



CHANA KUPFERMINC

28 June 1945

Main Commissioner for State Security

[Martin] Hinkens

PV [*procès-verbal*] no. 204/45

In connection with PV no. 202 from 20 June 1945 (S)

Hinkens

Regarding: unknown persons (from Germany)

Subject: guilty of mistreating prisoners

Testimony of: Chana Kupferminc, Polish national, born 10 August 1914 in Przedbórz [?],
[living at] rue des Tanneurs 74 in Brussels.

PRO JUSTITIA

On 22 June 1945 at 6.00 p.m., I, Martin Hinkens, Main Commissioner for State Security, judiciary police officer, assisting the Auditor General, heard our inspector Adelin Verbans, who stated in French:

That day, 22 June 1945 at 10.00 a.m., I heard Chana Kupferminc, Polish national, born 10 August 1914 in Przedbórz (Polska), living at rue des Tanneurs 74 in Brussels, currently staying at the House for Political Prisoners – chaussée de Louvain I in Tervuren, who testified in French:

On 6 June 1943 I was arrested by the Gestapo on avenue Louise in Brussels and taken to the concentration camp at Malines for being Jewish. A few days later, accompanied by a great number of Jews, I was deported to Germany. We were loaded into cattle cars, 80 to 90 per car or even more, and we were transported to Birkenau near Auschwitz in Upper Silesia.

After the train stopped we were ordered to leave our luggage inside. [The women] were separated from the men, after which cripples and sick people were collected into one



row, while the healthy were arranged into another row. I was in the second row. At that point we were segregated again, we numbered 133 [women], and we formed a transport to the Auschwitz camp – with the exception of the men’s camp – block 10, reserved for experiments on women. These 133 women had been selected out of the prettiest, they were all aged between 20 and 30, and all were married. (We later learned that a few hours before our arrival at the camp a transport [had come] consisting of the same number of people, [made up of] quite young Greek girls, a bit younger than us).

After we arrived, we were taken to the showers under SS guard and, like all the other prisoners at the camp, we had our heads shaved. We were undressed – to the delight of the SS [overseers] – and taken by these brutes to the cold showers. After coming out of the showers we received prison clothing, i.e., dirty trousers and a prison blouse which was in the same condition as the trousers, to go to block 10, located in between other blocks. I cannot describe the topography of the camp to you because, as you’ll see, we were never able to get an idea of what was happening outside.

Block 10 was a block like all the other blocks in the camp but the windows were boarded up and did not let in any light; it was always dark inside. We were greeted amiably by the nurses upon arrival and received dresses in place of our men’s clothing. But in spite of the cold we received no undergarments, and the block was not heated – three of my compatriots, Jewish women, and I, present here, can confirm the facts that I am about to recount to you. From this moment, every incident is significant.

The next morning I had a medical visit. There was a true laboratory in this block, and this clinic of sorts was nothing other than a place for the experiments of professors Clauberg (surgical sterilization), Wirths (sterilization by injections) and Schumann (sterilization of young girls by radiation). My visit was with Dr. Wirths.

I have to amend what I have said about the treatments used by the doctors; it was Dr. Wirths who used surgical procedures and Prof. Clauberg who used injections.

Dr. Wirths told me that I was suffering from uterine polyps and that I had an inner lesion due to childbirth. But I had never suffered of [any] abdominal [problems], neither before nor after childbirth; still Wirths insisted that I have an operation. I resisted, even though the nurses told us that if we were not reasonable, we would be sent to Birkenau and from there to the



gas chamber and crematorium. After a few weeks they came to [get me] for the operation and I was operated intentionally, effectively, and without any cut on my abdomen.

Because of this operation I began to have abdominal pains and pain in the female organs, and I suffer [from these] to this day. My ovaries have been swollen ever since, and my physiological functions have been completely terminated. I believe that the operation did not turn out satisfactory, although my impression is that I could no longer have children presently. After six weeks I was sent to Birkenau, where for 15 days I was treated as a convalescent. From then on I had to work and I was able to do light work in the camp hospital. The treatment in block 10 at Auschwitz had not been so bad because we were slaves that the doctors had bought from the SS and paid for.

Some of the nurses treated us very badly even though they themselves were prisoners like us, but their aim was to ensure the greatest number of inmates so that they wouldn't be sent back to the camp. Here are their names: Sylvia Friedmann, a big blonde, very beautiful and well-built, she was a Slovak and a very evil woman, and Ria Hans and her sister Magda – all three were nurses reporting to Prof. Clauberg. The food was not so bad in the block, only insufficient: we received only 250 g of bread and a thin soup, also once a day.

During my illness and lying in at the camp hospital in Birkenau, as well as when I had typhus, a disinfection was carried out that we, like everyone else, were subjected to. We were thrown outside completely naked at 4.00 a.m., and we remained there until 8.00 a.m. At that point we had to take a warm shower, then a very cold one, and again a hot one. Then we were drizzled with some kind of liquid which the women would rub into our skin under our armpits and into our abdomen. This was happening in front of the SS men and camp staff.

At the end of 1943 or at the beginning of 1944 Jews were no longer allowed to work at the hospital and I was sent back to the camp, where I had to work in the *kommandos* like all the other women.

Regarding this camp, I confirm all the points of the testimony given by Lily Cohen which I have read. I can describe the treatment that patients in the Birkenau hospital had to suffer; there were four persons to a bed; clean persons arriving were placed with those with scabies so they would get infected; [the sick] were beaten by SS men until they bled and were maltreated with a brutality that no words can describe. Every three days there



was a selection. The selection consisted of a doctor or SS man coming to the hospital, casting a glance at the most sick or weak from his point of view, and dividing the people into two groups. Group A included the really sick and the crippled; group B were the healthy. Group A always had to consist of a certain number; either that or its size was adjusted [to a certain extent] to that of group B.

Those [chosen during the selection] were directed to block 25, the terminus of every journey. It was the saddest place of all. These people knew that when leaving it, they'd be going to the gas chamber and from there to the crematorium. They stayed in this block for eight to ten days, sometimes longer, without food or drink. These people would bite themselves, there was only fear and madness in expectation of the day when they would go to meet their death in the gas chamber escorted by a special SS guard.

Here are the names of people who, like myself, were confined in block 10 at Auschwitz and whose path was pretty much the same as mine:

1. Ruchla Cygler, a Pole, b. 8 February 1909 in Tomaszów (Poland), living at rue de Poinçon 45 in Brussels
2. Helena Tenenbaum, b. 15 September 1912 in Warsaw (Poland), Polish national, living at rue [du] Progrès 221 in Schaerbeek
3. Tola Neyman, Polish national, b. 14 February 1909 in Łódź (Poland), living at rue Verte 212 in Brussels.

They can attest to the truth of my statements.

I forgot to mention that upon our arrival in block 10, which I have spoken of here, we were branded with tattoos. I received the number 42 623 with a triangle underneath, which meant that I was Jewish. In addition, an entry was made, there was an identification and mouth examination to determine how many gold teeth we had, which had to be recorded on our imprisonment card. The tattoo was on the left forearm.

Read out and signed.

Let us explain that the testimony of Lily Cohen was the subject of our PV 202 from 20 June 1945. This document contains the above date.



Having concluded, let us explain that the testimonies of:

1. Ruchla Cygler, living at rue de Poinçon 45 in Brussels
2. Tola Neyman, living at rue Verte 212 in Brussels
3. Helena Tenenbaum, living at rue du Progrès 221 in Schaerbeek

mentioned in the present PV, were the subject of our PV 205, 208 and 209 from 22 and 23 June 1945.