoners in the *Effektenkammer* [storerooms for personal belongings]. I can't say anything bad about Kuny; he was rather good-natured and I didn't hear anything about him beating prisoners.

5) Anton Lechner. I met him as a prison guard working in the *Bekleidungskammer*. Lechner was vulgar, harsh, used to beat prisoners till they bled for no real reason. He stole goods left, right and center, and in large quantities too, especially civilian clothes, and would then blame it on the prisoners. There were cases that Lechner sold a large quantity of these goods – clothes, underwear, footwear – and then blamed it on prisoners who were severely punished for that. The facts, which I mention, took place in 1944. Lechner was transferred to another department for his crimes.

6) Arthur Liebehenschel. In the autumn of 1943, I met him as the camp commandant after Höss. I didn't see Liebehenschel beat anyone personally, and during the time of his command the flogging punishment was abolished, but the incidences of gassing and shooting the prisoners increased. Liebehenschel was camp commandant for a relatively short time and I can't give you any more details about him.

7) Maria Mandl – she was a *Lagerführerin* in the women's camp in Birkenau and I heard from prisoners that she behaved towards them just like Aumeier and Grabner did with us. I personally saw incidents when Mandl beat the women with a whip while escorting them.



8) [Karl] Möckel – he was the head of the administration from June 1943 until the evacuation. On his orders, penalties were imposed on the prisoners for the alleged destruction of underwear. Möckel ordered severe reprisals for the alleged theft of precious jewelry from so-called "Canada". During his time, underwear wasn't washed, but only disinfected, allegedly for the purpose of saving material. If Möckel personally mistreated the prisoners, I neither saw nor heard anything like that.

9) Heinrich Josten – he was the commander of the 4th company and later the head of the air defense and fire brigade. He was greedy and tried to get rich on the back of the prisoners' belongings, and he was rigorous. There was only one incident when Josten hit a prisoner, but I didn't hear of Josten tormenting the prisoners.

I am not able to give exact dates with reference to my testimony, because after so many years in prison and in Auschwitz my memory fails me. [In addition] during my stay in the camp, I suffered from typhus twice and once from paratyphus. In 1942, when I was suffering from typhus, 80 of us survived from 1,200 people. Typhus patients, convalescents, were packed into vehicles and taken to the gas chamber. In this way, about 1,100 people were lost in one day.

No more was read out.